2018 Annual PROGRESS & SERVICES Report

State of Alaska • Department of Health & Social Services
Office of Children Services

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SECTION 1: GENERAL INFORMATION

This is the second update to Alaska's 2015-2019 Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP). This document addresses the requirements of ACYF-CB-PI-16-03 and is designed to provide an annual report of progress made towards accomplishing the goals and objectives of the CFSP, the CAPTA update, and the CFS 101, parts I, II, and III.

OVERVIEW

The Governor of Alaska has designated the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) as the single state agency responsible for administering Child Welfare Services (title IV-B, subpart 1), Promoting Safe and Stable Families (title IV-B, subpart 2), Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), and Chafee Foster Care Independence (CFCIP) and Education & Training Vouchers (ETV).

The Office of Children's Services (OCS) has administrative responsibility for the development and implementation of the CFSP, including all policies and procedures relating to child protection services in Alaska. In addition, OCS has been responsible for administration of the Early Intervention Programs and Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Planning.

The CFSP is a five-year strategic plan that sets forth the goals and objectives needed to strengthen the overall child welfare system in Alaska. Alaska's plan for 2015-2019 was submitted June 30, 2014, and approved November 6, 2014. Alaska was selected as a Round 3 state for the Child and Family Services Reviews (CFSR). As a part of the CFSR process, Alaska submitted the Statewide Assessment (SWA) in March 2017. The CFSR Round 3 occurred in Alaska in May 2017. Currently, the State of Alaska is not currently under a Program Improvement Plan (PIP) for any programs; however, it is expected that a PIP will be developed based on the findings of the SWA and the CFSR. Alaska is expecting to receive the findings of the CFSR in August 2017 from the Children's Bureau.

In November 2015, Alaska successfully completed a title IV-E audit, and was not required to develop a PIP. Like most public child welfare agencies, Alaska has seen a dramatic increase in the number of children and families served and with out of home placements since 2014. Alaska is scheduled to have another title IV-E Audit in November 2018.

Alaska has a disproportionate number of Alaskan Native children involved in the child welfare system. Alaskan Native children are the subject of a disproportionate number of child abuse reports, substantiated reports of abuse/neglect, and custody/placement into foster care. Consequently, the OCS dedicates time and resources towards nurturing our relationships with Tribal partners, developing practice and policy strategies to increase Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) compliance, targeted Alaskan Native foster home recruitment, and the purchase of culturally-appropriate, family support services. Many of these strategies will be highlighted throughout this report. Additionally, the impacts of social challenges such as homelessness, substance abuse, poverty, and other factors has added to the significant challenges OCS faces every day with families. The table below shows the Alaska OCS statistics on the increased numbers of children in out-of-home care for one or more days during the calendar year:

Table 1: Count of Children in Out-of-Home Placement during each of the last Five Calendar Years

Region	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Anchorage	1,059	1,176	1,322	1,580	1727
Northern	422	510	575	671	757
Southcentral	716	723	832	926	1108
Southeast	245	251	255	269	267
Western	339	243	277	281	282
Alaska, unique count (includes children in Trial Home Visits)	2,776	2,902	3,254	3,723	4,133

Source: State of Alaska (SOA) Online Resources for Children in Alaska (ORCA) Report Children in Out of Home Placement RR00161

In recent years, Alaska has also faced a significant budgetary crisis which presents additional challenges for OCS; especially during this past year. While OCS has not made significant cuts in services, the Governor's Office has encouraged state departments to look at doing "less with less." To this end, OCS is working diligently with the larger DHSS to find cross-

cutting efficiencies and efforts to streamline direct services and resources for children and families. The State of Alaska is progressing with these efficiencies (both programmatic and budgetary) through the Results-Based Accountability and Budgeting processes.

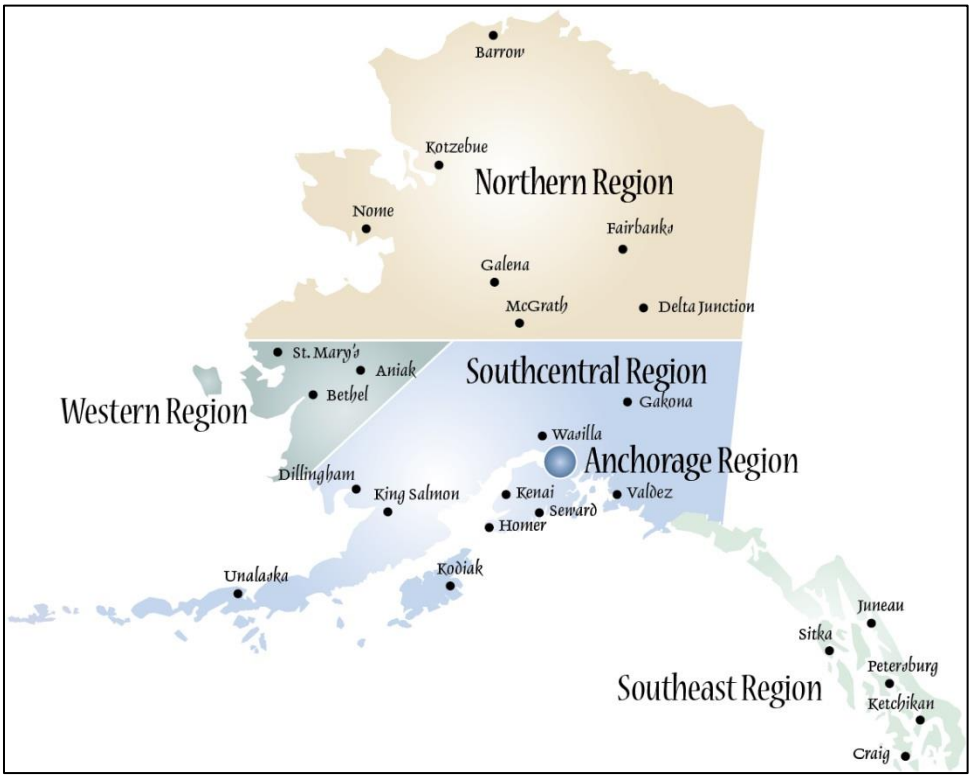
AGENCY STRUCTURE

2015 Update: The Director has overall responsibility for the administration of the OCS. The Deputy Director is responsible for statewide program management and the Division Operations Manager oversees field operations. The OCS operates Alaska's state-administered, child protection services and is organized into five geographic regions, with 24 (staffed) field offices statewide. A Protective Services Manager II administers each OCS Service Region:

- The Anchorage Regional Office (ARO) is responsible for the Municipality of Anchorage and the communities of Eagle River, Chugiak, and Whittier.
- The Northern Regional Office (NRO) is located in Fairbanks and is responsible for management of the Fairbanks, Nome, Kotzebue, Barrow, Galena, McGrath, and Delta Junction field offices and the surrounding areas. The Galena office is no longer a staffed office, but the community continues to be served by Northern Region staff.
- The Southcentral Regional Office (SCRO) is located in Wasilla and is responsible for management of the Wasilla, Kenai, Valdez, Kodiak, Dillingham, Homer, King Salmon, Gakona, Seward, and Unalaska field offices and the surrounding areas. The Unalaska office is no longer a staffed office, but the community continues to be served by Southcentral Region staff.
- The Southeastern Regional Office (SERO) is located in Juneau and is responsible for management of the Juneau, Craig, Sitka, Petersburg and Ketchikan field offices and the surrounding areas.
- The Western Regional Office (WRO) is located in Bethel and is responsible for management of the Bethel, St. Mary's, and Aniak field offices and the surrounding areas.

2016 Update: There have been no changes in agency structure since the 2016 APSR was submitted; see map below.

2017 Update: There have been no changes in agency structure since the 2017 APSR was submitted; see map below.



*OCS no longer has staff based in Galena and Unalaska. Both communities are served by other field offices in NRO and SCRO.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES, MISSION AND VISION STATEMENT

OCS' Practice Model provides guidance with the following guiding principles:

- A child's safety is paramount.
- A determination that safety threats are present within a family does not equate with removal of a child from their home. The assessment of safety threats directs staff to make informed decisions about safety planning that will control and manage the threats identified. These actions may be in-home, out-of-home or a combination of the two.
- Relevant services will be sought with respect for and understanding of the families' culture and specific needs.
- Collaboration with Alaska Native Tribes is fundamental to best practice.
- Families are treated respectfully, thoughtfully and as genuine partners.
- A person's right to self-determination is valued and supported.
- A safety intervention system is congruent with strengths based and family centered practice.
- Assessing for the safety of children is what we do; family centered practice is how we do it.
- Interventions are identified using the family's perspective about what needs and strengths exist that are selected in collaboration through family engagement.
- By engaging in a collaborative problem solving process with the family, case plans will be specific to the uniqueness of each family served.
- Enhancing parent/caregiver protective capacities are essential for the ability of families to protect their children.
- OCS needs partnerships within the community and stakeholders to achieve strong outcomes for children and families.

Vision Statement: Safe Children, Strong Families.

Mission Statement: OCS works in partnership with families and communities to support the well-being of Alaska's children and youth. Services will enhance families' capacities to give their children a healthy start, to provide them with safe and permanent homes, to maintain cultural connections, and to realize their potential.

COLLABORATION AND COORDINATION

OCS is highly invested in collaboration, coordination, and partnership with Tribal partners and stakeholders. In the past year OCS has engaged in substantial, ongoing and meaningful collaboration in implementing the 2015-2019 CFSP and the development of the Annual Programs and Services Report (APSR). Through these collaboration efforts with internal and external partners, OCS is able to assess the needs of children and families in Alaska, use the input to modify goals and monitor progress towards achieving the outcomes and objectives.

2015 Update: The lead OCS position responsible for oversight, collaboration, and coordination of the Child and Family Services Plan was vacant from July 1, 2014 – December 8, 2014. Because of this vacancy, the agency efforts prior to January 2015 were minimal.

- January 12, 2015 - Meeting held in Anchorage to review and implement the CFSP: discussed the priorities, strategies, and objectives. Recommendations were made to update, change, and enhance the CFSP objectives. Present at the meeting were OCS managers, Department of Law, Facing Foster Care in Alaska, Court Improvement Project and the OCS ICWA Program Coordinator. Through discussion and review of current data, it was determined that specific goals to address services to children under the age of five should be incorporated throughout the plan, as this is the population at greatest risk of maltreatment.

  Recommendation: After reviewing the plan, the group did recommend changes to dates for completion of items. Plan for improvement objective 1.C.1 was changed. Although the assessment of resource families will continue to be a focus in this objective, the group recommended additional focus on the complete assessment through the background check process. This will ensure safe environments and continuation of the current Resource Family Assessment process. These changes were incorporated into this APSR submission.

- April 8, 2015 – OCS supervisors, managers, Tribal and community partners met in Anchorage to review the CFSP priorities and strategies. Breakout sessions recommended changes, highlighted work completed, and identified barriers to the priorities, strategies, and objectives in the CFSP. Small workgroups met to discuss the strategies in the CFSP.

Each group was asked to review the objective and activities, identify priorities, efficiencies, and suggested changes. Focus in groups was on the following CFSP strategies: 1.A, 1.B, 1.C, and 2.A. The work groups determined the goals were appropriate based on what is happening in OCS practice; they noted that some strategies already have work happening to draw on and identified some of the key components that are already on the plan. The most effective workgroup was the resource family support workgroup focused on 1.C.

Recommendation: They identified a need to review position descriptions for licensing staff, identify point of contact for families (customer services), and identify financial support options for families outside of the foster care stipend. New position descriptions are included with this APSR submission.

- May 7, 2015 – Tribal State Collaboration Group Meeting presentation and handouts provided to OCS managers, Tribal Partners, Department of Law, Guardians ad Litem, and the Court Improvement Project. A follow-up phone conference for Tribal Partners was held May 15th for further discussion of the CFSP and APSR. The presentation was brief with minimal discussion. Two follow up calls were scheduled, but only the 5/15 call had Tribal partners call in. The phone conference included eight Tribal partners and two OCS staff; they were told they could also send written comments by 5/30/15, but no written comments were received.

  Recommendation: Input included clarifying the terms used through the document; Alaska Native is appropriate to use but not Native Alaskan. It was suggested that OCS review 1.A.3, that IA notices be sent timely; this is part of OCS policy already. There was discussion in the phone and in the face-to-face meeting about the OCS centralized intake plan and timeline. The timeline was changed in the CFSP plan for improvement with this APSR submission.

- May 11, 2015 and June 8, 2015– The Resource Family Advisory Board (RFAB) met and reviewed/discussed the CFSP. No recommendations for updates or changes were provided by this group.

In the coming year, Tribes and other partners listed in this section will be involved in continued efforts. This will include meetings and workgroups aimed at implementing CFSP strategies and achieving the objectives set out in the plan. In preparation for the 2017 APSR, meetings and phone conferences will be scheduled with stakeholders to continue to actively work on the identified strategies and gather information needed to complete the APSR and update the CFSP. Tribal representatives will continue to be included on Executive Steering Committee and the OCS Policy Committee. OCS will continue to partner closely with Facing Foster Care in Alaska on youth issues through regular meetings and collaboration on implementation of strategies to improve outcomes for youth. OCS will continue to partner with the Department of Law and Court Improvement Project through regular meetings to assess progress and implement strategies to improve outcomes for children and families. OCS will continue to fund and support the Resource Family Advisory Board to assess and implement changes to improve support to Alaska's Resource Families.

2016 Update: OCS is strongly invested in partnership and collaboration with internal and external stakeholders. In the past year new methods to gain stakeholder input were implemented to encourage ongoing, year-round stakeholder engagement related to the CFSP and APSR. Quarterly conference calls with stakeholders and monthly OCS leadership videoconferences were key tools in assessing the goals, objectives, data and progress related to the CFSP and modifying the plan. Positive feedback has been received from participants in these meetings. These meetings provided the OCS with opportunities to gather information and feedback regarding work towards improving outcomes for children and families, and partner with others to analyze data and brainstorm creative solutions. As part of the statewide assessment, and in preparation for the development of 2017 APSR, OCS initiated the following collaborative efforts to engage clients, stakeholders, and partners in the implementation of the CFSP:

- Quarterly Stakeholder Calls: Conference calls were scheduled as a method of sharing information and gathering input from stakeholders. OCS facilitated the meetings by teleconference or webinar, and invited the following partners to join these quarterly discussions: Tribal State Advisory Team (TSAT) partners, Alaska Public Defender Agency, Department of Law (DOL) , Guardians ad Litem (GAL), Court-Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), Court Improvement Project (CIP), Alaska Citizen Review Panel (CRP), Facing Foster Care in Alaska (FFCA), OCS regional and program managers, Alaska Center for Resource Families (ACRF), Child Welfare Academy (CWA), and Supervisory Leadership Council (SLC).

- October 29, 2015 a webinar meeting was held. The CFSP and APSR was reviewed and discussed. This core group of stakeholders expressed interest in learning more about the CFSP and OCS strategies to improve outcomes. Relative searches and background checks for resource families were identified as areas for future discussion.

  Recommendation: Focus the January call on relative search and background checks for resource families. Purpose of focus is to provide stakeholders with current practice and data, and gain feedback and input for future work on these issues.

- January 22, 2016 a teleconference meeting was held to discuss relative searches and background checks for resource families. The team did not identify changes needed to either item, but there were additional questions from the Public Defender Agency.

  Recommendation: Provide additional consultation with DOL and Public Defender Agency on the topics to further explore options for improved partnership. A series of follow up meetings were held to discuss relative searches and background checks with the OCS, the DOL and the Public Defender Agency. The Public Defender Agency was provided with OCS policy and other supporting documents to assist in understanding the processes in place for these two items. The Public Defender Agency staff may be able to assist with relative search when they are meeting with clients, and could share information they receive when relevant.

- April 29, 2016 a webinar meeting was held. Prior to this meeting a survey regarding needs and service assessment was emailed to this stakeholder group to gather input about the needs of OCS clients. Results of the survey were reviewed and discussed in this meeting, as was current data and the 2017 APSR. This informal survey gave a starting point for the April 29, 2016 discussion regarding needs as they pertain to improving child welfare outcomes for Alaskans. A more in-depth needs assessment will occur in the next year to assist the OCS Services Array Unit in identifying and reviewing service needs for development and implementation of services in the state. Results of the survey were as follows:

  - Fourteen individuals or 40% of the group completed the survey.
  - 71% of the respondents stated they were very familiar with the CFSP and 28% being somewhat familiar with the CFSP.
  - 85% responded they have access to OCS data re: safety, permanency, and well-being
  - Discussion occurred about service accessibility in the State of Alaska. The group talked about a need for more information about what services are available in each community. A map is available on the OCS website to identify OCS grantee service providers. There was also discussion regarding family contact for children in OCS custody.

  Recommendations: The group recommended expanding "the map of services" to include all DHSS grant and contract services, not just OCS grantees. The OCS Services Array Unit will work on this in the coming year to provide more visibility to services available in Alaska. It was requested that the next quarterly meeting focus on reviewing family contact plans, family contact data, and discuss this issue in more detail. No changes were made to the goals and objectives in the CFSP. These meetings will continue on a quarterly basis as a method to share information with stakeholders and gather feedback from stakeholders.

- Monthly OCS leadership meetings focusing on the CFSR, CFSP, and APSR occurred in the past year. Participants included Director Lawton, Deputy Director Spartz Campbell, Division Operation Manager Erickson, KariLee Pietz, Kim Guay, Bernita Hamilton, and Kristie Swanson. Phone or video conference meetings were held on the following dates: 9/23/15, 10/21/16, 11/13/16, 1/7/16, 2/17/16, 3/16/16, 4/20/16, and 5/18/16. Each priority, strategy, and objective was discussed in these meetings. Such meetings will continue as a method for ongoing collaboration specific to the CFSP, APSR, and CFSR processes.

  The meetings were a positive way to provide ongoing collaboration and coordination of OCS management regarding the CFSP, to report back on updates or changes in strategies, and to discuss other work happening in the division and department that may enhance the APSR. The data was reviewed, priorities were adjusted, and additional guidance was

provided on areas identified in the CFSP Plan for Improvement. During these monthly meetings OCS leaders developed a consistent understanding of the direction of the agency. Examples of specific review and modification of the CFSP include:

- Objective 1.A.1 (centralized intake) was discussed in detail and continues to be an agency priority to improve how reports are received and how they are screened.
- Objective 1.B.4 (visits with parents and children) was discussed at several meetings and a need was identified for a report to track parent contacts. After researching the issue we became aware that this report is available for OCS in ORCA Report Manager. After further review, some changes may be needed in this report, but the Divisions Operation Manager will work with Regional Managers to track this information on a monthly basis.
- Objective 2.B.1 (consistent meeting structure) was removed from the CFSP after discussion in this group. It was determined that this continues to be an area that the OCS will work on, but it is not a priority at this time as it will not support improved outcomes for children as quickly as other strategies.

- Monthly Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) meetings were scheduled and included ongoing discussion of data related to outcomes, goals, and objectives for the CFSR, CFSP, and APSR. These meetings occur on the 3rd Monday of the month. Participants include the Regional Protective Services Manager IIs, Travis Erickson, Kim Guay, KariLee Pietz, and Bernita Hamilton. These meetings will continue on a monthly basis. Below is an example of the CQI team process:

  - In the May meeting, the discussion focused on permanency efforts in Alaska. The team reviewed QA data about timely permanency, discussed how each region is addressing permanency for children, and made plans for further discussion on the permanency and ICWA specialists' roles and responsibilities. The team discussed a need for permanency values training for OCS employees. Because of this, a meeting was scheduled with the Casey Family Programs on May 24th to discuss assistance with training on permanency. OCS and Casey Family Programs will partner in the coming year to provide relevant training on permanency for OCS staff and partners.

- OCS Policy committee reviews all policy changes at the OCS, and has opportunity to make recommendations to change the OCS CPS Policy manual. The policy changes and updates are sent to all committee members, which includes DOL representatives and Tribal partners, prior to the twice-monthly meetings. The policy committee was restructured in June 2015 to include representatives with an interest in the drafting of updated policies. Additionally, members were selected by their supervisors to include staff from each region as well as allowing for a wide demographic of specialties, including Tribal representatives.

  A separate policy workgroup was also created to identify changes needed to the formatting and distribution of the CPS Manual. Recommendations were made after soliciting staff input to consider an electronic manual which would allow for:
  - Consistency in drafting changes;
  - Ensure information is up to date;
  - Reduce the time it takes to implement changes;
  - Decrease the overall size of the manual;
  - Improve the search features staff can use;
  - Reorganize the manual into 3 sections for intake/initial assessment, family services and administration.

  Based on the workgroup's recommendation, the policy committee is working to reduce repetition and combine policy and procedure sections. Beginning in July 2016, all policy updates will be distributed electronically reducing the risk of "out of date" information being used and to create efficiency in updating sections of the manual. The Policy Committee will continue in the coming year.

- Executive Steering Committee (ESC) is part of the ongoing process of engagement with internal stakeholders (state office and regional management,) and identified partners (Tribal representatives, SLC, and CWA). The purpose of the ESC is to oversee implementation and facilitate and manage change in the OCS practice model by providing leadership to the continuous quality improvement process. The committee is charged with promoting an integrated

approach to child safety, permanency and well-being. ESC meets monthly and this group provides input and feedback on initiatives and projects identified as part of the CFSP. ESC is an opportunity for managers and stakeholders to discuss initiatives and projects intended to improve outcomes for children as well as to provide feedback regarding the strategies identified to address the needs. ESC will continue in the coming year.

- OCS Managers Core Services Review meeting was held in Juneau March 1 &2 with OCS senior leadership, which included regional managers, state office managers, and the CWA. In this meeting, the team discussed OCS Core Services. This team reviewed the current OCS Practice Model with agreement that this continues to meet the needs of the agency and assists our staff and partners in understanding the way OCS does business. Monthly meetings will be scheduled from June through August to further this work and develop and implement strategies to assist the agency on focusing energy on the Core Services. Core Services are the activities that must be done timely and well to accomplish child safety, permanency and well-being, they include:
    - Screening
    - Initiation
    - Assessment
    - Case Planning
    - Caseworker Visits with Child
    - Caseworker Visits with Parent
    - Placement
    - Family Contact

- A presentation and discussion on the federal CFSP was provided at the 2015 CINA Conference in Anchorage. This convening was attended by DOL attorneys, Public Defender attorneys, CASA volunteers, Guardians ad Litem, court staff, and other partners in child welfare. The presentation provided an overview of the CFSP, APSR, and CFSR process, current priorities and goals, and provided participants with copies of the CFSP as well as information about how to share input or feedback.

- Monthly consultation and collaboration calls were held with the Children's Bureau (CB) Region 10 Alaska lead. During these calls, the strengths and needs of the 2016 APSR were discussed in detail. The initial submission was revised and resubmitted in September 2016; this version was accepted. Monthly calls focused on the requirements of the CFSP and APSR as well as the Statewide Assessment and CFSR. OCS received feedback on how to improve the APSR in the coming year, including more detailed information on the ongoing, meaningful and collaborative efforts with partners. CB staff encouraged OCS to review and analyze the data to provide additional information for discussion with stakeholders, and to document how their feedback impacted changes to the APSR. In the March and May calls with Region 10, new areas to include in the APSR were discussed. An example of the discussion was regarding the Human Trafficking reporting requirements and the efforts OCS has made to comply with the requirements, and recommendations for documenting these efforts.

Throughout the past year, OCS has been involved with other collaborative efforts to improve services and outcomes for children and families. The partnership with key stakeholders in Alaska is imperative to improving services and outcomes for the children and families served by OCS. Through ongoing collaboration, the department is able to better utilize resources, community partner agencies are able to identify needs and services of clients, and the OCS is able to be a part of new projects that will affect the work with the children and families OCS works with. At statewide and regional levels, partnership is a key to OCS successes in the past year and will continue to move OCS towards achieving the outcomes of safety, permanency, and well-being of children and youth. In the coming year, OCS will continue to develop the efforts listed above and will continue to partner with external stakeholders.

2017 Update: OCS continues to partner with internal and external stakeholder groups regarding the progress and updates to the CFSP and APSR. OCS has worked to actively engage partners in ongoing and meaningful collaboration for the implementation of Alaska's CFSP goals and objectives. During this past year, OCS has also utilized the stakeholder meetings as a part of the SWA process as well as the onsite CFSR. OCS uses various meetings and opportunities to demonstrate this collaboration of gathering input and feedback related to the APSR, CFSP, SWA, and CFSR:

- Quarterly Stakeholder Calls: Each quarter, calls are scheduled to allow opportunities to provide updates and gather input from internal and external stakeholders regarding the progress with the CFSP. In the past year, meetings have focused on the development of the SWA and preparation for the onsite CFSR. This is the second year that these calls have been facilitated consistently; based on regular participation by partners, the quarterly meetings are judged to be a successful opportunity for collaboration. OCS facilitated the meetings by teleconference or webinars, and invited the following partners to join these quarterly discussions: Tribal-State Advisory Team (TSAT) partners, Public Defender Agency, Department of Law (DOL), Guardians ad Litem (GAL), Court-Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), Court Improvement Project (CIP), Alaska Citizen Review Panel (CRP), Facing Foster Care in Alaska (FFCA), OCS regional and program managers, Alaska Center for Resource Families (ACRF), Child Welfare Academy (CWA), and Supervisory Leadership Council (SLC).

    - July 29, 2016: This meeting focused on the development of the SWA with discussion regarding the Systemic Factor B: Case Review System.
        - Written Case plans: Discussion about case plans included concerns that case plans are not completed in the first 60 days, leading to delays in for families. OCS implemented a new case plan form that can be completed by the worker and family while meeting with the family in their homes or other off-site locations. Additional discussion occurred in this meeting regarding engaging parents in how the plans are being developed.
        - Periodic Reviews: Concerns were expressed about the recent changes that centralized OCS administrative reviews. Comments included: foster parents are excluded from the reviews and the reviews are too short now; however, there is agreement that this centralization brings statewide consistency. Partners recommended matching the administrative reviews up with court reviews so that the court is conducting both the court and administrative reviews.
        - Permanency hearings: Concern was expressed over court hearing continuations in some communities.
        - Termination of Parental Rights (TPR): discussed collaboration with OCS and Tribes related to TPRs, and how the OCS survey showed 39% of responding Tribal ICWA workers say they are not collaborating with OCS on this item. Concern that barriers to this item include scheduling delays due to court calendars in most areas of the state.
        - Notice of Hearings and Reviews to Caregivers: Some foster parents share they receive notice, some do not, but most say that notices are often short notice to the hearings.

    Recommendation: The recommendation from this meeting was to consider the various survey data in the upcoming SWA as well as to monitor the recent changes to the written case plans and progress to see if there are improvements in the completion of case plans within 60 days.

    - October 28, 2016: This meeting focused on OCS updates for the stakeholders.
        - Child and Family Services Review: Stakeholders were notified of the move from a state-administered CFSR to a traditional on-site CFSR instead. The CFSR is scheduled for the week of May 22, 2017. Anchorage Office and two other offices will be identified as the sites for the CFSR. The state will identify 24 reviewers from OCS staff as well as Tribal and community partners, for the CFSR on-site review. Recommended to contact KariLee if interested in assisting with the CFSR in some capacity.
        - Statewide Assessment: Several partners joined OCS in August videoconference calls to prepare for the statewide assessment. The statewide assessment will be submitted to Region 10 by March 22, 2017. Prior to submission, a draft of the SWA will be posted and available for review and comment.
        - Other updates: OCS is currently working on policy updates related to House Bill 27, House Bill 200, and the BIA / ICWA Regulations. Kim Guay provided information about the recent change in family service case planning with parents and a new form was developed. Kristie Swanson shared information regarding the ICWA reference guide being developed and a workgroup focusing on home visit safety checks prior to placement with relatives through improved collaboration with Tribes.

    Recommendation: Since this meeting was scheduled to provide the stakeholders with current updates on the policy, SWA and CFSR updates, no recommendations were suggested.

- January 25, 2017: This meeting focused on OCS updates and dialogue about Systemic Factor F: Agency Responsiveness to the Community.
    - The SWA and APSR both include information related to OCS engagement and responsiveness with Tribal and Community Partners. In this meeting discussion included ways OCS can gather feedback and suggestions from Tribal and Community Partners. Some suggestions included emails with proposed changes and provide a comment period; ongoing communication with the Resource Family Advisory Board was recommended for issues about resource families; consideration of how OCS staff are oriented to the legal parties and learn about the role of GAL, Public Defender Agency, and DOL. Currently, Anchorage Region does provide this training to staff. Other methods discussed included region-specific items that may be useful for consideration in other OCS service regions; the OCS Frontline newsletter is utilized to disseminate important information to OCS staff and stakeholders regarding practice or policy changes; and the continued discussion of about the need for social histories to increase relative search efforts by the agency.
    - Data highlights: In previous meetings, OCS had stated that a Tribal data dashboard would be provided, however the dashboard is not yet finalized. Preliminary data regarding placement with relatives was at the highest levels and out-of-preference placement data was lower than previously reported.

Recommendation: No recommendations were identified from this meeting.

- April 19, 2017: This meeting focused on OCS updates related to the SWA and CFSR as well as policy and practice changes. Stakeholders were provided a link to the SWA and updates on the May 22- 26 CFSR onsite review. Additionally, there was discussion on a recent policy change for permanency goal changes and APPLA. Other discussion concerns expressed by stakeholders included how partners are informed of practice changes. For example, policy case planning changes to implement FSA 2.0 - GALs and Public Defender Agency would have liked talking points or opportunity to learn about the changes prior to OCS implementation. This will be discussed with OCS leadership to develop a consistent method to notify partners of practice changes.

  Recommendation: Further discussion is needed with the OCS leadership to find strategies to share practice changes with stakeholders and partners prior to implementation of the proposed change.

- OCS leadership meetings continue to occur to assist in consistent messaging, goal review, and planning.
    - Two meetings were held: December 15, 2016 and May 5, 2017, to focus on the CFSP and APSR work. Participants included Director Lawton, Deputy Director Spartz Campbell, Division Operation Manager Erickson, KariLee Pietz, Kim Guay, Bernita Hamilton, Kristie Swanson, and Tim Huffman. Discussions were related to SWA, the current CFSP plan for improvement, and the updates needed for the 2018 APSR that will be submitted in June 2017.
    - On March 3, 2017, program managers from OCS met to discuss the upcoming APSR and items that would be needed to successfully report on our progress and services.
    - Monthly CQI meetings continue to be held with the Regional Protective Services Manager IIs, Travis Erickson, Kim Guay, KariLee Pietz, and Bernita Hamilton. OCS Policy committee reviews all policy changes at OCS, and has opportunity to make recommendations to change the OCS, CPS Policy manual. The policy committee includes OCS staff, DOL representatives, and Tribal partners. The policy committee meets twice monthly and reviews any draft policy changes before they are sent for approval.
    - Executive Steering Committee (ESC) is part of the ongoing process of engagement with internal stakeholders (state office and regional management,) and other identified partners such as Tribal representatives, SLC, and CWA. The purpose of the ESC is to oversee implementation and facilitate and manage change in the OCS practice model by providing leadership to the CQI process.

- Regular consultation calls with Children's Bureau (CB) Region 10 and OCS managers have occurred more than monthly since July 2016, in preparation for the Statewide Assessment and CFSR. These consultation meetings have been held as frequently as weekly to ensure thoughtful planning and preparation. In addition to regular meetings, a full

day meeting was held in August 2016 by video and telephone conference with OCS, Children's Bureau, and Alaska stakeholders specific to the planning for the SWA and review of the required items. These meetings provided support to OCS in development and successful completion of the SWA, stakeholder interviews, and on-site CFSR. OCS included the following stakeholders in these meeting opportunities: Tribal-State Advisory Team (TSAT) partners, Public Defender Agency, Department of Law (DOL), Guardians ad Litem (GAL), Court Improvement Project (CIP), Alaska Citizen Review Panel (CRP), Facing Foster Care in Alaska (FFCA), OCS managers, Alaska Center for Resource Families (ACRF), Child Welfare Academy (CWA), and Supervisory Leadership Council (SLC).

- OCS included a variety of internal and external stakeholders and partners in the SWA and CFSR process. In August 2016, numerous individuals were included in the videoconference with Children's Bureau regarding the SWA. Partners participated in the Stakeholder Interviews after completion of the SWA. The Stakeholder Interviews included youth, birth parents, foster parents, Tribal-State Advisory Team (TSAT) partners, Public Defender Agency, Department of Law (DOL), Guardians ad Litem (GAL), Court Improvement Project (CIP), Citizen Review Panel (CRP), Facing Foster Care in Alaska (FFCA), OCS staff and managers, Alaska Center for Resource Families (ACRF), and other community service providers. Several partners participated in the CFSR process as state reviewers, including Tribal partners, DOL, Public Defender Agency, CIP representative, and CWA staff.

OCS anticipates continuing the partnership opportunities listed above in the coming year. Additionally, OCS anticipates increased collaboration and consultation with partners, Tribes, courts, and other stakeholders to assist in the development of the Program Improvement Plan based on the findings and recommendations of the CFSR.

As in past years, OCS provides the following additional information to highlight other collaborative efforts and projects that may not relate directly to the CFSP, APSR, or CFSR, but that are imperative to improving the safety, permanency, and well-being of children in a state as large as Alaska.

Alaska Citizen Review Panel

2015 Update: Alaska's Citizen Review Panel (CRP) evaluates OCS compliance with federal and state laws, and examines policies and procedures for consistent statewide implementation. Additionally, the CRP conducts public outreach, gathering public comment on current OCS procedures and practices involving children and family services. Each year, the CRP prepares an annual public report containing a summary of its activities and recommendations for the improvement of child protection services in the state. OCS works closely with the CRP and the Director participates in regular communication with the CRP.

2016 Update: Alaska's Citizen Review Panel (CRP) continued to evaluate OCS compliance with federal and state laws, and examines policies and procedures for consistent statewide implementation, conducts public outreach, gathering public comment on current OCS procedures and practices involving children and family services. The OCS and the CRP present jointly to the Alaska Legislature regarding the state of child welfare services. Each year, the CRP prepares an annual public report containing a summary of its activities and recommendations for the improvement of child protection services in the state. OCS works closely with the CRP and the OCS Director is in regular communication with the CRP. Many of the goals identified in this year's CRP report are already identified as areas of need by OCS, and have been included in the CFSP plan for improvement. See Appendix A for the 2015 CRP report and agency response to the report.

The 2015 report recommended six areas for OCS to consider. The areas identified are areas that OCS has already committed to as part of our work in the CFSP and with our Core Services. The CRP report and OCS' response are included as appendices to this document, but below is a summary of the recommendations and response:

1. OCS continues to implement the Panel's 2013-2014 recommendation on intake policy. *OCS response: OCS is actively working towards implementing the recommended changes to intake policy. Intake changes are incorporated into the CFSP Plan for Improvement item 1.A.1.*
2. OCS constitutes an internal taskforce to specifically focus on in-home service model, and operationalizing the CFSP Plan for Improvement item 2.A.2. *OCS response: OCS is exploring outsourcing this program and services to providers statewide.*
3. OCS should address the root cause of the IA backlog. *OCS' response: OCS has an internal committee developing a pilot project to improve timeliness and safety decision making. Timely, accurate initial assessments are incorporated into the CFSP Plan for Improvement as item 1A.3.*

4. Improve efforts to recruit and retain resource families across the state. *OCS response: OCS continues to work to recruit resource families in a variety of methods, with a goal to complete early relative and family friend identification. Work specific to these areas are incorporated into the CFSP Plan for Improvement items 1.C.2 and 2.C.1.*
5. Improve the survey instruments and reporting of results on various surveys that OCS QA unit conducts to assess important components of OCS operations. *OCS response: OCS is partnering with the CRP on modification and improvements of the survey instrument.*
6. Adopt a method to identify, measure, and assess various components of workload of frontline workers. *OCS response: OCS is exploring additional ways to do this through collaboration with the National Child Welfare Workforce Institute and other efforts.*

2017 Update: The Alaska Citizen Review Panel (CRP) evaluates OCS compliance with federal and state laws, examines policies and procedures for consistent statewide implementation, conducts public outreach, and gathers public comment on current OCS procedures and practices involving children and family services. The OCS and the CRP present jointly to the Alaska State Legislature regarding the state of child welfare services. Each year, the CRP prepares a public annual report containing a summary of its activities and recommendations for the improvement of child protection services in the state. OCS works closely with the CRP and the OCS Director is in regular communication with the CRP. The most recent CRP report, titled *Alaska Citizen Review Panel Annual Report 2016*, and the OCS response to the report are located in Appendix A to this document. The following items were recommendations made by CRP in the 2016 report (the following have been modified for brevity; please see Appendix A for details):

1. Consider assigning the CRP a significant role in implementing various priority areas of "Transforming Child Welfare Outcomes for Alaska Native Children: Strategic Plan 2016-2020".
2. Tribal State Collaboration Group should consider a dialogue with the leaders of Alaska Native for-profit corporations to garner support and resources to leverage to enhance child protection services.
3. The enterprise of CRP should be evaluated by an external entity to assess its effectiveness with particular attention to internal structure and CRP-OCS relationship, roles, and responsibilities.
4. OCS should consider building on CRP's survey efforts and made 3 specific recommendations.
5. OCS should work with CRP to strengthen CRP's ability as a robust mechanism for public participation and rely on it to improve public awareness.

Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC)

2015 Update: This collaborative work was not included in the APSR submitted in June 2015.

2016 Update AHFC and OCS work closely to implement youth housing options. More information regarding this collaboration is provided in Sections 4 and 12 of this report.

2017 Update: AHFC and OCS work closely to implement youth housing options. More information regarding this collaboration is provided in Sections 4 and 12 of this report.

Alaska State Legislature

2015 Update: This collaborative work was not included in the APSR submitted in June 2015.

2016 Update: The legislature provides ongoing support and commitment to OCS. In the past year OCS has received support through funding for programs to improve outcomes and services to children and families. This spring, the legislature passed HB 200 (Adoption of Child in State Custody) and HB 27 (Child Protection and Opportunity Act). OCS is currently analyzing these to identify necessary changes to policy and practice.

2017 Update: During the past year, the Alaska State Legislature continued to provide on-going support and commitment to OCS. During this legislative session several legislative proposals were introduced to affect significant changes to OCS processes, related to ICWA standards, worker caseload limits and expanded training and proposed jury trials for termination of parental rights proceedings. None of these proposals passed this year; however, all of these proposals will carry over into the 2018 legislative session, which begins in January, 2018.

Casey Programs

2015 Update: OCS is participating in a program with Casey Family Programs in an effort to strengthen state and Tribal collaboration in the recruitment and retention of native foster homes. Regionally-based workgroups were established to

include OCS staff representatives of various functions of child protection management, licensing managers, licensing supervisors, ICWA case reviewers, child protection front line workers and adoption staff. Tribal partners, Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ), Alaska Center for Resource Families and foster parents were also involved in the workgroups. The Tribal partners participating in the work groups represent area Tribes such as Aleutian-Pribilof Indian Association, Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska, Kenaitze Indian Tribe, Chickaloon Village Tribal Council, Tanana Chiefs Conference, Nome Eskimo Community, and Bristol Bay Native Corporation. The workgroups have developed plans to increase the number of native foster homes and developed strategies around support and retention of the homes. The work groups meet regularly and joint participation in the strategies identified between the state and Tribal partners are occurring. A progress update and training is scheduled for October 2015 with all workgroups and Casey Family Programs. Casey Family Programs support OCS in our work to improve services. Casey Family Program staff was present at the Tribal-State Collaboration Group meeting in May and had an opportunity to provide input on the CFSP and APSR.

2016 Update: OCS is fortunate to have an ongoing, strong partnership with Casey Family Programs. Casey Family Programs provides significant technical and financial resources in Alaska, without which many positive partnerships and practice enhancements would not be possible.

Casey Family Programs sponsored staff to attend the National Indian Child Welfare Association (NICWA) Training Institute November 17-19 in Anchorage. The *ICWA Basics with Guidelines Update* and *Advanced ICWA* courses were highly attended by OCS staff and Tribal partners. This was an opportunity for attendees to learn more about the proposed Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) regulations that will guide the application of the Indian Child Welfare Act. This professional development opportunity allowed OCS staff to increase understanding of the new guidelines and proposed regulations.

Because Casey Family Programs (CFP) is ending technical support to the Knowing Who You Are (KWYA) curriculum, CFP sponsored a face-to-face meeting for the KWYA Alaska Steering Committee in December 2015. KWYA is a workshop that provides a framework for participants to identify and explore racial and ethnic identity and to understand how ones race and ethnicity impacts personal and professional interactions. A representative from CFP assisted in developing a sustainability plan and Casey Family Programs agreed to continue to support the KWYA Steering Committee through the transition. CFP sponsored a follow up face-to-face meeting April 13-15, so the committee could review and make "Alaska specific" adaptations to the KWYA curriculum. KWYA will remain on the OCS Staff Development Plan as a required training to be completed within the first year of hire for new protective service specialists.

OCS managers met with Casey Family Programs on May 25, and CFP is working with OCS on the need to enhance permanency values and leadership at OCS. In the coming year, OCS will partner with CFP to identify, review, and analyze data; provide technical assistance to staff and leadership; and support ongoing program development for sustainable efforts to improve permanency timelines and outcomes for children.

Casey Family Programs, in conjunction with First Alaskans' Institute, have supported a statewide effort to develop a strategic plan titled "Transforming Child Welfare Outcomes for Alaska Native Children." Meetings began in spring of 2015 with representatives from Alaska's child welfare system including, Tribal Elders, Tribal leaders, Tribal judges, OCS managers and front-line workers, administrators, attorneys, and other DHSS division leaders. A draft plan was developed to address the following priorities:

1. Continuum of Culturally Specific Services and Support
2. Community Engagement
3. Respectful Government-to-Government Collaboration and Partnership
4. Embrace and Implement the Spirit of ICWA
5. Self-Governance
6. State Government Alignment

Casey Family Programs has continued to support the resource family support, development, and recruitment (SDR) efforts in Alaska. In October 2015, regional teams attended a two-day work session in New Mexico and presented their work plans and overall progress towards their regional goals/objectives. Team goals included developing talking points for rural recruitment opportunities, co-facilitating twice-monthly resource family orientations and fully licensing three new homes as dual-licensed foster homes. The regional teams include OCS staff representatives of various functions of child protection management, licensing managers, licensing supervisors, ICWA workers, child protection frontline workers, and adoption staff as well as

Tribal partners, Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ), Alaska Center for Resource Families and Alaskan foster parents. Highlights of the SDR work include the following:

- The Northern Region recruitment and retention team partnered with Tanana Chiefs Conference and Casey Family Programs to host a resource family recruitment event in December of 2015, to increase the number of rural interior resource families to be dually licensed between the Office of Children's Services and Tanana Chiefs Conference; 4 families have been dually licensed. In April of 2016, the Alaska Center for Resource Families, the Office of Children's Services, Tanana Chiefs and Casey Family Programs provided a three-day training for interior rural Tribal and family and youth services workers. This training included topics such as: supporting foster homes in your community, working collaboratively with OCS, accessing services within your community and self care for workers.
- The Western Region Recruitment and Retention Team efforts focused on increasing community awareness for the need for more resource families. Strategies to increase the number of foster homes included a recruitment table at the local cultural event, Cama'i Festival (April 1-3,) and the purchase of tangible items such as hooded sweatshirts with a logo encouraging families to become licensed foster parents.
- The Southcentral Region identified goals to increase collaboration with ICWA workers, provide training on licensing, and general recruitment of resource families. The team accomplished this by holding face-to-face trainings with ICWA staff from Aleutian-Pribilof Island Association (APIA) and during the regional Tribal break-out session. The team also sent out recruitment and licensing boxes to each ICWA worker and held teleconference training to go over the materials. Licensing staff meet with ICWA workers when they travel to rural communities to talk about training needs and recruitment.
- The Anchorage Region focused primarily on supporting the families currently working with OCS and looking to them to identify other native families may be interested in becoming licensed. The team partnered with Tribal workers to visit each licensed and unlicensed home to talk with them about support and needs. In the fall, a celebration potluck was held for these families and asked them to bring a "plus one" that may be interested in learning about being a foster parent.
- Anchorage and Southcentral regions report an increase in collaboration and communication with Tribal partners and ICWA workers that support strengthening resource families, identification of relative placements and collaboration between OCS and Tribes.

OCS partners with the Annie E. Casey Foundation to assist with training and technical assistance needs of the state. In the past year the OCS Director was able to participate in the *Measure of Leadership* conference because of the foundation's support. OCS will continue to partner with Annie E. Casey Foundation to improve leadership within OCS and in the coming year, an OCS representative will attend the *Leading With Evidence: Connecting Child Welfare Practice with Research* convening; this is funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. OCS will also receive training and technical assistance regarding the current Team Decision-Making process.

2017 Update: The long-standing partnership with Casey Family Programs (CFP) and Annie E. Casey Foundation (AECF) continued during this past year. Through the AECF, OCS received additional technical assistance related to the restructure and "re-boot" the OCS Team Decision Making protocols and processes for statewide consistency and fidelity. This assistance began in August 2016 and continues into State Fiscal Year 2018. During the past year, there have been a total of 17 meetings with AECF related to this project, or at least one meeting each month. During the next year, AECF will be conducting another site visit in September 2017 that will include training of all OCS staff in the three regions were TDMs are occurring. This training will focus on the role of the TDM and understanding the process.

Through Casey Family Programs (CFP), OCS has continued to utilize technical assistance and support in the areas of enhanced and expedited permanency for children in care, Tribal- State collaboration efforts, and State and Tribal recruitment and retention efforts for resource families. Specific efforts have included:

- Tribal-State Data Workshop in August 2016, in which CFP provided technical assistance to the Tribal-State Data Workgroup. CFP supported travel costs associated with the 2-day, in-person meeting and also provided a data expert to assist with the design of Tribal-State Data Indicators sheet.
- In October 2016, CFP provided technical assistance and training to OCS Regional Managers and State Program Managers in an OCS Permanency Summit. CFP provided a permanency expert to present on methods and strategies to improve planned permanency for children waiting in foster care.

- Western Region Office (WRO) support, development and recruitment work specifically focused on improving foster home resources in the Western Region, which serves the highest number of Alaska Native families;
- Assistance with regional Tribal-State Collaboration meetings throughout Alaska (Please see the Tribal State Collaboration Group section for more detail on these regional meetings);
- In March 2017, CFP partnered with OCS on the OCS Permanency Summit for Managers, in which a permanency expert provided training and technical assistance on permanency values, strategies and techniques to move more children in care to permanency through reunification, adoption or guardianship. The outcome of this training was a renewed focus on permanency for children in care.
- During this past year, CFP has provided evaluation support and technical assistance to OCS regarding the collaborative efforts in Rapid Safety Feedback through Eckerd Kids (Please see the information related to Eckerd Kids which can be found later in this section).
- Community of Hope Project: CFP has partnered with DHSS, OCS, the Alaska Children's Trust, Kawerak, Inc., All-Alaska Pediatric Partnership, First Alaskans Institute, and the Rasmussen Foundation. The purpose is to implement a pilot project with a multi-sector Tribal, community and state prevention plan that would reduce the incidents of child abuse and neglect for children ages 5 years and under. These incidents were indicated by a reduction of child abuse reports received by the State of Alaska Office of Children Services, in a pilot community within the Bering Strait region. This project funding is time-limited and expected to end in December 2017.

Children's Justice Act Task Force (CJATF)

2015 Update: The Alaska CJATF meets quarterly, with five active committees meeting more frequently to work on projects and discuss current issues. The task force created two new committees this year: 1) the Needs Assessment Committee to examine ways to inform its future efforts through information gathering and evaluation of statewide data on child maltreatment and the child maltreatment response system; and 2) the Information Sharing Committee was formed with a focus on determining what information sharing barriers may be affecting the collaborative work of child protection, law enforcement and others who are part of the multidisciplinary response to child abuse.

In November of 2014, the task force supported the Alaska Child Maltreatment Conference (CMC): Child Advocacy Center staff; law enforcement; social workers, mental health practitioners; pediatric forensic nurses and doctors; Assistant District Attorneys; and DOL attend the Alaska Child Maltreatment Conference. The Alaska CJATF Scholarship Program funds professionals to attend the CMC as well as other trainings to enhance their professional skills.

The task force is in the process of developing a video and an online training to educate the public and mandatory reporters in Alaska in the following areas:

- Signs and symptoms of child abuse and neglect;
- Short and long-term effects of child maltreatment;
- Responding to signs of maltreatment; and
- Resources for reporters, families and professionals who work with children and families at risk.

This project is a collaborative effort between OCS, the CJATF, the Alaska Division of Juvenile Justice, Senior and Disability Services and the Department of Health and Social Services. A priority for this new training is to provide detailed information and guidance on how to recognize and respond to child sexual exploitation.

2016 Update: The Alaska CJATF continues to meet quarterly, in addition to committee meetings and teleconferences which occurred between the in-person meetings. During the Winter Quarterly meeting (held January 28-29), the task force participated in a strategic planning process during which the mission of the task force and its activities were reviewed and considered by the membership. The CJATF work plan was revised and updated to reflect decisions made during the strategic planning process, the first step in the process of conducting a 3-year evaluation of the Alaska task force and its work which will be completed by May 2017.

The task force continued its work to diversify its membership by ensuring representation from both rural and urban communities. This year, new members include: a Tribal judge from the rural village of Barrow; a CINA attorney; a police commander (who leads Alaska's only Internet Crimes against Children (ICAC) Unit); and a clinical psychologist. The diverse membership allows the task force to better represent the population of Alaska as it participates in the state's CFSR process.

The task force continues to look for ways to access additional input directly from rural Alaska and Tribal communities across the state in order to fulfill its mission of evaluating the state's system responding to child abuse and providing recommendations as well as taking improvement actions.

The Alaska CJATF Scholarship and Training Committee continued to provide training scholarships to child protection, law enforcement, mental health, child advocacy, and professionals from other disciplines working to address child maltreatment from across the state. During this reporting period more than $10,000 in scholarships was awarded, which afforded recipients the opportunities to attend training in child forensic interviewing, trauma-informed care, interrogation methods, and forensic investigative approaches as well as attendance at child maltreatment conferences.

The CJATF completed its work on a multi-year project to produce an online training for mandatory reporters and the general public on how to recognize, respond to, and report child abuse. This training will be rolled out during the year and will include a small media campaign to encourage Alaska's to respond to child abuse. The training will be available online in multiple formats including one in which Alaska's mandatory reporters can receive a certificate for completing the training and passing the embedded quizzes. The training will be made available in portable formats for those in rural Alaska who do not have access to a reliable internet connection. This project was a collaborative effort between the Alaska CJA, the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services, the Division of Juvenile Justice and the Alaska Office of Children's Services.

In September of 2015 OCS provided the Alaska CJA Task Force a thorough presentation detailing Alaska's CFSP and the activities underway to achieve its objectives. Task Force members also read the most pertinent sections of Alaska's CFSP and were given access to the entire document online. The task force continues to discuss work regarding elements of the plan at the quarterly meetings. The CJATF provided stakeholder input during the 2008 CFSR.

2017 Update: The Alaska CJATF participated in three, 2-day meetings in Anchorage this year in addition to one, 3-day meeting in Juneau. The 3-day meeting focused on wrapping up the CJA's 3-year review process in time for completing Alaska's CJA 3-Year Review report due on May 31, 2017. CJA members used their time in Juneau to meet with State legislators and share information about activities and the mission of the task force. This year the task force was responsible for promoting an idea for legislation that will help enable sibling contact to occur following the release of a youth from state custody. This idea was incorporated into Alaska House Bill 151, introduced in March by Representative Les Gara and co-sponsored by seven additional House members.

This year the task force lost one member but added two additional members. A new law enforcement representative from the Alaska State Troopers was recruited, replacing an outgoing member from the Anchorage Police Department. The task force also added a clinician from Covenant House in Anchorage who has many years of experience working with homeless youth, including outreach to youth who may be being sexually exploited.

This year the task force released it's recently completed Child Abuse and Neglect Training which is intended for both the general public and for training mandatory reporters to help them better understand their role in responding to child abuse. The training is offered on line at: http://dhss.alaska.gov/ocs/Pages/childrensjustice/mandatoryreporting.aspx. More than 1,000 Alaskans have completed the training so far and many of those have provided valuable feedback through a link to a questionnaire embedded in the online version of the training. This feedback will be used to update and improve the training in the future. The design of the training allows editing and updates to be performed as needed. The task force is producing a version of the training for USB drives that will be available by the end of April 2017. A poster and Public Service Announcement media campaign advertising the training will soon follow.

The Alaska CJA Scholarship and Training Committee awarded $10,000 in sponsorships this year in support of the Alaska Child Maltreatment Conference which occurred from November 14-16, 2016, with a post-conference event held on Nov. 17 and 18. This conference is sponsored by the Alaska Children's Alliance, the Alaska CJA, OCS and other partners. In addition, the committee awarded close to $10,000 in scholarships for professional development training and conferences in the field of child maltreatment (including law enforcement, child protection, and child advocacy center staff).

The task force also formed a new committee to focus on a rural issues related to response to child maltreatment. The Rural Issues Committee met by teleconference between scheduled in-person meetings of the CJATF, and organized a listening session which took place at the Bureau of Indian Affairs: Rural Providers Conference in October 2016. This hour and a half long session was facilitated in collaboration with the First Alaskans Institute, Tina Woods from the Alaska Native Medical

Center, and involved about 200 participants from across the state. Information gathered from the listening session will be used to inform the work of CJATF as well as to guide and inform additional outreach efforts to rural Alaska are being planned for the near future.

Court Improvement Project (CIP)

2015 Update: CIP and OCS have continued to work closely in their efforts to achieve systemic improvements in child welfare in Alaska. The OCS Director is a key member of the statewide CIP committee, which meets 3-4 times per year. The CIP representative was included in discussion, assessment and planning for the CFSP and APSR through meetings in January and May (as listed above). During SFY15, CIP has collaborated with OCS on several critical projects, such as:

- The CINA Therapeutic Court (CTC) pilot began in Anchorage in July 2014 – this pilot program is based on a restructuring of the previous Family Care Court (FCC) therapeutic court, with the pilot utilizing a "parallel track" model. The CTC focuses only on substance abuse treatment progress and issues for parents, with all other CINA case-related matters being dealt with by a separate judge in the "regular" CINA track. OCS is represented on the CTC Steering Committee by the OCS Anchorage Region Protective Services Manager II.
- The CINA Core Curriculum workgroup held its second round pilot rollout in October. Three new, day-long CINA curriculum modules were presented to a group of 54 CINA stakeholders from around the state. The concurrent modules presented were: Family Well-Being, ICWA, and Services & Resources. The workgroup plans to present several additional modules at the 3-day statewide CINA Conference in Anchorage in October 2015.
- OCS Centralized Intake Project – OCS staff have provided updates to the CIP committee regarding progress in their Centralized Intake Project. The OCS Director and management staff has engaged in dialogue with CIP members about the project for input/feedback from CIP members.
- Review and implementation of updated BIA ICWA guidelines/regulations – CIP & OCS have cooperated in conducting an analysis and review of the impact of the new ICWA guidelines/regulations on the child welfare system in Alaska. This was a main agenda topic at the recent CIP committee meeting on June 5, 2015.

2016 Update: CIP and OCS have partnered to continue their efforts at systemic improvements for Alaska's children & families in need of aid. The CIP coordinator has participated in planning teleconferences for the CFSP and APSR, in order to provide input and feedback from the CIP and court system perspective. Additionally the CIP coordinator collaborated with OCS by participating in the title IV-E review in November 2015. During SFY 16, in addition to ongoing, multi-year joint projects, CIP and OCS have worked closely on the following projects:

- A "Safe Babies Court" project in Ketchikan, based on the Zero to Three Safe Babies Court Teams national model. The project is focused on increasing awareness about the particular negative impacts of abuse/neglect on infants and toddlers, as well as improving outcomes for families in the child welfare with children in custody from zero to three years old. The project is a collaborative effort among OCS, the court system, and a community non-profit – with intensive judicial oversight being a key component of the project, including holding status hearings and/or family team meetings on a monthly basis. The project has been underway for just over a year and is already gaining statewide interest.
- In March 2016, the court system in Palmer hosted a 2-day Safe Babies Court training for CINA stakeholders, including key OCS staff, with a presentation by the director of the national project. Local Palmer CINA stakeholders, including OCS and the court system, are very interested in implementing a Safe Babies Court project in their jurisdiction.
- OCS and CIP are also working together to support a site visit to Bethel by staff from the National Council of Family & Juvenile Court Judges (NCJFCJ), to conduct an evaluation of implementation of ICWA in Bethel and the Western OCS region. During the 4-day site visit in June, the evaluation by the NCJFCJ staff will include: court file reviews; CINA court hearing observations; and CINA stakeholder focus group meetings. OCS and CIP staff will coordinate and provide assistance to the NCJFCJ staff during the site visit. CIP is providing funding for several Tribal representatives in the region to travel to Bethel to participate in-person in the focus group meetings. NCJFCJ will provide a report of their ICWA evaluation findings, which will be shared with OCS management and CIP members.

2017 Update: CIP and OCS have continued to collaborate on systems improvements in child welfare in Alaska. The CIP Coordinator has been involved in planning meetings regarding both the APSR and CFSP updates. The CIP Coordinator participated as a case reviewer in the Round 3 CFSR in May 2017. The CIP steering committee now has a second OCS

representative: In addition to Director Lawton, Division Operations Manager Travis Erickson has been added as a committee member in 2017.

OCS has maintained its support for the development of CIP's CINA Core curriculum project. A 3-day Legal Module pilot was conducted in February 2017, with numerous OCS staff attending. OCS has requested that additional staff be invited to future CIP training events. CIP anticipates an Education Law pilot being held in August 2017, as well as a proposed joint state CIP/Tribal CIP training event in Sitka during the Fall 2017. CIP will ensure that OCS staff will continue to have opportunities to attend CIP training events.

OCS leadership staff participated in the Region 10 Parent Representation Leadership Forum in Vancouver, WA in November 2016, as part of the CIP team from Alaska. OCS has been a key partner in supporting CIP's initial efforts to enhance the quality of parent representation in Alaska and the meaningful engagement of parents in the child welfare system as a whole.

CIP and OCS discussed a joint permanency project at the Annual CIP meeting in August 2016. CIP and OCS conducted further review and determined to work on a joint project, the Permanency Priority Project (P3) to reduce the length of time in out-of-home care and minimize barriers/delays in permanency for children in state custody in Alaska. The initial target population for the project includes children placed with relatives and who have been in out-of-home placement for at least two years. The project will be data-driven, with primary data and evaluation sources from the Court System and OCS as well as other CINA stakeholder agencies. CIP and OCS staff will develop further next steps for the project at the CIP regional meeting in Seattle in May 2017.

Finally, CIP will continue to collaborate with OCS to collect and mutually exchange data and work cooperatively to ensure safe and timely permanency for children in Alaska. The CIP Coordinator and CINA CMS Analyst have been invited by OCS management to become members of their existing CQI committee and to begin attending monthly meetings.

Department of Health and Social Services Information Technology (IT) Governance Team

2015 Update: It is the vision of the DHSS to move towards an integrated enterprise of which the OCS SACWIS system, Online Resources for Children in Alaska (ORCA), will be a part of the larger enterprise. The DHSS IT Governance Team consists of the DHSS high level leadership. This team is now making all IT infrastructure and funding decisions for DHSS as the department moves forward with this level of integration. In the last year, this team had an integral role in the oversight of a project to replace of all OCS Live Scan fingerprint machines, and has approved the development and implementation of an OCS Incident Tracker which is due to go live on 7/1/2015.

2016 Update: OCS continues to be represented at the DHSS IT Governance Team by the OCS Director and Deputy Director. Since 2015, several key projects went through IT Governance and were approved:

- Eckerd Kids: The Rapid Safety Feedback Program will provide predictive data analytics of high risk child welfare cases in order to prevent additional maltreatment and facilitate better outcomes.
- Chapin Hall: The Chapin Hall database will allow users to have live graphs and tools to demonstrate performance measures around child welfare and adoptions. By reviewing, comparing, and analyzing different data points, the projection tool will be created to better predict the impacts of practice changes and/or budget changes.
- National Electronic Interstate Compact Enterprise (NEICE): This project is replacing the current "snail mail" delivery of Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) information with digital system.

2017 Update: OCS continues to be represented at the DHSS IT Governance Team; however, in May 2017, Alaska's Governor created a new Office of Information Technology at the State level to better integrate IT systems statewide. This effort is being assessed and evaluated by all State departments; the impacts of the IT consolidation for OCS efforts (and ORCA in particular) are currently not known. In the meantime, the OCS efforts as outlined in the 2016 APSR are on-going. OCS was able to go-live with the NEICE project in the Spring of 2017; OCS is now referring ICPC referrals and paperwork through the federal NEICE database as an effort to improve permanency for children covered through ICPC.

Department of Law (DOL)

2015 Update: The Chief Assistant Attorney General was involved in the development of the Child and Family Services Self-Assessment, as well as ongoing development of the CFSP and the APSR. DOL and OCS have been working collaboratively on streamlining improvements to the OCS notifications systems, administrative review system, and compliance issues with ICWA cases. DOL continues to provide on-going training and staff development through the Child Welfare Academy (CWA)

to OCS workers and supervisors on best practice in court preparation and participation. DOL partners with OCS on foster home licensing to improve practice. DOL assists OCS with litigation regarding child protection and foster home licensing cases.

The DOL has always provided discovery to Tribes in CINA cases for a fee to the Tribes. Recently the DOL and OCS were able to negotiate a new system that relieves the Tribes from payment for discovery copies. The DOL participate in Tribal State Collaboration meetings and are part of the OCS Policy Committee. DOL representatives have been attending meetings to review and assess the progress related to the CFSP and plan for the coming year.

2016 Update: The Department of Law represents OCS in legal work at the field level. Additionally DOL works actively with OCS to enhance and support the work of the agency. Assistant Attorneys General (AAG) staff participates in committees at the OCS as part of the normal process to provide legal support and recommendations. These collaborative efforts include AAG participation in Tribal-State Collaboration and OCS Policy Committee. In the past year the DOL has participated in analysis and development of changes due to the BIA regulations and ongoing support for the Tribal IV-E Maintenance partnerships.

The DOL actively engages in new initiatives with OCS and is often present for trainings and strategic planning sessions. The Child Protection Chief AAG partners closely with OCS; this year she was a reviewer for the title IV-E review. DOL provides on-site training to new workers as part of the CWA Skills, Knowledge and Insight Leading to Success (SKILS) curriculum.

2017 Update: The DOL continues to support OCS in the same ways presented in last year's APSR. In addition, the DOL has worked closely with OCS to provide legal guidance related to significant changes in the past year, including guidance on the ICWA changes, the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act of 2016, and the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act of 2015.as well as implementation of Alaska Statute HB 200 regarding CINA proceedings.

Division of Behavioral Health (DBH)

2016 Update: OCS partners with DBH to meet the needs of children and families in Alaska. DBH provides behavioral rehabilitative services to children/youth to remediate debilitating psycho-social, emotional and behavioral disorders. DBH and OCS Early Childhood Comprehensive Services staff has been working collaboratively to cross walk the Alaska Screening Tool to be adapted for use for young children. OCS works closely with DBH to access services and meet the needs of children with behavioral diagnoses and require residential care. OCS and DBH partner on the out of state placement committee. This group reviews all requests for children to be place in residential treatment programs outside of Alaska.

2017 Update: OCS continues to work closely with the DBH to improve and streamline services for children and families. During the past year, the Department of Health and Social Services has been actively involved in a Medicaid reform and expansion project. As a part of this effort, the DHSS is actively pursuing an 1115 waiver to assist with expanding services to children and families as a priority population of the 115 waiver. Additionally, designated OCS staffs are working with DBH staff to find efficiencies in services such as mental health assessments, behavioral health, and substance abuse treatment. These efforts are expected to continue throughout the next year.

Division of Health Care Services (HCS)

2016 Update: HCS collaborates with OCS for the completion of background checks for OCS staff and all resource families, including licensed foster care providers, through the Background Check Program (BCP). HCS provides licensing for residential child care facilities and assisted living homes, and through this work, collaborates with OCS regarding care and supervision needs for children in placement in these facilities. Additionally, HCS collaborates with OCS with a contract to monitor and review psychotropic medication use for children in care through the Seattle Children's Hospital. This contract allows for a third-party medical review of psychotropic medication prescriptions as well as doctor-to-doctor consultations on medication treatment. HCS and OCS are working on joint data collection to insure that all children in care who are currently on prescription medications are tracked routinely for prescription monitoring, tracking and management to collect data related to use of medications.

In October 2015, OCS launched the Alaska Medicaid Coordinated Care Initiative (AMCCI) for children in foster care. This service is provided through MedExpert in which a MedExpert staff is available to work with OCS on the coordination of medical services and supports for children in foster care. Since October, MedExpert has provided consultation to OCS regarding 11 children in custody of the department.

2017 Update: OCS continues to work closely with the HCS to improve and streamline services for children and families. The service with the Seattle Children's Hospital for third-party medical oversight of psychotropic medication for children in foster care was expanded to include children who are on three or more psychotropic medication while in care. Previously only children on four or more psychotropic medications were referred to Seattle Children's Hospital..

Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ)

2015 Update: OCS partners with the Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) to improve outcomes and services to children and youth in Alaska. In the past year collaborative efforts have been utilized to address human trafficking and sexual exploitation, and meet the requirements of Public Law 113-183. Additionally, the Department of Health and Social Services has received a grant to enhance and improve existing infrastructure and systems at DJJ, OCS, and the Alaska Court system to provide dual status Alaskan youth with the highest quality of integrated, efficient and effective services.

2016 Update: OCS, DJJ and the Alaska Court system continue to work towards piloting the "Dual Status Youth" initiative in Anchorage which targets DJJ youth who are also legally with OCS. A work plan has been drafted to address effective leadership, communication, data, training, resources and evaluation. Agencies are sharing positions to help ensure success. The goal is to start piloting in August 2016.

DJJ and the Trust Training Cooperative collaborated with OCS by providing their Gatekeeper Suicide Training to be adapted to include specific child protection needs. OCS and DJJ continue to look at innovative ways to share resources to improve outcomes for the children our agencies serve.

2017 Update: OCS and DJJ continue to collaborate when youth are involved with DJJ and have legal involvement with OCS. This Dual Status Youth (DSY) initiative aims to serve this highly vulnerable population through sharing resources between agencies and community partners. The main goal is to reduce recidivism and increase success for the futures of dual status youth. Joint training and combined staff meetings have also occurred in the Anchorage region during the past year.

Division of Public Assistance (DPA)

2015 Update: The OCS partners with the Division of Public Assistance (DPA) on a variety of projects. In the past year enhanced efforts to improve coordination of services has been a focus for the two divisions. Collaborative efforts to streamline and improve service delivery related to childcare funding and Medicaid coverage for youth exiting foster care have been priorities for OCS and DPA.

2016 Update: With the passage of the Affordable Care Act, Alaska Medicaid includes eligibility for coverage for former foster children up until the age of 26. Additionally, the Child Care Programs Office within DPA promotes capacity and accessibility of child care with special attention to infants, school age child care, and children with special needs. OCS works with DPA to assure that quality childcare is available and accessible to families that provide foster care services.

2017 Update: During this past year, OCS continued the partnership with DPA regarding the childcare services as well as implementing Purpose 3 and 4 programs across the divisions to better serve children and families. OCS continues to work closely with the DPA to improve and streamline services for children and families and look for efficiencies in services and resources for children and families.

Division of Public Health (DPH)

2015 Update: Alaskan babies die every year from unsafe sleeping conditions; many of these deaths are preventable. For this reason, the OCS partners with the Division of Public Health (DPH) to increase awareness regarding safe sleep practices. OCS and DPH have partnered to provide education to Alaskan families through public service announcements, educational information, and posters from the Alaska Infant Safe Sleep Project.

2016 Update: DPH, through the Title V Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Services Block grant, provides direct health care services, enabling services, population-based services and infrastructure services. The Title V MCH priorities are: reduce substance abuse among families including alcohol, tobacco and drugs; reduce the rate of child maltreatment; improve system of care for families with children and youth with special health care needs; increase access and preventative health care services to Alaskans and their families; increase healthy relationships; and increase evidence based screening for all MCH populations for behavioral and mental health problems.

OCS continues to work closely with the DPH on the Alaska Maternal and Infant Mortality Review and Child Death Review team. This work has provided OCS with new information and tools on "safe sleep" for infants. Additionally, OCS is evaluating a possible partnership with the DPH Bureau of Vital Statistics (BVS) to develop a process to cross reference child protection information with live birth information. Children born to parents who currently have other children in out-of-home care and those who have had prior termination of parental rights (TPR) or OCS facilitated relinquishment would be screened to determine if the household conditions meet criteria for an initial assessment.

2017 Update: OCS continues to work closely with the DPH. The efforts outlined in the 2016 APSR continue with representatives from OCS on the child fatality reviews workgroup.

Division of Senior and Disability Services (SDS)

2016 Update: OCS partners with SDS to promote health, well-being, and safety for children and families with disabilities. OCS and SDS work together on specific cases to ensure necessary services are provided. OCS has worked closely with SDS to improve understanding of the Medicaid Waiver program for children and families. In July 2015, through partnership with SDS, OCS developed a "waiver guide" as a quick reference for staff regarding services to this small population with unique service needs. OCS now has an online training with detailed information about waiver services. OCS also developed a policy specific to this population, to provide direction to staff working with a child receiving a Medicaid Waiver.

OCS also partners with SDS on other collaborative efforts. This year OCS is working with SDS to transfer the Infant Learning Program from OCS to the oversight of SDS. The Infant Learning Program provides the Part C early intervention system continued to improve processes related to serving families of very young children. Relocation of Early Intervention/Infant Learning Program from OCS to the Division of Senior and Disabilities Services will build efficiencies, reduce administrative costs, and expand revenue streams. SDS and the Early Intervention/Infant Learning Program have many intersecting components, such as: Children 0-3 with Developmental Disabilities, Targeted Case Management and Medicaid billing.

Management for the two divisions is exploring options for a standardized, electronic mandated reporting system to meet the needs of children and adults in Alaska. At this time, it is only in exploration phase and there is no plan for implementation of a standardized reporting system.

2017 Update: Through ongoing partnership, OCS and SDS have been able to implement a data sharing agreement to identify children and youth in the custody of the Department who are pending or receiving a Medicaid Waiver. This helpful data is being used to ensure the OCS Regional Psychiatric Nurses are familiar with all children receiving Waiver services, as these children have a higher level of need and require specialized services and care. The Infant Learning Program transferred from OCS to the SDS on July 1, 2016. The other efforts and partnerships listed above continue.

Eckerd Kids

2015 Update: This collaborative work was not included in the APSR submitted in June 2015.

2016 Update: OCS is working with Eckerd Kids in the Rapid Safety Feedback project. The project will enhance safety management of high risk cases of young children by identifying high risk cases involving children less than three years of age in the initial assessment phase of service. The cases are reviewed for safety management utilizing a standardized tool. Cases needing enhanced safety management will be reviewed with the Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) and Initial Assessment (IA) staff, and a plan for needed changes will be made. The staffing process follows a "coaching" model. The cases continue to be monitored to ensure the plan is implemented until the cases is moved to Family Services for continued services or closed. The intent of the project is to reduce reports to three or less for high risk children under the age of three years. OCS Quality Assurance staff has received extensive training from the Eckerd staff and the overall project will be evaluated by Casey Family Programs. OCS began reviewing cases for this project May 15, 2016 and as of June 20, 2016, 15 cases have had a staffing.

2017 Update: OCS has continued working with Eckerd Kids in the Rapid Safety Feedback project. The project is a joint effort between the Quality Assurance Unit and field offices to improve the quality of safety management. The project identifies high-risk children under age three years and provides for an ongoing monitoring process by Quality Assurance staff to enhance safety management. The case is reviewed periodically using a standardized instrument to review the safety assessment process and case activities. A coaching model is utilized by Quality Assurance staff to support workers on the case. The project identifies cases across the state. During the time the case remains in the initial assessment phase, the case continues to be monitored.

Executive Steering Committee (ESC)

2015 Update: OCS facilitates the Executive Steering Committee (ESC). This group is made up of OCS managers from the field, regional, and state offices. The ESC also includes Tribal-State Collaboration Group (TSCG) and Supervisory Leadership Council (SLC) Representatives. This group leads the program changes and implements strategies identified in the CFSP as needed to improve outcomes for OCS. This group focuses on areas identified in the CFSP and in the last year has been included in planning and development related to Strategy 1.A, Centralized Intake. This is an opportunity for OCS managers, TSCG representatives and SLC to have input on the discussion, assessment, and planning for the CFSP and APSR.

2016 Update: Monthly ESC meetings give an opportunity to ongoing and meaningful collaboration with OCS internal and external stakeholders on priorities and strategies identified in the CFSP. This group includes regional Protective Services Managers (I and II), state office managers, CWA, Tribal partners, SLC, and Director's Executive Team (DET) members. This group is tasked with reviewing data, identifying & developing program changes, and implementing strategies identified. In the past year this group has provided input on numerous areas of work including the following OCS efforts: initial assessment workgroup, early identification of relatives, intake changes, administrative reviews, staff development and training needs, coaching program for supervisors, in-home services, drug testing, case worker visits with parents and children, and core services. See page 11 of this document for more details about ESC.

2017 Update: The ESC continues to meet monthly. Over the last year ESC has worked on implementing practice changes through the lens of continuous quality improvement. Some of the projects that the ESC has been working on include: standardizing intake practice and moving to a centralized call center; improving case plan development for children, parents, and care providers; workforce initiatives such as recruitment, competencies, and retention; and new BIA regulations. In addition to these new projects we have continued to work on many practice changes that started in 2016 such as early identification of relatives, coaching program for supervisors, and analyzing and improving core services.

Facing Foster Care in Alaska (FFCA)

2015 Update: Alaska OCS has partnered with Facing Foster Care in Alaska (FFCA) on improving outcomes for older youth who are either in care or have exited foster care. OCS continues to participate in quarterly leadership meetings between OCS and FFCA to discuss relevant concerns, issues and program improvements. These leadership meetings occur in conjunction with the quarterly FFCA-led youth retreats; a venue that provides opportunity for peer mentoring in life skills and exposure to available resources. The Independent Living Program staff continue to work side by side with Facing Foster Care in Alaska to train and recruit foster homes to specifically support older youth and provide joint trainings to OCS staff, community agencies, and to schools on the importance of supporting youth in transition. The FFCA representative was invited to participate in discussion, assessment, and planning for the CFSP and APSR through meetings in January and May (as listed above).

2016 Update: In addition to the efforts noted in 2015, OCS have partnered on the following efforts in the past year:

- OCS staff met with FFCA youth at a retreat to work on the issue of placement disruptions for youth.
- OCS partnered with FFCA to obtain to develop the Foster Children's Rights brochure for Alaska.
- OCS and FFCA developed a webinar regarding the permanency goal of Another Permanent Planned Living Arrangement (APPLA) for youth. This webinar was provided to OCS staff on June 14, 2016.

2017 Update: The Independent Living Program staff continue to work side by side with FFCA to train and recruit foster homes to specifically support older youth and provide joint trainings to OCS staff, community agencies, and to schools on the importance of supporting youth in transition. FFCA regularly participates and presents to IL bi-weekly Life Skills classes in the Anchorage and Southcentral regions. Throughout 2017, FFCA provided three retreats in May, August and November, with increased youth participation to include 101 foster youth and alumni in attendance. These retreats cover a variety of independent living topics and offer opportunities of participating youth to advocate and support changes in the child welfare system at policy and legislative levels. This participation and collaboration lead to the finalization of the Foster Youth Bill of Rights brochure. This strategic tool is to inform foster youth of their rights, what they can expect from OCS and important contact information. The collaboration led to the inclusion of QR codes, making the brochure available electronically and linking all points to specific laws, websites and policies. FFCA also lead the development of a retreat evaluation tool. The tool was piloted during the November retreat, gaining critical feedback from youth to support future retreat development.

Resource Family Advisory Board (RFAB)

2015 Update: The Resource Family Advisory Board (RFAB) currently has 14 members made up of resource families, staff from the Alaska Center for Resource Families (ACRF), Tribal representatives, and OCS staff. In the past year, the ACRF received grant funding to manage and administer the RFAB. The RFAB meets by teleconference every month and has had two face-to-face meetings. The RFAB was given opportunity to review the CFSP and provide input the strategies and goals during their monthly meeting in their June 8th meeting.

The regular RFAB meetings have led to the development of specific initiatives upon which to focus. The Board is working on the following initiatives:

- Develop board members as mentors to other resource families.
- Starter Kits Project to assist resource families with emergency placements.
- Compile and share lists of resource/services available for resource families.
- Develop organizational by-laws for the RFAB.

2016 Update: The Resource Family Advisory Board (RFAB) is comprised of current and past foster, adoptive, and guardianship resource families as well as OCS staff, Tribal partners, and community partners such as the ACRF. The RFAB vision is to "strengthen and improve support for resource families and OCS as we partner to care for Alaska's children". During SFY16 there were 13 members on the Board (six resource families, three OCS staff, two Tribal representatives, and two staff from ACRF). The Board continues to meet telephonically once per month and during this fiscal year the Board met face to face in October 2015 and March 2016. During SFY16, the Board continues to focus their efforts on supporting resource families via the following initiatives:

- Foster Parent Bill of Rights
- Foster Parent Feedback & Communication with OCS Management
- Education to Resource Families on Foster Home Investigations
- Starter Kits for resource families (backpack with essential items needed at time of emergency placement)
- Promote Regional Support Networks for Resource Families
- Support of the FosterWear Program

On May 9, OCS representatives met with the RFAB to review the CFSP and discuss the upcoming APSR. In the meeting the CFSP was reviewed with attention to the strategies related to resource families. OCS has identified resource family assessment and support as strategy 1.C in the CFSP and supports the work of the RFAB as one component of support to families. The team was supportive of strategies identified in the CFSP Plan for Improvement, including improving background checks, supporting relative caregivers, and early identification of relatives. The group discussed situations they have been involved with where relative identification did not happen quickly, and they expressed concerns about the delays in the identification of relatives by OCS. The link to the APSR and CFSP were provided to this group for review, no comments or feedback were received from the RFAB members.

2017 Update: The RRFAB currently has 13 Board members representing all five OCS service regions of Alaska. The makeup of the Board includes: current and former foster, adoptive and guardianship parents; community partners such as the ACRF and Tribal representation. The RFAB continues to meet telephonically once per month and during this fiscal year, the RFAB met face-to-face on two occasions, in October 2016 in Anchorage and again in March 2017 in Juneau.

Accomplishments during FY 2017 include:

- Finalization of Foster Parent Bill of Rights including distribution to resource families and OCS staff in May 2017
- Continued promotion/implementation of Starter Kits for resource families (backpack with essential items needed at time of emergency placement). During SFY17, Starter kits were provided to OCS regional and field offices including, Bethel, Kotzebue, Barrow, Nome, Ketchikan and St. Mary's.
- Re-signing of all RFAB members for another two years as term limits were due to expire in April 2017.
- During SFY17, the RFAB has developed the following initiatives to support resource families:
    - Foster parent feedback & communication with OCS Management
    - Education to resource families on foster home investigations

- Continue with Starter Kits for resource families, but also concentrate on identifying supports to obtain fire/safety related items for resource families including smoke detectors, fire extinguishers and carbon monoxide detectors
- Promote regional support networks for resource families
- On-going support/development of the FosterWear Program
- Successful implementation of the Foster Parent Bill of Rights with resource families and OCS staff.

Supervisory Leadership Council (SLC)

2015 Update: The SLC began in the fall of 2009, when a committee of supervisors was selected to meet and begin working on a plan to improve the substance and consistency of supervision statewide. In Spring 2014, the SLC met and a decision was made to revise the Strategic Plan to align more closely with the OCS CFSP. A new vision was created: "Supervisors work cohesively to advocate, influence and support the OCS Priorities." The new plan identified four main areas:

1. Safe Children & Strong Families;
2. Quality Workforce;
3. Tribal Relationships; and
4. Community Partnerships.

Within these areas, the group identified three areas to work on this year:

- Addressing the high rate of repeat maltreatment;
- Standardization of in-home cases; and
- Trauma stewardship.

2016 Update: The SLC has had changes in membership in the past year, and with that, have spent time reviewing the charter and orientating new members to the purpose and goals of the group. OCS management participates regularly to discuss agency goals and direction as well as to gather feedback and input from SLC members regarding agency goals and objectives, and updates on SLC projects. SLC representatives participate in quarterly CFSP calls, OCS policy committee and ESC.

In the coming year, the SLC plans to partner with OCS management and continue to focus on addressing the high rate of repeat maltreatment and improve the selection and retention of quality staff. SLC will be exploring how to share information and seek feedback from the larger pool of supervisors at OCS, and not just those actively participating on the SLC.

2017 Update: The SLC has collaborated with OCS management and the Director's Executive Team (DET) to align with the agency goals. Staff retention and training is a goal for OCS. To support that, the SLC has updated the Staff Development Plan (SDP) for new workers. In the coming year, the SLC will be creating and implementing a similar document for supervisors. The supervisor SDP will establish a consistent training plan for all OCS supervisors.

Tribal-State Collaboration Group (TSCG)

2015 Update: TSCG is comprised of Tribal child welfare leaders and ICWA workers, OCS statewide leaders, regional managers and OCS ICWA Specialists. Over 100 Alaskan Tribes are represented at TSCG meetings. The TSCG meetings are one of the forums OCS uses to solicit feedback on the progress of goals and evaluate effectiveness of policy implementation. Through November 2014, the TSCG met three times a year. Changes were made to the structure to encourage regional collaboration work. Beginning in 2015 the TSCG met annually with Tribal State Advisory Team (TSAT) meetings occurring monthly, and regional TSCG meetings occurring more frequently. A detailed list of activities to enhance Tribal and state relations, reduce disproportionality and increase ICWA compliance are listed later in this report. TSCG representatives were invited to participate in discussion, assessment, and planning for the CFSP and APSR through meetings in January, April, and May. TSCG representatives participate in the OCS policy committee, which is responsible for developing and amending OCS policy and procedure in the CPS Manual. Tribal representation on this committee provides an opportunity for Tribal partners involvement with policy development and implementation on a consistent basis.

2016 Update: All OCS Regions have now held regional TSCG meetings in partnership with Tribes to address regional priorities and discuss ways to enhance relationships and improve practice. The TSCG met in Juneau Feb. 2-4, 2016. Representatives from Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association, Arctic Slope Native Association, Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska, Cook Inlet Tribal Council, Kawerak Inc., Kenaitze Indian Tribe, Ketchikan Indian Community, Kodiak Area Native Association, Native Village of Kotzebue, Aleut Community of St. Paul Island, Tanana Chiefs Conference, Bureau of Indian Affairs, DOL, Office of Public Advocacy (OPA), Alaska Court System, CFP, Region 10 and

OCS were in attendance. As part of this meeting OCS had opportunity to present information about the CFSP and APSR as well as information about Chafee Funds and Independent Living Services.

The OCS implementation efforts, including the development of new policy and practice strategies and statewide staff training related to the 2015 BIA's ICWA Implementation Guidelines and Proposed Regulation Changes, were a focal point during the meeting. The BIA's expanded guidance regarding the criteria for expert witnesses was an area of particular interest and discussion. As a result, a work group was formed to identify strategies to recruit and train regional Tribal expert witnesses to be used during statewide CINA proceedings. A new TSCG work group was also created to address the waiver of sovereign immunity related to Tribal title IV-E Agreements. Information sharing and confidentiality agreements were also an agenda item. To date, 127 Tribes/Tribal Organizations have signed the *Tribal Agreement of Confidentiality* which allows OCS to provide information to the child's Tribe in the initial assessment/pre-filing phase. Key statewide Tribal data points were also examined. Of significance, the statewide racial disproportionality rate was 60.1% in 2014 and has decreased to 55.8% in 2015.

2017 Update: To date, the Tribes/Tribal organizations who have signed the Tribal Agreement of Confidentiality has increased to 138. This continues to allow OCS to provide information to the child's Tribe in the initial assessment/pre-filing phase. Key statewide Tribal data points were also examined. The statewide racial disproportionality rate was 60.1% in 2014 and has decreased to 58% in 2016.

OCS continues to work collaboratively with Tribes/Tribal organizations across the state to focus on better outcomes for Alaska Native children and families. OCS issued new policy to align the final BIA ICWA regulations, which became effective December 2016. Training was provided to all OCS staff and Tribal partners were invited.

OCS Regions continued to hold regional collaboration meetings throughout the past year. The Southeast Region held its Tribal State gathering August 30 - September 2, 2016, in Juneau. The meeting was held in partnership with Central Council Tlingit Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska; conference topics included:

- Tribal Sovereignty and Tribal Child Welfare
- Permanency Options -Alternatives to TPR
- Independent Living Services
- New ICWA Regulations and Qualified Expert Witness
- Trauma Informed Care and Case Plan Development
- Relative Search and Increasing Placement Compliance

The Anchorage Region (ARO) hosted its second Tribal State meeting on March 1 - 2, 2017. The ARO Tribal State team worked for several months with the First Alaskans Institute to bring the ANDORE experience to the summit. ANDORE stands for Advancing Native Dialogues on Racial Equity. Anchorage OCS staff and Tribes were grateful to be together for two days and to have the time to acknowledge differences and strengths, discuss how to combat institutional racism, recognize biases and conditioned ways of viewing each other, all in an effort to move the work forward to benefit the families we serve. OCS staff and Tribes were very excited to come away from this experience with tangible goals and objectives that can be achieved together.

On April 18 - 19, 2017, the Southcentral Region Tribal State held their 4th Annual Regional Tribal State collaboration group in Kodiak. The 28 participants included eight OCS staff and 20 representatives from 15 different tribes; 17 of whom traveled from other areas of the state thanks to the support of Casey Family Programs. Topics of discussion during the two day meeting included Tribal leaders sharing their practices and services offered. This included many current and upcoming projects within their areas of service; a presentation on Strengthening Families; an overview of the CINA legal process; a presentation on Independent Living Programs; and training on the Unlicensed Relative or Prospective Foster Home Safety Evaluation. The Unlicensed Relative or Prospective Foster Home Safety Evaluation training was conducted with a Q & A session on barrier crimes, variances and a "how to" discussion on the process of becoming an OCS licensed foster parent.

Immediately following the Tribal/State Meet and Greet, a Knowing Who You Are (KWYA) workshop was held in the same KANA Koniag building on April 20 & 21. This was the second time the newly revised curriculum of KWYA was presented.

In May of 2017, a statewide Tribal State Collaboration meeting was held in Anchorage. Representatives from Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association, Arctic Slope Native Association, Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska, Cook Inlet Tribal Council, Kawerak Inc., Kenaitze Indian Tribe, Tanana Chiefs Conference, Native Village Chickaloon, Department

of Law, Office of Public Advocacy, Alaska Court System, Casey Family Programs, ACF Region 10, and OCS were in attendance. Topics included Statewide and Regional data indicators; BIA ICWA regulation and House Bill 200 implementation; Tribal participation on OCS hiring teams; updates on the Tribal State Strategic Plan; Child and Family Services 5-year plan; the Emergency Relief Support program; Knowing Who You Are training; Community of Hope: Transforming Child Welfare Outcomes for Alaska Native Children; and Ways to Work Better Together to improve outcomes for children and families. Additionally, Tribal State Data Indicators were distributed to participants illustrating key data points for each region as well as statewide (Appendix L).

University of Alaska (UAA)

2015 Update: UAA was a recipient of a five-year grant from the National Child Welfare Workforce Institute (NCWWI), for use towards a University Partnership Program. Through partnership with the University of Alaska, OCS intends to increase child welfare practice effectiveness through workforce systems development, organizational interventions, and change leadership using data-driven capacity building, education, and professional development. The UAA CWA was invited to participate in discussion, assessment, and planning for the CFSP and APSR during meetings in January. CWA staff participates on the Executive Steering Committee and have participated in meetings to review and assess the progress related to the CFSP and plan for the coming year.

2016 Update: OCS continues to work closely with the UAA CWA to develop and support OCS workforce development efforts. Through this partnership the UAA CWA and OCS strive to improve practice, increase capacity of staff, and support professional development at OCS. The UAA CWA and OCS have received training from the National Child Welfare Workforce Institute and the Leadership Academy for Deans and Directors, and through this have developed a coaching program.

2017 Update: OCS and UAA CWA continue to work on improving and delivering quality training and development through the use of information collection. In the last year UAA CWA staff attended the Leadership Academy for Middle Managers (LAMM) training along with key OCS middle managers. This training is delivered through the National Child Welfare Workforce Institute (NCWWI). CWA has representation on every LAMM workgroup working to improve our workforce here at OCS. In addition to this training, NCWWI, OCS and CWA are exploring and learning more about how technology can be used to assist adult learners in a large geographical state like Alaska. CWA has worked closely with the Supervisor Leadership Council (SLC) with efforts in improving the "on boarding" of new line workers.

Anchorage Region (ARO)

The OCS Anchorage Region is the most populous of the five designated regions. The large and diverse population residing in Anchorage requires collaboration with many of the Tribes throughout the state. Many Tribes and associations have representatives located in Anchorage along with the regionally-based Tribes allowing for convening and workgroups to occur locally in the Anchorage area.

2015 Update: There are multiple collaborative efforts actively occurring in the OCS Anchorage service region:

- Greater Anchorage Area Partnership (GAAP). This group meets monthly and is comprised of community partners including: service providers, educators, military personnel, medical and therapeutic service representatives, and Tribal partners. The purpose of the partnership is to provide a consistent forum for local child, youth, and family service providers and stakeholders to discuss issues, brainstorm solutions, and further strengthen services to improve outcomes for families in Anchorage.
- A quarterly "Fix It" meeting, which includes representatives from OCS, Office of Public Advocacy, Public Defender's Office, and Attorney General's Office, is scheduled to maintain open communication regarding practice changes at OCS. The Anchorage Regional Disproportionality Team includes local Tribal partners and community partners and meets monthly.
- There is a community partnership group that meets monthly regarding permanency and trauma informed care. The group consists of OCS and local mental health providers, and has developed a train the trainer curriculum on the 3-5-7 model which discusses transitions with children and grief and loss. Each agency in the group will use the training with their staff.
- The ARO management team meets twice a year with the Anchorage School District administration.
- The CINA Therapeutic Court Steering Committee consists of OCS, OPA, PD, AAG, a court judge, Division of Behavioral Health (DBH) and Cook Inlet Tribal Council (CITC).

- Fostering Hope Continuing Conversations meets monthly where the faith-based community works with the state on supporting families, recruitment of foster homes, and other events.
- The ARO Multiple Disciplinary Committee unit continues the collaboration related to the work of the Anchorage Child Advocacy Center, Alaska Cares. OCS and the Anchorage Police Department (APD) are collocated together; collectively, this unit works all "priority 1" protective services reports together.

2016 Update: The Anchorage Regional Office continues to prioritize partnership with community organizations. This is demonstrated by the Anchorage Leadership team members being assigned as the point of contact or community liaison to other agencies. Each quarter it is expected OCS staff meet with their assigned agencies to improve partnership and maintain connections. Agencies with community liaisons include residential care facilities, medical facilities, mental health agencies, and others. In the past year, OCS participated in the following collaborative efforts to strength services and outcomes for children and families in the Anchorage area:

- Greater Anchorage Area Partnership (GAAP). This group meets quarterly and is comprised of community partners including: service providers, educators, military personnel, medical and therapeutic service representatives, and Tribal partners. The purpose of the partnership is to provide a consistent forum for local child, youth, and family service providers and stakeholders to be informed about the OCS services and data, discuss issues that arise, brainstorm solutions, and strengthen services to improve outcomes for children and families.
- Anchorage Leadership Team is partnering to improve staff retention and increase partnerships. All new Anchorage staff participated in a unique eight-day training program designed to assist new staff in learning about community services and provide opportunities to meet with providers. Anchorage managers meet with new staff at the six month period to keep a "pulse" on the agency and improve staff retention. Anchorage is also partnering with local faith-based providers and has two chaplains in the OCS office on a weekly basis to allow staff an opportunity to seek support in a confidential method.
- Support Development and Recruitment Steering Committee meetings quarterly. Anchorage has several resource family groups extending efforts to recruit and retain foster and adoptive parents. The steering committee pulls together groups in OCS as well as partners to collaborate and be aware of efforts in the region. Resource Family Advisory Board, OCS licensing, Tribal partners, Foster Family-based Treatment Association, and other grantees and private providers are included in this meeting.
- Alaska Native Family Services Unit is a specialized unit of OCS to improve services and outcomes to Alaska Native Families. The unit partners closely with Tribal communities and ICWA workers. This group has monthly talking circle potlucks to bring Tribal and OCS partners together to improve working relationships and services to children.
- Anchorage supports close partnership with Tribal partners by providing a work space in the Anchorage office for Tribal representatives. There are currently three Tribal partners with staff located in the ARO, they include: Kawerak, AVCP, and BBNA.
- Permanency for children is a focus of community partners who are collaborating with OCS to develop a Heart Gallery to assist in recruiting permanent homes for children in the care of OCS.

2017 Update: The Anchorage Regional office continues to work closely with service providers and partners in their communities. The efforts listed above have continued in the past year. Additionally, the following items have been added during the past year:

- Alaska Native Family Services Unit is a specialized unit of OCS to improve services and outcomes to Alaska Native Families. The unit partners closely with Tribal communities and ICWA workers. This group has been so successful that OCS is looking to expand to a second Alaska Native Family Services Unit.
- Annie E. Casey Foundation provided "re-boot" training to our Team Decision Making facilitators and will be returning in September to train staff. Team Decision Making is a vital part of our practice so it is crucial to stay current on the Family to Family Model.
- Permanency for children is a focus of community partners who are collaborating with OCS in the development of a Heart Gallery to assist in recruiting permanent homes for children in the care of OCS. These Heart Gallery events have been very successful in recruiting permanent supports for children in custody.
- ARO's relationship with Beacon Hill continues to be a great success for us. This comes through the provision of Family Contact as well as Safe Families. This program has been successful in assisting high needs families prior to OCS involvement.

- The Anchorage Leadership Team has created a program improvement plan to improve function areas as well as track trends and/or challenge areas. They update these plans and the scorecards on a monthly basis.
- The Leadership Team is also looking forward to a Strategic Planning Session in August to continue the "Stop doing" exercise that was started at the Management Summit.
- ARO staff continues to hold on-going conversations about customer service at each all staff and individual program staff meetings. We will now be giving out Customer Service Awards at each of our all Staff meetings to encourage continued positive customer service interactions.

Northern Region (NRO)

Geographically, the OCS Northern Region is the largest of the five regions serving over 90 villages in an area over 325,000 square miles.

2015 Update: Because of the regional vastness, collaboration and workgroups are achieved in the main areas of Nome, Barrow, Kotzebue, and Fairbanks.

- OCS and Tanana Chiefs Conference provided a three-day family services training with a wide variety of workshops that included: Self-Governance; Barrier Crimes 101; Mandate Reporter Training and Trauma-Informed Care. There were over 100 ICWA workers from surrounding villages as well as OCS workers in attendance.
- The Nome and Kotzebue areas attended a three-day Family Group Conferencing training with OCS staff and Kawerak, Inc. ICWA/Tribal Family Coordinators. Maniilaq Association serves the Kotzebue area and Kawerak, Inc. serves the Nome area. Both organizations are in the second year of the Rural Child Welfare grant which provides caseworker visits and assists with some case management.
- Casey Family Programs has provided the Northern Region and its community partners and Tribes with training and technical assistance to increase and improve recruitment and retention of ICWA preferred placements. There are two Northern Region recruitment teams: 1) Nome/Barrow, and 2) Interior Rural. The teams have identified their respective plans and will work throughout 2015, and report their findings in October 2015.
- The Family 2 Family Workgroup continues with its work in the focus areas of Building Community Partnerships; Team Decision-Making; Data; and Recruitment and Retention of Foster Families. OCS is partnering with the ACRF and convenes monthly meetings to work on the four focus areas.

2016 Update: The OCS Northern Region continues to work closely with community partners throughout the region. Many of the communities are isolated and do not have access to the services that are needed. Creativity and partnership are essential to success of the region. In the past year, OCS participated in the following collaborative efforts to strength services and outcomes for children and families in their communities:

- OCS and Tanana Chiefs Conference provided annual training in April 2016. The two and a half day joint conference provided information about self-care, the foster care licensing and background check process, and highlighted the Huslia partnership.
- Huslia is a small community with a population of less than 300 people. To improve services to children and families, the Tribal Family Services Worker and the OCS worker have improved their working relationship by developing authentic partnership. Together they meet with families when an initial assessment or active family services case is open with OCS. They have also set up regularly scheduled "Town Hall" meetings to provide information and answer questions from the community.
- OCS staff works closely with the ACRF and Tribal partners to enhance the recruitment and retention of resource families in the region. Others are also involved with these efforts including the faith-based community, DPH, the local school districts, foster parents, and CASAs.
- Improving access to medical services and information has been a focus for NRO. The Regional Psychiatric Nurse now has access to the State of Alaska VacTrak (vaccination) database. He is able to use this information to ensure children are vaccinated timely. Additionally NRO has identified two substance abuse/mental health professionals who are able to contract to complete assessments for children and families as needed, and when other providers are unable to meet the need in a timely manner.

2017 Update: The OCS Northern Region serves 85 villages and covers 348,000 square miles; this is bigger than the state of Texas. NRO continues to work closely with community partners throughout the region. Many of the communities are isolated

and do not have access to the services that are needed. Creativity and partnership are essential to success of the region. In the past year OCS participated in the following collaborative efforts to strength services and outcomes for children and families in their communities:

- OCS and Tanana Chiefs Conference provided annual training in April 2017. The two and a half day joint conference provided information and highlighted the ICWA regulations.
- OCS staff works closely with the ACRF and Tribal partners to enhance the recruitment and retention of resource families in the region. Others are also involved with these efforts including the faith-based community, DPH, the local school districts, foster parents, and CASAs. Additionally, the regional psychiatric nurse collaborated with licensing managers to implement a statewide recruitment effort to identify foster homes for children with high medical needs.
- Permanency unit developed with internal experts to focus on reunification, adoption and guardianship. This unit has led work in the region to improve timely permanency for children and youth.
- OCS partners closely with the Rural Child Welfare grantees in Nome and Kotzebue. The focus on partnership assists OCS and Tribal partners in providing high quality services for families and children and also assists caseworkers by providing additional support to their cases through grantees' efforts in caseworker visits, case planning, and referrals for services.
- The Emergency Relief Support program is being piloted in NRO. The pilot began December 1, 2017. The pilot was created to support relatives who take emergency placement and care for children in OCS custody. This program provides financial and emotional support beginning at the time of placement in the home of unlicensed caregivers.
- NRO facilitates regional Tribal/State collaboration conference calls and meetings to improve partnership with Tribes in the region. The joint meeting opportunities assist with finding and identifying relatives, understanding the ICWA regulation and policy changes, and assessing areas of strength and need in the services to children and families.

Southcentral Region (SCRO)

The OCS Southcentral Region is a large area that reaches from Valdez on the southern coast to Unalaska on the Aleutian Island chain, and includes the Matanuska-Susitna Valley; an area of Southcentral Alaska and includes the communities of Palmer and Wasilla.

2015 Update: Regional leadership participates in Multi-Disciplinary Team meetings, the Mat-Su Health Foundation Community Scan Group and Mat-Su Area Partnership Meetings occur monthly with Tribal partners. SCRO was the first region to facilitate Regional TSCG meetings; those meetings occurred in Wasilla and Gakona. Additionally, adoption and foster care staff partner with the ACRF and other community partners to facilitate resource family appreciation and training opportunities.

2016 Update: The OCS Southcentral Region is unique in that they are growing very quickly, have communities that are small and remote, but also serve larger communities with access to many services. The field and regional staff work closely with community partners, including collaboration with Multi-Disciplinary Teams in communities with active Child Advocacy Centers. In the past year, OCS participated in the following collaborative efforts to strength services and outcomes for children and families in their communities:

- The Wasilla Field Office partners with community members very closely. Cook Inlet Tribal Council and Akeela (substance abuse services) are co-located in the office to allow for easy partnership with OCS staff and "one-stop" services for families and children.
- Mat-Su Health Foundation is working closely with OCS and other community partners in Wasilla and Palmer to develop and implement a Safe Baby Court Team. This program will provide increased court oversight to CPS cases involving a child under the age of three years old.
- Mat-Su Health Foundation and the Mat-Su Rocks (Raising Our Children with Kindness) organization is also partnering with Head Start and OCS to provide grant funds to assist with facilitating family engagement and supervised contacts for children in custody with their parents. This is an innovative approach to provide supervised visits for families.
- OCS partners closely with Tribal partners in the SCRO region. SCRO facilitates monthly region wide meetings with Tribal partners. In May 2016, the third regional TSCG meeting occurred in Kenai. This meeting included OCS, Tribal partners, and Region 10 staff. It provided collaborative learning related to mandated reporting, foster home licensing, a Kenai pilot project, and Title IV-B and IV-E programs.

2017 Update: The OCS Southcentral Region is unique in that the region is growing very quickly, has communities that are small and remote, but also serve larger communities with access to many services. The field and regional staff work closely with community partners, including collaboration with Multi-Disciplinary Teams in communities with active child advocacy centers. In the past year, OCS participated in the following collaborative efforts to strengthen services and outcomes for children and families in their communities:

- The Wasilla Field Office partners with community members very closely. Cook Inlet Tribal Council and Akeela (substance abuse services) are co-located in the office to allow for easy partnership with OCS staff and "one-stop" services for families and children.
- A monthly steering committee meeting with Akeela, DBH, and OCS is held to assure grant compliance and improve communication.
- Mat-Su Health Foundation is working closely with OCS and other community partners in Wasilla and Palmer to develop and implement a Safe Baby Court Team. Safe Babies court has been renamed to Palmer Family, Infants and Toddlers court. It is projected to launch July 1, and OCS has been involved in the community stakeholder meetings as well as steering committee meetings.
- Mat-Su Health Foundation and the Mat-Su Rocks (Raising Our Children with Kindness) organization is also partnering with Head Start and OCS to provide grant funds to assist with facilitating family engagement and supervised contacts for children in custody with their parents. This is still in its infancy but OCS has partnered with Infant Learning (Head Start) as well. In addition ROCK Mat-Su and OCS is exploring the concept of Differential Response to address the community response to trying to be preventative.
- OCS partners closely with Tribal partners in the SCRO region. SCRO facilitates monthly region-wide meetings with Tribal partners. In May 2017, SCRO had the fourth regional Tribal State meetings in Kodiak. Tribal members were supported with travel and lodging costs through Casey Family Programs; Tribal representation from the three communities served were present. There were 20 tribal members in attendance at this meeting.
- The Wasilla field office has entered into stronger relationships with community stakeholders. Monthly Building Community Connections meetings are held with ROCK Mat-Su committee members and OCS leaders to strengthen community relationships and help workers to develop partnerships. In January 2017, the first round robin, "speed dating" meeting was held. Thirteen service providers met with 39 OCS members to share their services, ethos, and referral process. The event was focused on substance abuse counseling and assessment services. The next meeting will focus on mental health services in the community.
- The Wasilla field office has the lead role in a meeting focused on the safety of teens in the community. The Care for Our Teens meeting includes law enforcement and several levels of OCS leadership. It also focuses on support to birth and foster parents.

Southeast Region (SERO)

Southeast Alaska has a land area of 35,138 square miles and is comprised of a 600 mile-long narrow strip of mainland coastline and hundreds of islands. The Southeast Region serves 17 cities or communities; however the majority of the population is concentrated in the city of Juneau. OCS partners with community and Tribal representatives in the communities served.

2015 Update: Southeast OCS managers and supervisors meet with Central Council Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska (T&H) Tribal Family & Youth Services staff on a quarterly basis to help facilitate communication and collaboration. Routinely, OCS, T&H, and AWARE (Juneau's local domestic violence service provider,) provide new staff orientation to the new staff within each agency in order to familiarize the staff on the responsibilities and services available, and to build relationships and understanding of the respective agency missions. Additionally, regional leadership participates in Multi-Disciplinary Team meetings and provides ongoing training to school district staff on mandatory reporting requirements.

2016 Update: Partnerships with community and Tribal partners is a priority for the Southeast Region. Southeast OCS supervisors and unit staff meet with T&H Tribal Family & Youth Services staff on a monthly basis to help facilitate communication and collaboration, as well as discuss mutual cases. In the past year, OCS participated in the following collaborative efforts to strength services and outcomes for children and families in their communities:

- An Alaska Native foster home recruitment team was created with OCS and T&H staff and managers from both agencies. Juneau Youth Services, a local residential services agency, will begin attending that partnership in the coming months.

- Regional leadership partner with community agencies to provide training for staff. OCS, T&H, and AWARE provide orientation to the new staff within each agency in order to familiarize the staff on the responsibilities and services available and to build relationships and understanding of the respective agency missions. OCS provides ongoing training to school district staff and law enforcement officials on mandatory reporting requirements.
- In Ketchikan, the Family and Infant Team (FIT) is a baby court program designed to improve permanency for children. The courts, public defenders, DOL assistant attorney generals, OCS staff, and other parties participated in the development and implementation of the program. Reunification and other permanency goals are being openly discussed by the courts and parents are given clear information about the expectations for case plan items.
- Early identification of relatives and support to caregivers is a focus for the region and for the Tribal and community partners. The region had one staff assigned to do in depth relative searches; they are working on a memorandum of agreement with local Tribes to increase access to relative information.
- The Emergency Relief Support program is being piloted in SERO. The pilot began March 1, and was created to support relatives and family friends who take emergency placement and care for children in OCS custody. This program provides financial and emotional support beginning at the time of placement in the home of unlicensed caregivers.
- OCS participates in the Multi-disciplinary Team in Juneau. This team includes law enforcement, child advocacy center, attorneys, Tribal partners, DJJ, mental health providers and domestic violence providers.

2017 Update: The Southeast region focuses on partnership with Tribes and other community partners to assist in meeting needs and providing services to families in all areas of the region. T&H Tribal Family & Youth Services continued to meet regularly with staff in the past year. Below are highlights of the collaborative partnerships in the past year:

- Tribal title IV-E agreement and Tribal jurisdiction in CPS cases: although the title IV-E agreement with T&H was signed in 2016, in the past year T&H took jurisdiction of two cases that transferred from state court and CPS services, to Tribal court and services. This is a positive step for Alaska Native children and families.
- Emergency Relief Support Pilot program: this pilot relied heavily on OCS field staff, state office staff, and Tribal partners around the region. This innovative program began in March 2016, and provides financial and emotional support to unlicensed relatives while they pursue foster care licensing or public assistance benefits to assist in meeting the needs of relatives in their care.
- Juneau Re-entry Coalition is a coordinated effort with the Department of Corrections and has offered an opportunity to educate, advocate, and inform local partners about the OCS system. The group is working on a project to support visits for parents in prison.
- Alaska Native foster home recruitment team was created with OCS and T&H staff and managers from both agencies. Juneau Youth Services, a local residential services agency, will begin attending that partnership in the coming months.
- OCS participates in the Multi-disciplinary Team, in Juneau. This team includes law enforcement, child advocacy center, attorneys, Tribal partners, DJJ, mental health providers and domestic violence providers.

Western Region (WRO)

The OCS Western Region is located in the Southwest area of the State of Alaska. The regional population is approximately 8500 people, who are primarily Alaska Native. The largest community is Bethel, with a population of 6,300. The Western Region covers 59,000 square miles and includes 56 villages. Each village represents an individual Tribal council. Many of the Tribal governments have contracted with Association of Village Council Presidents (AVCP) to provide ICWA services, housing and other social services programs.

2015 Update: The OCS Western Region works closely with Tribal and community partners on the following collaborative efforts:

- In SFY15, AVCP Bethel-based ICWA staff began collocating at the OCS facility to improve collaborative efforts and services to children and families.
- The Western Region actively partners with the Adult Probation and Parole Division, the Sex Offenders Treatment Program, Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation (YKHC), the DBH, DJJ, DPH and local law enforcement agencies.
- OCS Western region is currently working on development of a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to enhance the Multi-Disciplinary Team work in Bethel.

- OCS, Tribal partners and resource families attended training and work sessions through Casey Family Programs to support resource family recruitment.
- A resource family recruitment workgroup has been in place since February 2014, to identify and support families in the region. This workgroup includes OCS, Tribal partners, DBH and local health care services providers.

2016 Update: The OCS Western Region actively partners with community agencies to improve services and outcomes for children and families. OCS has regular collaboration efforts with the Probation and Parole Division, the Sex Offenders Treatment Program, Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation, the DBH, DJJ, DPH, Tundra Women's Coalition, Tribal partners, the child advocacy center and local law enforcement agencies. In the past year OCS Western Region actively participated in the following collaborative efforts:

- In the past year, a multi-disciplinary team (MDT) was established in Western Region and an MOU is in place to allow for consultation and partnerships.
- Resource family recruitment efforts have been supported by the Casey Family Program. These efforts to identify and develop foster homes in the region have been done in partnership with Tribal partners.
- Western Region Support Development Recruitment (SDR) team has been in place since 2014 to recruit foster homes, develop emergency foster care options, and assess and explore other services options that will benefit children and families in rural communities. This team includes OCS staff, local Tribal partners, ACRF, AK Child and Family Services, DBH and YKHC.
- The Yuut Kellutestiit Core Group began meeting in 2103, and grew out of Undoing Racism alumni that wanted to continue working to address institutional racism. This group received funding from the DBH and includes the following partners: The AVCP, Alaska Legal Services, CASAs, the PDs Office, local school districts, YKHC, OCS, Tundra Women's Coalition, Yup'ik elders and other community members.

2017 Update: The OCS Western Region has continued to partner with the community and Tribal stakeholders in their communities. Highlights of collaboration in the last year include:

- Emergency Relief Support Pilot program: this pilot relied heavily on OCS field staff and state office staff around the region. This innovative program began in March 2016, and provides financial and emotional support to unlicensed relatives while they pursue foster care licensing or public assistance benefits to assist in meeting the needs of relatives in their care.
- WRO is working with Association of Village Council Presidents and CFP to plan a Regional Tribal-State Collaboration Group gathering.
- The regional ICWA specialist has spent time reaching out to all of the 56 Tribes in the region to improve partnerships and build resources that will assist children and families.
- OCS continues to participate in the Multi-disciplinary Team and The Yuut Kellutestiit Core Group.
- Western Region Support Development Recruitment (SDR) team has been in place since 2014 to recruit foster homes, develop emergency foster care options, and assess and explore other services options that will benefit children and families in rural communities. This team includes OCS staff, local Tribal partners, ACRF, AK Child and Family Services, DBH and YKHC.
- Additionally, OCS staff continues to participate on the Sex Offenders Treatment Program Advisory Board and the Tundra Women's Center Board.

Alaska Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems

2015 Update: The Alaska Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS) Project's primary purpose is to facilitate the building and implementation of statewide comprehensive systems of care that support family and community approaches to promoting positive early development and early school success for young children. This important project is driven by a multi-disciplinary, governor-appointed task force that meets three times per year. ECCS mission is to promote positive development and improved health outcomes for Alaska's children prenatal to eight years by creating a culturally responsive, comprehensive and accessible service delivery system that links service providers, empowers families and engages communities.

2016 Update: The ECCS project focuses on the prevention of adverse childhood experiences while increasing the understanding and skills of our workforce regarding the impacts of trauma and early development, and increasing trauma informed care. The advisory council to the ECCS is the Alaska Early Childhood Coordinating Council (AECCC), co-facilitated

by DHSS and the Department of Education and Early Development (DEET). The members of the AECCC include representatives across health and education sectors and representatives from both public and private stakeholder groups. The AECCC priorities include the ECCS project as part of the vision to integrate and align services, planning efforts resources, policy development, and funding as a well as strengthening connections between health, mental health, education and family support systems and public and private partners.

2017 Update: The ECCS project's primary purpose is to improve the developmental skills of place-based communities 0-3 year olds. The vision of the Alaska ECCS project is that Alaska children, families, and communities are safe and healthy, and to promote and protect the developmental health and well-being of Alaskan families. Alaska seeks to improve children's developmental health and family wellness through improved linkage to necessary resources, reduction of the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences, and technical assistance for Primary Care Case Management. The long term goal is to build a sustainable system based on community-driven solutions.

The State of Alaska partners in this project with community and Tribal partners in the place-based communities of Kodiak, the Matanuska-Susitna Borough and the Norton Sound Region to strengthen leadership and expertise in Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) approach, using the Collaborative Innovation and Improvement Network (CoIIN) methodology to drive vertical and horizontal integration and mobilization of early childhood services and systems at the state, community and family/child levels. Using the Collective Impact model, supported by the CoIIN, at the state level this project will produce an increased integration of early childhood and other health and family wellness systems, development and adoption of core sets of indicators to measure Early Childhood system processes and outcomes, and testing innovative systems changes and improvements. At the community and family levels, this project will support the Collective Impact approach to integrate service delivery and collaboration resulting in improved child development and family wellness, measured by a 25% increase from baseline in developmental skills in 0-3 year olds by 2021.

Strengthening Families Leadership Team

2015 Update: This team, which includes OCS representation, is made up of a variety of key decision makers in state and private programs and provides the leadership for the state Strengthening Families programs. The efforts are focused on embedding the "protective factors framework" in a variety of early childhood and family support services and systems. Through this team, early childhood programs statewide receive intensive training and coaching. Additionally, regular trainings were available to interested providers by the Child Care Resource and Referral Network agencies.

2016 Update: OCS continues to actively participate in the Strengthening Families Leadership Team. By embedding protective factors in the workforce, families, and communities there is redirection to a strength-based approach for supporting families and addressing extra-familial interactions promoting healthy children and the well-being of families. Strengthening Families active outreach across Alaska communities supports leveraging community resources in order to build parent knowledge while providing resources on how to integrate new opportunities for families to thrive.

OCS is updating the case plan process with families to align with the Strengthening Families protective factors. In April 2016, a webinar was provided to OCS staff by members of this team, to lay a ground work of the Strengthening Families program. More training will be provided as OCS rolls out the case plan process changes in the coming year.

2017 Update: The Strengthening Families Leadership Team, which includes OCS representation, is made up of a variety of key decision makers in state and private programs and provides the leadership for the state Strengthening Families programs. Strengthening Families™ is a research-informed, strength-based approach to helping families reduce stress, address risk factors and promote healthy development. The overarching goal is the promotion of child and family well-being. It is based on engaging families, programs and communities in building five protective factors helping families succeed and thrive, even in the face of risk and challenges. The efforts are focused on embedding the "protective factors framework" in a variety of early childhood and family support services and systems.

Through this team early childhood programs statewide receive intensive training and coaching. Under the direction of the leadership team, Strengthening Families expanded its reach to include Kodiak, two trainings in Matanuska Valley, a re-visit to Nome and a re-visit to Bethel. Strengthening Families also provided training to Behavioral Health Aides, with the support of Alaska Native Tribal Health Corporation as well as to Rural Alaska Community Action Program, Inc. (RurAL CAP) providers. In addition to the face-to-face trainings, Strengthening Families is offering extended reflection opportunities to develop and support implementation of the protective factors framework through learning cohorts. OCS has adopted the Strengthening

Families framework to promote a strength based child and family-centered approach to case planning and has been receiving positive feedback on this model.

Early Childhood Mental Health Learning Network

2015 Update: OCS leadership facilitates the "Network" which is designed to develop/increase expertise in the existing workforce about early childhood mental health issues including trauma, diagnosis, appropriate interventions, and creating collaboration involving a variety of service providers. Through grants to local agencies in Anchorage, Fairbanks and Juneau the program provides consultation and/or professional development to mental health clinicians, family support workers and early interventionists. The grantees also provide "reflective facilitation" groups to a cross-disciplinary group of professionals working with young children and their families. These groups have been especially helpful in support best practices in the field.

2016 Update: OCS leadership continues to facilitate the "Network". The primary goals include the capacity of mental health professionals to promote social and emotional development, address mental health concerns, identification and intervention for young children with difficult behaviors and at risk of experiencing Severe Emotional Disturbance, and stabilization of childcare placement. Grant services continue to be available in Anchorage, Fairbanks and Juneau to provide consultation and/or professional development to mental health clinicians, family support workers and early interventionists.

2017 Update: OCS leadership continues to facilitate the "Network". The primary goals include the capacity of mental health professionals to promote social and emotional development, address mental health concerns, identification and intervention for young children with difficult behaviors and at risk of experiencing Severe Emotional Disturbance, and stabilization of childcare placement. Grant services continue to be available in Anchorage, Fairbanks and Juneau to provide consultation and/or professional development to mental health clinicians, family support workers, and early interventionists. In addition to the grant funded work, the State of Alaska through OCS, was one of ten states to receive a technical assistance award from the Zero-to-Three Center for Policy to develop funding strategies using Medicaid payments to enhance Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health (IECMH) Services. As a result the state is drafting IECMH services into the Medicaid Redesign and Reform benefits package due out for public comment in the Spring 2017.

Infant Learning Program

2015 Update: Child welfare and the Part C early intervention system (known in Alaska as the Infant Learning Program, or ILP,) continued to improve processes related to serving families of very young children including the development of regional protocols, outlining steps for collaboration, referral and ongoing planning. The two programs continue to work together to improve processes related to serving families of very young children including the development of regional protocols outlining steps for collaboration between child welfare and early intervention providers with regard to planning and intervention. This services is available statewide with 16 agencies providing ILP services in the State of Alaska.

2016 Update: ILP continues to be available in Alaska as described in 2015. In the past year, a department decision was made to move the ILP from OCS to the Division of Senior and Disabilities Services. In the coming year, OCS and SDS will partner on ways to improve data sharing and partnership to address CFSP Plan for Improvement

2017 Update: The ILP was transferred to the Division of Senior and Disability Services as of July 1, 2016. OCS continues to refer children and families for services to ILP as assessment and services indicate.

Head Start Programs

2015 Update: OCS provides data to Head Start programs statewide regarding the number of children that may be eligible for Head Start programs due to their foster care status. This data is helpful to Head Start in establishing their service needs and capacity. Anchorage and Mat-Su Valley Head Start directors participate in the Anchorage-based, Early Childhood Protective Services Collaborative meetings. Most Head Start programs have established MOAs with OCS offices.

OCS facilitates an annual meeting with Head Start grantees and their mental health consultants following the Early Childhood Mental Health (ECMH) Institute. This meeting is focused on improving the services to young children and their families with difficult situations in Head Start programs. The Head Start programs are often in rural/remote communities and consultants are located in hubs. These consultants are often the only ones in their area doing this work through these efforts it is hoped to establish a system that will connect them to each other and provide best practice information.

2016 Update: OCS continues to partner with Head Start Programs to meet the needs of young children. A primary focus of the collaboration is to increase knowledge and skills of the providers to understand the mental health needs of children in the program. Mental Health consultants provide consultations to support Head Start sites. Head Start participates in reflective practice that are coordinated by mental health consultants that supports Head Start staff to deepen their knowledge of child and family development and learn new intervention strategies.

2017 Update: As mentioned in the 2016 update, OCS continues to partner with Head Start Programs to meet the needs of young children in 2017. Additionally, the ECCS project is collaborating with Head Start to embed standardized developmental screening into Head Start programs across the state and will be sharing data between the two programs to improve health and educational outcomes for young children.

SECTION 2: UPDATE ON ASSESSMENT OF PERFORMANCE

Statewide assessment of performance considers data collected through the internal OCS case review system, the AFCARS/NCANDS data reported by OCS, and CFSR State Performance Workbook available on the ACF site. OCS completed the Child and Family Service Review in May 2017. This section will update the existing data from the current CFSP and will summarize the results of the 2017 OCS Statewide Assessment as it relates to the goals and objectives identified in the CFSP, and are intended to address areas likely to require a program improvement plan in the future.

All three data sources identify Repeat Maltreatment, Permanency Composite 1, and Placement Stability as areas needing improvement by OCS. OCS is committed to these three areas and has specific strategies included in the CFSP Plan for Improvement to address these areas. Specific strategies to address the identified areas of need include the following:

- OCS continues to be committed to centralizing and standardizing the intake process (See strategy 1.A) in Alaska; this is a key strategy in reducing repeat maltreatment.
- Through Strategy 1.B, Alaska intends to improve permanency outcomes for children; this includes timely and accurate case plans for families.
- Placement stability is addressed through strategies 1.C and 2.C. Through support to resource families and early identification of relatives, OCS expects to see improved placement stability.

CHILD AND FAMILY OUTCOMES THROUGH THE OCS CQI/QA UNIT

2015 Update: OCS has continued a rigorous case review system. OCS has a CQI Unit (often called the QA team) with dedicated staff maintaining ongoing case reviews for OCS. The agency has utilized the federal review instrument 23 items and in March 2015, the QA team began using the revised instrument through the Online Management System (OMS). In CY 2014, there were 255 case reviews conducted. CY 2014 findings show gains were maintained in all seven outcome areas over the findings of the CFSR 2008.

Each field office continues to be reviewed annually. A review of the case review findings for CY 2014 show results significantly below the federal standard of 95% achievement (see Table 2). Both Safety 1 and Safety 2 are areas for concern as well as Well Being 1. These areas are addressed through Field Office Program Improvement Plans.

As noted, in March 2015 the agency began use of the OMS. During the first quarter of CY 2015, there were 38 cases reviewed from two field offices (see Table 2). Although the number of cases reviewed is small which can result in significant "swings" in findings, there are concerns in several areas. Well Being 1 is an area significantly below the national standard. This area reflects the agency's challenges in establishing the base activities needed for accomplishment of permanency goals.

These outcome areas indicating concern for the areas of Safety and Well Being 1 are of continuing concern for the agency; they will likely be reflected in the CFSR Round 3. In the coming year, OCS will monitor this closely and consider revision of the CFSP goals and objectives to better align with the identified statewide data indicators.

2016 Update: The OCS has continued a rigorous case review system. The agency utilizes the federal review instrument and in March 2015, the QA team began using the revised instrument through OMS. In CY 2015 there were 277 case reviews conducted. CY 2014 findings show gains were maintained in six outcome areas over the findings of the CFSR 2008. There was a slight decrease in the outcome area of Well-Being 1.

Each field office continues to be reviewed annually. A review of the case review findings for CY 2015 show results significantly below the federal standard of 95% achievement (see Table 2 & 3). Both Safety 1 and Safety 2 are areas for concern as well as Well Being 1. The agency has recently identified items 12-15 as "Core Service" areas to be focused on for improvement in all regions through the CQI process. Regions will begin developing strategies to increase attention to these areas and improve monitoring of the activities. These areas are addressed through Field Office Program Improvement Plans.

These outcome areas indicating concern for the areas of Safety and Well Being 1 are of continuing concern for the agency; it is anticipated they will be reflected in the CFSR Round 3. In the coming year OCS will monitor this closely and consider revision of the CFSP goals and objectives to better align with the identified statewide data indicators.

Because OCS began using the new OMS tool, it is difficult to compare the QA results from CY 2014 with CY 2015 because the items have changed. The tool has changed from 23 to 18 items, and the information used to determine if each item is

considered a strength or need has changed as well. In CY 2015, relative placement and physical health needs of the child are two areas in which OCS shows a high level of compliance.

OCS is in the process of completing the Alaska Statewide Assessment (SWA). OCS will be undergoing the CFSR in the coming year and anticipates a Program Improvement Plan (PIP) will be needed for several items. The CFSP Plan for Improvement included in the Child and Family Services Plan addresses the areas of concern related to safety, permanency and well-being. The PIP will likely incorporate the Plan for Improvement items identified through our internal data review as well as new items recommended after completion of the CFSR.

2017 Update: Much of this past year has focused on the development of the OCS SWA which was submitted on March 22, 2017. The results of the SWA informed the on-site CFSR which occurred the week of May 22-26, 2017. However, the Quality Assurance Unit has continued case reviews of items 1-18 during CY 2016. The statewide results of these findings are listed below in Table 4. It is anticipated that the QA Unit will continue to provide on-going, robust QA reviews utilizing the OMS during FY 2018.

Table 2: Quality Assurance Reviews **January 2014 – December 2014 Calendar Year** **Outcome and Items**						
Item	**CFSR 2008**	**Qtr1** Jan-March 2014	**Qtr2** April-June 2014	**Qtr3** July-Sept 2014	**Qtr4** Oct-Dec 2014	**State-Wide** CY 2014
Outcome S1: Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect	**47.1%**	**66%**	**51%**	**60%**	**42%**	**56%**
S1- Item 1: Timeliness of initiating investigations of reports of child maltreatment	56%	82%	55%	67%	58%	68%
S1 - Item 2: Repeat maltreatment	81%	76%	83%	93%	65%	77%
Outcome S2: Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate	**38.5%**	**78%**	**57%**	**46%**	**55%**	**63%**
S2 - Item 3: Services to family to protect child(ren) in home and prevent removal	51%	86%	65%	47%	59%	69%
S2 - Item 4: Risk of harm to child(ren)	39%	84%	58%	50%	60%	67%
Outcome P1: Children have permanency and stability in their living situation.	**15%**	**66%**	**46%**	**45%**	**55%**	**56%**
P1 - Item 5: Foster care re-entries	91%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
P1 - Item 6: Stability of foster care placement	73%	76%	83%	91%	83%	81%
P1 - Item 7: Permanency goal for child	45%	90%	68%	82%	77%	80%
P1 - Item 8: Reunification, guardianship, or permanent placement with relatives	33%	79%	43%	43%	71%	66%
P1 - Item 9: Adoption	18%	65%	64%	54%	56%	61%
P1 - Item 10: Permanency goal or other planned permanent living arrangement	60%	100%	100%	no cases	100%	100%
Outcome P2: The continuity of family relationships and connection is preserved for children.	**62.5%**	**90%**	**90%**	**91%**	**94%**	**91%**
P2 - Item 11: Proximity of foster care placement	90%	98%	100%	100%	100%	99%
P2 - Item 12: Placement with siblings	91%	94%	94%	100%	100%	96%
P2 - Item 13: Visiting with parents and siblings in foster care	62%	85%	82%	78%	89%	85%
P2 - Item 14: Preserving connections	78%	98%	93%	100%	100%	97%

P2 - Item 15: Relative placement	83%	100%	98%	100%	98%	99%
P2 - Item 16: Relationship of child in care with parents	47%	83%	96%	75%	84%	86%
Outcome WB1: Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs.	**23.1%**	**52%**	**39%**	**29%**	**33%**	**41%**
WB1 - Item 17: Needs and services of child, parents, foster parents	32%	74%	64%	42%	53%	62%
WB1 - Item 18: Child and family involvement in case planning	37%	56%	41%	26%	30%	42%
WB1 - Item 19: Worker visits with child	26%	54%	50%	46%	38%	48%
WB1 - Item 20: Worker visits with parents	20%	30%	27%	19%	9%	22%
Outcome WB2: Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs	**76.1%**	**96%**	**96%**	**88%**	**96%**	**95%**
WB2 - Item 21: Educational needs of the child	76%	96%	96%	88%	98%	96%
Outcome WB3: Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs.	**52.5%**	**91%**	**76%**	**58%**	**59%**	**75%**
WB3 - Item 22: Physical health of the child	71%	99%	96%	85%	88%	94%
WB3 - Item 23: Mental health of the child	55%	90%	75%	57%	62%	75%

Table 3: Quality Assurance Reviews January 2015 - December 2015 Calendar Year Outcome and Items					
Outcome/Item	**Federal Standard**	**Qtr1 Jan-March 2015**	**Qtr2 April-June 2015**	**Qtr3 July-Sept 2015**	**Qtr4 Oct-Dec 2015**
Outcome S1: Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect	**95%**	**57%**	**67%**	**39%**	**63%**
S1-Item 1: Timeliness of initiating investigations of reports of child maltreatment		57%	67%	39%	63%
Outcome S2: Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate	**95%**	**61%**	**53%**	**28%**	**38%**
S2-Item 2: Services to Family to Protect Child (ren) in the Home and Prevent Removal or Re-Entry Into Foster Care		64%	69%	46%	41%
S2-Item 3: Risk and Safety Assessment and Management		66%	57%	28%	39%
Outcome P1: Children have permanency and stability in their living situation.	**95%**	**47%**	**48%**	**34%**	**38%**
P1-Item 4: Stability of Foster Care Placement		84%	78%	72%	76%
P1-Item 5: Permanency Goal for Child		76%	82%	72%	68%
P1-Item 6: Achieving Reunification, Guardianship, Adoption, or Other Planned Permanent Living Arrangement		58%	65%	48%	49%
Outcome P2: The continuity of family relationships and connection is preserved for children.	**95%**	**74%**	**72%**	**70%**	**62%**
P2-Item 7: Placement With Siblings		100%	79%	75%	79%
P2-Item 8: Visiting With Parents and Siblings in Foster Care		67%	66%	58%	56%
P2-Item 9: Preserving Connections		89%	87%	92%	83%
P2-Item 10: Relative Placement		89%	86%	100%	95%
P2-Item 11: Relationship of Child in Care With Parents		50%	65%	62%	62%
Outcome WB1: Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs.	**95%**	**39%**	**30%**	**12%**	**14%**
W1-Item 12: Needs and Services of Child, Parents, and Foster Parents		61%	40%	19%	26%

W1-Item 13: Child and Family Involvement in Case Planning		46%	33%	14%	31%
W1-Item 14: Caseworker Visits With Child		55%	36%	10%	18%
W1-Item 15: Caseworker Visits With Parents		30%	14%	4%	6%
Outcome WB2: Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs	**95%**	**94%**	**96%**	**84%**	**88%**
WB2- Item 16: Educational Needs of the Child		94%	96%	84%	88%
Outcome WB3: Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs.	**95%**	**54%**	**68%**	**52%**	**52%**
W3-Item 17: Physical Health of the Child		93%	89%	91%	95%
W3-Item 18: Mental/Behavioral Health of the Child		51%	70%	44%	45%

Table 4 Quality Assurance Reviews January 2016 - December 2016 Calendar Year Outcome and Items						
Outcome/Item	**Federal Standard**	**Qtr1** Jan-March 2016	**Qtr2** April-June 2016	**Qtr3** July-Sept 2016	**Qtr4** Oct-Dec 2016	**State-Wide** CY 2016
Outcome S1: Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect	**95%**	**67%**	**41%**	**87%**	**27%**	**54%**
S1-Item 1: Timeliness of initiating investigations of reports of child maltreatment		67%	41%	87%	27%	54%
Outcome S2: Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate	**95%**	**50%**	**46%**	**81%**	**71%**	**59%**
S2-Item 2: Services to Family to Protect Child (ren) in the Home and Prevent Removal or Re-Entry Into Foster Care		58%	65%	88%	83%	74%
S2-Item 3: Risk and Safety Assessment and Management		50%	46%	83%	71%	60%
Outcome P1: Children have permanency and stability in their living situation.	**95%**	**60%**	**49%**	**67%**	**67%**	**57%**
P1-Item 4: Stability of Foster Care Placement		90%	86%	89%	100%	89%
P1-Item 5: Permanency Goal for Child		78%	76%	78%	64%	75%
P1-Item 6: Achieving Reunification, Guardianship, Adoption, or Other Planned Permanent Living Arrangement		60%	67%	78%	67%	69%
Outcome P2: The continuity of family relationships and connection is preserved for children.	**95%**	**90%**	**88%**	**89%**	**92%**	**89%**
P2-Item 7: Placement With Siblings		75%	86%	100%	100%	90%
P2-Item 8: Visiting With Parents and Siblings in Foster Care		88%	79%	88%	91%	84%
P2-Item 9: Preserving Connections		90%	91%	100%	100%	94%
P2-Item 10: Relative Placement		100%	91%	100%	100%	95%
P2-Item 11: Relationship of Child in Care With Parents		86%	71%	88%	91%	79%
Outcome WB1: Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs.	**95%**	**45%**	**30%**	**61%**	**46%**	**42%**
W1-Item 12: Needs and Services of Child, Parents, and Foster Parents		55%	43%	83%	83%	61%
W1-Item 13: Child and Family Involvement in Case Planning		55%	52%	80%	61%	60%
W1-Item 14: Caseworker Visits With Child		55%	35%	67%	50%	48%
W1-Item 15: Caseworker Visits With Parents		20%	11%	38%	22%	21%
Outcome WB2: Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs	**95%**	**92%**	**92%**	**100%**	**100%**	**94%**
WB2- Item 16: Educational Needs of the Child		92%	92%	100%	100%	94%
Outcome WB3: Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs.	**95%**	**58%**	**71%**	**90%**	**91%**	**76%**
W3-Item 17: Physical Health of the Child		100%	89%	100%	100%	94%
W3-Item 18: Mental/Behavioral Health of the Child		50%	71%	88%	87%	74%

AFCARS AND NCANDS DATA MEASURES

2015 Update: The chart below illustrates the goals for safety and permanency federal measures established by OCS. OCS continues to track and monitor these measures. Alaska continues to be well below the national standard in Absence of Maltreatment Recurrence, Permanency Composite 1 (Timeliness and Permanency of Reunification, and Permanency Composite 4 (Placement Stability).

Table 5: AFCARS and NCANDS

Data Measures	FFY06b07a	FFY 2011AB3	FFY 2012AB4	FFY 2013AB4	FFY 2014AB4	National Standard
Absence of Maltreatment Recurrence	90.7	91.8	87.8	87.1	86.1	94.6
Absence of Child Abuse and /or Neglect in Foster Care		99.49	99.08	99.01	99.61	99.68
Permanency Composite 1: Timeliness and Permanency of Reunification	122.4	103.7	102.9	115.2	110.8	122.6
Permanency Composite 2: Timeliness of Adoptions	81.1	141.6	140	144.2	160.8	106.4
Permanency Composite 3: Permanency for Children and Youth in Foster Care for Long Periods of Time	125.4	132.7	134.3	134.2	130.4	121.7
Permanency Composite 4: Placement Stability	73.1	86.1	87.6	90.5	93.7	101.5

2016 Update: The AFCARS was submitted in May 2016. OCS has not received the finalized data profiles for 2015. OCS is still operating using the data provided in Table 4. NCANDS information can be found at the following site: http://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/cb/cm2014.pdf. OCS demonstrates a strong performance in Permanency Composite 2 and 3. OCS was above the national standard in both areas. Continued high performance in this area may be related to the regional permanency and adoption specialists who focus on permanency goals and assist in timely permanency for children through their focus on adoption and guardianship. The areas of need identified in the 2015 update continue to be focus areas for OCS. The OCS Plan for Improvement located in Section 3 of this document provides specific strategies the state is engaging in to reduce repeat maltreatment and improve placement stability for children in care.

2017 Update: On October 11, 2016, the Administration for Children and Families issued a Technical Bulletin #9, in which it was noted that the ACF had identified technical errors in "the syntax and formulation for statewide data indicators." As a result of these errors, the CB indicated that it "would not use the indicators in determinations of substantial conformity for the entire round 3 of the CFSR". As such the states were advised to utilize the AFCARS data indicators in context to assist with the SWA process, while also relying on other data sources such as quality assurance reviews and SACWIS data. As a result of this guidance, OCS elected to not utilize the data profiles in the development of the SWA. See the Statewide Assessment in Appendix B.

CFSR ROUND 3 STATEWIDE DATA INDICATORS

2015 Update: CFSR State Performance Workbook can be found at the following site: http://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/cb/cfsr_stateperformanceworkbook.pdf

The CFSR State Performance Workbook provides details regarding state performance on the CFSR Round 3 statewide data indicators and compares it to the national standards, and identifies areas the national standard is not being met, indicating a program improvement plan is needed. Areas identified for Alaska that do not meet the national standard include:

1. Permanency in 12 months for children entering foster care: timely permanency is an identified goal in the OCS CFSP and is listed in the plan for improvement under strategy 1.B and 2.B.
2. Placement Stability: placement stability is an identified goal in the OCS CFSP and is listed in the plan for improvement under strategy 1.C.
3. Maltreatment in foster care: safety in foster care is an identified goal in the OCS CFSP and is listed in the plan for improvement under strateg1.C.
4. Recurrence of maltreatment: reducing maltreatment is an identified goal in OCS CFSP and is listed in the plan for improvement under strategies 1.A, 1.B, and 2.A.

The plan for improvement provided later in this document will highlight specific data and assessment or progress towards each of these identified areas of need.

2016 Update: OCS continues to utilize information provided in the CFSR State Performance Workbook and continues to address the four areas identified in 2015.

2017 Update: OCS continues to utilize information provided in the CFSR State Performance Workbook and continues to address the four areas identified in 2015.

Since the OCS completed both the SWA and the CFSR during this past year, a summary of the SWA findings is provided below. See Statewide Assessment in Appendix B, for a full detail of the SWA findings and results.

For purposes of assessing Alaska's performance for the Statewide Assessment, Alaska relied heavily on data from the OCS Online Resources for Children in Alaska (ORCA) data system as well as the data collected through routine quality assurance case reviews; these reviews are routinely conducted by the OCS Quality Assurance Unit and produces data to inform quality improvement initiatives. Based on these data sets as well as interviews with key stakeholders, Alaska was able to determine its ranking for each of the 18 items related to Safety, Permanency and Well-being outcomes. In all cases, Items 1-18 indicate Alaska's state performance standard as compared to a national performance standard of 95%. Alaska did not meet the national performance standard on many items.

Alaska's lowest ratings are related to timely initiation of investigations, and caseworker visits with children and parents. Managing risk and safety to prevent removal of the home and addressing the mental health needs of children were both rated at 74%. Both of these issues may be tied to the lack of or accessibility of support services available to Alaska's at-risk families. Generally, Alaska's highest ratings were around Permanency Outcome 2: related to maintaining and preserving family relationships for children after they are removed from home. Alaska also performed well with respect to meeting children's educational and physical needs.

Please see the Statewide Assessment, Appendix B of this document, for detailed information. Below is a summary of each of the outcome areas:

Safety Outcomes: For the Safety Outcomes 1 and 2, OCS did not meet the national performance standard of 95% in any of the items or measures.

For Safety Outcome I, Item 1, Timeliness to initiating investigation of reports of maltreatment, OCS shows a rating of 54% through OCS Quality Assurance data and 56.8% through ORCA data, for which Initial Assessments are completed timely. In either case, these ratings are well below the 95% national performance standard.

For Safety Outcome 2, Item 2, Services to family to protect child(ren) in the home and prevent the removal or re-entry into foster care, had an overall strength rating of 74% which is below the national performance standard of 95%. Additionally, Item 3, Risk and Safety Assessment and Management, which addresses whether or not the state took sufficient actions to

control present/impending danger to the child, Alaska has a 74% strength rating out of a national performance standard of 95%.

Permanency Outcomes: For permanency outcomes 1 and 2, there are a total of eight items by which the state performance is assessed.

For Permanency Outcome 1 there are three items: Item 4, Stability of Foster Care Placement; Item 5, Permanency Goal of Child; and Item 6, Achieving Reunification, Guardianship, Adoption, or Other Planned Permanent Living Arrangement. Alaska's ratings for each of these items was below the national performance standard of 95% with individual rating of 89% for items 4 and 5; and 69% for item 6.

For Permanency Outcome 2 there are five items for which Alaska was assessed. These are Item 7, Placement with Siblings; Item 8, Visiting With Parents and Siblings in Foster Care; Item 9, Preserving Connections; Item 10, Relative Placement, and Item 11, Relationship of Child in Care with Parents. OCS achieved the national performance standard of 95% for Item 10, Relative Placement. All other items were rated below the national performance standards; however, with each of these items, Alaska's scores for some items were near the national performance standard. Item 7, rated 90%; Item 8 rated at 84%; Item 9 rated at 94%; and Item 11 rated at 79%.

Well-Being Outcomes: Well-Being Outcomes focus on the how well the child and families assessment of needs and services are being met. There are three Well-Being Outcomes, and there are a total of seven items. Well-Being Outcome 1 has a total of 4 Items; however, Item 12, Needs and Services of Child, Parents, and Foster Parents, has separated in additional subsections:

- Item 12A: Needs Assessment and Services to Children
- Item 12B: Needs Assessment and Services to Parents
- Item 12C: Needs Assessment and Services to Foster Parents

For this Outcome, all of these subsection measures are considered and assessed separately, in relation to a national performance measure of 95% for each item. For Item 12, the state performance rating is 61%; For Item 12A the state performance rating is 83%; for Item 12B, the state performance rating is 67% and for Item 12C, the state performance rating is 79%.

Item 13, Child and Family Involvement in Case Planning, OCS had a state performance of 60%, well below the national performance standard. Item 14, Caseworker Visits with Child, OCS has a state performance of 48%; while Caseworker Visits with Parents, Item 15, is rated at 21%, which is well-below the national performance standard.

For Well-Being Outcome 2, there is Item 16, Educational Needs of the Child. For this item, the state performance rating was 94%, with a national performance standard of 95%.

For Well-Being Outcome 3, two items were assessed. Item 17, Physical Health of the Child, Alaska rated very near the national performance standard; Alaska has a state performance standard of 94%, with a national performance standard of 95% for this item. Item 18, Mental/Behavioral Health of the Child has a state performance standard of 74%, with a national performance standard of 95%.

SYSTEMIC FACTORS

Please note: For the purpose of this section, a brief update is provided for each item and also references the Statewide Assessment (SWA). The SWA provides detailed data and information to provide information about each item. Alaska submitted the SWA in March 2017, and can be found in Appendix B of this document.

Systemic Factor A: Item 19: Statewide Information System

In the 2008 CFSR Alaska was found to be in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of statewide information system. OCS's statewide information system is the Online Resources for Children of Alaska (ORCA). ORCA is a fully functioning, compliant Statewide Automated Child Welfare System (SACWIS). ORCA effectively and accurately identifies the status, demographic characteristics, location, and goals for the placement of every child who is (or within the immediately preceding 12 months, has been) in foster care.

2015 Update: Tribal and court stakeholders have reported no concerns with current ORCA functionality. There are no concerns regarding ORCA, the State of Alaska's SACWIS system.

There are a number of enhancements planned over the next year that will leverage ORCA data to automate processes that are currently manually completed by field staff. These enhancements include enhancements to ORCA User Experience; expansions to the functionality for automating additional letters and notices to providers and/or case participants; new ORCA Audit functionality, which allows tracking of user activity; and enhancements to assure compatibility with the State of Alaska new accounting system, IRIS. Additional projects include increasing the number of data reports that are available on demand, and improvements to the initial assessment maltreatment findings functionality. In the past year, the following efforts have been made to enhance or improve ORCA:

- Collaborative efforts with the AK Court System, DJJ and Robert F. Kennedy National Resource Center for Juvenile Justice on a long term action plan to enhance services for youth who are or have been involved in both the child welfare and juvenile justice systems.
- The Search, Assignment, Eligibility, Request for Funds, Permanent Fund Application, Out-of-Home Placement, and Maintain case modules were modified to enhance usability and decrease user clicks.
- All financials batches were converted from COBOL to Java.
- A CPS Involvement summary tab was added to assist intake workers with researching details of a family's history of PSRs and Investigations
- A decision tree tool was added to Initial Assessments (investigation) in the interest of standardizing Findings results.

2016 Update: ORCA continues to be functioning as required statewide. The ORCA team, including the OCS Research Unit, continuously solicits input from stakeholders via stakeholder surveys and interviews. The input received is used to enhance and improve the ORCA system and reporting to better suit stakeholder needs. User Input Surveys consistently show that users are interested in having a user-friendly and modern system. A number of enhancements deployed in CY 2015 were major time savers for users:

- Streamlined the process for creating adoption cases so that frontline caseworkers are no longer responsible for the work.
- Significant Search enhancements reduce the amount of clicks needed to find information and complete work.
- CPS History for a family is automatically derived and summarized in a centralized location.
- Reduced the system limitations on intake view in preparation for a statewide centralized intake workforce.
- Automated Initial Assessment (Investigation) notification letters to alleged perpetrators, parents, Tribes and Tribal representatives.
- Streamlined the process for requesting an Eligibility Technician assignee so that frontline caseworkers are no longer responsible for the task.
- Some enhancements deployed in 2015 allow OCS to report data more accurately:
- Added a decision tree for Initial Assessment Findings.
- Out of Home Placement changes make documentation of an ICWA child and placement preference more intuitive.

The OCS ORCA team collaborates with multiple entities to ensure that the state is able to effectively and accurately identify the status, demographic characteristics, location, and goals for the placement of every child who is (or within the immediately preceding 12 months, has been) in foster care. ORCA is enhanced and improved regularly to better serve the children of Alaska. For example, the ORCA team worked with our interface partners on several initiatives in 2015:

- Modified the Non/Emergency petition to assist Department of Law with matching records.
- Converted the interface with the state's accounting system, AKSAS, to an interface with the new accounting system, Integrated Resource Information System (IRIS).
- Changed Permanent Fund Dividend page and batch functionality to accommodate 2015 Application Year Change Requests.

In the coming year, ORCA has two major projects planned with our interface partners. The ORCA team will be working with Division of Public Assistance while they transition from its Eligibility Information System (EIS) to the Alaska Resource for

Integrated Eligibility Services (ARIES). In the fall, ORCA will begin working with the Department of Administration on phase II to eliminate the use of the IRIS accounting code crosswalk.

In addition, OCS currently has data sharing agreements with:

- Both the Anchorage and Fairbanks North Star School Districts for determining youth who may qualify for head start, transportation, and school lunch program funding.
- Department of Public Health for analysis of maltreatment, risk, and protection factors.
- Chapin Hall for predictive projections for budgeting.
- Eckerd Kids Rapid Safety Feedback Program provides an analysis of high risk cases in order to prevent additional maltreatment and facilitate better outcomes.
- Division of Health Care Services for monitoring psychotropic medications administered to children in custody.

2017 Update: In the SWA, Alaska asserted that this item was a strength; however, upon further review and consultation with the Children's Bureau, it was determined that this item is an area needing improvement. While the location data within ORCA may be sufficient, the state did not provide the needed data to demonstrate that the ORCA is a fully functioning, compliant Statewide Automated Child Welfare System (SACWIS), as it relates to effectively and accurately identifies the status, demographic characteristics, and goals for the placement of every child who is (or within the immediately preceding 12 months, has been) in foster care. The SWA provides additional data about this item and can be found in Appendix B.

Systemic Factor B: Case Review System

2017 Update: Through the Statewide Assessment, the case review system has been assessed by Alaska as an area needing improvement. The Children's Bureau was in agreement with the assessment. The reasons for this rating include: 1) case plans are not consistently developed with the child's parents; 2) Alaska does not have a way to track the percent of cases in which a Termination of Parental Rights petition was filed on time; and 3) notification of caregivers for court hearings and reviews is an area of need. The SWA provides additional data about this item and can be found in Appendix B.

Item 20: Written Case Plan

In the 2008 CFSR, case planning was identified as an area in need of improvement. The state provides a process that ensures that each child has a written case plan, to be developed jointly with the child's parent(s), that includes the required provisions.

2015 Update: Alaska has demonstrated minimal progress in this area. Although there is a process in place, case planning continues to be an area of need for OCS. SACWIS data shows that 57% of cases with a child out of the home for 60 days or more have a current case plan (ORCA 6.15.2015). This number does not include details about when children and parents are included in case planning process. Internal QA data shows that children and family are included in case planning less than 40% of the time. This data can be found earlier in this report (see QA Review data). This is addressed in the current CFSP plan for improvement in objective 1.B.1. OCS has established a timeline of June 2017 for completion of the objective and demonstration of improvements in the case plan process. Case planning is an area of need identified by the courts and other partners and will require internal and external stakeholder involvement to develop and implement improvements.

2016 Update: Alaska has experienced decreased in compliance for cases reviewed in the QA Reviews in CY 2015 (See Tables 2 and 3). Although there is a process in place, case planning continues to be an area of need for OCS. The QA data shows that children and family are included in case planning less than a third of the time. That means that in less than 1/3 of the foster care cases reviewed, case plans were developed jointly with parents and children as required. This data can be found in Tables 2 and 3. Case planning is addressed in the current CFSP Plan for Improvement in objective 1.B.1. OCS has established a timeline of June 2017 for completion of the objective and demonstration of improvements in the case plan process.

Case planning is an area of need identified by the courts and other partners and will require internal and external stakeholder involvement to develop and implement improvements. Because of the importance of this item, OCS has been working with the Child Welfare Academy to implement a practice change. After receiving feedback from staff and stakeholders, and after reviewing and analyzing data, OCS realized that the Family Services Assessment (FSA) model implemented a few years ago was not effective and OCS was not achieving the desired outcomes. The FSA process was found to be burdensome and time consuming, and the model has been revamped. One of the practice changes OCS has implemented is the use of protective factors from the Strengthening Families model instead of using protective capacities language.

OCS is currently piloting a change to case planning. OCS is currently piloting to change both the case planning process and the actual form. The new system will include carbon copy forms that can be completed in the field with parents and Tribal partners, so that a hard copy of the case plan can be immediately provided to the parent. The forms will later be scanned into ORCA to ensure these efforts are documented. In addition, OCS has created carbon copy "to do" lists to be use during monthly contacts with parents. The "to do" list can be given to the parent at the end of the monthly visit to help clarify expectations and provide a reminder of appointments.

2017 Update: In the 2017 SWA, Alaska asserted that Item 20 is an area needing improvement. OCS data provided in the SWA shows that case plans are not completed within desired timelines and are not developed jointly with the children and parents. Until recently, all case planning needed to be completed in ORCA, whereby, the worker has had to rely on completing the plan on the office computer and not in the field where a worker is more likely to meet with parents and children. Current, technologies for the OCS ORCA system do not include mobility options for workers to access electronic case files and/or complete necessary documentation in the field. Additionally, increased caseloads and high worker turnover may also contribute to low levels of family engagement with case planning. Alaska is hopeful that the documentation improvements in this area and anticipate that the program change made in September 2016 related to case planning will assist in increasing compliance in this area. The SWA provides additional data about this item and can be found in Appendix B.

Item 21: Periodic Reviews (Administrative Reviews)

The state provides a process for the periodic review of the status of each child that includes the required provisions no less frequently than once every six months, either by a court or by administrative review. This was found to be a strength in the 2008 CFSR. Administrative reviews are conducted by OCS staff at least every six months. The reviews look at federal requirements as well as reviewing the involvement of all parties in the development of the case plan. A system is in place to notify caregivers of the administrative reviews this is successful due to administrative support to draft and send notices.

2015 Update: Due to the number of meetings and staff issues, OCS is looking at changes to the current review system. This is addressed in CFSP Plan for Improvement objective 2.B.2. Administrative reviews are considered an area of strength for OCS. The table below documents State Fiscal Year 2015, and shows OCS average 90% of our cases have timely reviews.

2016 Update: OCS continues to provide a process for administrative reviews as required. OCS has implemented a change in the administrative reviews this year. As of June1, 2016, all reviews are facilitated by the OCS QA unit in Anchorage. This change has brought consistency to the review process. This is addressed in CFSP Plan for Improvement objective 2.B.2. Table 5 provides SFY 2015 administrative review data. A review of the OCS data below shows that 90% of cases have periodic reviews that occur in a timely manner. OCS administrative reviews contain the required title IV-E provisions.

2017 Update: Alaska asserted that this item was a strength, and the Children's Bureau concurred with this assertion. Alaska demonstrated through data and information in the SWA, that OCS has a fully functioning administrative review system that ensures periodic reviews no less than every six months for custody cases. The QA Unit has successfully developed a process to conduct the administrative reviews from a centralized location in Anchorage for every child in care while maintaining a high rate of functioning on a statewide basis. The Statewide Assessment (SWA) provides additional data about this item and can be found in Appendix B.

Item 22: Permanency Hearings

This area was rated as an area of strength for OCS in the 2008 CFSR. The state provides a process that ensures that each child in foster care under the supervision of the state has a permanency hearing in a qualified court or administrative body that includes the required provisions no later than 12 months from the date the child entered foster care and no less frequently than every 12 months thereafter.

2015 Update: OCS does not have data to document agency performance in this area. The QA case review system does not collect data on permanency hearings. Although this is AFCARS data, OCS has been undergoing a change in reports and collection to better meet the needs and at this time is unable to provide data related to timeliness of permanency hearings. This element will be reviewed as part of the title IV-E requirements in our scheduled title IV-E audit scheduled for November 2015. OCS intends to provide AFCARS and title IV-E audit data about this in the next submission of the APSR.

2016 Update: In the past year, OCS has partnered with the CIP and other court staff to identify available data. The Children's Bureau conducted a secondary review of the Alaska title IV-E foster care program in November 2015. The Children's Bureau determined that Alaska was in substantial compliance with federal title IV-E eligibility requirements.

The Alaska Court system provided permanency data for Child in Need of Aid (CINA) cases closed in federal fiscal year 2015 (based on the date the petition was filed with the court). The statewide average for the first permanency hearing being held or continued in court was 351 days, 683 cases were included in this data. A review of court data shows that for children who were in foster care the average time between permanency hearings was less than 247 days.

2017 Update: In the SWA, OCS asserted that based on the court system data, this item is a strength area for Alaska as the statewide average to timely permanency hearings are occurring within the 12-month federal requirement, both for initial as well as subsequent permanency hearings. This is an item that the Children's Bureau did not agree with Alaska's assertion and a Stakeholder Interview was held on May 22, 2017, to gather additional data. The SWA provides additional data about this item and can be found in Appendix B.

Item 23: Filing for Termination of Parental Rights

2015 Update: The state provides a process for filing for termination of parental rights (TPR) proceedings in accordance with required provisions; however, in the 2008 CFSR this was found to be an area needing improvement. This continues to be an area of need for OCS. The QA case review system does not collect data on filing of termination of parental rights. Although this is AFCARS data, OCS has been undergoing a change in reports and collection to better meet the needs, and at this time is unable to provide this. OCS intends to provide AFCARS about this in the next submission of the APSR.

2016 Update: This continues to be an area needing improvement for Alaska. OCS policy states that the primary worker will file a petition to terminate parental rights within 60 days of changing to the primary goal of adoption, unless the parents will be consenting to adoption. In the past year, OCS has partnered with the CIP and other court staff to identify available data. The Alaska Court system was able to provide data from CINA cases closed in federal fiscal year 2015 (based on the date the petition was filed with the court).

State of Alaska Court System data shows that the average length of time to filing the TPR petition is 485 days; this does not meet the 15 out of 22 month timeframe requirement. The court data does not identify cases in which compelling reasons have been found, which could provide information about the accuracy of this data. ORCA does not have data regarding compelling reason findings. A review of court data shows that TPR petitions were filed in accordance with required provisions in most cases. Appendix B provides a chart of the court system report.

2017 Update: Through the SWA, Alaska asserts that this item is an area needing improvement and the Children's Bureau agreed with this assertion. Alaska does not have a data system to ensure TPR petitions are filed in a timely way and does not have a method to track when the court has found compelling reasons not to file a TPR petition. The SWA provides additional data about this item and can be found in Appendix B.

Item 24: Notice of Hearing and Reviews to Caregivers

This was rated an area needing improvement during the 2008 CFSR.

2015 Update: The state is responsible to provide a process for foster parents, pre-adoptive parents, and relative caregivers of children in foster care to be notified of, and have a right to be heard in, any review or hearing held with respect to the child. This continues to be identified as an area of need for OCS. The responsibility for notifying caregivers of court hearings is assigned to CPS caseworkers; due to heavy caseloads and competing priorities it is not consistently achieved.

2016 Update: OCS CPS Policy 6.6.3 provides guidance on notice of court hearings and administrative reviews; this policy has been was updated in February 2015. The policy is designed to ensure that notification of court hearings, court case conferences, Office of Children's Services (OCS) administrative reviews, and removals from home are provided to all individuals entitled to receive notice. This policy states that within 30 days of removing a child from the parent(s), the state must exercise due diligence to identify and provide notice to all adult grandparents, to all parents of a sibling of the child, where such parent has custody of such sibling, and to other adult relatives of the child subject to exceptions due to family or domestic violence. The notices are not generated or documented in ORCA so there is no current way to track compliance with this item.

The Department of Law (DOL) provides an initial notice to grandparents so they are aware of the upcoming court hearing. OCS provides notice to foster parents of all administrative reviews for children with a goal of APPLA. Notice for other reviews and court hearings are provided by OCS caseworker staff, and there is not a consistent method for noticing the relatives and foster parents. There is currently not a documentation method that would allow OCS to collect information regarding notification of all hearings and reviews. DOL has proposed a court rule change that would make it easier to notice foster parents for permanency hearing, but it has not passed yet. Although OCS has not developed a strategy to address this item for the Plan for Improvement, OCS management is reviewing this information and it is expected that a strategy will be identified and implemented in the coming year.

2017 Update: In the SWA, Alaska asserts that this item is an area of need, and the Children's Bureau agreed with this assertion. Because there is not a standardized system in all field offices and regions, there is not a method to track notices being received by the caregivers, and because caregivers are not included in all administrative reviews related to children, Item 24 is an area of need for Alaska. The SWA provides additional data about this item and can be found in Appendix B.

Systemic Factor C: Quality Assurance System

While Alaska continues to work towards a CQI process, Alaska has not yet affected a consistent, statewide, data-driven process that assesses, evaluates and informs policy and practice improvements and outcomes based on the totality of the data available to the agency. Alaska understands that strong CQI must demonstrate how data informs the entire agency of program and practice improvements, gaps, strengths, and barriers but data does not necessarily drive practice change, nor does the CQI process fully consider all of the data available consistently across the agency and across the OCS service regions.

Item 25: QA Case Reviews

This was rated as an area needing improvement in the 2008 CFSR. OCS believes this has been improved since that time through development of a strong case review system and the development of the CQI committee. The state is operating an identifiable quality assurance system that is in place in the jurisdictions where the services included in the CFSP are provided, evaluates the quality of services, identifies strengths and needs of the service delivery system, provides relevant reports, and evaluates implemented program improvement measures.

The system mimics the federal CFSR process. Each field office is reviewed at least annually, with the largest metropolitan field office reviewed twice yearly. The review includes case files of children served by the agency under the title IV-B and IV-E plans and interviewing parties in the cases.

Cases are selected through a random selection of cases of children by field office. The review attempts to evaluate 50% of the sample for out-of-home cases and 50% for in-home cases. When there are not a sufficient number of in-home cases, the number of cases reviewed is augmented by out of home cases. A sample of 12 cases is drawn for all field offices except the largest metropolitan area in which 26 cases are drawn. The sampling is conducted two to three months in advance of the review. Both the electronic and paper records are reviewed. The sample is sent to the field office with a due date for a mail in of the paper records.

The review uses the CFSR instrument. OCS began using the federal Online Management System in March 2015. The review encompasses a careful review of safety, permanency, and wellbeing using the 18 item instrument. Phone interviews are conducted with a parent, Tribal representative, foster parent, Guardian Ad Litem, and the assigned caseworker. Other collateral parties such as case providers may be interviewed as case review needs indicate. These interviews are used as part of the information gathering on a case and are documented in the evaluation process. Areas remaining to be resolved are the challenges in reaching parents; phone numbers change frequently. Also, the agency has opted not to reach children by phone out of concern for younger children and for further trauma when there is not a relationship with the reviewer. These two areas remain to be resolved.

Second level QA is conducted on cases by the QA Unit Supervisor. When all cases have been reviewed, the data reports are run by the research analyst and presentations of data are prepared. The review team meets for debriefing and preparation of the written report. The report provides both quantitative findings and comments on the findings by the reviewers. The report is finalized and is forwarded to the management team to include the Director, Deputy Director, Operations Manager, Program Manager and Regional Managers. A video or phone debriefing is then scheduled with the field office in which all staff participates. The findings are provided along with recommendations for change. Regions are then required to respond to the findings through the field office program improvement process.

2015 Update: Alaska maintains a rigorous system of ongoing case reviews, as noted above.

2016 Update: The OCS QA Case Review System is a high functioning component of OCS work. No changes have been made in the Case Review system in the past year. OCS provides a state case review system that summarizes findings of case reviews and identifies areas of strength and need statewide as well as in each field office. More information is provided at the beginning of Section 2 of this report.

2017 Update: The SWA identified the quality assurance system; CFSR Item 25 is an area needing improvement. OCS has many components to build on for an effective Quality Assurance System. Unfortunately, Alaska is not using the data and information collected to make informed decisions or improvements across the child welfare system, on a consistently systematic basis. OCS has a strong QA case review process and large amounts of relevant data available through the case reviews and the ORCA system; however, as a whole, this systemic factor is an area of need because OCS does not have a standardized method to use data collected to consistently inform practice change. The SWA provides additional data about this item and can be found in Appendix B.

CQI Committee

2015 Update: The OCS has established a Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Committee. This group meets monthly and includes: the Division Operations Manager; the Child Welfare Administrator; Social Services Program Administrator; the Continuous Quality Improvement Manager and the five Regional Protective Services Manager IIs.

This group has reviewed federal guidance regarding the CQI requirements. A CQI manual was developed to guide the group in their work. The agency has further refined its system by taking steps to enhance the communication process. This provides for exchange of issues identified through ongoing case reviews, specialized reviews, and use of other SACWIS data. When issues are identified, there is an immediate opportunity to collaborate and engage in problem solving. Changes planned and then implemented are able to be monitored through the committee. The CQI committee is also linked to the Executive Steering Committee (ESC) which has a broader management membership and Tribal partner representation. The ESC may utilize subgroups to develop revised policy and procedures and to engage in program development in response to issues identified through the CQI process.

In spring of 2105, OCS held two successful Data Summit events, involving internal and external (Tribal) stakeholders. The mission of the Data Summits was to enhance the OCS CQI system through providing stakeholder access to OCS data in a user-friendly, digestible way, building a bridge between fieldwork and data to impact practice and improve quality of service to children and families, and to increase managers' capacity to perform analysis of data on their own. As a result of the events, OCS management gained better understanding of stakeholder data needs and began working to develop reports and a data dashboard to allow access to OCS data in a user-friendly way.

2016 Update: The OCS CQI Committee continues to meet monthly and includes: the Division Operations Manager; the Child Welfare Administrator; Social Services Program Administrator; the Continuous Quality Improvement Manager and the five Regional Protective Services Manager IIs. Due to discussions in these meetings, and review of data, the Core Services Meeting in March 2016 was organized. During this meeting and the series of meetings to follow in summer 2016, OCS is reviewing the core services and identifying ways to improve outcomes and track data.

2017 Update: During this past year the OCS Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) committee has continued to meet monthly to review the essential core services needs and mapping out processes to improve outcomes and track data. Due to the findings of the SWA and the CFSR, the OC CQI team will likely be a key component to CQI improvements through the pending Performance Improvement Plan.

Systemic Factor D: Staff and Provider Training

Item 26: Initial Training

2015 Update: The state is operating a staff development and training program providing initial training that includes the basic skills and knowledge required of all staff who deliver services pursuant to the CFSP. OCS and the CWA collaborate to provide training to OCS staff. SKILS training is classroom based training and continues to be the initial training provided to front line staff. New line workers are provided with webinar and teleconference opportunities following attendance at SKILS as well as field training they complete and review with their supervisor. The staff development plan outlines specific training

requirements. Additionally CWA provides training opportunities for OCS supervisors and Social Services Associates, to assist them in development of their unique roles in the agency.

2016 Update: Through partnership with the Child Welfare Academy, OCS continues to provide staff development and training to meet the needs of new staff. Since the last CFSR in 2008, the CWA has made significant changes to a caseworker's initial training. OCS provides an intensive on-boarding training (SKILS) that requires two to three weeks of classroom training which is supported by pre-SKILS online training and post-SKILS "Transfer of Learning" calls following completion of the SKILS classroom modules

SKILS training is classroom based training and continues to be the initial training provided to front line staff. The staff development plan outlines specific training requirements (see Appendix C). New additions to case worker training includes pre-SKILS training that requires workers to take introductory online modules as a prerequisite to the classroom training. Once in the classroom, the training focuses on skill building through practice. When workers complete the SKILS classroom training and return to their offices, workers participate in weekly transfer of learning calls with CWA staff. The transfer of learning calls is in place to assist the worker to transfer classroom knowledge and skills to their field practice. New field workers are also provided with webinar and teleconference opportunities following attendance at SKILS as well as field training they complete and review with their supervisor.

The CWA provides core training for new OCS supervisors and social services associates to assist them in the development of their unique roles in the agency. Supervisors first attend core training aimed at helping them to transition to becoming a supervisor and developing leadership skills. After core training has been completed, supervisors participate in a new program called Coaching Supervisors to Best Practice (CSBP). CSBP is a 22-week program that focuses on supervising the OCS Practice Model through readings, assignments and weekly coaching. The program has proved to be very successful at helping to build practice model expertise and competence in critical thinking and decision making. Supervisors have expressed satisfaction with the program and seasoned supervisors are now requesting to be a part of the program.

CWA provides Social Services Associate (SSA) training 1-2 times per calendar year as needed depending on the need. SSA 140 is for workers who have been hired as SSAs statewide. The training is an introduction to the OCS Practice Model and includes pertinent topics to enhance working with children and families. Throughout the training, there is a focus on the ways SSAs support casework.

The CWA has tried different methods of measurement and evaluation, but continues to struggle with finding the right evaluation method to provide the needed data. CWA has stated they will be working with the CRP chair and utilize his expertise in evaluation to establish a more informed measurement tool.

2017 Update: Although Alaska's SWA asserted that this was an area of strength for the state, after consultation with the Children's Bureau, it was determined that this item is an area needing improvement. OCS has not demonstrated how the skills learned in initial training are applied to the job. The SWA provides additional data about this item and can be found in Appendix B.

Item 27: Ongoing Training

2015 Update: The state is operating a staff development and training program that provides ongoing training for staff that addresses the skills and knowledge needed to carry out their duties with regard to the services included in the CFSP. Throughout the year learning opportunities are available for staff to enhance their knowledge of existing policy and practice and to provide training on policy or practice changes. There have been changes made to the training plan to better meet the training needs of staff. OCS has not yet established a required number of continuing education hours, however mandatory trainings are provided to all staff throughout the year as well as other non-mandatory training opportunities. In the past year, mandatory trainings were provided regarding: title IV-E eligibility, emergency adoption regulations, relative placements and denials and assessment of Future Risk of Abuse/Neglect (FRAN).

2016 Update: OCS continues to provide ongoing training options for staff to address their needs. Trainings and learning opportunities are available in a variety of formats, including classroom, on-site sessions, webinars, e-learning, and micro-learning. The CWA works with the OCS managers to identify training needs and provides onsite training. CWA provides bi-annual reports regarding the number of workers and partners who attend training. In January 2015 – August 2015, 316 workers attended training. In July 2015 – December 2015, 209 workers attended training. CWA offers webinars on topics

specific to child welfare. The webinars are recorded and archived for staff not able to attend the live session. A list of trainings and webinars is provided in Appendix C.

The CWA has an "app" OCS staff can download and use to help them in the field with field guides and resource information. The CWA also maintains a website that keeps a list of online training modules to help keep staff educated on topics related to their work. Lastly, the CWA provides onsite regional training and technical assistance as requested by field staff on issues related to best practice.

OCS has developed "micro-learning" videos as a training tool specific to background checks. The video series includes three videos, each less than 90 seconds in length. The videos provided brief and concise information about the training topic. Staff responded favorably to the training opportunity and OCS is exploring expanding this learning tool and utilizing it for other subjects.

The state provides ongoing training to meet both the needs of new and long term employees, as well as to all levels to staff from support staff to management. OCS state office staff received training on the OCS Practice Model in May. This learning opportunity provides state office staff with increased knowledge and understanding of current field work. Please see the attachments for more information about courses and learning opportunities provided in the past year. The current training plan is attached in Appendix C.

2017 Update: Based on the SWA, Alaska and the Children's Bureau agree that Item 27 is an area needing improvement. Alaska does not have a standardized way to ensure ongoing training is readily available and accessible to all staff statewide to provide them with the skills needed to carry out their work. While Alaska has training available, there is not a systematic way to ensure all staff receives the training as needed and there is not a minimum training hour requirement for ongoing staff. The SWA provides additional data about this item and can be found in Appendix B.

Item 28: Foster Parent Training

The 2008 CFSR final report rated this item as an area in need of improvement because it was determined that foster parents were not receiving sufficient training to carry out their responsibilities. The state provides training for current or prospective foster parents, adoptive parents, and the staff of state-licensed or approved facilities that care for children receiving foster care or adoption assistance under title IV-E. Training addresses the skills and knowledge base needed to carry out their duties with regard to foster and adopted children. Resource Families are able to access a wide array of trainings in a variety of formats.

2015 Update: OCS provides a grant to the ACRF for provide this service. ACRF provides comprehensive training and continuous support services for all current and prospective resource families. Resource families include licensed foster families, and "kinship" or unlicensed relative caregiver families who are responsible for the day-to-day care of children who must reside outside their parent's home due to abuse or neglect. Resource family training and support services provide education and support resource families, and consists of basic training (CORE) for new and returning resource families and specialized, ongoing trainings for current, continuing resource parents. Trainings are provided in a variety of formats and may be available by face-to-face, self-study, small groups, and teleconferences. ACRF training course are provided at no cost to the resource family. Licensed foster homes are required to complete annual training hours to maintain their license.

2016 Update: Through the collaboration with the Alaska Center for Resource Families (ACRF), Alaska provides a comprehensive provider training system available to current or prospective foster parents, adoptive parents, and the staff of state-licensed or approved facilities that care for children receiving foster care or adoption assistance under title IV-E. The training system is available in a variety of formats and there are topics specific to issues and needs of children in custody. Licensed foster homes are required to complete annual training hours to maintain their license. ACRF includes licensed foster care providers and unlicensed relative caregivers in training opportunities. OCS provides a list of onsite training events and distant delivery training offered by ACRF, July 1, 2015 through March 31, 2016. During, July 1, 2015 through March 31, 2016, 1,642 individuals attended an onsite training event and 5,575 self- study hardcopy courses were mailed out or submitted online.

The ACRF conducted a 2015 satisfaction survey in which there were 232 respondents (197 Resource Families, with 37 in the process of becoming foster or adoptive and another 93 identifying as OCS, DJJ, adoption professional or community professional). The most used ACRF services include calling the local offices, using the website for materials, checking the calendar, checking for training documentation or current training record, attending core training or orientation, receiving foster parenting support or information, or requesting information from an ACRF staff person. Over 80% of the respondents

have used ACRF services two or more times; 35% have used ACRF services over five times in the past twelve months. Email, Training Tracks and the web site seem to be the most popular methods people find out about ACRF's services and training events. Overall, ACRF's staff and services received positive feedback. The general theme of suggestions for improvements reflect some common threads:

1. A desire for more intensive and advanced training to keep up with the increasingly challenging behaviors of children coming into care.
2. The need for more training and creative ways to reach out to rural Alaska with training, support and culturally relevant trainings.

Through the collaboration with the ACRF, Alaska provides a comprehensive provider training system. The system is available in a variety of formats and there are topics specific to issues and needs of children in custody.

2017 Update: Alaska's SWA asserted that this was an area of strength for the state; however, after consultation with the Children's Bureau, it was determined that this item is an area needing improvement. Alaska has a comprehensive training curriculum available statewide for current or prospective foster parents. The training addresses the skills and knowledge needed to carry out their duties with and meet the needs of children in care. The state does not have a clear training curriculum for adoptive parents and residential treatment facilities. The SWA provides additional data about this item and can be found in Appendix B.

Systemic Factor E: Services Array and Resource Development

The systemic factor related to Service Array and Resource Development is an area of need in Alaska. Alaska has determined that we do not have a fully functioning/effective service array. Alaska has limited services and not all services are available in all areas of the state.

Item 29: Array of Services

Alaska did not achieve substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Service Array during the CFSR in 2008.

2015 Update: The state provides an array of services that assess the strengths and needs of children and families and determine other service needs, address the needs of families as well as the individual children in order to create a safe home environment, enable children to remain safely with their parents when reasonable, and help children in foster and adoptive placements achieve permanency. The state works to ensure that these services are accessible in all jurisdictions covered in the CFSP, although the vast geographic makeup of the State of Alaska may impede access. Areas of need continue to be identified in Alaska, specific to mental health and substance abuse services. The agency has demonstrated improvements in its provision of services provided through the independent living program for older youth. OCS is currently working to develop an easy to use list related to the services available through OCS contracts and grants, the agency providing the service, and the location of available services.

2016 Update: As referenced in last year's update, OCS has completed and published an online list of the services available through OCS grants, the agency providing the service, and the location of the available services. Work is underway to expand access to information for what services are offered in Alaska communities by both OCS and other Divisions.

The OCS Service Array manages funding and resources aimed at providing a variety of services through grants and/or contracts in the following areas:

- Child Advocacy Centers (CAC)s and the associated Multi-Disciplinary Teams (MDT);
- Family Support Services - primary and secondary prevention and support;
- Family Preservation Services – reducing the need for out-of-home care;
- Family Contact Services – promoting the return of children home following an out-of-home placement;
- Emergency Shelter Services – supporting the needs of youth in transition;
- Mentorship Services – identifying and fostering supportive relationships for youth;
- Independent Living Services – assisting youth in their transition to independence;
- Education and Training Voucher Program – post-secondary education support services for youth;
- Adoption and Legal Guardianship Incentive Award; and
- Adoption and Guardianship Assistance.

2017 Update: The Array of Services was assessed as an area needing improvement. The array of services is not fully functioning, and there are many services that are not available in all communities of Alaska. The services that are available do not have automated or standardized referral processes, and families and workers may not always be aware of what services and resources are available to them. Stakeholder Interviews were facilitated by the Children's Bureau to gather more information about this item; they were held May 2 and 22, 2017. The SWA provides additional data about this item and can be found in Appendix B.

Item 30: Individualizing Services

The service array (see services described in the later referenced "array of services") can be individualized to meet the unique needs of children and families served by the agency. This item was rated as an area needing improvement in the 2008 CFSR final report.

2015 Update: OCS uses flexible funding to establish grants and contracts to meet the needs of children and families in Alaska. OCS is able to authorize funding for specific services needed to meet the needs of children through the life of the case, such as child care, clothing, activities, and more.

Much work has been done in recent years to increase the agency's ability to measure the quality and effectiveness of services; however, this also continues to be a growth area. Developing strong, meaningful collaborations will be critical in achieving conformity in these rating criteria. The agency will continue its many ongoing efforts to address this item. OCS has collaborated with the DPA and DSDS to improve efficiencies in service development to children and families in need. Rural Child Welfare Grants are provided to offer culturally relevant services to Alaska Native children and families.

2016 Update: The service array can be individualized to meet the unique needs of children and families served by the agency. Strong community partnerships, especially those with Tribes, and stakeholder input concerning the array of service needs are important to OCS achieving necessary outcomes for children and families in Alaska. Services Array conducts a variety of ongoing needs assessments ranging from informal conversations with OCS offices around the state, stakeholder surveys, and grantee meetings. Information is collected about emergent needs and needs specific to communities, regions and/or special populations. Services Array is able to individualize services by seeking approval for funding for new contracts for needed services, increasing funding to current grantees based on need, and by collaborating with other divisions, non-profit agencies and Tribes for service delivery.

In the last year, OCS has contracted with a non-profit agency in Cordova, where there is no OCS office located, to assist in providing services to families who are involved with OCS. Services Array also implemented a transportation contract for Southcentral Region in order to assist with their increased needs for transportation services for clients to have access to resources and services to comply with their case plans and for parent/child contact. Work has been underway in the last year on a provider agreement for drug testing services to both reduce administrative burden and to improve general service provision to families experiencing substance abuse issues. A project with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation was implemented to connect transition-aged youth currently or previously in OCS custody who experience a disability, and are in high school at the time of application, with Pre-Employment Transition Services (PETS). Through this work a career conference for youth will be planned in the coming year.

2017 Update: Alaska asserted in the SWA that this item is an area needing improvement due to limited services being available, and individualized services are not always available or accessible to children and families. Stakeholder Interviews were facilitated by the Children's Bureau to gather more information about this item; they were held May 2 and 22, 2017. The SWA provides additional data about this item and can be found in Appendix B.

Systemic Factor F: *Systemic Factor F: Agency Responsiveness to the Community*

Alaska did not achieve substantial conformity for this systemic factor during the 2008 CFSR. Alaska is highly invested in consulting and partnering with stakeholders, and acknowledges the importance of such consultation and collaboration. Collaborative work is central to developing, implementing improving services to support the safety, permanency and well-being for children and families.

2015 Update: The CFSP and enclosed plan for improvement incorporates strategies identified by stakeholders and partners.

2016 Update: Alaska continues to work closely with Tribal and community partners. Throughout this report there are examples of how OCS engages in ongoing consultation and receives feedback from partners in regards to the goals, objectives,

and annual updates to the CFSP. OCS is responsive to the community examples of how feedback and partnership occurs, and how feedback has been used in the past year to improve systems is provided in Section 1 of this report and in the Plan for Improvement located in Section 3. In the coming year OCS Services Array unit will complete a needs assessment.

2017 Update: For the 2017 SWA, this systemic factor was determined to be a strength. Details of the item rating are listed below with the respective item.

Item 31: State Engagement and Consultation with Stakeholders Pursuant to CFSP and APSR

This item was rated as an area needing improvement during the 2008 CFSR because OCS did not have a process to consistently seek input from and engage stakeholders, including local child welfare agency managers and staff in the development of its goals and objectives for state child and family service programs.

The OCS engages with staff, Tribal and community partners in a cycle of continuous quality improvement to successfully implement the provisions of Alaska's CFSP and develop the related APSR. Meaningful engagement with internal and external stakeholders occurs throughout our continuous improvement cycle, which includes identifying a need, defining the problem, assessing the problem, planning strategies for intervention, implementing the interventions, and monitoring the results.

Alaska's 2015-2019 CFSP was developed with input and recommendations provided by key statewide external stakeholder groups during regularly scheduled monthly or annual meetings. These groups include: TSCG, CIP, Alaska CRP, FFCA, OCS grantees, RFAB, CJATF, Early Childhood Protective Services Committee, the ESC, the SLC, and the Health Oversight Committee. The concerns and feedback from these groups directly influence the development and implementation of CFSP goals and objectives. For example: earlier interventions with families, better collaboration with community providers, quality case plans, stronger assessment of resource families, increased placement with relatives/ stronger supports for relative caregivers, retention of caseworkers and smaller caseloads for caseworkers were repeatedly identified by overlapping stakeholders as being essential to achieve in order to enhance the state's child welfare system.

Consequently, all of these concepts are incorporated into Alaska's 2015-2019 Plan for Improvement. Additionally, statewide surveys of stakeholder groups, facilitated by the OCS Quality Assurance Unit, enable OCS to obtain detailed information with which to gauge the effectiveness of the state's child and family services programs and identify areas for improvement. In 2013, OCS staff, Alaska Tribes, resource families and reunified parents were all surveyed. A central theme that emerged from the information gathered from these surveys is the importance of the relationship that the OCS caseworker develops with foster parents, Tribal staff and birth parents; and that it is the quality of this relationship for which the "success" of a case is dependent. Meanwhile, staff surveys and exit interviews with case workers who have resigned from the agency, repeatedly cite heavy caseload burdens as a major reason for why they are unable to achieve meaningful field work activities. This information was used in development of the CFSP.

2015 Update: In implementing the provisions of the CFSP and developing related APSRs, the state has engaged in ongoing consultation with Tribal representatives, consumers, service providers, foster care providers, the juvenile court, and other public and private child- and family-serving agencies, and includes the major concerns of these representatives in the goals, objectives, and annual updates of the CFSP. OCS continues to consistently meet and consult with key statewide external stakeholder groups during regularly scheduled meetings and teleconferences. These groups include: TSCG, CIP, Alaska CRP, FFCA, OCS grantees, Foster Parent Advisory Board, CJATF, Early Childhood Protective Services Committee, the Staff Advisory Board, the ESC, and other departmental partners such as DJJ, DPA, and DSDS. Section 1 of this report provides additional information about these partnerships and ongoing opportunities for engagement regarding the CFSP and APSR.

2016 Update: With the identification of this as an area of need, OCS worked with internal partners to develop supportive and engaging opportunities to receive staff input regarding programs, goals, and strategies. In 2009 the ESC was developed, in 2010 the SLC was developed, and in 2012 the Staff Advisory Board was established. OCS also made active efforts to solidify and develop partnerships with external stakeholders, examples of this include ongoing partnership with the TSCG and FFCA and the 2010 development of the RFAB.

In addition to the examples listed above who participated in development of the CFSP, OCS routinely engages with and solicits feedback and ideas from numerous and diverse statewide partners as a means of reviewing and assessing the identified priorities and strategies to improve outcomes and services to children and families. Stakeholder input is gathered throughout the year during ongoing program or population specific workgroups and committee meetings at state and local levels. These

include but are not limited to: TSCG, CIP, Alaska CRP, FFCA, OCS grantees, RFAB and CJATF, the ESC, the SLC, the Health Oversight Committee, DBH, DPA, DJJ, DSDS, and other local and statewide partners.

OCS shares data on the OCS website so that staff and stakeholders are informed of the division's strengths, areas needing improvement, and progress. The CFSP and APSR are available on the state website for access by staff, partners, and the public. OCS recently updated the statistics and data on the website after receiving feedback that the information was not user friendly and was difficult to understand. OCS has received positive feedback about the updated data pages.

Taking into account the input received from stakeholders, the Division defined priorities and strategies as part of the Child and Family Services Plan 2015-2019 to improve safety, permanency, and well-being of children by addressing root problems. As part of the ongoing process, OCS identified the following priorities and strategies for the CFSP:

Priority #1: Assess and Address Risk and Need
- Strategy 1.A: Standardize and enhance decisions at Intake and Initial Assessments
- Strategy 1.B: Timely, Quality Case Plans & Permanency Goals
- Strategy 1.C: Resource Family Assessment and Support

Priority #2: Timely & Safe Permanent Homes for Children/Youth
- Strategy 2.A: In-Home Services/Resource Linkages/Parent Support
- Strategy 2.B: Team Meeting Restructure
- Strategy 2.C: Early Identification of Relatives

Priority #3: Continuous Quality Improvement
- Strategy 3.A: Implementation of the OCS CQI Plan

OCS utilizes continuous engagement opportunities to seek feedback about the plan for improvement, through inclusion of internal and external stakeholders in quarterly teleconferences about the CFSP and APSR, inclusion on policy group and other committees and workgroups, and collaborative efforts with subject matter experts when issues arise. OCS will continue these efforts in the coming year.

2017 Update: In the SWA, Alaska assessed that the State Engagement and Consultation with Stakeholders with respect to the CFSP and the APSR was a strength area, and the Children's Bureau agreed with the assertion. OCS engages and seeks feedback from internal and external partners. Tribal and community partners are included in identifying concerns, reviewing data, and developing and implementing change efforts. The CFSP and related APSRs were developed with input and through ongoing consultation with Tribal representatives, consumers, service providers, foster care providers, the juvenile court, and other public and private child- and family-serving agencies. OCS has documented that Alaska engages partners and utilizes the feedback from them to improve policy and practice. The SWA provides additional data about this item and can be found in Appendix B.

Item 32: Coordination of CFSP Services with Other Federal Programs

This was rated as an area of strength in the 2008 CFSR because OCS has collaborative efforts among federal and federally-funded assisted programs.

2015 Update: This continues to be an area of strength for the state, as demonstrated by ongoing collaboration and coordination with partners. The state's services under the CFSP are coordinated with services or benefits of other federal or federally assisted programs serving the same population. OCS continues to partner closely with the following agencies: the DBH for mental health and substance abuse services; DJJ; CACs; Alaska Children's Trust; CIP; DPA (TANF and child care services); Department of Revenue for Child Support; DSDS; Department of Public Safety; Social Security Administration; DOL; Department of Labor (Workforce Investment Act); and the DHSS Bureau of Vital Statistics. OCS has memoranda of agreements with the Department of Education; Department of Public Safety; Department of Revenue and numerous Tribes/Tribal entities that outline the agency collaborative efforts and responsibilities for children in the purview of the Alaska's child welfare system. Additionally, the DHSS Directors work cooperatively to resolve departmental issues that arise.

2016 Update: The OCS has a fully functioning statewide system to coordinate services under the CFSP with services or benefits provided by other federal or federally assisted programs serving the same population. The divisions in the DHSS have collaborated to identify partnerships and interdependencies, and then identified ways to reduce duplication and improve

efficiencies. Through coordination with other federally-funded programs, the DHSS hopes to improve services and outcomes to children and families, while maximizing the funding opportunities. OCS relies on close relationships with a wide range of partners and interdependencies to improve the outcomes for Alaskan children and families. Specific examples of such partnerships include working with the following:

- Title XIX medical eligibility: OCS has partnered with other divisions to insure a seamless transition for former foster care youth in accessing Medicaid until age 26.
- Title IV-E eligibility: OCS has focused on meaningful process changes to better leverage federal dollars and services from other agencies.
- Division of Behavioral Health – Through collaboration efforts, DBH is able to leverage existing grants and services so that OCS clients can benefit. The DBH is working to enroll more Medicaid providers to meet the needs of children and families in Alaska. OCS also works closely with DBH on medical-necessity determinations for children in need of residential or psychiatric residential care.
- Division of Health Care Services and Department of Public Safety: OCS partners with these agencies to ensure timely and accurate background checks are received for OCS resource families. OCS has reimbursable billing agreements with both agencies to pay for background checks and fingerprints completed.
- Division of Public Assistance: OCS has partnered with DPA to leverage TANF federal dollars towards existing OCS services.
- Infant Learning Program: Child protective services partners with the Infant Learning Program for the early identification of young children with developmental, cognitive and physical delays, for early intervention.
- Social Security Administration: OCS successfully completed a Social Security Audit in August 2015.
- Tribal partners: OCS and Tribal partners have worked together on the Tribal title IV-E partnership since the late 1990s. The purpose of the Tribal title IV-E reimbursement program is to pass federal title IV-E funds to the Tribe/Tribal entities through the OCS to increase child welfare services to Tribal citizens. The program allows the OCS to make title IV-E foster care administration funds and title IV-E training funds available to the Tribe/Tribal Entity as a reimbursement for expenses incurred by Tribe/Tribal entity. OCS currently has agreements with 11 Tribes/Tribal entities and is actively seeking new partners across the state. In addition, OCS is currently in the initial implementation phase with two Tribal title IV-E maintenance partners.

As the title IV-B/title IV-E agency, the OCS shares information with the following partners through approved memorandum of agreement (MOA) to: access services for children or families, verify income and resources for parents to determine eligibility, verify eligibility for services, monitor health care services, locate potential resources, and provide legal documentation for children by obtaining their birth certificates. MOAs assist in collaboration efforts with Department of Revenue (Permanent Fund Dividend), Department of Education, and Bureau of Vital Statistics. In the coming year, OCS will continue to coordinate services with these agencies to create improvements and efficiencies in service delivery for Alaskans.

2017 Update: In the SWA, Alaska assessed this item as a strength, and the Children's Bureau agreed with the assertion. OCS is working closely with partners to ensure that the state's services under the CFSP are coordinated with services or benefits of other federal or federally-assisted programs serving the same population. Through partnership and collaborative opportunities, OCS is able to maximize the efforts to improve services to children and families and address the objectives in the CFSP. The provisions of the CFSP are coordinated with services or benefits of other federal or federally-assisted programs serving the same population. OCS has a close partnership with other state and private agencies, Tribal organizations, and community partners to ensure funds are used in an effective manner to support services to children and families. The SWA provides additional data about this item and can be found in Appendix B.

Systemic Factor G: Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention

Item 33: Standards Applied Equally

This item was rated as strength during the 2008 CFSR Alaska claims title IV-E funds only for children placed in fully licensed foster homes. The standards are applied to all licensed or approved foster family homes or child care institutions receiving title IV-B or IV-E funds.

2015 Update: A title IV-E audit is scheduled in November 2015 and will provide additional information about the compliance with IV-E funding.

2016 Update: The Children's Bureau, Administration for Children and Families conducted a secondary review of the Alaska title IV-E foster care program during the week of November 16, 2015, in accordance with federal provisions as part 45, section 1356.71 of the code of Federal Regulations. The Children's Bureau determined that Alaska was in substantial compliance with federal eligibility requirements and the next federal title IV-E review will be a primary review held within three years.

2017 Update: In the SWA, Item 33, was assessed as a strength because Alaska applies the licensing and adoption or guardianship home study standards equally, on a statewide basis. The Children's Bureau agreed with the assertion. The SWA provides additional data about this item and can be found in Appendix B.

Item 34: Requirements for Criminal Background Checks

The 2008 CFSR final report identified this item as an area of strength because criminal background checks are completed on all foster, adoptive, and relative placement homes. The state complies with federal requirements for criminal background clearances as related to licensing or approving foster care and adoptive placements and has provisions for addressing the safety of foster care and adoptive placements for children.

2015 Update: In SFY15 new fingerprint equipment was installed and changes to the State of Alaska Background Check Program system have assisted OCS in continuing to demonstrate compliance in this area. Background checks are completed consistently for licensed, unlicensed, and adoptive resource families and fingerprint results are received timely.

2016 Update: The state remains in compliance with federal requirements for criminal background clearance related to licensing or approving foster care and adoptive placements. Fingerprint-based criminal background clearance checks are completed on all foster parents, unlicensed relative and pre-adoptive or adoptive homes through the Division of Health Care Services (HCS), Background Check Program (BCP). A fingerprint-based background check conducted by the BCP consists of two parts. The first is a name-based search requiring review of at least ten registries available to the department. The second consist of a review of fingerprint-based criminal state and FBI history results. The combined review of both name-based and fingerprint based searches are required prior to an individual receiving an "eligible" determination.

The New Alaska Background Check System (NABCS) is the DHSS program for the processing of criminal history check for individuals in contact with Alaska's vulnerable populations receiving services in licensed and/or certified entities. NABCS became accessible to OCS in November 2015; since then OCS has seen improvements in the timeliness of background check information. In the past, the average time from submitting fingerprints to the receipt of the results were between three to six months. Now, with NABCS and new OCS Live Scan machines, the average time for fingerprint results from submitting fingerprints to the receipt is six days.

Alaska state statutes and regulations allow for a variance of barrier crimes or conditions through a departmental barrier crimes variance committee. In Alaska, the barrier crimes and conditions are more restrictive then the title IV-E requirements. Alaska has a process to allow variances for barrier crimes or conditions to be approved when the barring issue does not pose a safety threat to children in custody.

2017 Update: In the SWA Alaska asserted that this item was a strength; however, after consultation with the Children's Bureau, Alaska concedes that this is an area needing improvement. The reason for the change is there was insufficient data provided regarding the monitoring of flag hits, limited tracking and data regarding investigations, and no information about how often barriers are identified after an initial approval. The SWA provides additional data about this item and can be found in Appendix B.

Item 35: Diligent Recruitment of Foster and Adoptive Homes

The 2008 CFSR final report identified this item as an area in need of improvement.

2015 Update: Statewide and regional recruitment and retention plans are used by OCS to prepare and plan for the diligent recruitment needed to meet the needs of Alaskan children and families. OCS utilizes a variety of child specific recruitment techniques such as Wendy's Wonderful Kids and three adoption exchanges. Additionally, OCS participates in ongoing community collaboration and individual recruitment to meet the needs in all areas of the state.

The ongoing issue related to the disproportionate rate of Alaska Native children in care is a challenge for the agency, but with that OCS has chosen to focus on early identification of relatives. A pilot project was completed in the OCS Western Region to

enhance and support relative requests for placement. This specific item is addressed in the CFSP objective 2.C.1. In the past year OCS utilized a variety of methods to recruit foster and adoptive homes. There has also been a workgroup to work on recruitment in OCS Western Region. The workgroup has focused on identification of an emergency shelter home, and is a collaborative effort with community and Tribal partners. Here are a few highlighted activities from the past year:

- OCS has utilized Facebook to advertise the need for resource families.
- OCS purchased an ad in Alaska Nursing Today to recruit for homes to serve children with complex medical needs.
- Recruitment events in medical care facilities to recruit for homes to serve children with complex medical needs.
- Recruitment booth at the Alaska State High School Basketball Tournament.
- A variety of local events including presentation at service organization meetings and booths at community events.
- Retention events such as National Adoption Day celebrations and foster parent appreciation gatherings.

2016 Update: OCS has a process in place to ensure the diligent recruitment of foster and adoptive families who reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of children for whom foster and adoptive homes are needed. On 5/16/16, there were 1,631 Native children in out-of-home placement, and 298 licensed foster care homes that may be considered an ICWA placement preference. These numbers indicate the disproportionality between the number of Native children in out-of-home placement and the number of foster homes that may be considered an ICWA preference placement. OCS strives for children to be placed in the highest possible ICWA placement preference and for this reason, continues to actively work to recruit homes that may be identified as an ICWA placement preference. OCS partners closely with Tribes across the state to recruit and retain foster homes.

Statewide and regional recruitment and retention plans are used by OCS to prepare and plan for the diligent recruitment to meet the needs of Alaskan children. Each region develops a regional recruitment and retention plan to identify needs in their communities. Regional teams are comprised of OCS staff (licensing specialists, protective services specialists, ICWA specialists and permanency planning specialists), community and Tribal partners and resource families. The regional teams meet quarterly to review overall effectiveness of the plans. Goals and objectives are established by the regional teams to support the existing resource families (licensed, unlicensed, adoptive and guardianship), and to also recruit new families. Each region has identified a need for an increase in foster homes for children with complex medical needs, large sibling groups, teens, and foster homes that may be considered an ICWA preference placement. The SFY 17 regional recruitment and retentions plans will indicate baseline data and the increased outcome for each region for the above target populations.

Below are highlights of the recruitment work in the past year, which demonstrate the OCS commitment to diligent recruitment of resource families:

- "One Child" and 'Alaska Native Foster Homes" television commercials were run as 30 second advertisements with the Alaska Broadcaster Association for three months. The commercials featured former foster children and the Director of the Office of Children's Services. The hyperlinks are available to open to view the commercials.

- The Western Region SDR team continued to meet during SFY 16 to address the need for therapeutic foster care, emergency shelter care, and on-going support for existing resource families (licensed, unlicensed, guardianship and adoptive). WRO recruitment and retention efforts include:

    - During SFY 16, two emergency shelter care homes were licensed for the Western Region;
    - Advertisements were run at the local movie theater located in Bethel during December 2016;
    - The Western Region workgroup in partnership with ACRF and Alaska Child and Family (AK C&F) provided onsite training for resource families in May 2016. The event was held in conjunction with May foster parent appreciation month;
    - WRO SDR team, AK C&F and YKHC are working together to strengthen partnership with Tribal and private health care providers. AK C&F continues to provide support with Kalskag schools, and is reaching out to Upper Kuskokwim Schools to begin increased partnership; and
    - Beginning in April 2016, the WRO licensing unit began providing outreach to the unlicensed relative resource families located in the Western Region. A work plan was developed by the OCS licensing manager, WRO protective services manager and the WRO licensing supervisor.

- In April, Anchorage licensing staff worked with a writer from "The Alaska Nurse" magazine. The article focused on the need for foster parents to provide services for children with complex medical conditions, teens, sibling groups and Alaska Native children.

- The Fostering Hope Coalition continued to meet in SFY 16 and identified a goal target of finding adoptive parents for legally free children. As part of this initiative, Beacon Hill in partnership with OCS and ACRF has been working on re-commissioning the Heart Gallery and revamping the adoption exchange.

- During SFY 16, OCS has reached out to local movie theaters to inquire about possible "screen time" for short advertisements on the need for resource families throughout the state. Juneau and Ketchikan movie theaters have agreed to air the PSA for foster care recruitment as part of the previews beginning in May 2016.

- In April, OCS staff collaborated with Tribal partners and the local child placement agency to host a recruitment event in Juneau. The event was held at a local salmon hatchery. Alaska's First Lady was present to support and encourage foster parents (this is one of several events she has attended to support the need for foster parents in Alaska).

2017 Update: OCS identified this item as a strength in the 2017 SWA, however, after consultation with the Children's Bureau, it was determined to be an area needing improvement. This item needs improvement because there is a discrepancy between the number of kids needing permanency and the available foster homes, as well as the lack of reliable data to measure and adjust R&R plans when needed. The SWA provides additional data about this item and can be found in Appendix B.

Item 36: State Use of Cross-Jurisdictional Resources for Permanent Placements

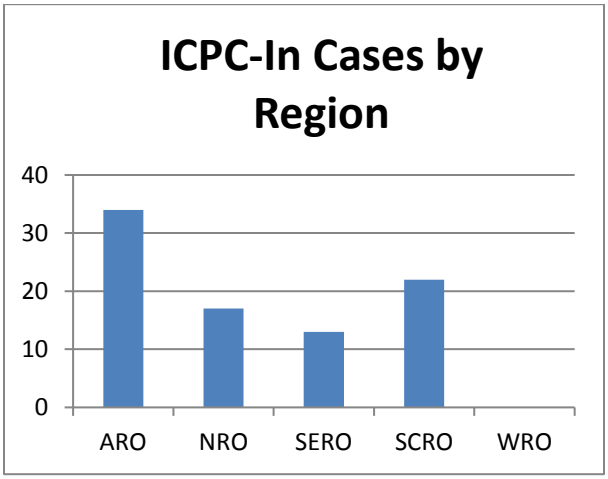
The 2008 CFSR reported this as a strength Alaska has in place a process for the effective use of cross-jurisdictional resources to facilitate timely adoptive or permanent placements for waiting children.

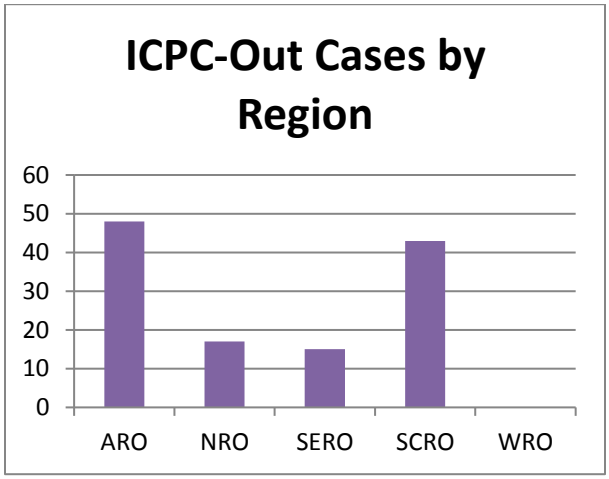
2015 Update: OCS continues to manage the Alaska Adoption Exchange and contracts with the Northwest Adoption Exchange to list children on the Northwest Adoption Exchange and the AdoptUSKids exchanges. Wendy's Wonderful Kids (WWK) continues to be utilized in Alaska. OCS works closely with the Catholic Social Services WWK recruiter in Anchorage. The PARKA (Preparation of Adoption Readiness for Kids in Alaska) program is funded by a contract with the ACRF and continues to be utilized to recruit, train and assist with matching children with potential adoptive families.

2016 Update: OCS continues to manage the Alaska Adoption Exchange and contracts with the Northwest Adoption Exchange to list children on the Northwest Adoption Exchange and the AdoptUSKids exchanges. In the last year, OCS has begun to work with an additional adoption exchange site called "A Family for Every Child" for photo listings.

Catholic Social Services' WWK program continues to be utilized in the Anchorage and Southcentral regions. WWK works to facilitate diligent child specific recruitment for legally free children who do not have an identified permanent home. OCS works closely with the WWK recruiter in Anchorage to make referrals and to work on finding connections and potential placement resources for the child. The PARKA program is funded by a contract with the ACRF and continues to be utilized to provide intensive training, preparation, matching and support to families who are motivated to adopt special needs children from foster care. This program has gained increased recognition in Alaska and has become a source of recruitment for foster families interested in adoption. Recently, a strong partnership has developed between WWK and the PARKA program to enhance matching of special needs children who are legally free with families who have received intensive training and preparation to adopt.

The State of Alaska is a member of the Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children (ICPC) and is bound by the Compact's regulations. Alaska Statute and OCS policy supports the ICPC regulations. ICPC cases are divided into ICPC-out cases, in which children in the custody of Alaska OCS may be sent to other states, and ICPC-in cases, in which children from other states may be placed in Alaska to live with parents, relatives, or other foster care providers. On March 31, 2016, there were 223 Alaska children involved in 158 ICPC-Out cases, and 136 children in 86 ICPC-In cases.





Source: ICPC database and ORCA (3/31/2016)

ICPC regulations provide for 60 days to complete non-expedited home studies. It allows for an extension up to 75 days in cases where circumstances beyond the control of the agency do not allow for all necessary information to be gathered within the 60 day window. Below is data indicating the percentage of ICPC home studies completed within 60 days. Data used for this determination is from the OCS ORCA database, specifically from the ICPC record for each home study request. These studies include parent, relative, relative foster care, non-relative foster care and adoption study requests.

Table 3: Completion time for ICPC-in home studies by calendar year:

Year	Completed in 60 Days	Percentage in 60 Days	Completed in 90 Days	Percentage in 90 Days	Incomplete	Total
2012	28	33.7%	42	50.6%	2	85
2013	36	33.6%	63	58.9%	0	107
2014	37	27.4%	60	60.6%	0	99
2015	30	45.4%	45	68.2%	12	78

Source: State of Alaska (SOA) Online Resources for Children in Alaska (ORCA) Report (3/31/2016)

Table 4: Completion time for ICPC-out home studies by calendar year:

Year	Completed in 60 Days	Percentage in 60 Days	Completed in 90 Days	Percentage in 90 Days	Incomplete	Total
2012	39	29.1%	58	50.7%	3	137
2013	71	41.8%	104	61.2%	4	174
2014	60	41.7%	93	64.6%	4	148
2015	50	44.2%	74	65.5%	33	146

Source: State of Alaska (SOA) Online Resources for Children in Alaska (ORCA) Report (3/31/2016)

Based on all home studies received from another state in calendar year 2015, 45.4% were completed within 60 days of the request and 68.2% were completed within 90 days of the request. Based on all home studies completed by the State of Alaska for another requesting state in calendar year 2015, 44.2% were completed in 60 days and 65.5% were completed within 90 days of the request.

2017 Update: In the SWA, Alaska identified this item as an area needing improvement; the Children's Bureau concurred with the assertion. Alaska does not have a fully functioning system to ensure successful placement across region or state lines, for this reason, Item 36 is assessed as an area needing improvement. Although Alaska has methods to facilitate inter- and intra-jurisdictional placements, the practice is inconsistent and timelines are not met consistently or timely. The SWA provides additional data about this item and can be found in Appendix B.

SECTION 3: UPDATE TO THE PLAN FOR IMPROVEMENT AND PROGRESS MADE TO IMPROVE OUTCOMES

2015 Update: Beginning in January 2015, OCS facilitated meetings to gather additional feedback and input regarding the recently approved CFSP Plan for Improvement. Stakeholders who engaged in these opportunities included OCS managers and supervisor, Tribal partners, and representatives from DOL, CIP, CWA, FFCA, and others. The priorities and strategies identified in the 2015-2019 CFSP will continue to be the focus of OCS**.** Collaborative meetings occurred in January, April, and March to allow internal and external partners opportunity for input on the state assessment, updates needed to the CFSP, and development of the APSR. Data from the CQI/QA unit reviews, as well as federal reporting data from the SACWIS system have also been used to assess progress. There has not been a recent CFSR or title IV-E Foster Care Eligibility Review in Alaska in the past year; however, Alaska is scheduled for a review in November 2015. OCS does incorporate items anticipated to require a program improvement plan in the future.

There have been modifications and alignment of objectives, completion dates, and proposed outcomes based on stakeholder input. In the last year, OCS has focused on centralizing intake functions. This is a large undertaking given the number of communities in Alaska. It is the belief of OCS management that consistent screening decisions will significantly improve outcomes with children and families. Vacancies and staff turnover, coupled with caseloads that have grown significantly in the past year, are part of the reason some areas do not show progress. An additional focus for OCS in SFY15 has been to modify how maltreatment findings are made. In February 2015, OCS implemented a new statewide process; it is anticipated that OCS may see an increase in the rate of maltreatment due to this change.

The 2017 APSR will include a column to document feedback loops and collaborative efforts on each objective. There are several objectives in place to address identified areas needing improvement identified in the assessment of performance using QA and AFCARS data, as well as the state performance workbook. Specific objectives to address the repeat maltreatment, permanency outcomes, and placement stability are included in this plan for improvement.

2016 Update: OCS is making progress on developing and implementing the identified strategies and objectives. The data provided throughout this report continues to show that the identified priorities and strategies continue to be urgent for Alaska, if the agency is going to improve outcomes related to the CFSR standards. OCS has successfully completed priority #3 related to CQI; although the objectives have been successfully completed and the strategies have been implemented, these strategies will continue to be important methods to track, review, and analyze information related to the safety, permanency and well-being.

As stated previously in this report, during 2016 OCS leadership identified specific core services. The core services are fundamental to all aspects of OCS work, as the focus on areas that will affect outcomes for children and families through the life of a case. The objectives and strategies in the Plan for Improvement provide focus on those areas. Data continues to support the priorities and strategies in the plan as methods to improve outcomes for children and families and to provide a more comprehensive, coordinated and effective child and family services continuum. OCS does not have a current Program Improvement Plan (PIP) in place for any programs; however it is anticipated that following the completion of the CFSR, a PIP will be required. OCS believes the items identified in the Plan for Improvement are representative of the issues that will be identified in the CFSR as areas of need. In the past year, no new goals or objectives have been added to the plan. The matrix located on the following pages has been updated to reflect modifications to timelines and updates regarding the state's progress on each item.

2017 Update: After completion of the CFSR, OCS anticipates receiving findings for a PIP development. OCS has begun working on planning the upcoming PIP. OCS intends to modify the CFSP Plan for Improvement to incorporate the PIP items and eliminate items that do not tie closely to the CFSR findings. For this year, OCS is providing an update to the following table and the items identified in the CFSP and updated in previous APSRs:

Child and Family Services Plan for Improvement

Priority #1: Assess and Address Risk and Need

1.A	Strategy: Standardize and enhance decisions at Intake and Initial Assessments			
Objectives		Measure of Progress and Timeline	Projected Outcomes	Updates /Comments
1.A.1	Refine and continue efforts to standardize and make safe intake screening decisions statewide.	• Standardized screening criteria policy finalized. • Develop and implement a CQI tool to measure the accuracy of the intake screening decisions by July 2016. • Screening decisions will be accurate in 70% of cases by 2017 and 90% of cases by 2019. • Centralize Intake statewide by January 2019.	Reduce Repeat Maltreatment Initial Assessments will be completed in a timely manner. Accuracy of screening decisions will increase.	2015: Work group established and work plan developed to outline tasks and implementation in process. Based on feedback received from internal and external stakeholders, OCS has changed the timeline for completion of this objective. Community messaging, human resource work regarding position locations, and work space issues will need to be addressed in the coming year. **Projected outcomes have been changed. Repeat Maltreatment and timely completion of IAs will be measured through SACWIS data. The accuracy of screening decisions will be measured by the CQI tool being developed. 2016: OCS continues to work towards centralizing intake functions; this means a unit of intake staff in one location with one manager overseeing this work. The Protective Services Manager I for this unit has been hired and is transitioning into the position. The Protective Services Specialist IV (supervisor) positions are expected to be relocated and in place by 07/2017. The implementation of this objective was been delayed due to the HR process and full implementation date has been changed to January 2019 after careful consideration of input from internal and external stakeholders. OCS is continuing discussions with Tribal and community partners regarding the centralized intake functions, to respond to questions and concerns regarding this strategy. **2017 Update:** The first steps toward Centralized Intake were taken in July 2016. A Protective Services Manager I was hired to supervise and oversee all Intake supervisors. The initial months focused on identifying areas of Intake that needed increased consistency or policy development. A workgroup was established to develop a

				consistent method of writing Protective Services Reports, workload balancing among the Intake workers in each region, and technology changes were implemented. OCS has been working to design a hotline system to improve OCS ability to answer calls throughout the state in a timely manner, with a prioritization for law enforcement agencies. This update is expected to go live in the summer of 2017, along with one reporting email address and expanded Intake hours to cover from 7am to midnight. Training was designed for Intake workers, with a focus on geographical and cultural differences, sufficient data collection, critical thinking, and customer service. Tribal partners have participated in workgroups and provided suggestions throughout the development process. Some recommendations from Tribal partners that have been successfully implemented include hiring externally, adding Tribal contact information to every PSR, and the creation of a new data report to help analyze disproportionality data at the Intake level.
1.A.2	Ensure accurate risk assessments and impending danger assessments (IDAAs) are completed and the appropriate intervention/case decision is selected.	• Case Review data monitoring (ongoing). • Case Review data indicates 75% achievement by June 2017and 90% by June 2018.	Reduce Repeat Maltreatment	2015: FRAN and IDAA training completed. Coaching / Mentoring position in Anchorage began. Data from QA reviews utilize the old CFSR instrument. Of 255 cases reviewed in CY 14, 67% were in compliance for item 4 (safety and risk assessment). 2016: A workgroup has been identified to work on this goal. QA data for CY15 shows that 45% of the cases assessed for Item 3 (Risk and Safety Assessment and Management) were found to be in compliance. This is an area of needed growth for OCS. Dates to achieve this objective by have been changed. **2017 Update:** The workgroup is implementing practice changes that impact case work in addition to timely completion and is exploring the definition of risk and how to serve this high risk population.
1.A.3	Ensure Initial Assessments are completed in a timely and accurate manner.	ORCA and Case Review data monitoring will indicate timely completion and accurate assessments in 75% of cases by June 2019.	Reduce Repeat Maltreatment	2015: No progress on this objective, as centralized intake has been the primary focus this year. IA completion will be a target in the next two years, we a goal date of June 2017. OCS will report work on this goal with the 2017 APSR. In calendar year 2014, IA

				completion compliance rate, meaning the IA was completed within 45 days, was 17.7% statewide. In CY 2013, this was 20.9%. 2016: In calendar year 2015, OCS completed 7,760 Initial Assessments (IA). The IA completion compliance rate (meaning the IA was completed within 45 days) was 15.6% statewide. In CY 2014, this was 17.7%. The timely completion of IAs has decreased 2%. Completion date of this goal was changed through discussion with the Director's Executive Team. Work is occurring on this objective, through the Core Services focus driven by the OCS management team. Each month the Division Operations Manager reviews data related to this item with the regional managers. OCS is updating the Initial Assessment policy to include clear guidance regarding documentation requirements. OCS is implementing the "Rapid Response! System" for cases with children under the age of three. **2017 Update:** A workgroup is analyzing data in order to make changes. OCS anticipates that in 2017 new procedures will be implemented to streamline the safety assessment process.
1.B	Strategy: Timely, Quality Case Plans & Permanency Goals			
Objectives		Measure of Progress and Timeline	Projected Outcomes	Updates /Comments
1.B.1	Support implementation efforts already underway to ensure Family Service Assessments/Case Plans are completed in an individualized, timely and family-centered manner for all parents and children.	ORCA data will indicate that 95% of out of home cases have a current case plan. Case plans will be completed within 60 days of removal. Case Review data will indicate statewide achievement of 75% for Well-being Outcome 1, indicating that parents and children are involved in the process, and accurately have their needs assessed and addressed by June 2017.	Increase Timely Permanency	2015: No work completed on this objective. OCS will report on this goal in the 2017 APSR. 6/15/15 data shows 57% of cases with a child out of the home for 60 days or more have a current case plan. *Measure of progress language has been changed for this objective. 2016: A workgroup was established to review case plans and case worker visits. Pilot sites have been identified to utilize carbon copy case plans in the field, to engage parents in actively participating in case planning. On 4/26/16 ORCA data showed that 65.8% of cases with a child out of the home for 60+ days had a current case plan. This is an increase since last year and is positive for OCS

				to show growth in documentation of case plans. QA data from CY 2015 shows a compliance rate of 29% statewide with item 13. Item 13 is related to the family and child engagement in case planning and measures qualitative and quantitative compliance. **2017 Update:** In CY2016 a new hand-written, carbon copy case plan was launched statewide. This is an effort to ensure that case plan development engages parents, children and placement providers. In addition to this practice change, OCS has moved away from the use of protective capacities and embraced the Strengthening Families model and the use of Protective Factors.
1.B.2	Improve the timeliness to permanency for children under the age of five through development of programming to meet the child's specific needs.	90% of children under the age of five will be placed in a potentially permanent placement within 13 months of being in care.	Increase Timely Permanency	2015: No work completed on this objective OCS will report on this goal in the 2017 APSR. 6/15/15 data shows 337 children under age 5 have been in OOH care 13 months or longer. Of these, 271 (80%) are in a potentially permanent placement. This is an area of need identified in Alaska; this will be an area of focus in the coming year. OCS is developing a plan to realign positions to increase focus on timely permanency. Additionally, OCS is reviewing the accuracy of data related to timeliness of documenting the pre-adoptive homes. At this time, no specific data is being provided, as we are reviewing the policy and make changes in the documentation expectations for this data element. 2016: OCS permanency specialists and ICWA specialists are working on a permanency project to improve timeliness to permanency for children. In January 2016 the SCRO began focused efforts on improving timeliness to permanency. ORCA data on 4/26/16 shows 616 children under age 5 have been in OOH care 13 months or longer; this is a significant increase since last year. Of these children, 510 (82.8%) are in a potentially permanent placement. This is a slight increase since last year. OCS is developing strategies to address permanency needs for all children. More specific strategies are expected in the next year. **2017 Update:** OCS permanency and ICWA specialists have continued working to improve timeliness to permanency. OCS has monthly

				permanency meetings with statewide managers to review permanency data from each region and discuss regional efforts to increase timely permanency. With these efforts, OCS has seen a large increase in overall achievement of permanency for children and youth in SFY 2017. On 6/5/2017 495 children under age five were in OOH care for 13 months or more. Of these children, 339 (68.5%) are in a potentially permanent placement. Data correction, please note: The 2016 numbers for potentially permanent placements (82.8%) was not accurate as expired permanency plans were being counted as being potentially permanent placements inflating the percentage being counted as potentially permanent.
1.B.3	Increase timeliness of reunification and other permanency goals through implementation of alternative planning, transition planning, timely permanency goal setting and changing.	Case Review data will indicate improvements in statewide timely achievement of permanency goals and OCS will achieve 85% for calendar year 2015, and 90% for calendar year 2016 for Item 7 (Permanency Goal for Child)	Increase Timely Permanency Reduce the number of children in foster/reduce caseloads	2015: A permanency conference facilitated by Facing Foster Care in Alaska, in collaboration with the OCS Independent Living Program staff. This conference focused on needs for older youth. Data from QA reviews utilize the old CFSR instrument. Of 100 cases reviewed for this item in CY 14, 66% were in compliance for item 8 (timeliness of reunification/guardianship). Of 102 cases reviewed for this item in CY 14, 61% were in compliance for item 9 (timeliness of adoption). Of 17 cases reviewed in CY 14, 100% were in compliance for item 10 (APPLA). This is an area of need identified in Alaska; this will be an area of focus in the coming year. OCS is developing a plan to realign positions to increase focus on timely permanency. 2016: OCS permanency specialists and ICWA specialists are working to improve timeliness to permanency for children. In January 2016 the SCRO began focused efforts on improving timeliness to permanency through use of data and regular meetings to track accountability for progress. This work has focused on children in trial home visits for more than 90 days and children in custody 24 months or longer in a placement with a relative. The IL Program Coordinator established a process to track goals monthly and RILS are held accountable for monthly case worker

				visits with youth. Since September of 2015, increased scrutiny of APPLA has resulted in the number of APPLA goals being reduced from 35 to 29. APPLA goals account for 10% of permanency goals for all youth, ages 16 to 19 in out of home placement. **2017 Update:** OCS permanency and ICWA specialists have continued working to improve timeliness to permanency. OCS has monthly permanency meetings with statewide managers to review permanency data from each region and discuss regional efforts to increase timely permanency. The focus areas are on permanency for children on a trial home visit 90+ days, children placed with a relative for 24+ months, and AN/AI children who are in an out-of-preference ICWA placement. OCS revised the permanency goal policy to provide guidance surrounding how case workers set and change goals and reiterating the federal timelines for which goals need to be achieved. In 2017, the APPLA policy was updated to provide clarification around how a case worker establishes the goal of APPLA, which now includes the approval of the OCS director. This change was based on feedback from the FFCA advocacy group. The Independent Living specialists provide APPLA training OCS staff. The number of APPLA goals for youth in care (statewide) remains consistent, around 30.
1.B.4	Increase the quality and frequency of case worker visits with parents and children to promote progress towards case plan goals.	Monthly visit rate for children will be at 95% and for parents at 50% by June 2017.	Decrease removals to foster care Increase Reunification Rates Reduce Repeat Maltreatment	2015: No work completed on this objective; OCS will report on this goal in the 2017 APSR. See monthly case worker visit information provided elsewhere in this report. 2016: This is an area of need for Alaska. In Calendar Year 2015, July had the highest percent of documented worker contacts with parents at 20%. Mothers have a higher rate of contact then fathers. In July OCS documented 24.8% Mothers received a monthly contact, compared to 15.7% of fathers. OCS ORCA data shows that case worker visits with children occur more regularly. FFY 2015 OCS ORCA data shows that the total number of visits made by OCS caseworkers on a monthly basis to children in foster care was 78%. This is a decrease from the previous year and OCS is not in compliance with the

				standard of 95%. OCS is required to have at least 50% of the monthly visits occur in the child's residence. In FFY 2015 OCS ORCA data shows that 66 % of the monthly visits by OCS caseworkers to children in foster care occurred in the child's residence. This is a decrease from the previous year; however OCS continues to be in compliance with this requirement. A workgroup was established to review case plans and case worker visits. Pilot sites have been identified to utilize case worker visit tool to ensure compliance with quality standards. ORCA report is available for supervisors and managers to track case worker visits with children and parents. **2017 Update:** This is an area of need for Alaska. In FFY 2016 OCS ORCA data shows that the total number of visits made by OCS caseworkers on a monthly basis to children in foster care was 73%. This is a decrease from the previous year and OCS is not in compliance with the standard of 95%. OCS is required to have at least 50% of the monthly visits occur in the child's residence. In FFY 2015, OCS ORCA data shows that 63% of the monthly visits by OCS caseworkers to children in foster care occurred in the child's residence. This is a decrease from the previous year; however, OCS continues to be in compliance with this requirement. Additional information related to CWV can be found in the SWA (Appendix B (Items 14 & 15). QA review data provided in the SWA shows an increase in compliance for CWV with children and parents, but the Alaska rates are still significantly below the federal standard.
1.C	Strategy: Resource Family Assessment and Support			
Objectives		Measure of Progress and Timeline	Projected Outcomes	Updates /Comments
1.C.1	Improve timeliness, accuracy, and assessment of background check information for resource families	Identify work group and develop an implementation work plan by January 2016.	Improve safety in foster care settings and increase placement stability.	2015: Information gathering has occurred with Foster Care Licensing Managers. Workgroup to be established. *This objective has been changed due to identified barriers to implementing a comprehensive Resource Family Assessment process. Through thorough assessment and background checks OCS intends to improve safety in foster care.

	(licensed and unlicensed).			The issue of background checks and assessment has been identified as a focus by our Tribal and community partners through various meetings and discussions. 2016: A workgroup was established and a work plan was developed. The date was extended for this strategy. OCS is working on a phased approach for implementation. This workgroup includes two Tribal partners. Phase 1 – Enhanced education for OCS staff and partners regarding background check requirements. Micro-learning videos and quick reference handout developed for training and use by the field staff related to background check basics. Phase 2 – Policy revision to enhance the partnership with Tribes to assess placement options. SERO pilot program provides additional support to unlicensed foster care. This program increased tracking of background check compliance for unlicensed providers. Title IV-E audit was completed in November 2015 and OCS was found to be compliant with IV-E standards, which include background check requirements. **2017 Update:** The work has been completed, but continues to be an area of focus for OCS. OCS data related to timeliness of background checks can be found in Item 34 of the Statewide Assessment in Appendix B.
1.C.2	Support relative care givers to ensure placement stability by 6/30/2016	• Explore creating a "Resource Family Specialists" job class that would support both licensed and unlicensed caregivers. (Completed 2015) • Explore the development of flexible funding to allow for concrete supports in times of need, and other resources/services needed to stabilize the placement.	Increase placement stability and number of relative placements	2015: Community Care Licensing Specialist I (CCLS) position description (PD) updated. CCLS II and CCLS III PDs will be updated. The Provider Payment Unit (PPU) Coordinator provided TA to four regional offices related to support and resources. PPU and Div. Public Assistance managers met to discuss support options for families. There are approximately 250 unlicensed relative caregivers in Alaska. Supporting these resource families will assist with increasing placement stability. This is an area of need identified in Alaska and will be an area of focus in the coming year. OCS is working to add additional positions to focus on resource family support and assessment.

				2016: OCS is working on the development of an Emergency Relief Support (ERS) program for unlicensed relatives. This program is currently being piloted in the SERO. Unlicensed relatives receive a monthly stipend for the first three months to assist them in providing for children in custody, and provide incentive to become licensed for foster care. Additionally this program builds in additional support and contact with the foster family by the payment and licensing specialists to provide support and information. In WRO licensing is providing additional assistance to unlicensed foster parents immediately following placement, by initiating a support call to the family, assisting them in completing background checks, and providing information about licensure and public assistance programs. Effective March 1, 2016, OCS updated the *Right to Request Placement* notices and the corresponding policy. The notices are sent to all identified relatives at the time of initial placement, when we identify a new relative, or at the time of a goal change to adoption. OCS updated the notice to make them easier to read and understand. **2017 Update:** OCS continues to work on all initiatives listed in the 2016 updates. The ERS program has expanded to include SERO, NRO and WRO. Relative placement has been a focus for OCS due to updated policy related to the ICWA changes.
1.C.3	Develop a system for consumer input of youth ages 12-21 to assess concerns about placement disruptions and quality of care.	• In partnership with FFCA and RLS, develop a screening tool, policy and procedures related to placement disruptions by September 2016. • Fully implement the process by December 2016.	Increase placement stability	2015: Minimal progress on this objective has been made. There have been collaborative discussions with youth and stakeholders, but the primary work will begin in Fall 2015. OCS will report on this goal in the 2017 APSR. 2016: Staff changes delayed work on this objective. Dates were changed to allow OCS to seek youth feedback. OCS began collaboration on this effort in March 2016 with FFCA youth. **2017 Update:** The OCS ILS Program Coordinator consulted with FFCA representatives. It was determined that this goal was no longer a priority and that they would be identifying other goals to work on jointly.

Priority #2: Timely & Safe Permanent Homes for Children/Youth				
2.A	Strategy: In-Home Services/Resource Linkages/Parent Support			
Objectives		Measure of Progress and Timeline	Projected Outcomes	Updates /Comments
2.A.1	Develop and standardize a process for making and determining the right referrals are made to community services and families are assisted with initiating the service if needed, regardless of whether a case is opened or closed.	• Increase the participation/engagement of OCS referred clients in the Infant Learning Program (ILP) for children birth to age three with substantiated reports of harm by June 2019. • Develop and implement a tracking method to monitor referrals by June 2017. • Demonstrate incremental increases in number of referrals made annually by 2019.	Enhance Community Partnerships Reduce Repeat Maltreatment	2015: No progress on this objective; OCS will report on this goal in the 2017 APSR. OCS is developing an easy to use list of services available in each community of the state. Barrier identified includes lack of feedback between CPS and ILP staff related to client referrals and follow through. Increased collaboration will be needed to impact this. *Timeline has been changed for this objective. 2016: OCS services and needs assessment survey sent to CFSP stakeholder group in April. The results of the survey were reviewed and discussed in this meeting, as was current data and 2017 APSR. The survey inquired about unmet needs for children and families. More details are provided in Section 1 of this report. **2017 Update:** OCS has not completed additional work on this goal, due to focus on the SWA and CFSR.
2.A.2	Standardize and enhance OCS's statewide in-home services model.	New in-home services model will be fully implemented with fidelity by December 2017. CQI data will indicate that in-home cases are appropriately identified and services.	Decrease removals to foster care Increase Reunification Rates Reduce Repeat Maltreatment	2015: No progress on this objective. OCS will report on this goal in the 2017 APSR. OCS managers review in-home data on a regular basis. Other priority items such as administrative reviews and centralized intake have been the focus of OCS. 2016: This year's CRP identified this as an area of concerns in Alaska. Since the report, OCS completed a comprehensive review of current and past in-home models used in Alaska. OCS is exploring options to contract or grant services for in-home programs. **2017 Update:** OCS has not completed additional work on this goal, due to focus on the SWA and CFSR.

2.A.3	Establish a birth parent mentoring program to provide support to parents active in the OCS system.	Pre and post surveys of parents involved in the mentoring program for at least 90 days will indicate an improved understanding of the OCS system and increased confidence in their ability to self-advocate and achieve case plan goals. Develop plan by January 2018. Implement by January 2019.	Increase Reunifications	2015: OCS continues to see the value of this as a way to engage parents. However, given other priorities, this objective is on hold until a later date. 2016: OCS is exploring options to contract or grant for birth parent mentoring program. **2017 Update:** OCS is awarding a parent navigation contract which is scheduled to begin in July of 2017. Parent navigation services will be provided in the Mat-Su area of the Southcentral region. Families involved with OCS will be referred for parent navigation services and the contractor will serve at least 10 parents at any given time.
2.B	Strategy: Team Meeting Restructure			
Objectives		Measure of Progress and Timeline	Projected Outcomes	Updates /Comments
2.B.1	Develop an effective, consistent structure for client team meetings.	• Establish a work group with internal and external stakeholders to explore and identify needed changes and develop a work plan by December 2015. • Work plan will be fully implemented by June 2017.	Increase timely Permanency Enhance Community Partnerships	2015: This objective is on hold until 2.B.2 is completed. 2016: **This objective is removed from the AK CFSP.** This will be something OCS continues to work on to improve efficiency. It will not have a direct and measurable effect on the CFSR outcomes, and has been removed after consultation with OCS management.
2.B.2	Administrative Review process will be restructured and enhanced	• Establish a work group with internal and external stakeholders to explore and identify needed changes and develop a work plan by June 30, 2015. • Work plan will be fully implemented by June 2017.	Increase timely Permanency Enhance Community Partnerships	2015: OCS workgroup assessing the feasibility of court administered administrative reviews. A work plan has been developed. Additionally, OCS is reviewing the current process and exploring re-aligning positions to streamline the process. 2016: The first phase of this project has been accomplished. A planning/implementation process has been carried out with OCS staff, AAG Manager, and Tribal partners. The agency has been granted three new positions who have been placed into the CQI/QA Unit as well as two clerks who are responsible for the administrative reviews. All five region's reviews will be conducted in the CQI unit effective June 1st. Work will continue on a planning process for coordinating court hearings with the review process. **2017 Update:** OCS continues to partner with the Department of Law on planning a process

				for coordinating court hearings with the review process.
2.C	Strategy: Early Identification of Relatives			
Objectives		Measure of Progress and Timeline	Projected Outcomes	Updates /Comments
2.C.1	Increase early identification of relatives.	• By December 31, 2015 50% of children will have 2 relatives documented within 30 days of placement. • By June 2017 80% of children will have 3 or more relatives documented within 60 days of removal.	Enhance Community Partnerships Increase Placement Stability	2015: pilot project in Western Alaska was completed. This pilot supported relatives in requesting placement of children in custody, and held OCS accountable to document the requests and make a decision about the request in a timely manner. The relative request process was updated in policy 3.5.4 and statewide training complete in June 2015. 55% of children removed during CY14 for 30+ days had two or more relatives documented within 30 days. 45% of children removed during CY14 for 60+ days had three or more relatives documented within 60 days of removal. 2016: 62.8% of children removed during CY15 for 30+ days had two or more relatives documented within 30 days. 47.5% of children removed during CY15 for 60+ days had three or more relatives documented within 60 days of removal. OCS is documenting improvements in both categories. Measurement #1 of 50% of children will have two relatives documented within 30 days was met last year and again this year. Measurement #2 with 80% of children having three or more relatives documented within 60 days has not been met. OCS is confident that we can achieve this measurement, for that reason the timeline for the measurement was extended to June 2017. OCS has increased training efforts related to the importance of early identification of relatives. ICWA Program Instruction was issued which provides additional guidance on this matter. This was a topic discussed in the January CFSP stakeholder meeting. This discussion led to additional discussions with AAG and Public Defender Office related to information the PDs are able to receive about identified relatives, placement requests and denials. On 3/1/16 the Anchorage office began an Early Identification of Relatives and Placement Support pilot project. The

				purpose of the project is to ensure all children have relative placement options at the time of intervention and to enhance the support and retention of relative placements to ensure all children maintain cultural continuity and family connections. Another goal of this project is to enhance Tribal partnerships and involvement if the child is Alaska Native/American Indian. Preliminary data shows an increase of the number of relatives documented and sent the Notice of Right to Request Placement letter timely. Calendar Year 2015 ORCA summary data showed ARO at 15.5% of children with at least four maternal relatives documented and 9.1% of children with at least four paternal relatives documented. In April 2016 (for children in custody 45 days) ORCA data shows ARO at 28.6% of children with at least four maternal relatives documented and 23.8% of children with at least four paternal relatives documented. **2017 Update:** In the past year, OCS has shown an increase in the identification of relatives. Of the children removed during CY16 for 30+ days, 70.8% had two or more relatives documented within 30 days. Of the children removed during CY16 for 60+ days, 63.9% had three or more relatives documented within 60 days of removal.

Priority #3: Continuous Quality Improvement

3. A	Strategy: Implementation of the OCS CQI Plan			
Objectives		Measure of Progress and Timeline	Projected Outcomes	Updates /Comments
3.A.1	Finalize the CQI Policy and Procedure Manual and raise internal and external awareness regarding CQI.	Manual will be finalized by June 30, 2015.	Enhance Community Partnerships	2015: CQI Manual finalized and is attached. *Timeline was been changed for this objective. 2016: Objective is complete. See final attached CQI Manual
3.A.2	Regional and statewide CQI teams will be fully implemented, including the institutionalization of a feedback loop between the regional, statewide and Director's	A system for documenting, sharing and storing meeting notes/decisions is implemented by December 31, 2015.	Enhance Community Partnerships	2015: Internal statewide CQI team is fully implemented. This committee includes regional and statewide managers. *Timeline has been changed for this objective. 2016: Statewide CQI team has been changed and now includes regional and state office managers. This change has improved communication between the regions and state office. The Division Operations Manager is

	Executive Team prior to the implementation of program changes. By June of 2016.			part of CQI Team and the Director's Executive Team (DET) and is responsible for sharing information between the two groups. The Executive Steering Committee is another avenue for developing and implementing changes to OCS practice. ESC includes members from state office and regional managers, Supervisory Leadership Council, Child Welfare Academy, and Tribal partners. March 2016 regional and state office managers gathered to review the OCS core services and identify areas of need. This team met with DET to discuss findings, concerns, etc. The core services identified by this group are currently part of the CFSP plan: 1. Screening 2. Initiation 3. Assessment 4. Case Planning 5. Caseworker Visits with Child 6. Caseworker Visits with Parent 7. Placement 8. Family Contact **This objective has been completed**. OCS will continue these efforts in the coming year.
3.A.3	Standardized data dashboards/higher quality and user-friendly reports/data will be developed and available for managers, CQI teams, external stakeholders and Tribal partners.	Dashboard is available on-demand in ORCA by December 31, 2015.	Enhance Community Partnership	2015: Meetings with OCS managers, Tribal partners, and community stakeholders occurred to identify the needs and requirements. The Research Unit is in process of developing improved reports for OCS, stakeholders, and the general public. *Timeline has been changed for this objective. To assist OCS in meeting requests from internal and external stakeholders regarding accessible data. 2016: **This objective has been completed.** New statistics pages are available on the OCS website.
3.A.4	Integration of title IV-E CQI with CPS CQI efforts will be initiated and enhanced through efforts to increase the visibility and significance of title IV-E compliance with child welfare field staff.	Staff training post-tests will demonstrate a statewide competency level of 90% or higher with respect to understanding key concepts about IV-E eligibility by June 2015 and annually.	Increase title IV-E compliance	2015: Online training provided to all OCS staff. This training is now included in the staff development plan for new employees. 2016: **This objective has been completed.** New employees receive training about title IV-E. The title IV-E audit was completed in November 2015, and an article was included in the December Frontline (internal newsletter) to provide additional information to staff about the audit.

SECTION 4: UPDATE ON SERVICE DESCRIPTION (TITLE IV-B, SUBPARTS 1 & 2)

SERVICES ARRAY

Services Array is the component of community-based services that OCS provides through professional services contracts or grants. The services are aimed at meeting the needs of children and families that come to the attention of the child protective services system, and to provide the necessary services and supports towards reunifying families. Funding from the federal title IV-B, subparts 1 and 2, the Community-based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP), the Chafee Foster Care Independent and Education and Training Voucher (ETV) Program, the Children's Justice Act (CJA) Task Force Program and the Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) are blended with state funds to support federal and state goals of service delivery and promote ongoing efforts to improve outcomes for children, youth and families served through Alaska's child welfare system. Service providers are located across Alaska and are provided by Tribal and non-Tribal entities.

The services supported through the Service Array Section continually adapt to changes in field practice, and are coordinated through ongoing dialogue and engagement with management in the five OCS regions. Additionally, other OCS collaborative efforts on statewide and regional levels ensure that available services through other federally funded programs, community-based public and private providers for programs such as substance abuse, domestic violence, and behavioral health ensure that families served in the state child welfare services receive priority services that meet their specific needs to achieve case plan goals. Alaska's community-based services are an exercise in positive collaboration within communities. In order to aid children and families, OCS grantees must cultivate and utilize relationships with community resources from school districts, local non-profits and faith communities as well as state agencies. These collaborations allow families to identify a safety net of resources to strengthen them, and protect children. Evidence of collaboration is required from grantees.

Alaska's community-based service providers demonstrate a high level of collaboration within their communities. This collaboration occurs across Alaska's populated cities and small villages, in order to meet the needs in this geographically diverse state. Community-based service providers work closely with community resources and partners such as school districts, local non-profits, Tribal agencies and representatives, faith communities, private businesses and other state agencies. These collaborations improve and increase the availability of necessary resources which help to strengthen families and protect children. Alaska continues to assess the needs of the children and families in the communities across Alaska, and to expand the service options available to meet the needs of children and families in the child welfare system.

2015 Update: Alaska continues to explore other service options to meet the needs of children and families in the child welfare system. OCS is currently working on outlining all available services through OCS-funded grants and contracts, including the communities they are available in. Additionally we work closely with other DHSS divisions to identify areas of need or overlap. Due to the remoteness of Western Alaskan communities, OCS is working to increase available services in that region and we look forward to reporting on this in the coming year.

2016 Update: Service Array Programs continues to provide a wide variety of services for children and families including assessment, early intervention, family support, youth development, and adoption promotion. While each individual program serves a unique function, in combination, these services aim to ensure the safety, permanency and well-being of children, enhance the protective capacities of caregivers, and strengthen families. OCS provides community-based services through professional services contracts and grants. Service providers are located across Alaska and are provided by Tribal and non-Tribal entities.

In the last year, OCS has developed a web-based, resource listing of all of the OCS funded grants available in the state of Alaska and the communities they serve. Additionally in the last year, OCS counseled staff in a targeted fashion regarding the availability of Service Array Programs funded by OCS.

In the coming year, OCS will be working on identifying the grants and contracts managed by other divisions of the DHSS which serve families in order to effectively increase utilization of these programs for OCS involved families. There will also be a focus on identifying community resources which provide services and activities designed to prevent child abuse and neglect as well as to strengthen families. The resulting information will be shared and highlighted within the Department. Additionally, we work closely with other DHSS divisions to identify areas of need or overlap. Due to the remoteness of Western Alaskan communities, OCS continues to work towards increasing available services in the region.

2017 Update: The SWA provides detailed information and assessment of Alaska's array of services and individualization of services. Detailed information can be located in the SWA, which is located in Appendix B of this document.

STEPHANIE TUBBS JONES CHILD WELFARE SERVICES PROGRAM AND THE PROMOTING SAFE AND STABLE FAMILIES PROGRAM

All title IV-B funding received is awarded through grants and/or contracts managed through OCS. No title IV-B subpart 1 or 2 funding is allocated to support planning and service coordination. The allocations of title IV-B, subpart 2 funding to the respective categories is based on an analysis of utilization and service outputs in each service category; the blending of additional funding supporting each service priority; the availability of services in each category statewide; and the capacity of providers to deliver the services within each category. Based on utilization data from the previous five fiscal years, funding has been realigned to increase the services utilized most by children, youth and families.

2015 Update: The following chart provides a percentage breakdown of title IV-B, subpart 2 funds in the allowable categories. In FY 2016, OCS intends to spend these funds as shown in Table 5:

Table 5: Title IV-B, Subpart 2 Allocation for FY 2016

Service Type	Percent Allocated
Family Support	5%
Community Service Option 1 (FP)	25%
Community Service Option 2 (TLFR)	50%
Adoption Promotion	20%

The allocation of title IV-B, subpart 2 funding to family support was reduced to 5% in 2013 due to an increase in the Community Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) funding, coupled with low utilization of the program services. Information prior to 2013 has been difficult to locate and use in the report due to changes in reporting, the new State of Alaska accounting system, and staff turnover in our fiscal unit. To address the increased utilization of Time-Limited Family Reunification (TLFR) services, funding was shifted from the Family Support category to expand the resources available to support the ongoing growth in need and utilization of TLFR services. As the number of children in an out-of-home placement continues to increase, the need for increased TLFR services will continue. For this reason, OCS anticipates the funding percentages will remain consistent in the coming year. OCS has identified resource linkages and parent support as objectives in the plan for improvement.

OCS is collaborating to identify all services available through the agency and other divisions, along with the communities served by those services. After collection of information, an analysis will be completed to identify needs or gaps to assist in assessing new programs, services, and activities needed to meet the needs of children and families. Additionally, the state has been working on service development in the Western Region, and is collaborating with community partners to improve available services in those communities. Initially, progress will be measure by documentation of establishing additional programs or expanding programs. Long term progress will be measured by client participation and data changes, such as reduction in repeat maltreatment rates. OCS anticipates the funding percentages will remain consistent in the coming year.

2016 Update: OCS has continued with the efforts provided in last year's APSR. OCS anticipates the funding percentages will remain consistent in the coming year. The estimated number of individuals and families to be served in the coming year is expected to remain the same or increase in all areas. OCS is working to increase staff and stakeholder knowledge of grant services in Alaska, and with increased information about available services, we expect service use to increase. Additionally, we are expecting to increase family contact services, which may equate to an increase in utilization of the TLFR services. The following chart provides a percentage breakdown of title IV-B, subpart 2 funds in the allowable categories, as OCS intends to utilize funds in FY 2017:

Table 6: Title IV-B, Subpart 2 Allocation for FY 2017

Service Type	Percent Allocated
Family Support	5%

Community Service Option 1 (FP)	25%
Community Service Option 2 (TLFR)	50%
Adoption Promotion	20%

2017 Update: OCS has continued with the efforts reported in last year's APSR and plans to more closely align percentages to the four categories with the intent of the title IV-B, subpart 2 funding in the coming year. The estimated number of individuals and families to be served in the coming year is expected to increase in all areas. OCS is continuing its efforts to increase staff and stakeholder knowledge of grant services in Alaska; with better information about available services, OCS expects that service use will continue to increase.

OCS has continued with the efforts reported in last year's APSR and plans to more closely align percentages to the four categories with the intent of the Title IV-B, subpart 2 funding in the coming year. The estimated number of individuals and families to be served in the coming year is expected to increase in all areas. OCS is continuing its efforts to increase staff and stakeholder knowledge of grant services in Alaska; with better information about available services, OCS expects that service use will continue to increase. With the increase in the number of children in out-of-home care, a priority for family reunification services use with the funding is needed. Alaska has existing funding sources for Adoption Promotion and Support and Family Support, for that reason Alaska's limited Title IV-B, subparts 1 and 2 funding is needed primarily for Family Preservation and Family Reunification services. Family Support grants are funded primarily with Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention funds, which have increased in recent years.

With the increase in the number of children in out-of-home care, a priority for family reunification services with the funding is needed. Alaska has existing funding sources for Adoption Promotion and Support and Family Support, for that reason Alaska's limited title IV-B, subparts 1 and 2 funding is needed primarily for Family Preservation and Family Reunification services. Family Support grants are funded primarily with Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention funds which have increased in recent years. The chart below provides a percentage breakdown of title IV-B, subpart 2 funds in allowable categories, as OCS intends to utilize funds in FY 2018:

Table 10: Title IV-B, Subpart 2 Allocation for FY 2018

Service Type	Percent Allocated
Family Support	5%
Community Service Option 1 (FP)	20%
Community Service Option 2 (TLFR)	65%
Adoption Promotion	10%

Family Preservation Services

These services are designed to serve families and children living in Alaska who are at risk of out-of-home placement and/or children who are in out-of-home placement needing services to reunify with their families. Family Preservation services are provided to OCS-involved families to prevent the removal of children to out of home settings or to support the reunification process when children are returned home from an out-of-home placement. These services are provided to families with an open child protection case.

2015 Update: In FFY 2014, 91 families and 182 children were served by this program.

2016 Update: In FFY 2015, 115 families and 240 children were served by this program. Grant funded family preservation grantees are available in four of the five OCS regions.

2017 Update: In FFY 2016, 122 families and 258 children were served through this program. Grant-funded family preservation services are available in four of five OCS regions. OCS provides grants in Anchorage, Northern (Nome, Fairbanks), SCRO (Homer, Mat-Su) and Southeast (Ketchikan) for family preservation to address the needs of families and individual children and to help create a safe home environment. During the year, the program funding was expanded in Anchorage and Southcentral regions to help meet the increased needs for family preservation in those areas.

Family Support Services (FSS)

Family Support Services (FSS) are community-based primary prevention services designed to increase the strength and stability of families, to increase the parents' competence in their parenting skills, to afford children a safe, stable and supportive family environment, and otherwise to enhance child development (1993 OBRA Provisions, PL 10366). Families participating in FSS do not have an open child protection case.

The primary focus of this grant are children ages 0-12 years of age, with special consideration given to children ages birth to three years. Other targeted populations are families experiencing disability of a family member and/or homeless youth. The services are intended to promote parent engagement and parent leadership skills. Service providers facilitate family participation in free engagement activities such as literacy fairs, parenting nights, health fairs and other positive family activities. These activities sometimes involve child care, parenting resources and links to other community resources.

The core services of FSS include: in-home support; parent education and support; facilitated access to resources, transportation services and service coordination of access to or participation in early childhood services, medical services, educational or employment services. FSS works with families who need support for basic needs, skill acquisition and crisis stabilization. Referral sources include OCS case workers, other service agencies, such as schools or early education programs, medical services, community agencies, or parents may self-refer.

2015 Update: In FFY 2014, 213 families and 400 children were served by this program. FSS Grantees report robust use of services. During the past year, training and technical assistance included quarterly newsletters, quarterly teleconferences, monthly "check in calls" and central office response to technical assistance requests. With the integration of the Strengthening Families program, we have documented an increase in parent engagement and program participation.

2016 Update: In FFY 2015, 182 families and 366 children were served by this program. This fiscal year, FSS grantees report robust use of family support services by non-OCS families. FSS continues to use the Strengthening Families program. In 2015, engagement activities reached 151 additional families. This service is provided statewide. The funding allocation for this service category is expected to be less than 20%. The allocation of title IV-B, subpart 2 funding to family support was reduced to 5% in 2013 due to an increase in the Community Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) funding, coupled with low utilization of the program services.

2017 Update: In FFY 2016, 214 families and 415 children were served by this program. FSS continues to use the Strengthening Families program, and to provide Trauma-Informed services. In 2016, engagement activities reached 290 additional families. Three of the five OCS regions provide FSS services through grantee agencies, although the services are primarily available in the urban communities. The Western Region and Southeast Region do not have a family support grantee providing these services because an organization in that area either did not propose to provide the services or the proposal was not awarded. There have been no waitlists reported for family support. These services are currently funded primarily through the use of Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) funding.

Time Limited Family Reunification (TLFR)

TLFR services provide ongoing family contact and transportation services for OCS-involved families in the agency, home or community settings; and facilitate the reunification of the child with their biological parent(s). TFLR also provides Family Contact Services Center (FCSC) services, designed to provide ongoing family contact and transportation services for OCS-involved families needing higher levels of supervision in the agency setting; and facilitate the reunification of the child with their biological parents(s).

2015 Update: In FFY 2014, 2014 families and 282 children were served by the family contact and transportation program. Services are delivered in the home whenever possible and focus on engaging the family with both community and natural supports to enhance protective capacities and promote a safe environment. In FFY 14, 76 families and 169 children were served by the FCSC program.

2016 Update: In FFY 2015, 133 families and 223 children were served by the family contact and transportation program. In FFY 2015, 212 families and 440 children were served by the FCSC program.

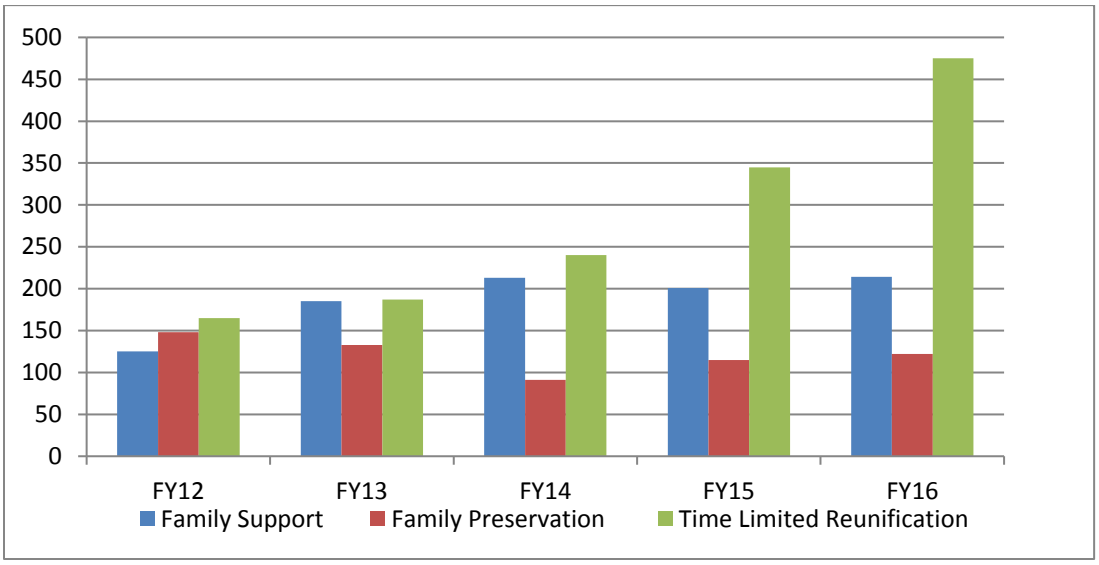
The allocation of title IV-B, subpart 2 funding to family support was reduced to 5% in 2013 due to an increase in the Community -based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) funding. As the number of children in out-of-home placement continues to increase, the need for increased TLFR services will continue.

All community based support services providers have integrated the Strengthening Families protective factors framework into their services. During SFY16, training and technical assistance to all grantee providers included:

- Twice yearly newsletters;
- Quarterly teleconferences evaluation, parent engagement activities, results based budgeting;
- Monthly "check in calls";
- Program coordinator response to technical assistance requests;
- Grantees were encouraged to attend the child maltreatment conference and children's mental health conference; and
- Individual grantee authorization of training based on the needs of the community.

2017 Update: In FFY 2016, 471 families and 745 children were served by the TLFR &FCSC programs. As the number of children in out-of-home placement has continued to increase, the need for TLFR services will continue. In Table 12 below, the green bar illustrates the sharp increase in the use of these services by OCS-referred families. Due to the increased needs, title IV-B subpart 1 and 2 funding has been shifted to try to better meet the current needs.

Table 12: Title IV-B subpart 1 and 2, Families Served



Source: OCS Grantee State Fiscal Year-end Reports

Adoption Promotion and Support Services

The OCS continues to provide "Services for Adoption Support" through a grant with the Alaska Center for Resource Families (ACRF). The grant was established to provide seamless continuation of support for adoptive and guardianship families of Alaska through pre- and post- adoption/guardianship services. This ongoing collaboration with ACRF provides for improved outcomes to children and families through the provision of services including: family preparation services, information and referral services, crisis intervention services, and case management services. The population served through this grant includes all families in Alaska who have adopted children through public and private adoptions. Services are available throughout the State of Alaska by face to face contacts, self-study courses and telephonic services.

ACRF provides a series of classes called "The Adoption Learning Path" geared toward preparing families to adopt special needs children from care. When the family completes the series of classes, they help the family generate a "family profile" which is shared with adoption case workers throughout the state. This process has assisted in matching children needing adoptive homes with families who understand the needs of children in care and are ready to care for them. Services are available throughout the State of Alaska by face to face contacts, self-study courses, and telephonic services.

In addition to these adoption support services, ACRF also provides intensive education and preparation as well as matching support and post adoption support to a limited number of families per year in the regions of Southcentral and Anchorage Alaska. This is an effort to match legally-free children in care with trained adoptive families and to promote placement stability for these children who may have a high level of special needs.

2015 Update: During the past year, services were provided through the grantee from July 1, 2014 through March 31, 2015.

Training and support were available in the follow formats:

- Face to face classes – 245 offered
- Self-study course – 1460 available
- Telephonic or webinar classes - 47 offered

The following family specific support services to adoptive and guardianship families:

- Recruitment services provided to 9 families
- Case management services provided to 85 families
- Resource referrals provided to 32 families
- Support services provided to 205 families

2016 Update: OCS continues to offer adoption promotion and support services through the statewide grant with ACRF. The support through this grant is available regardless of how or from where a child was adopted. During the past year, training and support were available in the following formats:

- Face to face classes – 382 offered
- Self-study course – 1460 available
- Telephonic or webinar classes - 147 individuals attended

During the past year, family specific support services were delivered to adoptive and guardianship families:

- Recruitment & retention services provided to 15 families
- Case management services provided to 154 families
- Information and Resource referrals provided to 307 families
- Support services provided to 187 families

In the last five years of the program, 22 children were adopted by 11 families who graduated from the program and five additional children were adopted by families who received some of the training but did not graduate due to various reasons. Families in this program report that they received the support and encouragement from the program which they needed to work through the process of being matched with a legally free child and working through challenges or family adjustments post adoption.

2017 Update: OCS continues to offer adoption promotion and support services through the statewide grant with ACRF. The support through this grant is available regardless of how or from where a child was adopted. During the past year, training and support were available in the following formats:

- Face to face classes –509 classes offered
- Self-study course –1719 available
- Telephonic or webinar classes - 249 individuals attended

During the past year, family specific support services were delivered to adoptive and guardianship families:

- Recruitment & retention services provided to 39 families
- Case management services provided to 202 families
- Information and Resource referrals provided to 395 families
- Support services provided to 178 families

Additionally, the Preparing Families for Special Needs Adoption project provides intensive preparation and training to approximately ten families per year who are interested in adopting children with special needs from foster care. Since the inception of the program in 2010 through June 2016, the program has trained and prepared 60 families for adopting special needs children. Since the program began 35 children were placed with families who completed this program; 25 children have finalized adoptions through this process.

THE INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAM (IL)

Chafee Foster Care Independence (CFCIP)

2015 Update: OCS serves all Alaska youth ages 16 years and older who are eligible for the program. OCS has 594 eligible youth and includes in custody and out of custody youth. OCS partners with other state and community agencies to deliver

services to youth. Increased efforts have been made to collaborate with the Office of Public Advocacy (OPA), to educate court-appointed Guardians ad Litem (GAL), and CASA volunteers to better coordinate services during transition. The IL Program hosted a focused discussion during the IL Program Retreat in September 2014 to glean important input from other community providers and encourage increased communication and coordination of effort. The hope is that continued discussion and collaboration will reduce duplication of services and encourage ease of access for youth engaged in multiple services.

Partnerships continued with grantee and contracted providers in SFY 2015, adding additional resources to increase mentorship and permanency efforts and career preparation and support resources. Additional formalized agreements will be established with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) in SFY 2016 to provide additional career navigation support and encourage greater retention of youth in career preparation services and career focused training programs. The IL Program manages five grants, contracts and provider agreements. Site visits with all five providers were completed for the purpose of gathering information and offering technical assistance to promote further service outputs. The visits were focused on reviewing program achievements and gathering information about agency staff and their facilities. Technical assistance was provided to the following during site visits:

1. Covenant House Alaska – multiple visits conducted. Discussed with agency the continued flat funding in spite of the increase in number of youth served and the increased length of stay. Discussed added services and negotiated realistic costs to provide services. Plans to increase grant award and include training funds for Child Sex Trafficking.
2. Facing Foster Care in Alaska (FFCA) – quarterly OCS/FFCA Leadership meetings and FFCA facilitated retreats. Contractor to provide leadership skill-building and transition services to youth in care. Continued meetings with FFCA and OCS leadership to identify and work on common goals. Collaborative agenda development for retreats hosted by the contractor. Focus on permanency for older youth in 2016.
3. Big Brothers/Big Sisters – multiple visits conducted. Grantee provides Mentorship for IL services in multiple OCS service regions. Provided assistance, redirection and plan of correction in 2015, allowing flexibility with budgeting to work through challenges with meeting the program goals.
4. Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC) – multiple phone and in-person visits conducted. Worked to develop stronger communication protocol between referring OCS staff and AHFC staff in Anchorage and more frequent oversight and support for youth in Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) housing.
5. University of Alaska (UAA) CWA – multiple visits conducted. Reviewed program and discussed distribution of resources to youth enrolled in the program. Continued planning around outreach and the format for the annual educational conference.

2016 Update: OCS' IL program serves all Alaska youth ages 16 years and older who were in care on or after their 16th birthday up and up to age 21. There are currently 746 youth who are eligible for the program, including in custody and former custody youth. In March of 2016, the IL program met with youth during a youth retreat to collect input about youth placement disruptions and ideas for OCS to effectively address this issue.

1. *Partnerships:* Partnerships continue to grow and strengthen for youth in Alaska. OCS is focused on improving resources to increase mentorship and permanency efforts for youth as well as career preparation, educational support and other supportive resources. A formalized agreement with the DVR in SFY16 was established to provide additional career navigation support and encourage greater retention of youth in career preparation services and career focused training programs. This program is being expanded to deliver a yearly career conference to youth, to focus on exposure to some of the more lucrative job prospects in Alaska for young workers without plans to go to college. The IL Program manages two grants, one contract and three business agreements with organizations who deliver services to youth who are eligible for independent living services. Monthly or quarterly teleconferences take place with the grantees and service providers in order to maintain relationships, address challenges to service delivery and to work on increasing efficiency and effectiveness of the services. Technical assistance was provided to the following either in person or during regular teleconferences.
2. *Emergency Shelter Services:* This grant is currently awarded to Covenant House of Alaska, a non-profit organization. Quarterly telephonic meetings are held and one site visit was conducted in SFY16. In SFY16 an Independent Living Specialist position was established to co-locate at the facility to improve IL service delivery to homeless youth who may be eligible for services. The linkage created also serves to improve IL service delivery by creating networking opportunities for the IL staff co-located, since many other community agencies who provide services for youth, also co-locate. Covenant House has been delivering sex trafficking trainings to communities, including Kodiak, Fairbanks

and Anchorage. These trainings will continue in the coming year as an effort to increase community and OCS worker awareness of sex trafficking issues. The next communities to receive the training will be Homer and Kenai. Covenant House is expanding its housing options with a transitional living program called "Rights of Passage". OCS is looking at ways to partner with Covenant House for this new resource which may benefit eligible OCS youth who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

3. *Development of Transition and Leadership Skills for Youth Participants of the OCS IL Program*: This contract is awarded to FFCA, a non-profit organization which serves as Alaska's youth advisory board. OCS holds quarterly OCS/FFCA Leadership meetings and three times per year youth retreats which provide leadership skills training, mentorship and transition support. The quarterly collaborative meetings with FFCA and representatives of OCS' leadership to include the agency director, assist with the identification of common goals. The collaborative meeting serves to assist youth in practicing advocacy skills as well as to show youth how their advocacy can result in support and responsiveness from the highest levels of leadership in the agency. The contractor provides leadership skill-building and transition services to youth during the youth leadership retreats. OCS Independent Living Specialists participate in the retreats to support youth, and they identify youth and arrange their participation in the events.
4. *Mentorship for Independent Living*: This is a grant awarded to Big Brothers/Big Sisters. Monthly grantee teleconferences occur to provide technical assistance regarding effective grant outcome reporting, increased outreach to the community for mentor recruitment, increased youth referrals to the program and improved relationships between OCS and the non-profit agency. The grantee provides mentorship for independent living services in the OCS service regions of Anchorage and Southcentral (Mat-Su). An Independent Living Specialist from Anchorage is identified as the OCS liaison with the agency, in order to provide increased communication between the agencies. This liaison is now attending all of the monthly grantee meetings and will be expected to present information regarding the grant at regular OCS staff meetings.

OCS has a formal partnership for Tenant Based Rental Agreements (TBRA) for youth with the Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC). Monthly teleconferences occur to discuss individual youth who are housed with the program or who are in the process of becoming housed. The monthly meetings also serve to develop strong communication between referring OCS Independent Living staff and AHFC staff in Anchorage. Youth in TBRA housing require monthly home visits by OCS workers; therefore, frequent contact and collaboration with this program is needed to assist youth in being successful in obtaining and maintaining housing through this program.

DVR has partnered with OCS on a project to connect transition-aged youth currently or previously in OCS custody with Pre-Employment Transition Services (PETS). The project connects transition-aged youth currently or previously in OCS custody with opportunities to engage in hands on, career focused assessment and support services.

2017 Update: OCS' IL program serves all Alaska youth ages 16 years and older who were in care on or after their 16th birthday up and up to age 21. Currently, there are 771 youth who are eligible for OCS' Independent Living services.

1. Independent Living is now fully staffed with seven Regional Independent Living Specialists across the state to provide IL services, resources and opportunities to foster youth and alumni: two in Anchorage, two in Southcentral, one in Southeast, one in Northern, and one in Western. The IL Program manages two grants, one contract and two business agreements with organizations who deliver services to youth who are eligible for independent living services. Monthly or quarterly teleconferences take place with the grantees and service providers in order to maintain relationships, address challenges to service delivery and to work on increasing efficiency and effectiveness of the services. Technical assistance was provided to the following either in person or during regular teleconferences.

2. The Independent Living Program partners with a number of agencies to provide enhanced services to IL youth. FFCA is contracted to provide quarterly youth retreats and is an essential partner to developing youth-focused policies and material. During the past year, FFCA provided three retreats, in May, August and November, with increased youth participation; 101 foster youth and alumni attended the retreats. This participation and collaboration lead to the finalization of the Foster Youth Bill of Rights brochure.

3. OCS has also partnered with grantee Big Brothers, Big Sisters to provide enhanced mentorship opportunities. Big Brothers Big Sisters matches caring adult mentors with youth in the foster care system to help youth succeed in life. This past year 42 youth were referred and 17 were matched with an adult mentor. Matches can do many things

together, like going to a movie, getting a burger, learning to drive, working on a resume or homework, or going hiking, just to name a few.

4. Recently OCS IL partnered with grantee Covenant House to provide a community Sex Trafficking Training. This training provided the chance to learn about how sex trafficking is affecting our communities. The training focused on how each individual and professional may help curtail the growth of this pandemic by being aware, by asking the right questions, and at times, by simply being there for the children served. This training has been provided in Fairbanks, Anchorage and Bethel, with hopes of bringing it to Juneau in the near future.

5. This past year the IL program organized and facilitated a 3-day Career Conference dedicated to providing youth with vocational and technical training exploration. This conference was a great opportunity for youth to gain hands-on experience various fields, to support their future career and education goal setting; last fall 24 foster youth and alumni to provide hands on employment and training information from Job Corps, Northern Training Institute and other various mentorship and recruitment opportunities.

6. In addition to providing daily and emergency housing, education and employment assistance, Independent Living staff conducted multiple Life Skills classes for IL youth. These classes are a chance for youth to connect with each other, learn and practice basic skill necessary for adult success. IL staff is dedicated to connecting youth with a network of providers and experiences, inviting experts and training staff to present to the classes. Many of the contractors, grantees and community partners present valuable information and skill development opportunities the areas of health and financial education, employment and rental readiness, and career and post-secondary education exploration to the class. In 2017, approximately 511 youth attended classes statewide.

7. The Independent Living program is also focused on strengthening the relationship with Tribal providers. The program hosts quarterly teleconferences with Tribal providers, providing direct programmatic connections and technical assistance to deliver IL services and Chafee support to eligible youth. In the past year, regular attendance and direct referrals continues to increase. The first teleconference had one attendee with no familiarity with the IL program. A year later, the most recent had nine attendees and all had knowledge of the program and referrals of youth to participate.

Education and Training Vouchers (ETV)

2015 Update: ETV services from the "2016 APSR" submitted in June 2015 are located in Sections 12 and 14 of this report.

2016 Update: The CWA manages the OCS ETV program. Quarterly telephonic meetings are held and one in person visit to discuss the program was held this year. Meetings focus on continued assessment of utilization of the program and distribution of available educational funding from ETV as well as other resources to maximize the funding allotted. OCS provides assistance in identifying eligible youth so that CWA can use University of Alaska systems to identify youth who may be eligible for ETV. CWA provides intensive outreach to and advocacy for eligible youth. Collaboration and planning for the annual educational conference for youth also occurs. Additional information about ETV is provided in Section 14 of this report.

2017 Update: IL has partnered with the Child Welfare Academy to provide Education and Training Vouchers (ETV) to former foster youth. In the past year 38 UAA students received ETV financial assistance to support their continued academic path. The ETV program also provides an annual Education Conference for former foster youth that are interested in exploring post-secondary education opportunities.

OTHER SERVICES

Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention

OCS is designated as the State Lead for the Community-based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) program. In this role, the program coordinator serves as the lead on statewide prevention for the State of Alaska. This program coordinator also manages the CBCAP and title IV-B grant funded programs to ensure the integration of trauma-informed practices and Strengthening Families framework into programs and parent engagement into the development and delivery of services. Each year, OCS funds the production and distribution of April Child Abuse Prevention Month pins and the annual Prevention Resource Guide.

Statewide prevention efforts and the establishment of a strong statewide child abuse prevention team will be the focus of the coming year. Participants will include educators, law enforcement, early childhood providers, mental health agencies, court representatives, DJJ, the Alaska Children's Trust, and the state CBCAP lead and the Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS) Program Officer.

2015 Update: This year a continued focus was participation in the statewide prevention team, and the integration of trauma-informed practices throughout the programs. Several training opportunities were provided to grant funded programs in FY15:

- Training for all community in-home grantees included an abbreviated version of SKILS, which is the training provided to all new OCS workers;
- Training in offering services to disabled parents;
- Training in interface with GEMS, our new electronic grant management system was offered to all grantees at a two and a half -day training even held in Anchorage;
- Grantees were encouraged to attend the child maltreatment conference.

2016 Update: Currently, OCS funds primary prevention programs with CBCAP funds. Child abuse prevention team collaboration is needed to increase primary prevention efforts in areas of the state where there are currently no OCS grantees to deliver primary prevention. This includes expansion of primary prevention services beyond what is currently offered by partnering with other non-profit agencies, parent leaders, businesses and state agencies who are also contributing to prevention work in Alaska's communities.

In 2016, CBCAP funding was utilized to contract statewide Community Cafés as part of parent and community involvement in systems planning and parent engagement in the delivery of services. The information gathered will provide foundational information to further develop the child abuse prevention work in Alaska. The results of the cafes will be compiled and shared in July of 2017. The goal of this project is to:

1. Partner with parents to identify and target the development of services that are responsive to the needs of families raising children in Alaska;
2. Increase the knowledge and resources dedicated to prevention and up-front services to parents aimed at preventing involvement in the OCS system and the need for out-of-home care;
3. Build strong linkages to services that increase the protective capacities of families along the continuum of care within the OCS Practice Model;
4. Garner community support and parental knowledge of the five strengthening families' protective factors;
5. Implement the community café model to increase parent engagement in our OCS planning system and gain knowledge about the needs of families in communities and interaction with the various services delivery systems in their area.

The contractor will provide comprehensive feedback from each community café to the project director. The intent of the feedback should be to highlight the "harvest" from parent participants. Feedback will be directly integrated with the agency's ongoing efforts to gather information from multiple groups to help guide systems improvements and target family strengthening services needed by parents and families.

Funds were also used to update to the Mandated Reporter Training, as reported earlier in this report. In the coming year prevention human sex trafficking will be incorporated into statewide child abuse prevention planning.

2017 Update: OCS continues to fund primary prevention programs with CBCAP funds. This year, OCS conducted a survey to identify potential partners statewide and to expand primary prevention services beyond what is currently offered by partnering with other non-profit agencies, parent leaders, businesses and state agencies who are also contributing to prevention work in Alaska's communities. We have worked with existing OCS partners, state agencies and grantees to disseminate materials to increase primary prevention awareness and efforts in areas of the state where there are currently no OCS grantees to deliver primary prevention. OCS has also continued to work with the existing Prevent Child Abuse America, prevention team to disseminate materials on parental resilience, and to distribute the Child Abuse and Prevention Month, Alaska forget-me-not pinwheel pins and posters as well as to promote "Go Blue" day.

The results from the Community/Parent Cafés funded at the end of the previous reporting period were compiled, analyzed, and disseminated. The needs assessment was qualitative in nature, and its quality was high. Participants of the Community Cafés

included a broad representation from each community, including interested community members, professionals, leaders and parents of children. The cafés occurred in all five of the OCS service regions and included the communities of Anchorage (providers n=30) (families n=50), Hooper Bay (n=100), Kotzebue (n=40), Sitka (n=15), Sutton (n=15), and Wasilla (n=25). This needs assessment focused on gathering community and parent input on what the priorities are for each area to strengthen families in their communities. There was surprising uniformity in the top priorities across the various cafés conducted in the different regions.

Here is a list of the top community needs identified through the Community Cafés:

- Provide services locally;
- Connect families with someone to help them access services;
- Encourage workplaces and employers to be flexible and understanding;
- Connect families with someone to help them access services;
- Host community gatherings and events;
- Share cultural traditions, language, stories and skills;
- Hands-on, in-home coaching for new parents;
- Engage elders and extended family to support new parents;
- Help parents tend to their own personal and emotional needs;
- Help parents provide an environment for their children that is nurturing and loving.

A link to the summary report is on the OCS website and has been shared with state and community partners, particularly hosts and participants. http://dhss.alaska.gov/ocs/Documents/Publications/pdf/CommunityCafeReport_2016.pdf
Feedback will be integrated with OCS ongoing efforts in systems improvements and target family strengthening services needed by parents and families.

Rural Child Welfare Services

Because of the high number of Alaska Native/American Indian children involved in the OCS system, and because young Alaskan Native children are the population at greatest risk in Alaska, there is a critical need for OCS to provide culturally relevant services that are available to meet the needs of families in remote areas. In many of these areas, OCS must serve clients remotely and/or does not have a stable workforce to provide the close monitoring and support necessary to adequately meet the legal mandates needed to serve Alaskan Native families. The Rural Child Welfare (RCW) grant program utilizes state general funds to fund service providers with a demonstrated understanding of the ICWA, and an existing infrastructure in remote/local settings to provide culturally relevant, intensive case management services. This program is designed to provide services to children and families living in rural Alaska who are at risk for out-of-home placement, and children who have been removed from their home setting. Grantees assist OCS in the development of safety plans and provide safety plan management. Grant services include:

- Safety plan management such as monthly visits with children and documentation of all contacts.
- Case plan support is provided and may include service coordination, coordination of family meetings for safety or case plan development, placement decisions or other case decisions.
- Resource family recruitment and relative searches.
- Individualized, in-home parenting education and support.
- Family contact (visitation) services or transportation services.

2015 Update: In FFY14, 100 families were served by this program.

2016 Update: The challenges of service delivery to remote areas along with workforce retention issues continues to hinder OCS's ability to adequately serve families in rural Alaska. The RCW grant program provides culturally relevant interventions, safety plan support and case worker visits to Alaskan Native families involved with OCS. In FY 2015, 218 rural families were served by this program; this is double the number of families served in FY 2014. On June 3, 2016, OCS received correspondence from Region 10 confirming that RCW grantee parent and child monthly visits can be considered "caseworker visits" for the purpose of the CFSR, as long as the visits are well documented and used by the assigned social worker for use in case planning. OCS will be working with field staff and grantees to provide technical assistance in regards to the documentation required. In the coming year, reporting forms and evaluation measures for the program will be revised in order to more effectively track outcomes.

2017 Update: Alaska recognizes that cultural and racial barriers exist within the delivery of services to minority populations in Alaska. The OCS RCW grants are provided to rural organizations to help fill gaps in formal service provision in specific rural communities. In SFY16, the grantees were all Tribal agencies or organizations who provided services, primarily to Alaska Native families, including, facilitate/monitor/update Tribal In-Home Safety or Case Plan, make referrals/help complete applications for services, one-on-one parenting guidance/support, engage/take/teach parents and children about cultural activities (subsistence, dance, art), relative searches, relative placement support and foster parent recruitment.

In SFY 16, 64 rural families were served by this program which is a significant decrease from the year before. Narrative reports from RCW grantees and verbal reports from OCS workers indicate that some of the factors related to relatively low numbers served by the RCW grant has to do with a variety of factors, to include: 1) low caseload sizes of RCW workers to account for the amount of travel they have to do to meet with rural families; 2) communication difficulties in the referral process; 3) staff turnover, both for OCS workers who make the referrals and for RCW workers who perform the service provision. Data collection has not focused on whether the service provision for RCW by Tribal entities has improved outcomes for the Alaska Native population served in the rural areas.

Source data from the RCW grantee and ORCA data reports indicate that the RCW grants are serving nearly 19% of the Alaska Native / American Indian children who are placed in out-of-home care and residing in rural Alaska communities. This type of service provision in collaboration with Tribes and Tribal organizations is an important step in meeting the cultural needs children or families in these rural areas.

Western Region Support, Development, and Recruitment Workgroup

This collaborative effort began in 2014 with the focus on development of services in the OCS Western Region to allow children to remain in their home region. OCS partners with Western Region Tribal partners, YKHC, Alaska Child and Family, and DBH to improve and increase the therapeutic foster care services available to children in custody. The focus is on development of services in the Western Region to allow children to remain in their home region. The workgroup has focused on foster care recruitment, emergency shelter home development, and exploration of more available services for children and youth with high needs.

2015 / 2016 Update: This group continues to meet regularly. An update was provided in the diligent recruitment information located in Section 2 of this report.

2017 Update: The Western Region Support, Development and Recruitment (WRO SDR) workgroup continues to meet every other month and is comprised of OCS and DBH staff, tribal partners, community partners such as: YKHC and Alaska Child and Family Services. The workgroup focuses on six core initiatives including: assessing and improving the availability of community based resources for families, increasing supports to relative and licensed foster parents, establishing therapeutic foster homes, incorporating cultural activities /traditional helpers in treatment roles and explore the development of a residential facility for adolescent girls. During SFY17, the WRO SDR workgroup accomplished the following items:

- Four emergency shelter care homes were licensed in order to assist with the placement of children coming into care under emergent situations.
- The Alaska Center for Resource Families in partnership with AK Child and Family and OCS conducted a 2-day training for WRO resource families May 15-16. Topics included; professional parents, skill teaching, conflict resolution and understanding child development and behaviors.
- Foster care recruitment advertising at local movie theater during the months of May and June 2017.
- Development of a WRO SDR Work Plan to better track progress towards the 6 identified initiatives and establishes accountability for workgroup tasks needing to be completed.

POPULATION AT GREATEST RISK OF MALTREATMENT

2015 Update: OCS has determined that Alaska Native children, age birth to five years, are the population at greatest risk of maltreatment. Alaska Native children ages birth to five years makes up 8.3% of the general population of children in Alaska. However, this population makes up 30.6% of the substantiated protective services reports and 31.1% of substantiated abuse and neglect allegations.

With the new process of determining maltreatment findings implemented in February 2015, we anticipate an increase in substantiated findings statewide, but expect an increase in the consistency of decision making. Through the CFSP priorities and strategies, OCS will be working on activities to target services to improving outcomes for this specific population.

2016 Update: OCS has determined that Alaska Native children, age birth to five years, are the population at greatest risk of maltreatment. Because of this, many efforts are being made to improve services and outcomes for Alaska Native children. Tribal partners and OCS have continued to commit to authentic partnership; efforts to reduce disproportionate outcomes are provided in detail in Section 6 of this document. Additionally, the DHSS Commissioner has initiated the Community of Hope Project (COHP). The DHSS Commissioner participated on the U.S. Attorney General's Advisory Committee on *American Indian/Alaska Native Children Exposed to Violence: Ending Violence so Children can Thrive*. This committee developed recommendations for states, including a chapter specific to Alaska. One of the recommendations for Alaska was to create a task force to strategically address gaps or areas needing improvement within the state. In the past year, First Alaskans Institute facilitated a series of meetings with Tribal leaders, advocates, legal representatives, and child welfare representatives to discuss how we can change the future of Alaska's child welfare system for the better. The DHSS 2016-2020 Strategic Plan, entitled "Transform Child Welfare Outcomes for Alaska Native Children", identifies six priorities for the next five years. The six priorities include the following:

1. Continuum of Culturally Specific Services
2. Community Engagement
3. Respectful Government-to-Government Collaboration and Partnership
4. Embrace and Implement the Spirit of ICWA
5. Self-Governance
6. State Agency Alignment

Alaska Native children ages birth to five years makes up 9.6% of the general population of children in Alaska. However, in 2015 this population made up 31.0% of all children with a substantiated allegation of maltreatment, and 27.0% of all substantiated allegations of maltreatment.

2017 Update: Alaska Native children age birth to five years makes up 9.5% of the general population of children in Alaska. However, in 2016 this population made up 28.7% of children with a substantiated allegation of maltreatment. For this reason Alaska works very closely with Tribal partners to enhance the support and services available to Alaska Native families and children. Please see Section 5 of this document for details regarding efforts currently being made to improve outcomes for Alaska Native children. The data below demonstrates the changes to the population at greatest risk over the past three years:

Table 8: Population at Greatest Risk of Maltreatment

Maltreatment Data										
Age Range	Child Race	% of All Alaska Children Age 0-17 (adds to 100%)			% of Total Children with a Substantiated Allegation			% of All Children in the Group Who Were Maltreated		
		2016	2015	2014	2016	2015	2014	2016	2015	2014
Ages 0-5	Native	9.5%	9.6%	8.3%	28.7%	31.0%	31.1%	4.9%	4.3%	3.8%
Ages 0-5	Non-Native	24.5%	24.6%	26.6%	18.6%	16.1%	12.7%	1.2%	0.9%	0.5%
Ages 6-10	Native	7.8%	7.6%	6.4%	18.7%	18.9%	21.0%	4.0%	3.3%	3.4%
Ages 6-10	Non-Native	20.8%	20.6%	21.5%	10.7%	10.6%	9.5%	0.9%	0.7%	0.5%
Ages 11-15	Native	7.0%	7.1%	6.2%	11.9%	11.9%	13.9%	2.8%	2.2%	2.3%

Ages 11-15	Non-Native	19.9%	19.9%	20.6%	6.7%	6.8%	6.3%	0.5%	0.4%	0.3%
Ages 16-17	Native	2.8%	2.7%	2.4%	2.8%	3.1%	4.3%	1.7%	1.5%	1.9%
Ages 16-17	Non-Native	7.8%	7.9%	8.0%	1.9%	1.5%	1.1%	0.4%	0.2%	0.1%

Source: SOA Online Resources for Children in Alaska (ORCA) and SOA Department of Labor 2013, 2014, & 2015 Population Estimate

SERVICES FOR CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF FIVE

A variety of services are available to provide support and services to children who are under five years of age. OCS has identified specific objectives in the CFSP Plan for Improvement to improve outcomes for this group of children. OCS has capitalized on opportunities to facilitate focus groups with OCS managers, Tribal partners, and DOL representatives to brainstorm ideas to enhance and support services for this population.

2015 Update: In the coming year, OCS will be developing a plan to increase participation and engagement in the Infant Learning Program by children in custody, age birth to three years. This will be done by increased communication between OCS child protection and infant learning staff. Additionally, OCS is reviewing the accuracy of data related to timeliness of documenting the pre-adoptive homes. At this time, no specific data is being provided, as we are reviewing the policy and make changes in the documentation expectations for this data element.

In the last year, OCS management initiated two processes to improve monitoring of cases involving children under the age of five:

1. The "Hot for Permanency" project: statewide managers utilized data to identify children in care more than 24 months, then reviewed each case to assist in facilitating the actions needed to achieve permanency and to develop greater understanding of the systematic factors contributing to the delay in permanency; and
2. Regional management reviews information regarding high risk infants who have been the subject of a new protective services report and are living in a household which has had significant child welfare history. The managers monitor the report weekly to ensure timely and accurate assessment and service provision.

OCS has identified permanency for children under the age of five as a primary objective in the CFSP. Although limited progress has been made towards this goal, it is expected to be an area of focus in the coming year. In the coming year, OCS intends to include data and updates on progress, including strategies and barriers identified. OCS is currently exploring staff available to focus on permanency issues for children, through re-alignment of duties.

Although there are many services and activities happening through this program, the agency has not consistently had data to demonstrate the effect the services have had on child safety for children and families involved with child protection services. OCS has identified an area of need to include improved collaboration with our ECCS program (plan for improvement 2.A.1). It is anticipated that the next submission of this report will include data specific to the activities and outcomes of the services provided, specific to children involved in the child protection system. The following collaborative efforts were included in the 2015 update:

- Alaska Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems
- Strengthening Families Leadership Team
- Early Childhood Mental Health Conference

2016 Update: OCS is actively working to improve outcomes for children under the age of five. OCS data shows an increase in children in care less than two months who are placed in a potentially permanent home. At this time we are unsure why that has increased or if it will result in more timely permanency, but it could be tied to updated case planning and permanency planning documentation requirements implemented in 2014. OCS is exploring why this change has occurred.

2017 Update: OCS continues to focus heavily on work related to high-risk infants. This includes managers utilizing strategies to emphasize the vulnerability and high priority for infants. OCS Managers continue to review and track cases involving

infants when there are multiple reports or prior removals. Additionally, the work regarding permanency for children in care also continues.

Table 9: Permanent Placements

Count of Potentially Permanent Placements											
Months in Care		**< 1 month**	**1-2 months**	**3-6 months**	**7-12 months**	**13-18 months**	**19-24 months**	**24-36 months**	**36 – 48 months**	**48 + months**	**Total**
In Permanent Placement	2015	5	24	78	128	69	60	55	9	1	**429**
	2016	16	25	51	115	108	69	64	14	1	**463**
	2017	9	21	72	118	122	78	90	48	2	**560**
Not in Permanent Placement	2015	44	98	146	149	105	43	31	2	-	**618**
	2016	38	60	132	152	116	68	36	3	-	**605**
	2017	42	70	118	139	90	42	46	10	1	**558**
% in Permanent Placement	2015	10.2%	19.7%	34.8%	46.2%	39.7%	58.3%	64.0%	81.8%	100.0%	**41.0%**
	2016	29.6%	29.4%	27.9%	43.1%	48.2%	50.4%	64.0%	82.4%	100.0%	**43.4%**
	2017	17.6%	23.1%	37.9%	45.9%	57.5%	65.0%	66.2%	82.8%	66.7%	**50.1%**
Total	**2015**	**49**	**122**	**224**	**277**	**174**	**103**	**86**	**11**	**1**	**1,047**
	2016	**54**	**85**	**183**	**267**	**224**	**137**	**100**	**17**	**1**	**1,068**
	2017	**51**	**91**	**190**	**257**	**212**	**120**	**136**	**58**	**3**	**1,118**

Source: SOA Online Resources for Children in Alaska (ORCA) Report Perm. Status of OOH Children Under 5 (RR00138)

Additional programs are in place to assist in improving outcomes for children under the age of five. Below are methods used in the last year to impact change:

Rapid Safety Feedback

OCS has collaborated with Eckerd Kids to implement the Rapid Safety Feedback project. This will enhance safety management of high-risk cases of young children. In Alaska, the project will involve identification of high-risk cases of children less than three years of age in the initial assessment phase of service. The cases will be reviewed for safety management utilizing a standardized tool. Cases needing enhanced safety management will be reviewed with the QA and IA staff, and a plan for needed changes will be made. The staffing process follows a "coaching" model. The cases continue to be monitored to ensure the plan is implemented until the cases is moved to Family Services or closed. The intent of the project is to reduce reports to three or less for high risk children under the age of three years. The CQI staff has received extensive training from the Eckerd Kids staff and the overall project will be evaluated by Casey Family.

Timely initiation, completion, and decision making

After reviewing data OCS managers are working on action steps to insure timely initiation, timely completion, and appropriate case decisions when a case involves an infant less than one year of age and factors in the case may predict that the child is a high risk infant. OCS is working with DPH to develop a report to identify protective service reports received for infants, and matching those cases with past removals from the family home, previous termination of parental rights for one or both parents, and previous reports of harm received for this child or siblings. Regional managers have received direction to review the cases and initiate face to face contact with the supervisor on the case each week until the initial assessment has been completed. Guidance was provided in January 2016 and a discussion and follow-up email were provided in May 2016.

Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems

The ECS unit had a change in staffing in the past year. Due to a vacancy in this position from September through December, OCS was unable to demonstrate progress on work planned for this year. OCS is pleased to have new staff in the position. Additionally, a department decision was made to move the Infant Learning Program (ILP) from OCS to SDS. In the coming year, OCS and SDS will partner on ways to improve data sharing and partnership to address CFSP Plan for Improvement strategy 2.A.1. It is anticipated that the next submission of this report will include data specific to the activities and outcomes of the services provided, specific to children involved in the child protection system who receive ILP services.

2017 Update: The Aim Statement for the Alaska Early Childhood Comprehensive System Project is by January 2018 families will have access to a centralized call center that will serve as a resource for appropriate linkage to needed services through the launch of the Help Me Grow resource and referral system.

SERVICES FOR CHILDREN ADOPTED FROM OTHER COUNTRIES

2015 Update: Services for adoption support are provided through a grantee. The grant specifically states that support services are crucial to ensuring the continued success of families who have adopted through private or international adoptions. For this reason, the grantee is required to provide support services for all adoptive and guardianship families, regardless of the how the adoption was finalized, so that children do not enter the public foster care system from a failed private or international adoption.

2016 Update: Services continue as reported last year. The services provide information and referral, brief case management, crisis intervention, training and education to adoptive families in order to assist families in meeting their adopted children's needs and to keep their family strong.

2017 Update: No changes in services during the past year. Services continue as reported last year.

SECTION 5: PROGRAM SUPPORT

TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Accomplishments and Planned Activities

2015 Update: Alaska did not receive training and technical assistance in the past year. OCS is scheduled for technical assistance in July 2015 to enhance knowledge and skills related to the CFSR and use of the Online Management System.

In the past year, the OCS provided technical assistance to many community partners that receive state and federal funds to help OCS achieve the CFSP goals. This technical assistance was provided in a variety of ways including teleconferences, emails, site visits and site reviews. The following programs received site visits and site reviews:

- Women in Safe Homes, Ketchikan
- Frontier Community Services, Soldotna
- Catholic Community Services, Juneau
- Sprouts, Homer
- Kawerak Child Advocacy Center, Nome
- Alaska Center for Children and Adults, Fairbanks
- Health Care Services Background Check Program
- DHSS Barrier Crimes Variance Committee
- Division of Senior and Disability Services
- Resource Family Advisory Board
- Alaska Center for Resource Families
- Central Council of Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska
- Bering Sea Women's Group
- Tundra Women's Coalition
- Kodiak Multi-Disciplinary Team (KANA)
- Fairbanks Multi-Disciplinary Team (RCPC)

2016 Update: In the past year OCS received the following training and technical assistance:

- OCS works closely with Region 10 and the Children's Bureau to prepare for the 2017 CFSR. OCS received technical assistance from Region 10 related to the APSR submission and recommended changes to the report. In July 2015 training and technical assistance was provided to assist OCS in utilizing the OMS. Children's Bureau staff met with OCS QA staff onsite in Anchorage to improve the knowledge and skills of the QA staff and managers who are using the new tool. This training and technical assistance also assisted OCS in preparing for the CFSR in the coming year. OCS is working closely with federal partners to identify and schedule upcoming training and technical assistance for SFY2017. At this time, July phone consultation and October onsite trainings are tentatively set for CFSR preparation.
- OCS partnered with National Indian Child Welfare Association (NICWA) in November 2015 to provide training to OCS managers related to the BIA proposed regulations.
- OCS is partnering with CFP to assist in providing training and technical assistance to OCS staff on permanency values and leadership skills in Fall 2016.
- FRIENDS NRC provided face-to-face orientation training to new CBCAP staff at OCS. FRIENDS NRC is partnering with OCS to provide technical assistance to help with the continued goals of meaningful evaluation, parent leadership, and quality improvement for the CBCAP funded programs. The CBCAP lead plans to benefit from technical assistance in the following areas in the coming year: Evaluation, Parent Leadership and Strategic Planning.

In the past year OCS provided training and technical assistance to partners and grantees in Alaska. Below are examples of the training and technical assistance provided in the past year:

- OCS has a Training and Technical Assistance business agreement with the CWA; through this agreement, training and technical assistance services are provided to existing OCS funded grant/contract programs and partner agencies that provide support to non-OCS and OCS-involved children, youth and families in collaboration with Service Array

programs. Training may include but is not limited to topics on child development; the OCS Practice Model; technical support in all aspects of service delivery to families, children and youth; education related to the effects and symptoms of child abuse; data collection and program evaluation; and technical support for programs seeking to expand service delivery and diversify funding. Training and instruction can be delivered through multiple venues and strategies, including in-person classroom instruction; webinars/seminars; written guidance; and/or the virtual classroom. All of the Child Advocacy Centers in Alaska were able to receive training and technical assistance from the CWA this year. This business agreement is expected to continue in the coming year.

- Service Array program managers provide one on one and group training and technical assistance to grantees. Teleconferences and video conferences are conducted on a regular basis with all grantees. In the coming year, online training will be the primary venue for the training to the family support, family preservation and time-limited family reunification grantees. Video conference is available to enhance grantee meetings and planning sessions.

OCS provided technical assistance to many community partners that receive state and federal funds to help OCS achieve the CFSP goals. This technical assistance was provided in a variety of ways including teleconferences, emails, site visits and site reviews. Training/technical assistance was provided to the following grantees, and will also be provided in the coming year:

- Alaska Center for Resource Families to include the Resource Family Advisory Board
- Independent living grantees including Covenant House and Big Brothers / Big Sisters
- CBCAP Family Support Programs
- Family Preservation and Time-limited Family Reunification Grantees
- Rural Child Welfare Grantee

The following programs received onsite visits and reviews:

- Copper River Child Advocacy Center
- Alaska Cares Child Advocacy Center
- Catholic Community Services
- Nome Eskimo Community

2017 Update: Training and technical assistance continued as listed above. Additionally; as part of teleconferences, grantee staff was referred to online trainings on Strengthening Families, offered by the National Alliance of Children's Trusts, and on Trauma-Informed Care, offered by the National Clearinghouse of Families and Youth, and the Family and Youth Services Bureau. Ongoing training and technical assistance to family program grantees continues with regularly scheduled teleconferences, connection to online resources, and a one-on-one response to identified challenges or needs.

Family Support, Family Preservation and Time-Limited Reunification grantees attended a two-day grantee meeting and training in Anchorage in April 2017. There were 13 attendees, from Ketchikan, Soldotna, Nome, Anchorage, Wasilla/Palmer, Fairbanks and Anchorage. The training was hosted by a Tribal partner who is also a grantee. The training was focused on the Strengthening Families Model, and was presented by the Child Welfare Academy. Three common threads were woven throughout the curriculum:

1. Protective factors framework;
2. Importance of culture - how culture impacts families as they seek to build protective factors and how our own culture shapes how we individually feel, act and think; and
3. The critical role parents play in strengthening families.

OCS expects the training will help grantees increase their evidence-informed outputs to contribute to the CFSR measures as well as any upcoming PIP. Grantees will be asked to complete the Protective Factors survey or other evidence based evaluation tools when providing services to families, in order to report on service delivery outcomes. The second half-day of the grantee meeting was facilitated by Service Array staff and focused on shared successes and challenges and gathered input on quarterly reporting forms.

The following grantee agencies received onsite visits and reviews:

- Alaska Family Services- Palmer
- Rural CAP- Anchorage

- Central Council Tlingit Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska- Juneau

In SFY18, OCS plans to provide training and technical assistance to the Family Support, Family Preservation and Time Limited Family Reunification grantees regarding enhancing evaluation of the programs. OCS will also ensure appropriate training for recipients of the Rural Child Welfare grant, to help ensure quality of service delivery. The CWA also continues to provide regular training and technical assistance to the state's Child Advocacy Centers, with a goal of assisting centers with becoming or maintaining their national accreditation as well as effectively meeting the regional and local needs of the children and families they serve.

OCS has revised its quarterly grantee reporting forms which will be in effect for SFY18. The quarterly reports collected from grantees have been modified to gather data to help determine not only how many children and families are being served, but whether the services are effective or efficient. It is expected that data from these reporting forms will be used to determine if the services provided are meeting the needs of the target population or whether they should be discontinued or modified. The Service Array section also plans to conduct a formal needs assessment, working with OCS managers and stakeholders to define what grant programs are needed, which are functioning and which need to be modified.

Capacity Building Center for States (CBCS)

2015 Update: This specific section title was not include in the "2016 APSR" submitted in June 2015.

2016 Update: OCS did not receive any onsite training or technical assistance from any of the Capacity Building Centers. OCS receives regular communication from the Capacity Building Center for States, including Monthly News Blasts, notice of upcoming webinars, and direct contact with CBCs when needed. OCS staff participated in the Region 10 call regarding Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act PL 113-183. OCS Independent Living staff has received support from the Capacity Building Center for States Chafee Program and ETV Coordinators by phone and webinars. In the coming year, OCS anticipates utilizing the CBCS in the same manner as in the past.

2017 Update: The National Child Welfare Workforce Institute (NCWWI) delivered the Leadership for Middle Managers (LAMM) training and coaching program to OCS manager in late January 2017. The workgroups formed from this partnership are around recruitment of line staff, competency based assessment of line staff, and the organizational culture and retention of staff. These groups are just beginning to apply what they learned in January and looking to make positive practice changes in these important areas. The LAMM also has a six month coaching component that each participant is involved in. These change initiatives are long term practice changes and will take a few years to implement and well as evaluate effectiveness.

RESEARCH, EVALUATION, MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS, AND/OR QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEMS

2015 Update: In the SFY 15 the OCS Research Unit continued efforts to modernize OCS reports and reporting needs by converting from SAS to SQL. This was the second year of submissions for both AFCARS and NCANDS reports using the new SQL code. OCS is currently working with the federal partners in an AFCARS Assessment Review of the new code. The Research Unit is in the process of updating the monthly web reports; draft reports are ready for testing and OCS management feedback. Efforts continue with providing "real time" data to OCS workers in the form of on-demand report. Data summits were held to solicit input regarding data needs from both OCS Management and Tribal partners. In the past year, the Research Unit has published 34 new reports that are available to OCS staff on the Intranet to assist them with prioritizing workload and meeting state and federal standards. Additionally, the Research Unit has responded to over 175 data requests from internal and external customers including: OCS Management, Alaska State Legislature, other state agencies, the media, and other public and private users.

2016 Update: OCS continues to partner with CGI to improve ORCA, the OCS SACWIS system. ORCA updates are completed monthly to improve the information and reports available to staff, based on feedback received or problems identified. In the last year, the Research Unit has updated reports available and improved the public-facing statistics page on the OCS website.

OCS has a high functioning QA Unit. The QA system is described in more detail in Section 2 of this report. OCS management has worked to engage all level of staff to use data available to assist in the work of the agency. Weekly Regional Managers meetings focus on data related to safety, permanency and well-being.

2017 Update: The OCS Research Unit has over 75 on-demand reports for use by OCS staff. Numerous additional reports are available and manually sent to staff and other OCS stakeholders each week or upon request. New reports are being developed for data validation purposes that will identify data conflicts within the database in support of a staff cleanup effort intended to improve data quality and ensure accurate data for reporting. During the last year the Research Unit collaborated with Federal partners on testing and code revisions to our NCANDS and AFCARS Federal reports. Numerous updates have been made to the federal reports that will improve the accuracy and quality of Alaska's Foster Care, Adoption, and Child Maltreatment data.

The Quality Assurance Unit has continued to provide regularly scheduled QA reviews for OCS on a statewide basis. Details of the QA case review process is outlined in more detail in Section 2 of this report and includes a summary of the CY 2016 data from completed QA reviews.

OCS continues to maintain a SACWIS data system, called ORCA. During this past fiscal year, OCS ORCA staff have been assessing and evaluating whether or not OCS will become a CCWIS system. OCS has until August 1, 2018 to make a decision about CCWIS.

SECTION 6: CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION BETWEEN STATES AND TRIBES

GATHERING INPUT FROM TRIBES

2015 Update: OCS has policy in place to address the responsibility for child welfare services and inclusion of Tribal partners in initial assessments, case reviews, and case planning activities. Tribal representatives participate on the OCS policy development workgroup, the ESC, and have been included in planning to meet the requirements of Public Law 113-183. Input from Tribal partners was gathered in development of the CFSP and APSR. Documentation of involvement is provided earlier in this report.

OCS works closely with the Tribal State Advisory Team (TSAT) and Tribal State Collaboration Group (TSCG). The ongoing partnership with these groups has assisted OCS in identifying areas of need and developing plans to improve services in Alaska. Through regularly scheduled meetings, occurring three times a year, the TSCG has been a forum to discuss the state compliance with ICWA, services related to permanency planning for Tribal children, and independent living programs and services. Current efforts include support for Tribes receiving title IV-E administrative funds, ongoing collaboration to support the title IV-E maintenance with TCC and changes to enhance information sharing between the state and Tribal partners.

2016 Update: No changes have occurred in the way OCS gathers input from Tribes. OCS continues to work closely with Tribes in Alaska. Tribal representatives participate on the OCS policy development workgroup, the ESC, and have been included in planning to meet the requirements of Public Law 113-183. Input from Tribal partners was gathered in development of the CFSP and APSR efforts. The Tribal Partners that participate in TSAT are:

- Lou Johnson, BBNA
- Mary Johnson, TCC
- Francine Eddy Jones, CCTHITA
- Cheryl Offt, AVCP
- Lola Stepetin, NEC

The Tribal Partners that participate in TSCG are:

- Aleut Community of St. Paul Island
- Aleutian/Pribilof Islands Association (APIA)
- Arctic Slope Native Association (ASNA)
- Association of Village Council Presidents (AVCP)
- Bristol Bay Native Association (BBNA)
- Cheeshna Tribe
- Central Council Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes (CCTHITA)
- Chickaloon
- Chugachmiut
- Copper River Native Association (CRNA)
- Cook Inlet Tribal Council (CITC)
- Kawerak, Inc.
- Kenaitze Indian Tribe
- Ketchikan Indian Corporation (KIC)
- Knik Tribe
- Kodiak Area Native Association (KANA)
- Kwigillingok
- Maniilaq Association
- Metlakatla Indian Community
- Native Village of Barrow
- Native Village of Kotzebue
- Nome Eskimo Community (NEC)
- Ninilchik Tribe
- Orutsararmuit Native Council (ONC)
- Sitka Tribe of Alaska (STA)
- Sun'aq Tribe of Kodiak
- Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC)

2017 Update: OCS continues to work closely with Tribes in Alaska via the Tribal State Advisory Team, Tribal State Collaboration Group, Tribal State Strategic Plan, and Regional Tribal State teams.

In May of 2016, the Tribal State Strategic Plan "Transforming Child Welfare Outcomes for Alaska Native Children 2016-2020" was finalized. Shortly thereafter, priority workgroups were formed and work plans were developed. In October of 2016, a Steering Committee was established to prioritize and oversee the plan's implementation. The committee, which

includes Tribal members, convened in January 2017 for a two-day work session to ensure implementation fidelity. The following goals were selected for 2017:

- Truth, Racial Healing, and Transformation
- Tribal Self Governance
- Tribal Consultation
- Messaging/Education

Tribal representatives, along with OCS staff and key stakeholders participate in the six strategic priority workgroups: Respectful Government-to-Government Collaboration & Partnership, Self-Governance, Embrace & Implement the Spirit of ICWA, State Government Alignment, Community Engagement and Culturally Specific Services & Supports. There are over 75 individuals participating in these priority work groups.

Tribal members are also included in the OCS Executive Steering Committee, Policy Group, and have been immersed in the planning to meet the requirements of Public Law 113-183. Input from Tribal partners was gathered while developing the CFSP and APSR efforts. Additionally, Tribal members participated in the Child & Family Services Review.

Commissioner Davidson will be hosting a Tribal Consultation and Listening Session in November of 2017 to gather input directly from Tribes, Tribal Organizations, and Tribal Health Care Providers about ways to streamline services and improve collaboration with the Department of Health & Social Services.

ONGOING COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION WITH TRIBES

2015 Update: OCS will continue all collaborative efforts listed above. Additionally in the coming year quarterly teleconferences specific to the CFSP will be available to gather input and assistance from our Tribal partners. A detailed list of activities to continue collaboration and coordination with Tribes regarding child welfare programs, enhance Tribal and state relations, reduce disproportionality and increase ICWA compliance is included in the matrix beginning on page 104.

The partnership with OCS and Alaska Tribes is essential to the safety, permanency, and well being of children and families. Additionally, on April 15, 2015 an emergency regulation was issued regarding petitions for adoption in ICWA cases. This regulation provides enhanced opportunities for relatives and Tribal members to adopt and reduces barriers in ICWA cases. OCS management is working diligently to get information and guidance to OCS staff and Tribes regarding this regulation change. The link to OCS APSR will be sent to Tribal partners on July 1, 2015, after submission of the document.

2016 Update: OCS continues with its numerous collaborative efforts with Tribes. A detailed list of activities to continue collaboration and coordination with Tribes regarding child welfare programs, enhance Tribal and state relations, reduce disproportionality and increase ICWA compliance is included in the matrix beginning on page 104.

Additionally, Alaska Federation of Natives, First Alaskans Institute, Alaska DHSS/OCS, the Tribal-State Collaboration Group, and Casey Family Program continue to partner on several projects to improve the lives of children, identify pathways to move forward, and align efforts improve outcomes for our Native children and communities. In April a leadership summit, in conjunction with the Third Annual Honoring Our Children Day across Alaska, was held in Anchorage.

OCS and Tribal partners are working together to implement and assess the CFSP and APSR. Tribal partners are included in the quarterly CFSP conference calls, ESC, and policy committee to provide feedback and suggestions to assist in implementation of the plan.

States and Tribes are required to exchange copies of their Annual Progress and Services Report. OCS will provide the link to the 2017 APSR to Tribes in Alaska by email no later than July 1, 2016. Additionally, Tribal State Advisory Team members will continue to be invited to participate in quarterly CFSP focused conference calls.

2017 Update: Tribal State Advisory Team Members participate in a monthly teleconference and meet face-to-face on an annual basis. Much of their work drives the regional and statewide collaboration efforts with Tribes.

The Tribal-State Data Group met in August of 2016 with a research consultant from Casey Family Programs who provided technical assistance to assist in selection of the data indicators that could be represented on one page. Since then, the Data Indicators have been tailored to include statewide data trends and data specific to each region. These indicators are included

as attachments and focus on the following categories: racial disproportionality, maltreatment, repeat maltreatment, extended relative placements, out-of-preference placements, ICWA foster homes, transfers to Tribal jurisdiction, Tribal interventions, reunification and other permanency outcomes.

The Annual Tribal State Collaboration Meeting occurred in May of 2017, where Tribal and state leaders gathered to share program updates, discuss collaboration efforts, examine trends in Data Indicators, reflection implementing the ICWA Regulations that took effect December of 2016, and to talk about upcoming initiatives that will provide more opportunities for collaboration.

The state obtained permission for a sole source contract to hire a negotiator funded by both the Tribes and the state to explore Tribal Self-Governance as it relates to service delivery to children and families. The first meeting took place in April of 2017, and meetings will continue through October of 2017.

Since Casey Family Programs ended technical support to the Knowing Who You Are (KWYA) curriculum in 2015, the KWYA Steering Committee and Curriculum Group assumed the responsibility of updating the curriculum which provided the opportunity to make Alaska specific adaptations. KWYA provides a framework for participants to identify and explore racial and ethnic identity and to understand how one's race and ethnicity impacts both personal and professional interactions. KWYA leaders have implemented the updated curriculum with great success the program is well received and continues to be supported by the Tribal State Collaboration Group. The statewide KWYA team continues to facilitate 12 workshops each year around the state for Tribal and state employees as well as build community partnerships by inviting other agencies and service providers to attend workshops. The statewide network is looking to build the internal infrastructure by offering a Facilitator Training to increase the facilitator pool and offer the content to more people.

UPDATE ON COLLABORATIVE WORK EFFORTS WITH TRIBES WHO PROVIDE CHILD WELFARE SERVICES

2015 Update: Information is provided below regarding updates related to Tribal services and collaboration with OCS. OCS is working closely with DOL and Tribal partners to improve information sharing with Tribes. OCS will explore the option of including a Tribal representative on general variance committees for licensed foster care providers, and looks forward to reporting more details on this proposed change next year.

2016 Update: OCS negotiated a Tribal title IV-E foster care maintenance pass through agreement with Central Council Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska in April 2016. OCS also has an agreement with Tanana Chiefs Conference for Tribal title IV-E foster care maintenance pass through. The agreements outline the roles and responsibility for services to families. OCS continues to work closely with DOL and Tribal partners to improve information sharing with Tribes. Over the last year, OCS was able to facilitate the inclusion of a Tribal representative from each region of the state to participate on the Regional General Variance Committee for foster care licensing. Additional information is provided on the following pages regarding updates related to OCS's Tribal partnerships. APPLA information is shared with Tribal partners; for more information please see Section 12 of this report.

2017 Update: The Tribal License Foster Care group continued to meet over the past year to incorporate new federal legislation into licensing standards. The Second Edition of the Alaska Tribal Foster Care Standards has been issued and disseminated, and training for Tribal ICWA workers will take place in October of 2017. As a result of these efforts, there are currently over 100 Tribal licensed foster homes in the state of Alaska.

Additionally, the state has been collaborating with Tribes to develop a process whereby OCS can place state custody children in Tribal licensed foster homes. It is anticipated that this effort this will have a direct impact on Data Indicator trends, specifically the number of children in out-of-preference placements.

Over the past year, Central Council Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska and Tanana Chiefs Conference have begun implementation of their Tribal Title IV-E Maintenance agreement with three cases in the program. The state reimburses these Tribal partners 100% of the foster care payment while the Tribes have full placement and care authority for the children. OCS is working on expanding this program with other Tribes in Alaska

MONITORING COMPLIANCE WITH ICWA

2015 Update: This specific section title was not include in the "2016 APSR" submitted in June 2015.

2016 Update: OCS continues to work closely with Tribal partners to monitor compliance with ICWA. OCS and Tribal partners have worked closely to develop the Tribal State Advisory Team Data Indicators (see Appendix L). This data is reviewed regularly to track compliance with ICWA. Additional examples of the efforts regarding this are described on the following pages.

2017 Update: OCS continues to work closely with Tribal partners to monitor compliance with ICWA. Evaluation of data is ongoing and occurs regularly during Tribal State meetings. In addition, Tribes are provided monthly reports illustrating the children who are affiliated with their Tribe and the placement preference.

Much of the work to increase ICWA compliance includes partnering with the child's Tribe from the beginning of a case including on all placement decisions, ensuring due diligence to identify relative and other preference placements for Alaska Native and American Indian youth, collaborating with Tribal partners regarding existing out-of-preference placements and potential permanency options, and delivering joint training to OCS staff and Tribal partners. Additional examples of the efforts regarding this topic are described on the following pages.

Enhance Tribal and State Relations, Cultural Humility, Increase ICWA Compliance	
Goal: Promote positive state and Tribal collaboration relations, build Tribal capacity, reduce disproportionality and increase ICWA compliance.	
Action Steps	**Annual Update (includes date completed)**
4.A.1 Continue to meet with Tribal State Collaboration Group (TSCG) 3 times per year.	2015: Meetings held February 4-6 2014; May 6-8 2014; Nov. 4-6 2014; and May 7 2015. The TSCG participated in an Undoing Racism workshop Feb. 3-5, 2015. In the past year, Tribal State Collaborations restructured to allow for regional TS meetings. 2016: All State TSCG meeting was held in Juneau February 2-4, 2016. Regional Tribal State meetings are further discussed earlier this section, under the heading "Collaboration and Coordination". **2017 Update:** Regional Tribal State meetings are further discussed earlier in this section, under the heading "Collaboration and Coordination". An annual all state TSCG meeting was held in Anchorage May 3-4. Members expressed interest in meeting on a biannual basis in the future.
4.A.2 OCS will engage in mutual updates on the CFSP with Tribal partners across the state.	2015: The CFSP/APSR was discussed at the May 2015 Tribal State meeting. Opportunities to provide feedback were provided at May teleconferences. 2016: Quarterly teleconferences specific to the CFSP were implemented to gather input and assistance from our Tribal partners. An opportunity to provide feedback was also provided at the 2016 February Tribal State meeting. **2017 Update:** Quarterly teleconferences specific to the CFSP continued to gather input and assistance from Tribal partners and other stakeholders.

4.A.3 OCS Leadership will support the development and sustainability of Regional Disproportionality Teams.	2015: Regional TS meetings provide the opportunity for Regional Disproportionality Teams to become an ongoing workgroup, in which Tribes, OCS, and community partners will collaborate. 2016: The Anchorage Region has an active Regional Disproportionality Team. The team meets monthly. Their vision and goals are as follows: The vision statement: Enhancing Tribal partnerships and Family Wellness: Engage, Educate, Empower. Team Goals: • Recruit new ICWA homes • Retain the current ICWA homes to take other native children. • Identify and implement strategies to support our ICWA homes. • Replicate the efforts the AK native family services unit throughout other units. **2017 Update:** The second edition of the Alaska Tribal Foster Care Standards was disseminated at the Tribal State Collaboration Group meeting in May 2017 and training is scheduled to occur October 3-5, 2017. According to recent data (see attached), disproportionality rates have fluctuated statewide from 60.3% in 2014, to 56.7% in 2015, to 57.0% in 2016. Please note: this slight increase could be due to identifying and entering the race of children who are in state custody previously documented as unknown race. Over the last year the number of ICWA foster homes increased by over 40.
4.A.4 OCS will work with Tribes across the state to strengthen relationships, coordinate services and explore opportunities to engage in authentic partnerships.	2015: OCS invites Tribal partners to trainings, provides Rural Child Welfare grants to 5 Tribal grantees, and has participated in the development of title IV-E maintenances agreements with two Tribal consortia. 2016: No changes in the past year. OCS invites Tribal partners to trainings, provides Rural Child Welfare grants to 5 Tribal grantees, and has participated in the development of title IV-E maintenances agreements with two Tribal consortia. **2017 Update:** No changes in the past year. OCS invites Tribal partners to trainings, provides Rural Child Welfare grants to five Tribal grantees, and has participated in the development of Title IV-E maintenances agreements with two Tribal consortia. OCS is partnering with Metlakatla Indian Community and Arctic Slope Native Association to explore the possibility of implementing administration and short term training agreements.
4.A.5 Continue Tribal State Co-Chair meetings on a bi-monthly basis.	2015: TSCG Co-Chairs met twice a month until January 2015. This group is now the Tribal State Advisory Team (TSAT) which meets once a month. Face-to-face meetings were held in January and March 2015.

	2016: The TSAT meets by teleconference the second and fourth Thursday of each month. A face to face meeting was held December 10, 2015. **2017 Update:** The TSAT meets by teleconference the second Thursday of each month.
4.A.6 Explore and adopt new strategies for communicating and engaging with Tribes that are currently not attending TSCG.	2015: With the restructure of TSCG, the focus is for more Tribes to participate in regional TS meetings which will improve the communication regionally and statewide. 2016: Over the last year regional TSCG meetings have occurred in Fairbanks, Nome, Juneau, Bethel, Anchorage, Gakona, and Kenai. Tribal and OCS representatives attended from surrounding villages and communities. OCS provided a "Let's Talk ICWA" presentation at the annual BIA Providers Conference in Anchorage December 2015. A Tribal Survey was sent on February 26, 2016 to Tribal partners across the state; a list was provided to OCS from the BIA to ensure the most accurate contact information was used. **2017 Update:** Over the last year regional TSCG meetings have occurred in Juneau, Anchorage and Kodiak. Tribal and OCS representatives attended from surrounding villages and communities. The Statewide ICWA Coordinator also attended the NICWA Conference in April with a team consisting of Tribal Partners and Tribal advocates presented a workshop on Transforming Child Welfare Outcomes for Alaska Native Children: The Collaborative Development of a Strategic Plan. In addition, OCS recently began meeting with several Tribal partners regarding self-governance and meetings will continue through September. The Listening Session/Tribal Consultation scheduled for November 2017 will also be a great opportunity to communicate and engage with all Tribes throughout Alaska.
4.A.7 Increase number of Tribal title IV-E Agreements with Tribes/Tribal Organizations	2015: All IV-B Tribes were invited to the Tribal IV-E meeting to become familiar with the requirements. Technical assistance regarding Tribal title IV-E maintenance pass-through was offered to Ketchikan Indian Community and St. Paul Island for their pursuit of direct funding. 2016: OCS is continually reaching out to Tribes/Tribal Entities across the state to increase partnerships and possible additional maintenance agreements. One new maintenance agreement was executed in March 2016. Inquiries from Metlakatla Indian Community, Native Village of Kotzebue, and Arctic Slope Native Association occurred during the last reporting period. **2017 Update:** OCS is continually reaching out to Tribes/Tribal Entities across the state to increase partnerships and possible additional maintenance agreements. OCS is partnering with Metlakatla Indian Community and Arctic Slope Native Association to explore the possibility of implementing administration and short term training agreements.

4.A.8 Continue to provide technical assistance and support to Tribes/Tribal Organizations who access title IV-E funding to provide child welfare related services to children that qualify under the Indian Child Welfare Act.	2015: Technical assistance was provided by telephone and email communication. In the past year, Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association received a site review. All Tribes were invited to a training summit in November 2014 and a meeting and training in May 2015. 2016: Intensive technical assistance is underway with the Central Council Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska, Tribal Family and Youth Services in preparation and anticipation of their first transfer of jurisdiction cases to occur over the summer of 2016. Due to travel restrictions, technical assistance needs have been provided via telephone and email. In February of 2016, OCS presented information regarding options for AVCP to access and increase their Title IV-E funding to enhance their Tribal ICWA program capacity. **2017 Update:** Intensive technical assistance continues with the Central Council Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska, who successfully transferred jurisdiction of two child welfare cases over the past year. OCS partners regularly with ORCA Help and CCTHITA to develop a process and protocol for successfully reissuing maintenance payments. OCS continues to partner with Tanana Chiefs Conference who also transferred jurisdiction of one child welfare case. Additionally, OCS has been providing intensive technical assistance to Orutsararmuit Native Council (ONC) to help them navigate their administrative and short-term training agreement reimbursements.
4.A.9 Work with Tribes to assess readiness, and develop the needed infrastructure necessary to expand and increase the number of title IV-E Maintenance Agreements.	2015: Over the past year, OCS received permission to expand the Tribal title IV-E maintenance pass-through agreement with additional Tribes: OCS currently in negotiations with Central Council Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska. 2016: The CCTHITA of Alaska signed a Maintenance Agreement with the State of Alaska in March 2016. In April 2016, a presentation related to accessing title IV-E maintenance funds was provided to the Association of Village Council Presidents along with cost pool evaluation and discussion of ways to access additional administrative funding to further serve their children and families. In the upcoming year, OCS will also work with Kawerak to discuss the possibility of a maintenance agreement. **2017 Update:** The State has been working closely with CCTHITA since they signed a Maintenance Agreement in March 2016. Regular technical assistance is provided to assist in developing and maintaining their infrastructure by re-evaluating cost pools to maximize federal funding reimbursement. The state plans to visit the Arctic Slope Native Association and with Metlakatla Indian Community to present information related to accessing Title IV-E Maintenance funds and administrative funding to provide services to children and families.

4.A.10 Provide information regarding how Tribes can access Chafee funding for Tribal youth in Tribal custody on an annual basis via various modalities. This will include consultation with Tribes regarding determining eligibility for benefits and services to ensure fair and equitable treatment for Indian youth under Chafee Foster Care.	2015: The Independent Living Program's quarterly teleconference to discuss the Chafee Foster Care Independence Act Funding and the Education Training Voucher program specifically targeting to the Tribes of Alaska. The statewide Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) Coordinator and the Independent Living Program Coordinator sent out invitations via e-mail, fax, word of mouth, and by mail. A packet designed for youth in Tribal custody is available to Tribes requesting assistance with Chafee funding or the ETV program. The Independent Living Program has goals to include Tribes in the permanency summit for older youth in the leadership retreat planning sessions this coming year. 2016: A Chafee program overview on the resources available for youth in Tribal custody was provided during the February 2016 TSCG meeting. In addition, quarterly teleconferences continue and the dates are listed on the OCS ICWA webpage along with all the forms required to access funding. **2017 Update:** A presentation and discussion on Chafee funding occurred at the Southcentral Region Tribal State meeting in Kodiak April, 2017. Quarterly teleconferences continue and the dates are listed on the OCS ICWA webpage along with all the forms required to access funding.
4.A.11 Develop policy and procedures to prioritize, standardize and streamline the referral process for OCS clients to receive Tribal in-home and case management services where available.	2015: OCS staff was trained on how to make referrals to Rural Child Welfare Services Program in their area. 2016: Grant Meetings are scheduled for Juneau and July 2016 with RCW grantees and OCS representatives in order to work on improving partnership, facilitate referrals, discuss documentation issues, and to generally improve services to Alaska Native families in rural areas. **2017 Update:** A comprehensive needs assessment was completed in fall 2016, with the goal of continuing to improve the provision of Rural Child Welfare Services. Due to this assessment, Tribal workers are using the same Caseworker Visit documentation as OCS, and both ongoing program documentation and reporting have been streamlined, and the Strengthening Families Framework integrated, to continue towards standardization and streamlining of service referral and provision.
4.A.12 Continue to promote cooperation and collaboration on case-related matters and sharing reciprocal information through full implementation of the Tribal Confidentiality Agreements.	2015: Department of Law and Alaska Legal Services developed "frequently asked questions" regarding information sharing. Training was provided during May's TSCG meeting. OCS' policy and matrix along with a two page consolidated FAQs are currently being developed. 2016: The Information Sharing and Confidentiality Agreements were discussed during the Feb. 2016 TSCG meeting. To date, 127 Tribes/Tribal Organizations have signed the Tribal Agreement of Confidentiality which allows OCS to provide information to the child's Tribe in the Initial Assessment/pre-filing phase. A list of

	the Tribes who have signed the agreement is on the OCS ICWA webpage. **2017 Update:** To date, 138 Tribes/Tribal Organizations have signed the Tribal Agreement of Confidentiality which allows OCS to provide information to the child's Tribe in the Initial Assessment/pre-filing phase. A list of the Tribes who have signed the agreement is posted on the OCS ICWA webpage. At recent meetings related to self-governance, OCS and Tribes have explored options to share information more freely with one another and to collaborate while providing child welfare services. Meetings will continue through October 2017.
4.A.13 Work with ORCA Project Manager to determine feasibility of providing Tribes access to AK OCS ORCA.	2015: ORCA reports and data are available to Tribes with a maintenance agreement. 2016: No changes in the past year. ORCA reports and data continue to be available to Tribes with a maintenance agreement. **2017 Update:** No changes in the past year. ORCA reports and data continue to be available to Tribes with a maintenance agreement.
4.A.14 Conduct critical review of 20 year old Tribal State ICWA Agreement.	2015: Will be reviewed in the coming year. 2016: This work has yet to begin and remains an important priority. TSAT will determine whether to keep this item in the plan or not. **2017 Update:** The topic was identified as a tactic under the "Respectful Government to Government Collaboration and Partnership" work group. A sub group of this priority reviewed and determined that it is not necessary to update the agreement. 4.A.14 is discontinued.
4.A.15 Develop ICWA Reference Guides for everyday use by state and Tribal workers.	2015: Will be reviewed by Tribal State Advisory Team in the coming year to determine if action is needed. 2016: OCS, in conjunction with the Child Welfare Academy, is working on a draft desk guide that would be provided at new worker training. **2017 Update:** The Child Welfare Academy is now providing an ICWA Desk Guide at ICWA II Training. This document will eventually be provided at SKILS/new worker training. Item completed.
4.A.16 Keep OCS ICWA webpage updated to allow easy access to all pertinent TSCG efforts and ICWA information.	2015: New confidentiality agreements are posted when received. The web page will be updated in 2015. 2016: Webpage is updated on a regular basis and includes dates of upcoming events such as TSCG meetings, ICWA trainings, KWYA workshops and Alaska Native cultural events. Also posted are forms pertaining to Tribal work in Alaska.

	2017 Update: The webpage is updated on a regular basis and includes dates of upcoming events such as TSCG meetings, ICWA trainings, KWYA workshops, and Alaska Native cultural events. Also posted are forms pertaining to Tribal work in Alaska. OCS plans to add a link to the second edition of the Alaska Tribal Foster Care Standards.
4.A.17 Continue to seek Tribal participation in on-site QA reviews and other CQI related activities.	2015: Two Tribal partners will participate in November 2015 title IV-E review. During OCS quality assurance reviews, if a Native child is identified; reviewers make efforts to contact and interview the Tribe. 2016: No changes in the past year. Two Tribal representatives were present for the on-site title IV-E review in November. During OCS quality assurance reviews, if a Native child is identified; reviewers make efforts to contact and interview the Tribe. **2017 Update:** No changes in the past year. It is common practice for Tribal partners to participate in Quality Assurance Reviews. Several Tribal partners participated in the Child & Family Services Review as reviewers.
4.A.18 Conduct ongoing OCS ICWA team teleconferences, which includes the Tribes and others as needed.	2015: OCS ICWA Specialists have monthly teleconferences. Topics over the last year included: • Out-of-preference placement reviews, documentation, and providing Tribes with the placement preference level of their Tribal children in custody • Maintaining and updating Tribal providers, the list of Tribes and affiliated agencies in ORCA; • Preparing ICWA presentations and speaking at conferences • How to process placement and adoption requests and educate staff regarding relative searches; • Development and delivery of consistent ICWA training regionally, tracking, and co-facilitating with Tribal partners. 2016: The OCS ICWA Specialists continue to have monthly teleconferences which are primarily focused on many of the same items listed above. **2017 Update:** OCS ICWA Specialists continue to have monthly teleconferences which are primarily focused on many of the same items listed above. Regional ICWA Specialists and the Statewide ICWA Program Coordinator provides case consultation and advocate for the paradigm shift of compliance driven to a values driven approach in embracing the spirit of ICWA. This work includes examining due diligence to identify extended family and other preference placements for Alaska Native and American Indian youth, collaborating with Tribal partners regarding existing out-of-preference placements and potential permanency options, and delivering joint training to OCS staff and Tribal partners.

4.A.19 Ensure placement preference data for Native children entered in ORCA is accurate.	2015: Over 95% of records have a placement preference. ORCA is being modified to ensure a higher level of accuracy in preferences. 2016: ORCA was modified in 2015 to ensure that whenever a child enters a placement the system asks whether the child is Alaska Native or American Indian, thus populating the ICWA placement preferences. According to ORCA report RR000163, 4/19/2016, Native Placement Preference tab, only eight records were missing documentation out of 1,572; therefore, 99.5% records have placement documented. **2017 Update:** Regional ICWA Specialists have been persistent in inputting data regarding placement preferences for Alaska Native children and they have been facilitating training with field staff regarding what constitutes a diligent extended family/preference placement search. ICWA Specialists have been designated as the OCS point of contact to communicate with Tribes regarding permanency for children in out-of-preference placements, what the Tribe's position is and to document these positions accurately in ORCA.
4.A.20 Increase placement preferences for Native children in out of home care.	2015: 41.7% of Native children are in relative placements. Over the last year efforts were made to address out-of-preference reviews in Administrative Reviews and Team Decision Making Meetings. The WRO pilot project has been expanded to all Tribes being able to notify OCS when a relative requests immediate placement of a child. In June 2015 staff received training on how to document and process placement requests. 2016: Despite efforts to increase placement preferences for Alaska Native children, the percent remains under 42% for 2015. These percents are being evaluated at a regional level with focused efforts on recruitment and retention of Alaska Native homes is underway. Additionally, OCS is moving forward on development of a model to place children in state custody in Tribal licensed homes. In February of 2016, a pilot "Emergency Relief Support" program was initiated in the Southeast Region. This program provides up front time-limited funds to relatives and family friends. The number of ICWA foster homes for 2015 was 306. There was clarification regarding the difference between a Native foster home and ICWA foster home. **2017 Update:** As a result of focusing on diligent relative searches and having more Tribal licensed foster homes, 48% of Alaska Native children were placed in relative placements in 2016. Concurrently, the percentage of out-of-preference placements decreased from 36% in 2015 to 29% in 2016.
4.A.21 Increase number of licensed Native foster homes and implement a process for verifying that foster parents are Native.	2015: As of 12/31/14, OCS had 333 Native Foster Homes out of 1022. Regional recruitment and retention teams have a goal to recruit Alaska Native foster homes. OCS licensing unit has developed and implemented a consistent method to document and track Resource Families who may be an ICWA placement preference.

	2016: This item was combined with 4.A.20. **2017 Update:** 2016 & 2017: This item was combined with 4.A.20. Item discontinued.
4.A.22 Provide on-going ORCA data as requested by Tribes.	2015: OCS ORCA team met with Tribal IV-E and title IV-B Tribes to discuss data needs. The OCS Research Unit will be making changes to the reports available on the state web page. Annually data is prepared for the TSAT to review disparate data for Native and Non-native children. 2016: As of July 2015, OCS provides Tribe specific out of home placement data monthly (as requested). In addition, the OCS Research Team will work on updating the state web data to include disproportionality data. **2017 Update:** OCS continues to provide Tribes with specific out-of-home placement data on a monthly basis. In addition, the OCS Research Team will work to provide updated information on the website to include disproportionality data.
4.A.23 Support ICWA related training including KWYA, through grants, title IV-E, and the Child Welfare Academy.	2015: Tribal title IV-E Partners meet in May 2014, Nov. 2014, and May 2015 for a two day training summit. Support is provided as needed, examples include caseworker visit and case planning training by CWA and TCC staff, and RCW grantee training co-facilitated by CWA and OCS. Knowing Who You Are workshops were offered 15 times in the past year, and training for new KWYA facilitator candidates also occurred. The Regional ICWA Specialists conduct ICWA trainings with Tribal partners. The Child Welfare Academy supports these trainings by sending invites out to participants and tracking attendance and feedback. 2016: The Advanced ICWA training is being revised and will be rolled out May 2016. KWYA curriculum is also being revised and is anticipated to be complete by Fall 2016. There are approximately 12 workshops annually. Tribal title IV-E partners are working on updating the Tribal Licensing Standards, Procedures and Forms; this is anticipated to be complete by Fall of 2016 with a training held in October. **2017 Update:** The revised KWYA curriculum has been implemented and is well received. The Tribal State Licensing work group issued the second edition of the Alaska Tribal Foster Care standards and are in the process of planning a co-hosted Tribal State training for ICWA workers that is scheduled to take place in October 2017.
4.A.24 Ensure Tribes are notified of their right to intervene in state proceedings, or to seek transfer of the proceedings to the jurisdiction of the Tribe.	2015: Notification of a Tribe's rights is in the ICWA notice sent to the identified Tribes. According to data listed in 4.A.26, notices are being sent over 90% of the time

	2016: The Tribal State Advisory Team decided in December 2015 to add Tribal interventions to the data indicators consistently monitored by TSCG. The percent of Tribes that intervened on ICWA cases was 43% for 2015. In March 2016, Eligibility Technicians began entering intervention detail into ORCA the day the order of intervention is received. Regional ICWA Specialists are collaborating with Tribes regarding the importance of Tribes becoming legal parties in custody cases in hopes of increasing the number of Tribal interventions. The number of cases in which the Tribe assumed jurisdiction is also being tracked. The number of cases in 2015 which transfer of jurisdiction took place was 49. In March 2016, OCS issued an ICWA Program Instruction which included a section regarding transfer of jurisdiction, specifying that OCS supports transfers of jurisdiction to the Indian child's Tribe. A decision to take the position that there is good cause not to transfer jurisdiction will be made on a case by case basis after a consultation with the AAG and OCS Director. **2017 Update:** Work continues as listed above with data provided in Appendix L.
4.A.25 Ensure/increase the notification of Indian parents and Tribes of state proceedings involving Indian children and their right to intervene.	2015: The initial plan to notify DOL is currently in place. OCS continues to maintain well over 90% compliance. The DOL continues to notify Indian parents and Tribes of State proceedings involving Indian children with a highly level of consistency. 2016: No changes in the past year. Notification of a Tribe's rights is in the ICWA notice sent to the identified Tribes. According to data listed in 4.A.25, notices are being sent over 90% of the time. **2017 Update:** No changes in the past year.
4.A.26 Increase active efforts through the use of in-home services to prevent the breakup of the Indian family when parties seek to place a child in foster care.	2015: Several regions have In-Home Family Services units. Rural Child Welfare grantees also provide in-home services to families. 2016: OCS uses in-home services to provide active efforts to prevent the breakup of the Indian family. Several regions have In-Home Family Services units. Rural Child Welfare grantees also provide in-home services to families. Currently there are 281 Native children receiving in-home services through OCS. Initial assessment workers may provide referrals when needed by the family prior to custody being assumed. The 2015 Tribal Survey asked the question "The Office of Children's Services makes active efforts to work with Alaska Native families" in which 46% of the respondents selected strongly agree/agree, 37% were undecided, and 17% strongly disagree/disagree. **2017 Update:** OCS continues to use in-home services to prevent the breakup of the Indian family. Rural Child Welfare grantees also provide in-home services to families. It is the hope that OCS will be able to provide Tribes funding to expand service provisions to prevent the break of Alaska Native families.

4.A.27 Provide capacity building support to regional disproportionality teams to develop child protection teams in rural communities.	2015: OCS has been working with Association of Village Council Presidents to develop and implement a project in which Rural ICWA workers OCS by conducting monthly quality caseworker visits, this pilot project is still in the development phase. 2016: TSAT will determine if this item will continue or be melded into the Strategic Plan efforts. **2017 Update:** Regional disproportionality teams have moved into the Regional Tribal State groups. Item discontinued.

Discussions with Tribal Partners Specific to CFCIP

OCS facilitates quarterly teleconferences to provide Tribes with information about CFCIP and independent living services available to youth, but also to collaborate on how to improve Tribal access to Chafee services. Tribes have identified that they are not familiar with the Chafee services and OCS has worked to increase participation in quarterly teleconferences to share general information. The teleconferences have been increasingly collaborative opportunities to share resources and conduct detailed referrals for youth to receive Chafee IL support and services. Additional information is further delineated in Section 12 of this report.

Sharing 2018 APSR with Tribes

OCS will provide a copy of the submitted 2018 APSR to Gloria Gorman with the Bureau of Indian Affairs. The report will be disseminated to all Tribal partners through the Tribal listserv as well as the Tribal caucus listserv. The 2018 OCS APSR will be a discussion item on the next State and Tribal Meetings, planned for Fall 2017. Additionally, the submitted report will be posted on the public-facing State of Alaska OCS website.

SECTION 7: MONTHLY CASEWORKER VISIT FORMULA GRANT

USE OF THE MONTHLY CASE WORKER VISIT FORMULA GRANT

2015 Update: Alaska received a total of $34,862 in title IV-B, subpart 2 funding for FFY 2014 to support monthly caseworker visits with children in foster care. The funds were used to pay the travel costs associated with monthly caseworker sites in remote locations in the Northern Region. OCS intends to continue to us funds in a similar way in the coming year.

OCS continues to be out of compliance with the overall target percentage goal for annual case worker visits with children. However, 83% is an increase from the previous year's data (2013 was 80%). The percent of children visited in their home, at 69%, exceeds the 50% federal standard. Managers and supervisors continue to have access to a weekly ORCA report which provides an up-to-date status, by worker, regarding how many visits have been made thus far in the month. Case worker visits with children continue to be a primary agency focus and we anticipate a continued progress towards making the target goal.

2016 Update: OCS continues to use MCWVF Grant to support monthly caseworker visits with children in foster care. The funds were used to pay the travel costs associated with monthly caseworker sites in remote locations in the Northern Region. OCS intends to continue to use these funds in a similar way in the coming year. States were required to report data on monthly case worker visits with children in foster care by December 15, 2015. OCS submitted the following data on November 30, 2015:

STANDARD #1: The total number of visits made by caseworkers on a monthly basis to children in foster care during a fiscal year must not be less than 95% of the total number of such visits that would occur if each child were visited once every month while in care. FFY 2015 OCS ORCA data shows that the total number of visits made by OCS caseworkers on a monthly basis to children in foster care was 78%. This is a decrease from the previous year and OCS is not in compliance with the requirements.

STANDARD #2: At least 50% of the total number of monthly visits made by caseworkers to children in foster care during a fiscal year must occur in the child's residence. FFY 2015 OCS ORCA data shows that 66% of the monthly visits by OCS caseworkers to children in foster care occurred in the child's residence. This is a decrease from the previous year however OCS continues to be in compliance with this requirement.

2017 Update: Alaska received a total of $34,713 in title IV-B, subpart 2 funding for FFY 2016 to support monthly caseworker visits with children in foster care. The funds were used to pay the travel costs associated with monthly caseworker visits. OCS intends to continue to us funds in a similar way in the coming year.

States were required to report data on monthly case worker visits with children in foster care by December 15, 2016.

1. STANDARD #1: The total number of visits made by caseworkers on a monthly basis to children in foster care during a fiscal year must not be less than 95% of the total number of such visits that would occur if each child were visited once every month while in care. FFY 2016 OCS DATA: the total number of visits made by OCS caseworkers on a monthly basis to children in foster care was 73%; this is a decrease from FFY 2015.

2. STANDARD #2: At least 50% of the total number of monthly visits made by caseworkers to children in foster care during a fiscal year must occur in the child's residence. FFY 2016 OCS DATA: 63% of the monthly visits by OCS caseworkers to children in foster care occurred in the child's residence. This is a decrease from FFY 2015, but still above the standard.

Table 10: Caseworker Visits

RR00124 - Federal Monthly Caseworker Visits Measures, FFY15 through FFY16						
Data					Measures	
Region	Item 1: Total Children	Item 2: Total Monthly Visits	Item 3: Total Months in Care	Item 4: Total Visits in Child's Residence	% of visits made on a monthly basis by caseworkers to children in foster care	% of visits that occurred in the residence of the child
FY 2016						
Anchorage	1,590	11,033	13,414	7,305	82%	66%
Northern	665	4,247	5,678	2,446	74%	57%
Southcentral	1,001	4,482	8,758	3,009	51%	67%
Southeast	248	2,041	2,202	1,133	92%	55%
Western	227	1,602	1,958	954	81%	59%
Statewide	**3,733**	**23,408**	**32,014**	**14,849**	**73%**	**63%**
Percent Change from FY2015 to FY2016:					Absolute Change, FY2015 - FY2016	
Anchorage	10.9%	11.0%	15.7%	4.3%	-3.0%	-4.0%
Northern	9.2%	19.3%	18.9%	7.2%	0.0%	-7.0%
Southcentral	15.6%	-5.5%	25.9%	-3.7%	-17.0%	2.0%
Southeast	-5.0%	21.4%	7.7%	25.3%	10.0%	2.0%
Western	-7.0%	7.3%	-1.7%	11.8%	7.0%	2.0%
Statewide	**9.3%**	**9.2%**	**17.0%**	**4.8%**	**-5.0%**	**-3.0%**
FY 2015						
Anchorage	1,434	9,943	11,591	7,005	85%	70%
Northern	609	3,561	4,777	2,282	74%	64%
Southcentral	866	4,742	6,958	3,123	68%	65%
Southeast	261	1,681	2,045	904	82%	53%
Western	244	1,493	1,991	853	74%	57%
Statewide	**3,415**	**21,429**	**27,373**	**14,171**	**78%**	**66%**
Per practice used from 2011, numbers for Central Office are excluded from the final counts.						

Source: State of Alaska Online Resources for Children in Alaska (ORCA) Report Monthly Caseworker Visits RR00124

ACTION STEPS TO ENSURE STANDARDS ARE MET

2015 Update: This specific section title was not include in the "2016 APSR" submitted in June 2015.

2016 Update: OCS management is reviewing the current practice and accountability for staff and managers related to this item. OCS is developing a plan to focus on core services, one of which is monthly case worker visits (MCV) with children. It is expected that a plan will be in place by September 30, 2016, and that a primary goal will be to increase compliance with MCV with children.

2017 Update: OCS continues to work on the CWV compliance, but efforts are not impacting the outcome. This will be an area of focus in the PIP developed as follow up to the CFSR.

REASONS THE STATE'S PERFORMNCE HAS FALLEN SHORT AND STEPS TO COMPLIANCE

2015 Update: This specific section title was not include in the "2016 APSR" submitted in June 2015.

2016 Update: The State of Alaska received a letter dated March 10, 2016 informing us that we failed to meet the performance standards. Based on the state's failure to meet the FFY 2015 MCV performance standard, Child Welfare Services program funding for FFY 2016 is reduced by 3% (from 75 % to 72%). OCS believes that the increasing case load and ongoing worker vacancy issues contributed to the decrease in compliance. OCS management is developing a plan to address this item and increase compliance in the coming year, as part of the core services work.

2017 Update: The State of Alaska documented a decrease in the MCV performance standard for FFY16. This will be an area of focus in the PIP developed as follow up to the CFSR.

SECTION 8: ADOPTION AND LEGAL GUARDIANSHIP INCENTIVE PAYMENT

2015 Update: In FFY 2014, The State of Alaska received $620,000 in Adoption and Legal Guardianship Incentive Payment. OCS has until 9/30/2017 to expend these funds. With the extended time frame allowed under Public Law 113-183, OCS does not anticipate challenges in utilizing these funds.

2016 Update: In FFY 2015, The State of Alaska received $301,647 in Adoption and Legal Guardianship Incentive Payment. OCS has until September 30, 2018 to expend these funds. With the extended time frame allowed under Public Law 113-183, OCS does not anticipate challenges in utilizing these funds.

2017 Update: In FFY 2016, The State of Alaska receives Adoption and Legal Guardianship Incentive Payments. OCS does not anticipate challenges in utilizing these funds. For this past fiscal year, OCS received $4,724.00 total. The OCS Notice of Grant Award indicated in a note: *"Due to limited availability of funds, and in accordance with the provisions of SEC 473A9(d)(2) of the Social Security Act, this award contains a prorated portion (approximately 21 percent) of the FY 2016 Adoption and Legal Guardianship Incentive Payment Program award to which the State is entitled. As soon as additional funds become available, the balance of the award will be issues."* OCS has made multiple attempts through the Region 10 office to get clarification on possible additional awards for this fiscal year; however, any additional awards have not been provided to Alaska to date.

HOW ADOPTION & LEGAL GUARDIANSHIP INCENTIVE PAYMENTS WERE SPENT

2015 Update: Alaska OCS elects to use these funds to provide:

- Support grants that aid children in achieving permanency through timely completion of adoption and guardianship home studies.
- Support services to pre- and post-adoptive families, through the provision of adoption support services.

2016 Update: As in previous years, Alaska OCS elects to us these funds to provide:

- Support grants that aid children in achieving permanency through timely completion of adoption and guardianship home studies.
- Support services to pre and post-adoptive families, through the provision of adoption support services to include support for guardianship families.
- Adoption promotion activities including intensive education, preparation, matching and support for families who are motivated to adopt special needs children from foster care

2017 Update: Alaska will continue to use the ALGI funds as listed in the 2016 update.

HOW ADOPTION AND LEGAL GUARDIANSHIP INCENTIVE FUNDS WILL BE SPENT

2015 Update: This specific section title was not include in the "2016 APSR" submitted in June 2015.

2016 Update: There are no anticipated changes in how OCS utilizes the ALGI Funds in the coming year. OCS does not anticipate any difficulty in spending the funds in the allotted time frame.

2017 Update: There are no anticipated changes in how OCS utilizes the ALGI Funds in the coming year. OCS does not anticipate any difficulty in spending the funds in the allotted time frame.

SECTION 9: CHILD WELFARE DEMONSTRATION ACTIVITIES

Not applicable for Alaska

SECTION 10: QUALITY ASSURANCE

ASSESS THE STATE'S CURRENT QA/CQI SYSTEM

2015 Update: The Quality Assurance case review and CQI system at OCS are described in detail earlier. OCS has a strong QA system and case reviews are found to be accurate and align with data collected through SACWIS. The case reviews encompass a careful review of safety, permanency, and well-being using the 18 item instrument. Each of the 24 field offices are reviewed at least annually with the largest metropolitan field office reviewed twice yearly.

OCS has developed a CQI committee and desk manual to guide the committee in their work. This committee is in the development phase and will be working to identify how the data used will drive system change in the agency. The inclusion of regional and statewide managers, as well as commitment to monthly meetings is an improvement in Alaska's practice related to CQI.

2016 Update: OCS has not made changes to the QA/CQI system. OCS has a CQI committee and desk manual to guide the committee in their work. The inclusion of regional and statewide managers has supported a process that identifies issues that are impacting individual regions as well as a statewide perspective. Managers can engage in an immediate problem-solving process; the regional managers' participation allows for a direct link from the QA findings to needed program change.

2017 Update: The CQI Committee continues to encompass the regional managers from the five regions as well as the Division Operations Manager, Child Welfare Administrator, Social Services Program Administrator, and the Quality Assurance Manager. The committee reviews data from the various program components to include Intake, Initial Assessments and Permanency efforts. The data analysis includes information gathered from the ongoing case review system. This comprehensive use of data coupled with qualitative information from the management team facilitates an ongoing process to monitor and change practice.

TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDS

2015 Update: OCS has received training and technical assistance related to the OMS from the Children's Bureau and Region 10. In preparation for the 2017 CFSR, it is anticipated that technical assistance will be needed from the Children's Bureau to assist in preparation for the upcoming review, use of the review instrument, and ongoing assessment of the OCS CQI process. Statewide and regional managers and staff receive information about the case reviews, and have field office improvement plans which address areas of need identified through the case review process.

2016 Update: OCS is working closely with Region 10 and the Children's Bureau to prepare for the 2017 CFSR. In July 2015, training and technical assistance was provided to assist OCS in utilizing the OMS, enhancing the knowledge and skills of QA staff and managers to use the new tool, and prepare for the coming year to plan for the CFSR. OCS is working closely with federal partners to identify and schedule upcoming training and technical assistance.

2017 Update: During this past year, OCS has received training and technical assistance to prepare for the Statewide Assessment and Child and Family Services Review. It is anticipated that OCS may request/receive training and technical assistance from the Children's Bureau as a part of the Performance Improvement Plan development and implementation during the next year.

HOW QA/CQI DATA WAS USED TO UPDATE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

2015 Update: QA data supports the need for the identified strategies regarding repeat maltreatment, placement stability, and permanency planning. Please see the plan for improvement for more details.

2016 Update: The QA manager is a participant in OCS leadership, ESC, and other committees and workgroups to ensure that current data is used to determine needs and identify strategies. QA data is provided to managers on a regular basis to review and analyze. OCS Management utilizes the QA data to inform decisions on identifying the strengths and needs for each region and the state. CY2015 QA review data was reviewed in monthly OCS leadership meetings specific to the CFSR, CFSP, and APSR. The data collected through the QA reviews continues to support the need to focus on Core Services. Caseworker visits with children and parents continue to be identified as key areas that OCS is weak in, but improvements would have a large impact on outcomes. The QA data is provided in Section 2 of this report.

2017 Update: The 2017 Statewide Assessment, the OCS Continuous Quality Improvement processes were identified as an area needing improvement. The Statewide Assessment located in Appendix B of this document, provides detailed information about how the QA/CQI system has been functioning in Alaska.

ALASKA'S CURRENT CASE REVIEW INSTRUMENT

2015 Update: OCS will undergo a CFSR in July 2017. The OCS case review system uses the CFSR instrument. OCS began using the federal Online Management System (OMS) in March 2015.

2016 Update: The OCS case review system uses the CFSR instrument. OCS continues to use OMS. OCS received onsite training and technical assistance on the instrument from Children's Bureau in July 2015.

2017 Update: The OCS continues to use the CFSR instrument. The CFSR case reviewers received training in May 2017 in preparation for serving during the 2017 CFSR site review.

A total of 149 cases were reviewed in quarter 1 through 4 of the calendar year 2016, of which 66 (44%) were in home cases and 83 (56%) were out of home cases. There were no cases reviewed from Western Region field offices during the four quarters.

SECTION 11: CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION AND TREATMENT ACT REQUIREMENTS

ANNUAL CAPTA REPORT

Substantive Changes to State Laws Relating to Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect

2015 Update: There have been no changes in the state laws or regulations related to the prevention of child abuse and neglect that affect the state's eligibility for the CAPTA state grant.

2016 Update: There have been no changes in the state laws or regulations related to the prevention of child abuse and neglect that affect the state's eligibility for the CAPTA state grant.

2017 Update: There have been no substantive changes in the state laws or regulations related to the prevention of child abuse and neglect that affect the state's eligibility for the CAPTA state grant.

Significant Changes to the Approved CAPTA Plan in How State Proposes to Use Funds

2015 Update: There have been no significant changes in the states approved CAPTA plan related to how funds are used to support the program areas. In 2013, the Service Array Section entered into a collaborative with the DOL, CWA; the Department of Public Safety; local community law enforcement agencies; and the Alaska Children's Alliance to implement the ChildFirst® Alaska Project. ChildFirst® is a trademarked training program that was initially developed by the National Child Protection Training Center (NCPTC) in partnership with Corner House in Minnesota. The adaptable curriculum that can be modified and utilized by states who are working to develop their own nationally certified training programs. ChildFirst® Alaska was certified by the NCPTC in 2014.

Several years of preparatory work lead up to the roll-out of the first trainings on the new ChildFirst® Alaska forensic interview training model. The trainings in year one resulted in the certification of nine certified ChildFirst® Alaska faculties, who provided ongoing training in Anchorage in 2013, expanding to Anchorage and Fairbanks in 2014, and will continue training in both areas in 2015.

2016 Update: There have been no significant changes in the states approved CAPTA plan related to how funds are used to support the program areas. OCS will be focusing on CAPTA in the coming year to review the current plan and identify any needed changes.

2017 Update: There have been no significant changes in the states approved CAPTA plan related to how funds are used to support the program areas.

How CAPTA State Grant Funds Were Used to Support the State CAPTA Plan

2015 Update: In the past year, CAPTA funding has been designated to support the implementation and ongoing delivery of the ChildFirst® Alaska training for OCS staff, other department staff, and community partners involved in the response to child sexual and physical abuse. Funding was used to support the project in multiple areas:

- ChildFirst® Alaska Project Coordination: contracts with the CWA and the Alaska Children's Alliance to support coordination efforts of the project and strategic planning by the ChildFirst® Alaska Leadership Team activities;
- OCS and other department staff participation in ChildFirst® training: direct funding for costs associated with OCS staff participation in the ChildFirst® training. It is expected that all OCS staff receive training in forensic interviewing within the first 12 months of employment. Funding also supported participation of DOL and Department of Public Safety staff, as well as local law enforcement and other MDT member training; and
- Resource development of ChildFirst® Materials: funding to support the development of a web portal and tools for staff implementing the ChildFirst® Alaska training protocol.

It is expected that this new model of forensic interviewing will provide a common language and standard across the system and promote an increased rate of prosecution of offenders.

In FY 16, CAPTA funds will be used to support additional grants and contacted services in state. The services will provide direct support to children and families through the following programs:

- Resource Family Training – provides training and instruction to resource families caring for children in OCS custody;
- Emergency Shelter Services for Youth – shelter and transition services for youth in or out of OCS custody. Provides shelter, employment preparation, and counseling services;
- Family Support Services – primary preventative services to reduce risk to families and children by assisting with basic needs and resources and referral; and
- Visitation and Skill Building for OCS-involved families – home visitation and parenting education for families with OCS involvement or identified as at risk. Services are isolated to the Cordova area, where OCS does not have a local office or worker in the community.

Providers of these and other OCS-funded grantees, contractors and partners will also receive training and technical assistance supported by CAPTA funding.

2016 Update: During this reporting period CAPTA funds have supported multiple projects that improve the quality of child protective service investigations while reducing trauma to child victims. This has been done primarily through provision of training to child welfare professionals and their partners in best practices in areas such as: child forensic interviewing; multidisciplinary child protection teams; trauma informed care; and home visiting; as well as CAC development/maintenance. Below is a list of activities and projects funded by CAPTA during this reporting period:

- ChildFirst® Alaska Project Coordination: As noted last year, OCS contracts with the CWA and the Alaska Children's Alliance to support coordination efforts for the Childfirst® Alaska Forensic Interview Training. Since this began in February 2013, 284 professionals in Alaska were trained, including: attorneys, OCS staff, law enforcement, and CAC staff.
- Development and maintenance of ChildFirst® website. Funding to support the development and maintenance of a web portal and tools for staff implementing the ChildFirst® Alaska training protocol. This site went live in April 2016.
- Training DOL attorneys in the Childfirst® Alaska model. In order to ensure that the investment in forensic interview Training is fully utilized, it is essential that Alaska's attorneys who are responsible for child maltreatment cases (both civil and criminal), be familiar with the state's forensic interviewing model. One of the ultimate goals of teaching forensic interviewing, aside from reducing trauma to the victims, is to increase accountability for the perpetrators of abuse. This year CAPTA funds supported two additional attorneys to attend Childfirst® Alaska training.
- Technical assistance and training to OCS grantees is delivered through a contract with the CWA. This project supported development and maintenance of a multidisciplinary training team to work with MDTs. It has also continued to support direct technical assistance for Alaska's CACs and family support programs. This project funded a cross-disciplinary collaborative training event organized by OCS; the Alaska Children's Alliance (ACA) and the CWA and was attended by all of Alaska's CAC Program Managers which occurred in May 2016.
- OCS has been working collaboratively with multiple partners including the Children's Justice Task Force, and the Alaska Division of Juvenile Justice to plan and produce training for mandatory reporter and the general public about how to recognize and respond to child abuse. This training is near completion and will be rolled out this summer. www.reportchildabuse.alaska.gov

In SFY 17 the efforts to support training in Childfirst® Alaska will continue, as this is one of the state's top training priorities which is expected to have a positive impact on the safety of children. Other training and technical assistance provision to grantees and OCS partners is going to continue and OCS will continue to look for ways to optimize the use of funds spent on training for maximum benefit. The training on child maltreatment for reporters will be completed in FY16. Expected FY17 expenses related to this project will be for the production of the mandated reporter DVDs and for the public information campaign associated with the training.

2017 Update: CAPTA funds supported a variety of projects again this year that focus on training the workforce of the child welfare continuum in Alaska. Through training child protection workers and partner professionals from communities and agencies across the state, Alaska continues to improve the services offered to families, which results in the ability to better protect children through achieving higher quality investigations in conjunction with integrated case management and strong family support. Training offered during this reporting period included: Childfirst® Alaska Forensic Interviewing; Multidisciplinary Child Protection Team Case Review; Strengthening Families; OCS Practice Model; Program Evaluation; Recognizing Child Abuse and Neglect; Mandatory Reporting; Home Visiting; and a variety of grantee technical assistance and

program development guidance. Here is a list of specific projects and activities funded by CAPTA during this reporting period:

- Childfirst® Alaska Coordination: The University of Alaska, Child Welfare Academy has had assisted with coordination of yearly trainings. This year, 88 professionals from across the state successfully completed this training and became certified in the Childfirst® Alaska forensic interviewing model.
- Training to Alaska Department of Law attorneys in the Childfirst® Alaska model: This year CAPTA funds supported 2-4 attorneys to attend Childfirst® Alaska training. This is the third consecutive year that CAPTA funds have been utilized for this purpose. In order to ensure that the investment in forensic interview training is fully utilized, it is essential that Alaska's attorneys for child maltreatment cases be familiar with the state's forensic interviewing model to contribute to reducing trauma to the victims and to increase accountability for the perpetrators of abuse. The attorneys who have participated report being better prepared in court when forensic interviews are used as evidence.
- Development and maintenance of ChildFirst® Alaska website: This website went live in April 2016, and continues to be maintained through CAPTA funding. The Childfirst® Alaska website link: http://childfirstalaska.org/
- Training and Technical Assistance to OCS Grantees: Training and technical assistance is delivered in part through a business agreement with the UAA CWA. This project continues to support direct training and technical assistance for Alaska's CACs and community based family support programs. In April 2017, the CWA delivered the Strengthening Families™ training to family support, family preservation and family reunification grantees. In May 2017, the project funded a cross-disciplinary collaborative training event organized by OCS, the Alaska Children's Alliance (ACA) and the CWA for CAC program managers. In addition, the CWA travelled to provide face-to-face technical assistance CAC's.
- Child Abuse and Neglect Online Training: In the last year, collaboration between OCS, the Children's Justice Act Task Force and other community partners resulted in the completion of a new online training on how to recognize and respond to child maltreatment. This training serves as an accessible and up-to-date way of educating both the general public and mandatory reporters. This year the public training site was visited over 10,000 times. In addition, approximately 1,000 State employees of the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services took the training on the Departmental Learning Site and received a certificate upon completion. CAPTA funds were used to edit and maintain the training during this reporting period and to create a version of the training now available on USB Drives. CAPTA funds were also used to develop video PSAs for an upcoming media campaign.

In SFY18, OCS anticipates continued training for frontline child protection, law enforcement and attorneys in the Childfirst® Alaska Forensic Interviewing Model. The Childfirst® Alaska website and the online child abuse and neglect training will be maintained and improved. OCS plans to move forward with a media campaign advertising the availability of the online training and reporting child abuse and neglect through public service announcements, posters and other media that have been developed for that purpose. Technical assistance and training will continue to be offered to OCS grantees, community partners, and multidisciplinary child protection teams to help ensure that they have information to implement best practices and to ensure maximum effectiveness in their interventions.

Alaska Citizen Review Panel Annual Report and State Agency's Response

2015 Update: A copy of Alaska CRP annual report 2014 and OCS response were included.

2016 Update: A copy of Alaska CRP annual report 2015 and OCS response were included.

2017 Update: The Alaska Citizen Review Panel annual report for 2016 was released on June 30, 2016. OCS responded to this report in December 2016, and presented these findings to the Alaska State Legislature in February 2017. The complete CRP Annual Report and the OCS response to the report are located in Appendix A of this document.

AMENDMENTS TO CAPTA MADE BY P.L. 114-22, THE JUSTICE FOR VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING ACT OF 2015

OCS has provided information to staff related to human trafficking, however additional training will be required as policy is updated. OCS has updated protective service reports in ORCA to accurately document and capture information regarding children and youth who have been or may have been involved in sex or human trafficking. The ORCA update was completed

in April 2016 and policy and procedure changes will be implemented by September 30, 2016. The random moment time study is also being revised to monitor staff time on cases of sex trafficking, this is slated to be effective July 1, 2016. The data will allow OCS to report the number of sex trafficking children in the NCANDS report. OCS has developed policies and procedures and is working on final edits before finalization of policies regarding how staff will screen, assess and provide services to children who are at risk or victims of sex trafficking.

2015 Update: (Please note, the 2016 APSR PI did not request an update, however, OCS provided information on the work surrounding P.L. 113-183) On September 29, 2014, the President signed into law P.L. 113-183. This law amended title IV-B and title IV-E plan requirements. OCS has complied with the requirements that were effective upon enactment and is actively working on requirements due in the coming year with expectation to submit all necessary documentation on time.

The Title IV-E State Plan amendment was submitted January 20, 2015; the plan was approved by Administration of Children and Families (ACF). OCS complied with recommendations from ACYF-CB-IM-14-03 and ACYF-CB-PI-14-06, and submitted necessary documentation regarding:

1. Relative notification
2. Sibling definition
3. Successor guardians

The Title IV-E State Plan amendment will be submitted September 29, 2015. OCS is intending to comply with all recommendations from ACYF-CB-IM-14-03 and ACYF-CB-PI-14-06, and will submitted necessary documentation regarding our collaboration, policy development, and training related to:

- Section 101 – identifying, documenting, and determining services for children and youth at risk of sex trafficking
- Section 102 – reporting instances of sex trafficking
- Section 104 – locating and responding to children who run away from foster care
- Section 111 – supporting normalcy for children in foster care
- Section 112 – improving case review system and APPLA as a permanency option
- Section 113 – empowering youth ages 14 and older
- Section 114 – ensuring foster children have needed documentation when they exit care.

2016 Update: Alaska continues to work actively on the issue of human trafficking. There are many efforts occurring simultaneously to improve identification and services to victims and potential victims of sex trafficking. The State of Alaska Title IV-E State Plan amendment with the updates pertaining to P.L. 113-183 was submitted timely. OCS was asked to make additions and corrections to the amendment; the resubmission was timely and OCS is waiting for approval on the amendment. OCS continues to work on implementation of this law and will submit updates to the State Plan as required in September 2016. OCS met with the Children's Bureau CBCAP Federal Project Officer and the CBCAP regional contact for Alaska on April 21st by telephone. This meeting was specific to the intersection between CBCAP Prevention funds and State efforts regarding sex trafficking.

2017 Update: Alaska received approval to the title IV-E State Plan Pl 113-183 requirements. OCS developed a workgroup to identify the procedures and policies for receiving reports of sex trafficking, or missing minors. Reports are screened through the intake unit, who are responsible for verifying that a report to law enforcement has been made for entry into the National Crime Information Center (NCIC). The intake unit then completes a report to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC). Tools have been developed for direct line workers and intake unit to streamline the reporting process. Training has been provided to regions on reporting cases of missing minors or sex trafficking victims. For missing minors, once the child has been located the intake unit is informed and will remove the child from the NCMEC database. Joint training and work sessions have occurred with juvenile justice, law enforcement, and social services agencies to identify high risk populations, as well as developing procedures for working with sex trafficking victims. Alaska statutes did not require changes and reflect that sex trafficking victims are victims of child abuse and neglect.

Steps the State is Taking or Will Take to Address Amendments to CAPTA Relating to Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act of 2015

The Office of Children's Services has implemented policies and procedures for children who are in custody or have an open case plan to be screened when they have run away to determine if they are sex trafficking victims. OCS is implementing

policies and procedures to have any protective services reports regarding sex trafficking to be screened and assessed to determine further steps the agency will take. OCS has an active workgroup to address the federal requirements related to human and sex trafficking. OCS participates in other community groups that include stakeholders from local and statewide agencies.

The policies and procedures are being developed in collaboration with state law enforcement, juvenile justice, and social services agencies such as runaway and homeless youth shelters to assist with training OCS staff on identifying, assessing whether a child is at risk or a victim of sex trafficking and providing services to these children. Trainings have been provided to staff in regards to sex trafficking provisions, as well as other training being developed to assist staff with identifying, assessing and providing services to children who are sex trafficking victims. Trainings on the prevention of sex trafficking have also been occurring in collaboration with partners listed above.

The Alaska CJATF has decided to focus on child trafficking, and particularly child sex trafficking, during its recent quarterly meetings. In 2016, Covenant House conducted a presentation on Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, focusing on the problem in Alaska, and what is currently being done to address it. The presenter works directly with exploited youth at Covenant House in Anchorage Alaska, where they focus on outreach to homeless youth in the community and works to keep them safe from exploitation. Two federal attorneys who are directly responsible for prosecuting traffickers also presented before the task force at the winter meeting (December 2015) and spoke to task force members about the difficulties and challenges of their work as well as some of their successes. Task Force member receive regular updates related to the work of OCS to implement policies and changes within the child protection system in order to address P. L. 113-183.

In addition to the above mentioned presentations several task force members have been active on statewide task forces and roundtables that have been formed to address human trafficking. Those members regularly report to the rest of the task force on the activities of those groups to address this issue. In FY16 the Alaska CJATF also produced an online training to educate the public about child abuse and how to respond to and report child abuse. This training contains an entire segment devoted to child exploitation and sex trafficking, including information on the extent of child exploitation in Alaska, the signs for recognizing exploitation and how to respond if you see these signs.

Technical Assistance needs identified by the State related to implementation of amendments of CAPTA

In April 2016, OCS representatives participated in a teleconference with the CBCAP Federal Project Officer with the Children's Bureau regarding the intersection between CBCAP Prevention funds and State Efforts regarding Sex trafficking. OCS will continue to seek technical assistance as needed to assist in meeting requirements for amending the CAPTA state plan. Alaska did not elect to extend the sex trafficking definition to those over 18 and up to 24.

Training was provided to staff in 2016 regarding identification, assessment, and providing resources for sex trafficking victims. This training is now part of a webinar that can be accessed by new workers, or as a refresher to current staff. A guidance document was created for workers to use when a child has runaway or is missing to help identify if the child may be at risk or a victim of sex trafficking. Workers are directed to notify the intake unit if a child is identified as being a victim of sex trafficking or at risk. Intake staff have also been trained, and provided with a flowchart to verify that the correct reporting has been done to the NCIC and NCMEC databases. Ongoing training to the regions by the intake unit is being done to help provide guidance and tools to assist with reporting runaway or missing minors, and sex trafficking victims. OCS workers have been invited to participate in training with other social services organizations on identifying and working with victims, and those that may be at high risk of sex trafficking. ORCA changes and changes to the random moment time study allow for ongoing tracking and reporting of the number of suspected victims of sex trafficking. OCS is working on a system to track the information and data that will be transmitted in the next NCANDS submission.

Governor's Assurance: OCS submitted the title IV-E state plan to comply with requirements of P.L. 113-183; the plan was submitted September 29, 2016 and OCS received Region 10 approval on November 22, 2016. OCS submitted the Governor's Assurance to Region 10 on May 24, 2017.

Assessment of Changes the State Will Need in Law, Policy, or Procedure to Ensure Compliance

No changes are expected to be needed at this time.

UPDATE ON SUBSTANCE-EXPOSED NEWBORNS

2015 Update: This specific section title was not included in the "2016 APSR" submitted in June 2015.

2016 Update: Alaska Statute 47.17.024 addresses infants exposed to drugs and requires that if a practitioner of the healing arts is involved in the delivery or care of an infant who the practitioner determines has been adversely affected by, or is withdrawing from exposure to, a controlled substance or alcohol shall immediately notify the nearest office of the department of the infant's condition. In this section, "controlled substance" has the meaning given in AS 11.71.900 but does not include a substance lawfully taken under a prescription from a health care provider who is authorized to prescribe the substance and "infant" means a child who is less than 12 months of age. OCS policy and procedures for intake and screening adequately address infants born or affected.

2017 Update: Since the 2016 update, OCS has had further discussions with DOL well as the Alaska Chief Medical Officer regarding CARA amendments. Additionally, during the 2017 legislative session, a Governor's Bill related to Opioid treatment were introduced that outlined many of the CARA amendments and provisions. This legislation is HB 159/SB 79; the bill has not yet passed the 2017 legislative session and may be held over into the 2018 legislative session. The changes to the child abuse reporting law changes have not yet been included in the existing legislation and it is unlikely that it will be added in future amendments of the legislation, despite efforts by OCS staff to have the language added to the proposed legislation. OCS continues to work with the DHSS Chief Medical Officer and DOL on legislative changes to the mandated reporting law.

UPDATE ON STATE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES REGARDING DEVELOPMEN OF A PLAN OF CARE TO ADDRES THE HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE DISORDER TREATMENT NEEDS OF BOTH INFANTS AND FAMILIES OR CARETAKERS.

2015 Update: This specific section title was not include in the "2016 APSR" submitted in June 2015.

2016 Update: If a Protective Services Report is received, OCS follows the policy, including safety and case planning requirements. If an infant is determined to be unsafe or at high risk OCS will take the necessary action to ensure the child's needs are met. A safe plan of care for a substance exposed child may include referrals to outside agencies, a safety plan, or taking custody of the child and developing a case plan. If OCS opens a case for services to the child and family, OCS provides ongoing monitoring of the case through monthly case worker visits. No training or technical assistance have been identified at this time.

2017 Update: There have been no changes to laws, policies or procedures relating to the identification and referral of substance exposed infants to OCS.

POLICES AND PROCEDURES REGARDING THE DEVELOPMENT OF PLANS OF SAFE CARE TO ADDRESS HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER TREATMENT NEEDS OF SUBSTANCE-EXPOSED INFANTS AND FAMILIES OR CAREGIVERS

Protective services reports are screened into the intake unit at the Office of Children's Services. A protective service report regarding an infant born exposed to, or withdrawing from a controlled substance would be assessed to determine if additional services are required. The intake unit gathers information from the reported regarding the family demographics, maltreatment, children, caregivers, family, child safety, collateral contact information, and child's Tribal affiliation. The information gathering is essential in assisting the intake worker in evaluating the reported child maltreatment and justifying the screening decision made. The intake worker will screen the family for past history and determine if the report will be screened in for services or screened out.

Protective Services Reports that are screened in are given a priority level and the initial assessment process begins. The initial assessment worker will determine if there is present or impending danger for the infant. If there is, a safety plan would be developed with the family at that time. The safety plan would identify how the infant would remain safe, either in, or outside the home. Within 30 days of the initial assessment a case plan would be developed with the family to assess the infant's physical and mental health and additional services that may be needed for the child or the parent(s). Referrals to outside agencies to assist the infant or family may be made throughout any step from the protective service report to case closure.

PROCEDURES DEVELOPED TO MONITOR PLANS OF CARE, TO DETERMINE WHETHER AND IN WHAT MANNTER LOCAL ENTITIES FOR SUBSTANCE-EXPOSED INFANTS AND AFFECTED FAMILY MEMBERS AND CAREGIVERS ARE PROVIDING REFERRALS TO AND DELIVERY OF APPROPRIATE SERVICES FOR SUBSTANCE-EXPOSED INFANTS AND AFFECTED FAMILY MEMBERS AND CAREGIVERS

The procedure Alaska uses to monitor plans of safe care is the same for the child's case plan. The elements of the plan are reviewed at each visit with the child, family members, and caregivers. Information gained regarding services needed, or issues with the child or family not accessing services would be pursued to find ways to meet the family and child's needs. Whenever a service is required as part of the case plan, feedback from the provider is required through the request for information. This allows the worker to track attendance and progress towards meeting goals

Multi-disciplinary outreach, consultation and coordination to support implementation

The state of Alaska has participated in trainings provided by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Center for Substance Abuse Treatment and the Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Children's Bureau, Office on Child Abuse and Neglect, in partnership with the National Center on Substance Abuse and Child Welfare.

Governor's Assurance

Alaska has submitted the Governor's Assurance Statement, Attachment G.

SECTION 12: CHAFEE FOSTER CARE INDEPENDENCE PROGRAM (CFCIP)/EDUCATION & TRAINING VOUCHERS (ETV)

EIGHT PURPOSES OF CFCIP

CFICP program has eight purposes. The OCS partners with other Tribal and community organizations to meet the requirements.

1. **Help youth likely to remain in foster care until age 18 transition to self-sufficiency by providing services.**

2015 Update: Engaging youth in exit planning will continue to be an area of focus for SFY 2016. The Independent Living Program Transition Plan has been updated to promote youth involvement and streamline the process of transitioning from custody. OCS continued collaboration with FFCA to host retreats for youth with leadership development and service delivery as the focus of each event. A statewide Permanency Summit will be organized through collaboration with FFCA and Casey Family Programs. The Summit will focus on permanency for older youth. The summit hopes to attract Tribal leaders, legal and community partners, foster parents, children's services workers, and youth to discuss permanency and the importance of identifying adult supports for youth as they transition from care.

2016 Update: In the past year the Independent Living Program Transition Plan has been updated to promote youth involvement and improve the process of transitioning from custody. The transition plan serves to focus on the desired and necessary services to promote the youth's self-sufficiency. The IL program collaborated with FFCA to host quarterly retreats for youth with leadership development and service delivery as the focus of each event. OCS independent living workers play a large role in the delivery and facilitation of services to IL youth. IL workers deliver services directly one-on-one with youth and in facilitated group training opportunities. They also request Chafee funding to help pay for the provision of independent living services and make referrals to services which are appropriate for the youth's plan for self-sufficiency. OCS is making stronger efforts to engage youth in exit planning and advocating for youth at team meetings regarding helping the youth make thoughtful and planned exit from foster care. This will continue to be an area of focus for SFY 2017. Additionally, OCS will continue to maintain strident standards for the use of Another Permanent Planned Living Arrangement (APPLA) as a permanency goal, and providing enhanced supports and services to youth with APPLA goals.

2017 Update: The past year the independent living program has focused on increasing opportunities for youth to learn and experience skill-building opportunities to support adulthood. To that end, all regions have increased the number of life skills classes and have created opportunities for youth to receive hands-on training. Youth have been able to travel to different parts of the state and tour various vocational and technical training. The opportunities have included: Alaska's Institute of Technology, the Rights of Passage program at Dena'ina House as well as helping youth recover high school credits for graduation with extracurricular activities and inviting community partners to present to the class such as: Identify, Alaska's statewide LGBT organization. The IL program has also worked to increase knowledge and awareness of APPLA policy, conducting webinar trainings for staff and updating the policy with significant stakeholder participation.

2. **Help youth likely to remain in foster care until age 18 receive the education, training, and services necessary to obtain employment.**

2015 Update: The contract with FFCA will continue, with three statewide youth leadership retreats planned in SFY 2016. See next question for more information about education and training.

2016 Update: The contract with FFCA will continue in SFY17, to provide three statewide youth leadership retreats throughout the year, and one Education Conference to be held in May 2016. Additionally, in September 2016, OCS will partner with Alaska's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and hold a statewide Career Conference through the existing Pre-Employment Transition Services (PETS) program. This conference will provide youth with skill development essential to gaining employment and vocational training. Aside from the conference, PETS provides career preparation and support services to youth in transition.

2017 Update: Facing Foster Care in Alaska provided statewide youth leadership retreats in August and November, with 101 foster youth and alumni attending the retreats. This participation and collaboration lead to finalization of the Foster Youth Bill of Rights brochure. The IL program will continue to provide a contract to conduct the retreats and increase to four statewide retreats per year. In October 2016, OCS conducted a career conference for statewide IL foster youth and former foster youth. This conference focused on providing hands-on career and vocational training experience. It was successful and highly attended, and will be included in the future retreat contract.

3. Help youth likely to remain in foster care until age 18 prepare for and enter post-secondary training and educational institutions.

2015 Update: The CWA continues to administer the ETV program on the University of Alaska Anchorage campus. Due to the increase of case management and academic support available through this partnership, the program is seeing increased retention and higher academic achievement by the youth served. Financial support was made available to allow youth to maintain residence on campus during the scheduled breaks and summer months in effort to promote stability in their living situation. Oversight and review will include documenting efforts for educational achievements, an area that has not been documented consistently. Training and capacity building in the area of career preparation and post-secondary education will continue in SFY 2016, with a focus on trades and apprenticeship programs and university and other post-secondary education programs available to youth across the state. These areas of focus were identified by youth in 2015 as the priority service areas to focus on for youth in transition. Career preparation and support services will be developed. This Program will focus on developing services with the State of Alaska Department of Labor Division of Vocational Rehabilitation program, to provide career preparation and support services to youth in transition. The PETS Program will be online to provide career exploration and preparation services and offer navigation support to youth enrolled in the program.

2016 Update: The program is expecting its highest graduation year with 11 college graduates (two in December and nine in May). Financial support was made available to allow youth to maintain residence on campus during the scheduled breaks and summer months in effort to promote stability in their living situation. Oversight and review will include documenting efforts for educational achievements, an area that has not been documented consistently. Training and capacity building in the area of career preparation and post-secondary education will continue in SFY 2017, with a focus on trades and apprenticeship programs and university and other post-secondary education programs available to youth across the state.

2017 Update: An education conference for youth was held in June 2016, and was a positive training opportunity for youth interested in exploring post-secondary education. IL continues to partner with the Child Welfare Academy to provide Educational and Training Vouchers (ETV) to foster youth.

4. Provide personal and emotional support to youth aging out of foster care through mentors and the promotion of interactions with dedicated adults.

2015 Update: Mentorship provides services to urban and rural youth statewide. A specialized program was developed to enhance permanency efforts to all youth by matching youth to mentors as well as searching for relatives, past foster parents and those that supported the youth as coaches, teachers, and leaders. These individuals will be brought in to support and develop a plan for permanency for each youth served by the program. This program was developed in SFY 2015, and will be solicited through a Request for Proposals in SFY 2016. This grant program will increase the focus of IL Services on permanency and inform OCS management on best practice to integrate in to the work with older youth.

2016 Update: A statewide Permanency Summit was organized through collaboration with FFCA and Casey Family Programs. The summit focused on permanency for older youth and included participation by Tribal leaders, legal and community partners, foster parents, children's services workers, and youth to discuss permanency and the importance of identifying adult supports for youth as they transition from care. An outcome of the summit was the facilitation of a two-day workshop presented by Kevin Campbell of Family Finding, founder of the Center for Family Finding and Youth Connectedness and developer of the Family Finding model- (http://www.familyfinding.org). In November 2015, Mr. Campbell worked with foster youth in custody and out of custody during a youth retreat, teaching them to explore and map their support networks and make individualized plans to expand these networks outside of formal social services.

Regional Independent Living Staff work closely with youth to identify important people in their lives and help them make permanent connections with these people. They help advocate for adoption, including adult adoption, continually working on a youth's family tree and reach out to extended family members through social media. In addition, OCS funds a grant for

Mentorship for Independent Living services, currently awarded to Big Brothers Big Sisters of Alaska in the Anchorage and Southcentral Regions, to which the Specialists make youth referrals.

2017 Update: OCS continues to partner with grantee, Big Brothers Big Sisters (BB/BS) to provide enhanced mentorship opportunities. Big Brothers Big Sisters matches caring adult mentors with youth in foster care to help the youth be successful in life. This past year BB/BS has focused on recruiting adult mentors and enhancing their program in the Southcentral Region by hiring staff to facilitate programming for youth in the Mat-Su Valley. This year they also piloted a successful Thanksgiving Match Activity, in which youth and their mentors gathered to prepare and celebrate the holiday together. In the past year, 42 youth were referred to the mentorship program and 17 were matched with an adult mentor.

5. **Provide financial, housing, counseling, employment, education, and other appropriate support and services to former foster care recipient between 18 and 21 years of age to complement their own efforts to achieve self-sufficiency and to assure that program participants recognize and accept their personal responsibility for preparing and then making the transition to adulthood.**

2015 Update: Utilization of the Tenant Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) program has been consistent in the Anchorage region; Chafee funding was used to add additional housing vouchers. Chafee funding supported five additional housing vouchers for Anchorage-based youth, increasing the number of available housing vouchers to 15 in the Anchorage area. There are currently 69 youth who received housing coupons or vouchers statewide, with 15 additional vouchers issued to youth currently searching for appropriate housing in the community. The "Ready to Rent" training was introduced in 2015, and has been expanded to provide to every youth receiving a TBRA coupons. OCS is also supporting youth attending college who are residing in dorms to maintain their dorm housing during the summer months and scheduled breaks on campus. This promotes permanency in a youth's living situation and offers them direct support during those periods classes are not in session and the campus resources are closed. In 2015, the Independent Living program focused on expanding housing education and home management supports, leading to a stronger partnership with AHFC.

2016 Update: Last reporting cycle, TBRA data was miscalculated to include youth from the DJJ re-entering the community. Therefore, adjusted to correctly account for only OCS IL youth, a total of 19 Independent Living youth have received housing coupons or vouchers statewide, 15 additional vouchers have been issued to youth, and eight additional youth have been searching for appropriate housing in the community. The "Ready to Rent" training has continued. In 2016, the Independent Living program focused on expanding housing education and home management supports, leading to a stronger partnership with AHFC and providing housing assistance across the state.

2017 Update: There has been significant success with the TBRA program. Statewide, there has been an increase in out of custody youth accessing and maintaining subsidized housing through this program, most significantly in Anchorage. For the first time since conception, the TBRA program has filled all slots reserved for former foster youth and we have developed a waiting list for youth interested. This interest has grown from the IL program's intentional effort to provide more IL classes that focus on the needs of older former foster youth. TBRA representatives have attended IL classes, presenting their information and helping youth to understand and complete the application process. This past year we have filled all 15 available TBRA slots in Anchorage and have a total of 25 former foster youth engaged with the program, maintaining their housing and positive rent histories. Currently, all statewide vouchers have been utilized.

6. **Make available vouchers for education and training, including postsecondary education to youth who have aged out of foster care.**

2015 Update: The CWA continues to administer the Education and Training Voucher (ETV) Program statewide. This is allowed for more direct support for youth attending college. Additional resources will be identified to support the growth of involvement.

2016 Update: The CWA continues to administer the ETV Program statewide; this allows more contact and "hands on" support for youth applying for and attending college. The CWA has made progress in leveraging resources, such as the Presidential Tuition Waivers and additional OCS scholarship funding in order to maximize the assistance for youth. CWA is also adept at helping youth to understand what other resources need to be applied for such as the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and Pell Grants, in order to help the education funding stretch as far as possible. CWA promotes youth accountability to help them understand they will be responsible for paying for some of their own educational expenses. The

ETV Program reports that 21 students returned and 16 new students enrolled for Academic year 2015-2016. For this reporting period enrollment expanded to include additional University of Alaska campuses across the state which contributed to increased enrollment. In the past year, the ETV and IL program celebrated a total of eleven graduates from UAA Bachelor programs.

2017 Update: As it has proven to be increasingly successful over the past years, the CWA continues to administer the ETV program statewide. The CWA supports youth as they exit high school, obtain their GED or return to apply for post-secondary and vocational training and financial assistance to achieve it. This past year, the CWA has partnered with Nine Star to leverage funding to support youth entering Vocational Technical Programs/and internships. The CWA is also utilizing the University of Alaska's Financial Literacy staff to better support youth in understanding money management and financial aid. The CWA continues to work closely with the OCS IL program to promote Alaska's Vocational Training Center and conduct an annual Education Conference for college interested youth. This year we celebrated three fall graduates and one youth who is projected to graduate this Spring, with 20 youth total who have completed their degree/certificate program to date.

7. Provide services to youth who, after attaining 16 years of age, have left foster care for kinship guardianship or adoption.

2015 Update: Every youth who leaves foster care after age 16 due to an adoption or guardianship is eligible to have an individualized subsidy negotiated to meets their special needs until age 18. When each youth is close to turning 18 years old, a letter is sent out to inform the guardian parent(s) that the adoption or guardianship subsidy will be ending. Information about the Independent Living Program, how to apply for Alaska Medicaid beyond 18 years old and how to contact the Regional Independent Living Specialists around Alaska is dispersed. Once the youth engages in the Independent Living Program at age 16, the assigned Regional Independent Living Specialist will conduct the Life Skills Assessment which identifies areas of strengths and needs in functioning and independence. The assessment results guide the development of a transition plan, which guides services and supports for each individual youth. The youth will have opportunities for engagement in youth retreats where they are mentored to develop their leadership skills and identify supports that assist them in their transition. Academic supports are offered while youth attend high school. Post-secondary supports are offered for youth attending college. Many of these youth are utilizing the ETV Program, housing supports and academic supports offered through the program. There is an increase in the career preparation services offered.

2016 Update: Youth remain eligible for IL services after leaving foster care at age 16 or older, regardless of whether they are adopted, placed in a guardianship, are reunified with their family, or are released to their own independence. Adoptive and guardianship families receive a monthly subsidy payment to assist in meeting the special needs of the youth in their care, until the youth turns 18. When Independent Living youth exit care, either to themselves, an adoption or guardianship, they receive a transition packet. The packet explains the continued supports available to the youth and their responsibility for program engagement, including housing, education and employment resources. Often adoptive/guardianship families will reach out to IL Services for their youth at this time, when they no longer have access to the additional funds to assist the youth with achieving self-sufficiency such as completing high school after age 18, and for post-secondary education. OCS Independent Living staff and Adoption staff, work together to ensure that both youth and/or their families are well aware of the resources which continue to be available to them after they exit care.

2017 Update: Youth who turn age 16 or older while in foster care and out of home placement are eligible for Independent Living Services until they turn 21 years old. During this time, the dedicated IL staff focus on providing skill building opportunities for youth to explore, develop and enhance skills necessary to becoming a successful adult. OCS Independent Living staff and Adoption staff, work together to ensure that both youth and/or their families are well aware of the resources which continue to be available to them after they exit care. The IL staff work closely with the OCS staff, youth and their families to insure youth are aware of opportunities and to support the youth's participation. IL staff continuously reaches out to eligible youth to share information about housing and education assistance, career exploration and supports, as well as peer mentoring opportunities.

8. Ensure children who are likely to remain in foster care until 18 years of age have regular, ongoing opportunities to engage in age or developmentally- appropriate activities as defined in section 475 (11) of the P.L. 113-183.

2015 Update: Alaska will comply with the requirements for normalcy standards, and intends to submit all necessary documentation by the September 29, 2015 deadline. Covenant House Alaska will be providing training to local community MDT around child and human sex trafficking and will be a participant in the development of a community. Routine credit reporting now includes the 14 and 15 year old population as well as all youth in-custody ages 16 to 21 years old. A small number of youth have had credit reporting issues identified and was able to address those issues with support from their RILS. The OCS Program Coordinator will continue to negotiate agreements with all three credit reporting agencies to ensure compliance with credit reporting requirements.

2016 Update: Alaska has complied with the requirements for normalcy standards. To ensure that youth are engaged in developmentally-appropriate activities, Regional Independent Living Specialists and OCS Case workers work together to develop creative opportunities for youth activities. IL organizes, supervises and transports youth to retreats, and career and educational fairs throughout the state that are specifically focused on the youth's developmental needs. The IL Specialists identify training and internship opportunities that are of interest of a youth, engaging the youth in their education and employment future. Finally, each region conducts monthly classes targeted to meet the specific developmental needs of IL youth for self-sufficiency, such as education on budgeting, renter's rights and responsibilities, and credit reporting. These events provide unique opportunities for youth with similar life experiences to come together, support each other and learn skills essential to adulthood while engaging them in their community and in traditional practices.

Chafee funding is used to support individual youth in engagement with traditional hunting and fishing practices, attendance at cultural events, extracurricular activities, firearm safety classes, and lessons essential for youth to attain their driver's permits and licenses. Chafee funding is also used to help youth attend prom and events normal for high school aged teenagers including senior picture and graduation accessories. Funding is also used for purchasing clothing appropriate for their first interview or employment or items for their first apartment or dorm room.

2017 Update: Maintaining normalcy for youth in foster care is a priority for the Independent Living Program. IL organizes, supervises and transports youth to retreats, and career and educational fairs throughout the state that are specifically focused on the youth's developmental needs. The IL Specialists identify training and internship opportunities that are of interest of a youth, engaging the youth in their education and employment future. The IL program has become fully staffed with seven Regional Independent Living Specialists statewide, allowing the program to increase the availability of Life Skills classes. These events are very important as they deliver hands on life skills development opportunities, but they also provide an opportunity for peer mentorship to occur. In addition, the IL program continues to provide additional normalizing resources for youth. These include purchasing letterman jackets for our student athletes, supporting funding for travel to school sport events, helping youth train for and obtain their drivers' permit, and celebrating their success by supporting the purchase of graduation packages.

COLLABORATION

2015 Update: The Independent Living Program incorporates CFCIP and ETV programs. The Independent Living Program (IL) is focuses on collaboration with Tribal and community partners. In the past year the IL staff has continued to engage in substantial, ongoing, and meaningful collaboration with the following partners:

- Facing Foster Care in Alaska (FFCA) to train and recruit foster homes to specifically support older youth and provide joint trainings to OCS staff, community agencies, and to schools on the importance of supporting youth in transition.
- The State of Alaska Dept. of Labor Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) to develop and implement a project to connect transition aged youth currently or previously in OCS custody with Pre-Employment Transition Services (PETS). The project will connect transition aged youth currently or previously in OCS custody with opportunities to engage in hands on, career focused assessment and support services.
- The Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC) collaboration continues to provide housing support to youth in transition around the state.

2016 Update: The Independent Living Program incorporates CFCIP and ETV programs. The IL Program is focused on collaborating with Tribal and community partners. In the past year the IL staff has continued to engage in substantial, ongoing, and meaningful collaboration with the following partners:

- Facing Foster Care in Alaska (FFCA) provides joint trainings with OCS staff, community agencies, and to schools on the importance of supporting youth in transition. OCS holds quarterly OCS/FFCA Leadership meetings and three

times per year youth retreats which provide leadership skills training, mentorship and transition support. The quarterly collaborative meetings with FFCA and representatives of OCS leadership to include the agency director assist with the identification of common goals. The collaborative meeting serves to assist youth in practicing advocacy skills as well as to show youth how their advocacy can result in support and responsiveness from the highest levels of leadership in the agency. The contractor provides leadership skill building and transition services to youth who are eligible for the IL program during the youth leadership retreats. OCS IL specialists identify and facilitate youth participation in these events.

- The State of Alaska Dept. of Labor Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), with OCS, implemented a project to connect transition aged youth currently or previously in OCS custody with Pre-Employment Transition Services (PETS). The project will connect transition aged youth currently or previously in OCS custody with opportunities to engage in hands on, career focused assessment and support services.
- The Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC) collaboration continues to provide housing support to youth in transition around the state. The monthly meetings also serve to develop strong communication between referring OCS Independent Living staff and AHFC staff in Anchorage. Youth in TBRA housing require monthly home visits by OCS workers, therefore, frequent contact and collaboration with this program is needed to assist youth in being successful in obtaining and maintaining housing through this program.
- Covenant House is a non-profit agency which provides emergency shelter services to youth. In SFY16, an Independent Living Specialist position was established to co-locate at the facility to improve IL service delivery to homeless youth who may be eligible for services. Additional information was provided in Section 4 of this report.
- Mentorship for Independent Living Services in the OCS service regions of Anchorage and Southcentral (Mat-Su) collaboration information is available in Section 4 of this report.
- University of Alaska (UAA) CWA collaborates closely with OCS regarding management of the Education and Training Voucher program. OCS provides assistance in identifying eligible youth so that CWA can use University of Alaska systems to identify youth who may need outreach to utilize ETV funding. Collaboration and planning for the annual educational conference occurs annually.
- IL program presentation to Court Improvement Project in October 2014; attendees of the meeting included representatives from Tribe Partners, Judges, and OCS leadership.
- FFCA representatives, ILP staff, and the OCS Director's Executive Team met in August and November 2014, to discuss programs, services, and needs for this population. These meetings will continue three times per year.

2017 Update: The Independent Living Program incorporates CFCIP and ETV programs. The IL Program is focused on collaborating with Tribal and community partners. In the past year the IL staff has continued to engage in substantial, ongoing, and meaningful collaboration with the following partners:

- FFCA is a contractor to provide quarterly youth retreats and is an essential partner to developing youth focused policies and material. In 2017, FFCA provided two retreats, in August and November, with increased youth participation; 101 foster youth and alumni attended the retreats. This participation and collaboration lead to the finalization of the Foster Youth Bill of Rights brochure.
- Big Brothers Big Sisters provides enhanced mentorship opportunities. Big Brothers Big Sisters matches caring adult mentors with youth in the foster care system to help youth succeed in life. This past year, 42 youth were referred and 17 were matched with an adult mentor. Matches can do many things together, like going to a movie, getting a burger, learning to drive, working on a resume or homework, or going hiking, to name a few activities. Covenant House provided a community Sex Trafficking Training to both the Western and Southeast regions. This training provided the chance to learn about how sex trafficking is affecting our communities. The training focused on how each individual and professional may help curtail the growth by being aware, by asking the right questions, and by being there for youth.
- The Independent Living program is also focused on strengthening the relationship with tribal providers. The program hosts quarterly teleconferences with tribal providers, providing direct programmatic connections and technical assistance to deliver IL services and Chafee support to eligible youth. In the past year, regular attendance and direct referrals continues to increase. The first teleconference had one attendee with no familiarity with the IL program. A year later, the most recent had nine attendees and all had knowledge of the program and referrals of youth to participate.
- University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA) CWA collaborates closely with OCS regarding management of the Education and Training Voucher program. OCS provides assistance in identifying eligible youth so that CWA can use UAA

systems to identify youth who may need outreach to utilize ETV funding. Collaboration and planning for the annual educational conference occurs annually.

- The Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC) collaboration continues to provide housing support to youth in transition around the state. In t he past year this program has been incredibly successful, filling all slots reserved for IL foster youth, and now maintaining a waiting list.

USE OF FUNDS

2015 Update: OCS has under-spent the FFY 2013 Chafee funds. The FFY 2013, award amount was $608,949.00; the grant was under spent by $95,831.00. OCS has been working with Region 10 to address the under spending of these funds and to insure that future federal funds are fully spent for Chafee.OCS has been transitioning to a new statewide accounting system. The IRIS Project is set to go live on July 1, 2015. This system will better help us to track and record more accurately the major programs such as Chafee. OCS utilizes Chafee Funds to provide the following services and assistance to eligible youth:

- Emergency Housing Services
- Youth Retreat planning and coordination
- Employment Training and assistance
- Goods and services for youth.
- Regional Independent Living Specialist staff

2016 Update: OCS is on track to spend all of the FFY 2014 Funds. There were no changes to how the Chafee funds are used in Alaska. There are no plans to change the way we utilize these funds in the coming year.

2017 Update: OCS continues to utilize all funding for FFY 2015. The increased staffing and increased availability of Life Skills classes support the steady expenditure of Chafee funding for youth. In the coming year OCS will continue with the current program delivery activities and the current spending patterns, projecting to spend all allotted funding.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND PLANNED ACTIVITIES

2015 Update: The IL Program experienced significant growth in many service areas during the past year. Supervision of the six Regional Independent Living Specialists (RILS) transferred from the five OCS regional offices to the state office Independent Living Program Coordinator, offering improvements in program consistency, increased service delivery, and expends Chafee funding more effectively statewide. The spending matrix for the IL Program was reviewed with staff and revised to promote more accountability in the investment of resources for youth in transition. The plan is for youth to receive increased support and will achieve more of their goals with more focused support and increased monitoring of the outcomes for each youth engaged in services.

2016 Update: The IL Program experienced significant growth in the past year; the number of eligible youth for Independent Living Program services increased from 594 youth in SFY 15, to 746 in SFY 16.

OCS added an additional Regional Independent Living Specialist (RILS) in the Southcentral Region bringing the total number of Independent Living Specialist staff around the state to seven specialists who serve eligible youth. The addition of the specialist position was critical to delivering timely and quality services to the Southcentral region which serves youth in outlying rural areas in addition to the larger community of Wasilla. Additionally, supervision of the seven Regional Independent Living Program Specialists has been centralized to the state office Program Coordinator. This transition affords improvements in program consistency, increased service delivery, and expending Chafee funding more effectively and equitably statewide. These efforts also facilitate providing increased support to youth, helping them to focus and achieve their goals and improve overall outcomes for each youth engaged in services.

Increased staffing and supervision provides for increased accountability for service provision to APPLA youth. Recently, during an FFCA quarterly retreat, OCS IL staff facilitated a conversation related to placement disruptions. Youth and staff are beginning to explore both reasons for and ramifications of unanticipated changes in a youth's placement. Notably, and identified by both youth and staff, caseworker visits are critical to both preserving placement and easing transitions. OCS' focus on increasing staffing and supervision will undoubtedly have positive effects for youth and their success in independence. For SFY 17, the OCS IL Program will continue to explore systemic solutions to increase youth placement stability. This will conducted in partnership with community stakeholders such as FFCA, GAL/CASAs, Tribal partners, foster parents and individual meetings with youth.

2017 Update: The Independent Living program is now fully staffed with seven Regional Independent Living Specialists across the state to provide IL services, resources and opportunities to foster youth and alumni: two in Anchorage, two in Southcentral, one in Southeast, one in Northern, and one in Western. This growth has been critical to support the 771 youth who are eligible for OCS Independent Living services. The focus for the program this past year has been to provide technical assistance to colleagues regarding the use of Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA) and maintain its restricted use as a primary permanency goal. The IL program partnered with Facing Foster Care in Alaska to deliver a webinar mandatory training for staff on this policy, and then working together to update the policy, adding clarity, accountability and provisions to further limit the use of this permanency goal. These activities have lead to the reduction of the use of APPLA and increased staff communications and attention to other prioritized permanency goals.

POLICY AND PRACTICE TO AFFIRM SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITIES OF YOUTH SERVED BY THE PROGRAM

2015 Update: Information regarding sexual orientation and gender identities of youth was not included in the APSR.

2016 Update: The State of Alaska OCS actively practices non-discriminatory and inclusive practices, which are affirmed in the Foster Children's Rights publication. Independent Living Specialists advocate for the youth's wishes with their self-identity. Specialists engage with youth in nonjudgmental manner and ensuring all participants on the youth's team engage in a similar manner. Further, RILS actively seek out supportive connections to LGBTQ communities, resources and appropriate supports in the area in which the youth live. This includes university and high school groups, sexual health medical care, area specific agencies such as Identity Inc. FFCA is another organization which seeks to affirm and support youth who have experienced foster care.

2017 Update: The State of Alaska OCS actively practices non-discriminatory and inclusive practices, which are affirmed in the Foster Children's Rights publication. Independent Living Specialists advocate for the youth's wishes with their self-identity, exploration, and connecting youth with community education and supports through the IL Life Skills classes.

NATIONAL YOUTH IN TRANSITION DATABASE (NYTD)

Collaboration

2015 Update: Quarterly phone conferences have been set up for regular communication and collaboration with Tribal partners. Additionally FFCA representatives were invited to attend the TSCG meetings. At those meetings they have shared program goals using the NYTD outcomes pertaining to homelessness, education, substance abuse, and employment.

The IL Program Coordinator has shared NYTD outcomes with community partners, foster parents, and youth in communities around the State of Alaska. Including a large meeting in Anchorage held September 17, 2014 to discuss program goals, barriers to services and permanency, and share NYTD data. This meeting included community partners such as DBH, GALs, CASAs, the ACRF, FFCA, OCS IL Staff, Mental Health Trust representatives, Department of Vocational Rehabilitation, community attorneys and community mental health centers.

2016 Update: Quarterly phone conferences have been established for regular communication and collaboration with Tribal partners. OCS has coordinated with agency Tribal specialists to support outreach efforts in order to increase Tribal attendance and provide seamless support for Alaska Native Independent Living youth. FFCA is also an active participant in the TSCG meetings, advocating on behalf of IL youth and the specialized needs of youth aging out of foster care. At those meetings they have shared program goals using the NYTD outcomes pertaining to homelessness, education, substance abuse and employment.

The ILP Program Coordinator has shared NYTD outcomes with community partners, foster parents, and youth in communities around the State of Alaska. This meeting included community partners such as DBH, GALs, CASAs, ACRF, FFCA, OCS Independent Living Staff, Mental Health Trust representatives, Department of Vocational Rehabilitation, community attorneys and community mental health centers. NYTD data is shared at the quarterly retreats with youth. FFCA representatives, ILP staff, and the OCS Director's Executive Team met in May 2016 to discuss programs, services and needs for this population. These meetings will continue three times per year.

2017 Update: The program hosts quarterly teleconferences with Tribal providers; providing direct programmatic connections and technical assistance to deliver IL services and Chafee support to eligible youth. In the past year, regular attendance and direct referrals from tribal partners to the OCS IL program has increased. The first teleconference had one attendee with no

familiarity with the IL program. A year later, nine Tribal partners participated in the quarterly teleconference and all had knowledge of the program, with several making referrals of youth to participate. NYTD data is shared during these calls and with our other partner agencies: FFCA, Covenant House, Big Brothers Big Sisters and OCS leadership.

Utilization of NYTD Data in Consultation with Youth and Stakeholders to Improve Service Delivery

2015 Update: NYTD data has provided Alaska with concrete numbers to develop and enhance program focus on three areas: 1) housing/homelessness, 2) healthcare and risk prevention, and 3) educational achievement. Additional funding was allocated in SFY 2014 and SFY 2015, to expand services to youth based on trends identified through both the NYTD survey and State of Alaska statistics tracked by the department. NYTD data is shared at the quarterly retreats with youth. The NYTD outcomes have informed the FFCA and OCS about needs and caused collaborative efforts to find specialized presenters and activities supporting the areas identified, such as health education, homelessness, budgeting, and employment.

2016 Update: The NYTD outcomes have informed the FFCA and OCS about needs and caused collaborative efforts to find specialized presenters and activities supporting the areas identified, such as health education, homelessness, budgeting, and employment.

2017 Update: NYTD data is the map from which programmatic success is monitored as well as identifying areas needing improvement. In the past year OCS has focused on enhancing service delivery in the areas of healthcare and education, this year, OCS added a focus of increasing housing education and preventing homelessness for IL eligible youth. The IL Life Skills classes have become a successful vehicle to provide information for these critical areas and have become very well attended. The IL program has shared NYTD data with youth during these classes and provided community agencies as guest speakers to provide focus area education. To that end IL has provided training on the Tenant Based Rental Assistance Program and has been successful at filling all 15 reserved slots in Anchorage. The development of a waiting list for that area has been put into place and has a total of 25 youth housed.

Improvements to Data Collection

2015 Update: In SFY 2016, the third cohort of NYTD surveys will be conducted, with the youth previously surveyed at age 17 and age 19, now being surveyed at age 21. This will provide a snapshot of the same population over a five year period, and give the agency increased information about the needs. The data will be informative in evaluating the efforts of the IL Program to provide adequate supports to youth and will suggest what supports will need to be strengthened to address identified trends.

The increased use of social media tools has assisted Regional Independent Living Specialists (RILS) to reach out to more youth in transition than in past years. RILS were able to locate and survey 82.9% of our cohort-age 21 young adults, with only 14.3% unable to locate and 2.9% declining to complete the survey. The IL Program uses social media to survey groups of youth to inform program planning and service delivery, including career planning, job skills preparation and housing preparedness.

The NYTD data has assisted OCS in documenting the need for youth engagement and training for attorneys and judges. OCS and FFCA have partnered with the CIP to develop the training; the training is anticipated to roll out in September 2015.

2016 Update: In SFY 2016, the third cohort of NYTD surveys was conducted, with the youth previously surveyed at age 17 and age 19, now being surveyed at age 21.

The increased use of social media tools has assisted Regional Independent Living Specialists (RILS) to reach out to more of our youth in transition population than in past years. RILS were able to locate and survey 82.9% of our cohort-age 21 young adults, with only 14.3% unable to locate and 2.9% declining to complete the survey.

The NYTD data has assisted OCS in documenting the need for youth engagement and training for attorneys and judges. OCS and FFCA have partnered with the CIP to develop the training; the training is anticipated to roll out in September 2015.

2017 Update: The IL program has been conducting the third cohort of Age 17 surveys. The increased use of social media tools has enhanced IL success at connecting with youth to complete the survey. The data collected will provide a snapshot of the same population over a five year period, and give the agency increased information about the needs. The data will be informative in evaluating the efforts of the IL Program to provide adequate supports to youth and will suggest what supports will need to be strengthened to address identified trends as it has in the past.

Involvement of Youth in CFCIP, CFSR, NYTD and Other Agency Efforts

2015 Update: This specific section title was not include in the "2016 APSR" submitted in June 2015.

2016 Update: Facing Foster Care in Alaska (FFCA), is a non-profit organization which serves as Alaska's youth advisory board. Alaska OCS has partnered with FFCA on improving outcomes for older youth, who are either in care or have exited foster care. OCS and FFCA hold quarterly leadership meetings and three youth retreats annually, which provide leadership skills training, mentorship and transition support. The quarterly collaborative meetings with FFCA and representatives of OCS' leadership team, assist with the identification of common goals, agency efforts, and to discuss concerns and program improvements.

The quarterly leadership meetings occur in conjunction with FFCA-led youth retreats. OCS awards a contract to FFCA named *Development of Transition and Leadership Skills for Youth Participants of the OCS IL Program*, as mentioned earlier. The IL staff continue to work side by side with FFCA to train and recruit foster homes to specifically support older youth and provide joint trainings to OCS staff, community agencies, and to schools on the importance of supporting youth in transition. A FFCA representative was invited to participate in the quarterly CFSP stakeholder calls.

In March, the IL staff met with FFCA youth retreat to work on the issue of placement disruptions for youth. OCS also partnered with FFCA to obtain input from youth regarding updating the Foster Children's Rights brochure for Alaska. The IL program is working with FFCA on a joint presentation to OCS staff regarding the permanency goal of Another Permanent Planned Living Arrangement (APPLA) for youth. An FFCA representative was invited to participate in discussion, assessment, and planning for the CFSP and APSR through meetings in April.

In SFY 17, OCS will continue to involve youth in the CFCIP, CFSR, NYTD, and other agency efforts. OCS leadership will continue to meet quarterly with FFCA representatives to discuss the current projects and ongoing efforts. OCS IL Coordinator will continue to meet regularly with FFCA representatives to work on identified projects and will attend FFCA retreats to gain youth input on the CFCIP and NYTD programs. FFCA representatives will continue to be invited to participate in the quarterly CFSP stakeholder calls. Additionally, FFCA representatives will be invited to participate in Statewide Assessment work as part of the preparation for the CFSR, and they will be one of the stakeholder groups recommended to be interviewed as part of the Services Array stakeholder interviews.

2017 Update: Facing Foster Care in Alaska (FFCA), is a non-profit organization which serves as Alaska's youth advisory board. Alaska OCS has partnered with FFCA on improving outcomes for older youth, who are either in care or have exited foster care. OCS and FFCA hold quarterly leadership meetings and three youth retreats annually, which provide leadership skills training, mentorship and transition support. The quarterly collaborative meetings with FFCA and representatives of OCS' leadership team, assist with the identification of common goals, agency efforts, and to discuss concerns and program improvements. The quarterly leadership meetings occur in conjunction with FFCA-led youth retreats. This past year leadership attention was focused on increasing knowledge related to the permanency goal of APPLA, limiting its use, and enhancing agency policy to provide clarifying provisions to limit its future use as a primary permanency goal. FFCA representatives and youth are invited to and regularly attend scheduled teleconferences regarding the CFSR.

Involvement of Public and Private Sectors in Helping Adolescents in Foster Care Achieve Independence

2015 Update: This specific section title was not include in the "2016 APSR" submitted in June 2015.

2016 Update: Partnerships continue to grow and strengthen for youth in Alaska. OCS is focused on improving resources to increase mentorship and permanency efforts for youth as well as career preparation, educational support and other supportive resources. In SFY 2016, a formalized agreement with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation was established to provide additional career navigation support and encourage greater retention of youth in career preparation services and career focused training programs. This program is being expanded to deliver a yearly career conference to youth, to focus on exposure to some of the more lucrative job prospects in Alaska for young workers without plans to go to college.

The IL Program manages two grants, one contract and three business agreements with organizations who deliver services to youth who are eligible for Independent living services. Monthly or quarterly teleconferences take place with the grantees and service providers in order to maintain relationships, address challenges to service delivery and to work on increasing efficiency and effectiveness of the services to help youth in foster care achieve independence. Specific examples are listed as "collaboration" earlier in this section.

In SFY 17, OCS will continue the efforts listed above to involve the public and private sectors in helping adolescents in foster care achieve independence. OCS will continue to explore the use of expanding public/private contracting to expand the accessibility of Chafee IL Services statewide. For SFY 17, the OCS IL Program will continue to explore systemic solutions to increase youth placement stability. This will conducted in partnership with community stakeholders such as FFCA, GAL/CASAs, Tribal partners, foster parents and individual meetings with youth.

2017 Update: In FY 17, OCS has continued the efforts listed above to involve the public and private sectors in helping adolescents in foster care achieve independence. OCS will continue to explore the use of expanding public/private contracting to expand the accessibility of Chafee IL Services statewide. For FY 17, the OCS IL Program will continue to explore systemic solutions to increase youth placement stability. This will conducted in partnership with community stakeholders such as FFCA, GAL/CASAs, Tribal partners, foster parents and individual meetings with youth.

Coordinate Services with Other Federal and State Programs

2015 Update: This specific section title was not include in the "2016 APSR" submitted in June 2015.

2016 Update: OCS partners with other state and community agencies to deliver services to youth. Increased efforts have been made to collaborate with the Office of Public Advocacy (OPA), to educate GALs and CASAs better coordinate services during transition

- OCS has a formal partnership for Tenant Based Rental Agreements (TBRA) for youth with the Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC). Monthly teleconferences occur to discuss individual youth who are housed with the program or who are in the process of becoming housed. The monthly meetings also serve to develop strong communication between referring OCS Independent Living staff and AHFC staff in Anchorage. Youth in TBRA housing require monthly home visits by OCS workers, therefore, frequent contact and collaboration with this program is needed to assist youth in being successful in obtaining and maintaining housing through this program.
- Division of Vocational Rehabilitation has partnered with OCS on a project to connect transition aged youth currently or previously in OCS custody with Pre-Employment Transition Services (PETS). The project connects transition aged youth currently or previously in OCS custody with opportunities to engage in hands on, career focused assessment and support services.

In SFY 17, OCS will continue to partner with the Office of Public Advocacy, Tribal partners, AHFC, and DVR as mentioned throughout this report. Additionally OCS will continue to partner with Covenant House and the Division of Public Health.

2017 Update: In SFY 17, OCS continues to partner with the Office of Public Advocacy, Tribal partners, AHFC as mentioned throughout this report. Additionally OCS continues to partner with Covenant House and the Division of Public Health.

Homeless Prevention

2015 Update: This specific section title was not include in the "2016 APSR" submitted in June 2015.

2016 Update: In March of 2016, the IL program met with youth during a youth retreat to collect input about youth placement disruptions and ideas for OCS to effectively address this issue.

- Covenant House of Alaska provides Emergency Shelter Services to youth. Covenant House is expanding its housing options with a transitional living program called Rights of Passage. OCS is looking at ways to partner with Covenant House for this new resource which may benefit eligible OCS youth who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.
- Covenant House is expanding its housing options with a transitional living program called Rights of Passage.
- The AHFC collaboration continues to provide housing support to youth in transition around the state. OCS has a formal partnership for TBRA for youth with the AHFC.

2017 Update: The IL program will continue to work collaboratively with Covenant House of Alaska and Alaska Housing Finance Corporation to increase the available homelessness prevention resources for IL eligible youth.

Pregnancy Prevention

2015 Update: This specific section title was not include in the "2016 APSR" submitted in June 2015.

2016 Update: The IL program partners with the Division of Public Health who facilitates classes statewide several times a year focusing on reproductive anatomy, birth control options and information about sexually transmitted infections. Planned Parenthood, Alaska Aids Assistance Association (AAAA), Aiding Women in Abuse and Rape Emergencies (AWARE) and Abused Women's Aid in Crisis (AWAIC) also regularly present, focusing on health relationships, medical care and personal hygiene. Additionally, the Regional Independent Living Specialist regularly engage the youth in conversations about how to make healthy life choices for themselves and make information, posters, and condoms readily available for youth.

OCS policy 3.14.1 provides guidance to staff to provide health education and risk prevention information; this includes pregnancy prevention and family planning information. The IL Specialists in each region "…provide or arrange for sex education, abstinence education, and HIV prevention, including education and information about sexual development and sexuality, pregnancy prevention and family planning, and sexually transmitted diseases and AIDS…"

2017 Update: The IL program continues to partner with Division of Public Health as well as regional partners to deliver education, resources and increase awareness of reproductive anatomy, birth control options, and information about sexually transmitted infections focusing on health relationships, medical care and personal hygiene. This is in addition to the ongoing one-on-one conversations IL staff have with youth discussing health choices and how to access help when they need it.

Training Regarding CFCIP to Resource Families

2015 Update: This specific section title was not include in the "2016 APSR" submitted in June 2015.

2016 Update: The ACRF provides a series of workshops focusing on 18 to 21-year olds in the foster care system. The workshops are called the extended foster care series. Topics of the workshop include: *Fostering young adults: Considerations for resources families; Together- having the conversation;* and *What youth need to know* and *Extending Foster Care: Nuts & Bolts*. Community partners, former foster youth, IL specialists and the ACRF work together to provide resource families information on fostering older youth, including the benefits of the IL program. Additionally, Alaska's Resource Family Handbook was recently updated with information on the IL program. Each foster youth is assigned an IL specialist, who works with the youth on transition planning. Foster parents are informed about Alaska's IL program through a welcome packet sent to the foster youth at the foster home as well as through the IL specialist's direct work with the youth in the foster home. IL specialists visit foster youth and talk with foster parents about transition planning and independent living skills and IL services available.

The ACRF provides information and training opportunities for foster parents, adoptive parents, and workers to support LGBTQ youth. They provide four self-study courses and other books and resources that individuals can access.

2017 Update: ACRF continues to provide information and training opportunities for foster parents, adoptive parents, and workers to support older youth in the foster care system. ACRF provides 31 self-study trainings regarding youth in foster care and independent living issues and they continue to provide on-site and face to face training to Resource Families who either are already providing care to youth or are interested in providing care to youth.

REDUCING RISK TO YOUTH TO BE VICTIMS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

2015 Update: This specific section title was not include in the "2016 APSR" submitted in June 2015.

2016 Update: Alaska has been working to help build awareness of human sex trafficking around the state. Through an OCS grant, Covenant House has been delivering Sex Trafficking trainings to communities including Kodiak, Fairbanks and Anchorage. These trainings will continue in the coming year as an effort to increase community and OCS worker awareness of sex trafficking issues. The next communities to receive training will be Homer and Kenai. Information regarding compliance with requires for P.L. 113-183 and P.L. 114-22 is provided in Section 11 of this report.

2017 Update: Alaska continues to help build awareness of human sex trafficking around the state. Through an OCS grant, Covenant House has delivered sex trafficking trainings to OCS staff and community partners in the Western and Southeast regions.

CONSULTATION WITH TRIBES

2015 Update: This specific section title was not include in the "2016 APSR" submitted in June 2015.

2016 Update: OCS provides outreach to Tribes to share information about the availability of program funds for youth who are in Tribal custody or were formally in Tribal custody. Quarterly phone conferences have been established for regular communication and collaboration with Tribal partners. OCS has coordinated with agency Tribal specialists to support outreach efforts in order to increase Tribal attendance and provide seamless support for Alaska Native Independent Living youth. Facing Foster Care in Alaska (FFCA) is also an active participant in the Tribal State Collaboration meetings, advocating on behalf of IL youth and the specialized needs of youth aging out of foster care. At those meetings they have shared program goals using the NYTD outcomes pertaining to homelessness, education, substance abuse, and employment.

An OCS APPLA webinar is scheduled was scheduled June 14, 2016. Tribal partners received email notice of the upcoming webinar and were invited to participate. This webinar featured a panel of speakers, including youth, as well as OCS IL and permanency staff. The webinar provided the latest information on:

- The OCS policy and new requirements
- What APPLA means for a youth in care
- The steps to explore before recommending the goal change to the court
- Placement with a Fit and Willing Relative which is a preferred permanency goal over APPLA

2017 Update: The Independent Living program is focused on strengthening the relationship with Tribal providers. The program hosts quarterly teleconferences with Tribal providers, providing direct programmatic connections and technical assistance to deliver IL services and Chafee support to eligible youth. In the past year, regular attendance and direct referrals continue to increase. On November 3, 2016, five Tribal entities including Kenaitze Indian Tribe, Ketchikan Indian Community, Tlingit and Haida Central Council, Kawerak and United Native Village of Unalakleet attended a teleconference regarding the IL program. The topic was a general IL introduction, but questions focused on employment opportunities, how IL provides for youth employment, and how IL supports job readiness. Program eligibility and how to connect IL staff to tribal staff were discussed. On February 2, 2017, eight Tribal partners attended the teleconference. Tribal attendees included: Tlingit & Haida Central Council, Kenaitze, Portage Creek/Bristol Bay Native Association, Chilkat Indian Village, Ninilchik, and Sitka Tribe. Questions were specific to program eligibility, resources and services available to older youth. One Tribal representative committed to helping to create an opportunity for IL to provide a presentation during their regional ICWA meetings on May 4, 2017.

Describe Concerns Raised by Tribes on Accessing Chafee Services

2016 Update: No concerns have been raised by the Tribes regarding access to Chafee services. OCS presented at Tribal State Collaboration Group meeting and OCS facilitates quarterly teleconferences to provide Tribes with information about the Chafee and independent living services available to youth. However, OCS has been identified that not all Tribes in Alaska are familiar with the Chafee services. In SFY 17 the OCS independent living coordinator will collaborate with the OCS Tribal Affairs Advisor to identify and implement new methods to reach out to Tribal partners and provide information so Tribes are aware of the services available.

2017 Update: OCS facilitates quarterly teleconferences to provide Tribes with information about the Chafee and independent living services available to youth but also to collaborate on how to improve Tribal access to Chafee services. Tribes have identified that they are not familiar with the Chafee services and OCS has worked to increase participation in quarterly teleconferences to share general information. The teleconferences have been increasingly collaborative opportunities to share resources and conduct detailed referrals for youth to receive Chafee IL support and services. The Tribal participants have shared that they want to be more informed when the OCS IL staff are in their area so they can encourage youth in their programs to meet with them to find out more information about the services.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING VOUCHER PROGRAM

Accomplishments and Progress

2015 Update: This specific section title was not include in the "2016 APSR" submitted in June 2015.

2016 Update: The CWA manages Alaska's ETV program through close collaboration with OCS. The CWA is housed on the Anchorage campus lending easy access to students who need supportive services, intervention or advocacy with school needs. This has led to better supported students with faculty and educational leadership more ready to accept our foster youth and understand their significant and individual needs. For additional information on ETV funds, please Section 14.

2017 Update: As it has proven to be increasingly successful over the past years, the Child Welfare Academy (CWA) continues to administer the ETV program statewide. The CWA supports youth as they exit high school, obtain their GED or return to apply for post-secondary and vocational training and financial assistance. This past year the CWA has partnered with Nine Star to leverage funding to support youth entering Vocational Technical Programs/and internships. The CWA is also utilizing the University of Alaska's Financial Literacy staff to better support youth in understanding money management and financial aid. The CWA continues to work closely with the OCS IL program to promote Alaska's Vocational Training Center and conduct an annual Education Conference for college interested youth. The ETV program reports there were 38 students receiving the Education and Training Voucher; 19 of which were new recipients, 23 received the Presidential Tuition Waiver, and 15 received OCS Tuition Scholarships. This year we celebrated three fall graduates and one youth who is projected to graduate this Spring, with 20 youth total who have completed their degree/certificate program to date. Additional information regarding g ETV funds is available in Section 14 of this document.

Changes in Administration of ETV Program

2015 Update: The CWA has been administering the ETV funding since SFY 13. There has been increased focus in service delivery and support given to youth who attend the University of Alaska state schools. The Child Welfare Agency is housed on the Anchorage campus lending easy access to students who need supportive services, intervention or advocacy with school needs. This has led to better supported students with faculty and educational leadership more ready to accept our foster youth and understand their significant and individual needs. For additional information on ETV funds, please Section 14.

2016 Update: No changes have been made to the administration of the ETV program in the last year.

2017 Update: No changes have been made to the administration of the ETV program in the last year.

Unduplicated Number of ETV Awards

Please see Section 14 and Appendix H for unduplicated numbers of ETV awards.

SECTION 13: UPDATES TO TARGETED PLANS WITH IN THE 2015-2019 CFSP

FOSTER AND ADOPTIVE PARENT DILIGENT RECRUITMENT PLAN

2015 Update: Statewide and regional recruitment and retention plans are used by the OCS to prepare and plan for the diligent recruitment needed to meet the needs of Alaska's children and families. In the past year, OCS experienced success with diligent recruitment, although there will be a heightened focus on this work, as the number of children in out-of-home care continues to rise in Alaska. During the past year, the following accomplishments were made:

- Tangible recruitment supplies were ordered and distributed around the state.
- Increased recruitment for homes to serve children with complex medical needs including development of posters and purchase of an advertisement in the Alaska Nursing publication.
- Western Region SDR efforts have been made to increase the services in Bethel and surrounding communities. An emergency shelter home was identified and established to prevent out of region placement when emergency situations arise.
- Enhanced support and recruitment for the FosterWear program. This program offers clothing discounts to foster parents in Alaska.
- Resource family and adoptive family support and appreciation celebrations were held around the state to support families currently providing care to children in custody.
- Adoption exchanges continue to be utilized. Alaska OCS uses AdoptUSKids, Northwest Adoption Exchanges, and the Alaska Adoption Exchange.
- WWK continues to be a program provided by Catholic Social Services, through partnership with the OCS.
- The PARKA program through the ACRF is funded by OCS to recruit, train, and support families interested in adopting special needs children through the public child welfare system.

2016 Update: Statewide and regional recruitment and retention plans are used by the OCS to prepare and plan for the diligent recruitment needed to meet the needs of Alaska's children and families. The State of Alaska does not have any limiting its ability to recruit for resource families that reflect the diversity of children in care. There are no bans or restrictions based on sexual orientation. There have been minimal changes and updates from the previous plan. The SFY 17 plan will be completed in June 2016. During the past year, the following accomplishments were made.

- Western Region licensed two emergency shelter homes in SFY 2016. A third emergency shelter home is expected to be licensed in July 2016.
- Western Region ran a foster care recruitment movie theater advertisement in December 2015. The community of Bethel provided positive feedback to the advertisement. Since then, OCS has sent a letter to other movie theaters asking for donated time to run a foster care recruitment advertisement. OCS is currently working with theaters in Anchorage and Juneau.
- Resource family and adoptive family support and appreciation celebrations were held in May and June around the state to support families currently providing care to children in custody.
- Adoption exchanges continue to be utilized. Alaska OCS uses AdoptUSKids, Northwest Adoption Exchanges, the Alaska Adoption Exchange, and A Family for Every Child.
- WWK continues to be a program provided by Catholic Social Services, through partnership with the OCS.
- The PARKA program through the ACRF is funded by OCS to recruit, train, and support families interested in adopting special needs children through the public child welfare system.
- ACRF provides a quarterly report to each regional licensing unit, of the people who call ACRF requesting information on becoming a resource family. The regional licensing units then follow up with these interested individuals, with the licensing process.

2017 Update: Statewide and regional recruitment and retention plans are used by the OCS to prepare and plan for the diligent recruitment needed to meet the needs of Alaska's children and families. The State of Alaska does not have any policies limiting its ability to recruit for resource families that reflect the diversity of children in care. There are no bans or restrictions based on sexual orientation. There have been minimal changes and updates from the previous plan. The SFY 18 plan is located in Appendix D. Accomplishments from the past year include the following:

- Each of the five regional teams in Alaska submitted Recruitment and Retention plans and budgets for Fiscal Year 17. The regional teams are comprised primarily of OCS staff (Licensing Specialists, Protective Services Specialists, ICWA Specialists and Permanency Planning Specialists), community and tribal partners and resource families.
- During SFY 17, the Emergency Relief Support (ERS) Pilot Program was implemented in two additional regions (Western and Northern). The ERS pilot was initiated in Southeast Alaska in March 2016. The ERS program provides support to unlicensed relative families via financial assistance during the first three months of placement of a child in care. Licensing supervisors utilize the contact with the resource families as means of a recruitment effort in order to fully explain the licensing process to families and walk them through the steps of becoming a licensed foster care provider.
- Throughout the fiscal year, events were held around Alaska to focus on recruitment and retention of resource families. In Anchorage, a subsistence celebration was held to honor and support current licensed and unlicensed relative care providers. Recruitment events were also held at the two-day Eklutna Tribal Pow-Wow as well as a bike blessing at the Alaska Native Medical Center. In an effort to recruit resource families who have skill sets to care for children with complex medical needs, a recruitment event was held at the Alaska Maternal Child Health and Immunization Conference. In Fairbanks, Tanana Chiefs Conference in partnership with Casey Family Programs, the Alaska for Center Resource Families and OCS hosted a one-day recruitment and retention event for rural interior resource families and applicants. The focus of the event was to streamline the application process for dually licensing families with both the tribe and State. Application paperwork assistance was provided along with fingerprinting and training.
- As part of the statewide resource family recruitment, OCS continued to air the "One Child" Public Service Announcement (PSA). The 30-second commercial was filmed in Western Alaska and is narrated by the Department of Health and Social Services Commissioner Valerie Davidson.
- In an effort to identify resource families willing to care for children with complex medical needs, a workgroup was formed during SFY 17, to create a postcard for mailing to medical personnel throughout the State of Alaska. 5,000 postcards were distributed to OCS regional offices for mailing and usage at regional recruitment events.
- In the month of November, each of the Regional Permanency Planning Specialists held events to recognize National Adoption Month.
- During the month of May, resource family appreciation events were held around the state to recognize foster, adoptive, unlicensed and guardianship families providing care to children in custody. In addition, during the month of May each regional office mailed appreciation letter to resource families from the Director of the Office of Children's Services. The appreciation letter also contained a copy of the newly created Resource Family Bill of Rights.
- During this fiscal year, each of the regional licensing units utilized foster care tangibles as part of the resource family recruitment efforts in their community. Tangibles include: ice scrapers, key chains, pens and tote bags displaying the phrase, "Make a Difference One Child at a Time" as well as a phone number to call if interested in more information regarding foster care. The tangibles were distributed at various recruitment events/presentations in the community such as health fairs, educational summits, cultural activities, sporting and outdoors gatherings, etc.

HEALTHCARE OVERSIGHT AND COORDINATION PLAN (HCO)

2015 Update: The plan was submitted in 2014, and no updates have been made. OCS policy manual includes a schedule for initial and follow up health screenings that meet reasonable standards. OCS continues to track and monitor the medical needs of children through QA case reviews. OCS policy manual includes the monitoring and use of psychotropic medications. The OCS Regional Psychiatric Nurses have an integral role in the oversight and management of medical issues for children at OCS. Due to a change in supervision and unclear expectations, data is not available for this submission. OCS will develop a plan and be able to provide additional information about the use of medication in the 2017 APSR.

2016 Update: Due to staff changes in OCS, the HCO Committee did not meet for nearly two years. On June 9, 2016, the committee reconvened and reviewed the plan. At the June meeting, recommendations and suggestions for review or changes were identified. This committee will meet quarterly in the coming year and will update the plan prior to next year's APSR. The committee is being led by OCS and includes variety of partners, including community medical providers, OCS staff, DBH, DPA, HCS, and Indian Health Services. The current plan requires updates which will be completed at the next quarterly meeting in September 2016. The committee met in June and discussed the changes and follow-up needed.

2017 Update: In the past year OCS and the HCO committee did a comprehensive review and update to the HCO plan. The committee is led by OCS and includes variety of partners including community medical providers, OCS staff, DBH, DPA,

HCS, and Indian Health Services. Through a series of meetings and email discussions, the plan was updated and is located in the Appendix E of this document.

DISASTER (CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS) PLAN

2015 Update: There have been no changes and updates from the previous plan, but it has been reviewed and signed by the OCS Director's Executive Team. In the past year, the State of Alaska Department of Health and Social Services responded to the following emergency situations:

- April 2015 Ketchikan flooding
- June 2015 Sterling fire
- June 2015 Willow fire
- June 2015 Tanana / Nulato fire
- June 2015 Aniak fire

To mitigate effects of imminent events, OCS researched the families served in each area and employees who might be traveling in the area affected. OCS staff contacted each family to determine their preparedness and response plans should they be affected. OCS tracks the events and families at risk. No OCS offices were affected by the events that occurred this year.

2016 Update: Alaska experiences numerous disasters and weather related issues that affect the health and safety of residents. The OCS goal is that these issues do not affect delivery of services to children and families in Alaska. In the past year, the State of Alaska Department of Health and Social Services responded to the following emergency situations:

- August 2015 Kodiak Island Wildfire: August 28, 2015 the Kodiak Island Borough Emergency Ops Center was activated. The fire was approximately 2000 acres at the time; Kodiak Island Borough EOC issued mandatory evacuation for Chiniak and the Alaska State Troopers enforced evacuation of 45 people. Southcentral Region staff report no effect on OCS office or staff, and no families, children, or foster homes were affected.
- August 2015 Sitka Landslide: The incident was reported to Paula Bentz by memo on August 24, 2015. On August 18, 2015, two and a half inches of rain in 24 hours caused three landslides and a sinkhole in the community. The landslides occurred in a new development site in the community which was not populated. Three people who were working in the development site were killed. There were no other injuries reported. Support services were offered to foster children in the form of mental health services and counseling.
- November 2015 Bethel School Fire: This incident was reported to Paula Bentz by email on November 5, 2015. The Lower Kuskokwim School District had a fire in the Kilbuk School building. This building housed the Ayaprun Elitnaurvik Yup'ik immersion school and Kuskokwim Learning Academy Boarding School. At the time of the incident, the Bethel OCS staff and managers researched the children in custody and families served. No one was injured in the fire and OCS did not have any youth in custody attending the school or residing in the dormitory. The school was declared a loss and the students were displaced.
- November 2015 Oil leak in Nome Office: This incident was reported to Paula Bentz by email on November 23, 2015. The Nome OCS office was closed due to an oil leak and fumes in the building. The office remained close for the entire week. OCS staff was relocated to the Nome Youth Facility during this period of time and services to clients were not interrupted.
- January 2016 Earthquake in Southcentral in Anchorage: On January 24, 2015, a 7.1 magnitude earthquake, originating near the community of Homer, Alaska, was felt for hundreds of miles in all directions. No damage was reported to OCS offices and services continued uninterrupted. A highway was closed for a period of time for repairs and an alternate route was established. Foster care licensing staff contacted foster families and verified the safety of all foster children in the area. An email was sent to remind staff about what to do in case of an earthquake.
- February 2016 Nome Office closure due to weather: On February 17, 2016, the OCS office in Nome had an office closure due to a weather/storm warning. Some OCS staff reported to work, answering phones and power and communications remained online. The status of foster homes was assessed and the weather improved by the end of that day leading to cancellation of the storm warning.
- May 2016 Deering Flood: No known effects to OCS children/families and no foster homes in the area.
- June 2016 McGrath Wildfire: Families were contacted. No injuries or damage was reported regarding OCS office or OCS families and children.

No significant changes have been made to the disaster plan in the past year; however, contact information for key staff has been updated. To mitigate effects of imminent events, OCS identifies the families served in each area and employees who have or might be traveling in the area affected. OCS staff contacts each family to determine their preparedness and reviews emergency response plans should they be affected. OCS tracks the events and families at risk.

2017 Update: In the past year, the State of Alaska Department of Health and Social Services and OCS responded to the following emergency situations:

- August 2016 Glenn Highway Flooding: On August 22, 2016, the Regional OCS office was notified that Glenn Highway 15 Mile was declared state disaster area due to Matanuska river flooding, erosion and possible landslide activity. All foster homes and in-home cases were reviewed to assure safety. No further action was indicated.
- October 2016 Bethel Active Shooter Incident: Bethel OCS office received report from the Bethel Police Department of an active shooter in the community at 10:20 am on October 6, 2016. The office initiated a lockdown, which ended mid-afternoon. No staff or clients were affected by the emergency and phones remained operational. The situation was diffused by local law enforcement. No further action was needed.
- October 2016 Bethel Office Relocation: due to structural issues with the building, OCS staff were relocated to other office sites. A system is in place to respond to reports of abuse and neglect and services have continued. It is unknown when all Bethel office staff will be located in the same building again.
- October 2016 Hurricane Matthew Follow-up: The Emergency Response Coordinator worked with the ICPC Program coordinator to follow-up to October hurricane and flooding in FL, GA and SC. Social workers associated with Alaska cases were contacted in affected states to determine the status of the children. It was determined that all children were safe and the families had emergency plans. No further action was needed.
- December 2016 Kotzebue Blizzard: During a significant blizzard in Kotzebue on December 29, 2016, the roof blew off the OCS office building This incident happened during the night, and disrupted operations of the office for 20 hours. After the storm, operations were restored, and there were no reported injuries and no loss of office contents. The OCS office is located on the ground floor of the building and the sub-roof remained relatively intact. While the building was closed, OCS staff worked from their homes and continued to respond to calls as necessary. No further action was needed.
- January 2017 Savoonga Storm: Due to widespread storm damage on January 4, 2017, the Arctic island village of Savoonga was declared a disaster area. Power was disrupted and some displaced families were housed at the school. Foster families in area were contacted and children were determined to be safe. OCS staff maintained close contact with the school where families were housed. No further action was needed.

To mitigate effects of imminent events, OCS researched the families served in each area and employees who might be traveling in the area affected. OCS staff contacted each family to determine their preparedness and response plans should they be affected. OCS tracks the events and families at risk. There was minor disruption of OCS office activities in Bethel and Kotzebue, but emergency and on-call staff was able to continue to provide services. The most recent disaster plan is attached in Appendix F.

TRAINING PLAN

2015 Update: There were no changes made to the training plan.

2016 Update: Changes to the training plan have been included. Changes include updates to the training plans related to P.L. 113-183. There are updates included in the IV-E eligibility training page, agency and contract training page, and family resource training page. A committee has been developed to meet regularly to keep this plan updated.

2017 Update: The Supervisor Leadership Council (SLC) and CWA worked closely to update the Staff Development Plan this last year. Some identified changes to the plan include: reviewing new mandatory reporting training, an online course on substance use through SAMHSA, online training on human trafficking, online suicide prevention training, and a webinar on Normalcy and Prudent Parent Standards. The current training plan and staff development plan are included in Appendix C. A committee has been developed to meet regularly to keep this plan updated.

SECTION 14: STATISTICAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

CAPTA ANNUAL STATE DATA REPORT ITEMS

Information on Child Protective Services Workforce

Education, Qualifications, and Training Requirements for CPS Professionals

2015 Update: The OCS continues to contract with the CWA to provide new staff training, called SKILS. The CWA provides core training to front line staff, social services associates and supervisors. Online training modules and webinars are offered in addition to classroom training. New workers are required to complete a Staff Development Plan that entails six months of required activities/events to further the staffs' orientation to the OCS. OCS does not require a minimum number of continuing education hours be required each year, instead when training is needed it is provided in a variety of ways including mandatory staff training. Job descriptions, including education and qualifications, have not changed since submitted last year.

2016 Update: There have been no changes to the employee training requirements. The current Staff Development Plan is attached, but has not been updated since the last submission. OCS does not have a minimum number of continuing education requirements for staff. Webinars and trainings are provided throughout the year on a variety of topics. OCS provides a multitude of training opportunities in a variety of formats to staff, and often includes Tribal and community partners. Trainings may be offered through on-site training, webinars, teleconferences, or email learning opportunities. OCS is excited to experimenting with micro-learning videos as an innovative way to get information out to busy child welfare staff. Micro-learning videos is a new training format for OCS that utilized a series of three short (less than two minutes each) training videos starring "OCS Rock Stars" on the topic of background check requirements for foster parents. We were excited about this new learning method and OCS is exploring ways to use this exciting new learning method in the future. OCS continues to partner with the Child Welfare Academy for staff training.

Staff with a professional license may be required through their licensure to maintain CEUs prior to renewal. OCS does not require front line caseworker staff to hold a professional license, such as a social work license from the State of Alaska. OCS does not track how many staff are licensed professionals.

There have been no changes to the education and qualifications for OCS staff. The minimal qualifications for a protective services specialist I/II (front line worker) is a bachelor's degree for an accredited institution with a major in a social, behavioral or health science, law, or a related field. The State of Alaska allows applicants to substitute post-secondary education with paraprofessional experience providing assistance, information or referrals to the public related to social services, health care, or legal services.

2017 Update: The information regarding employee training and OCS staff education and qualification has not changed since the 2016 update. OCS does not have a minimum number of continuing education requirements for staff, but trainings are provided throughout the year to provide ongoing staff development. The minimal qualifications for a protective services specialist I/II is a bachelor's degree for an accredited institution with a major in a social, behavioral or health science, law, or a related field. Alaska allows applicants to substitute post-secondary education with paraprofessional experience providing assistance, information or referrals to the public related to social services, health care, or legal services. The Staff Development Plan (SDP) was updated in December 2016 and is attached as part of Appendix C. The title IV-E Training Plan is also attached as part of Appendix C.

Demographic Information on CPS Personnel

2015 Update: The OCS does not have data related to education and salaries of personnel at the time of hire. Human resource information is maintained by the Department of Administration, Division of Personnel (DOP) and additional information is not available. Prior to the next submission of this report, OCS will explore, through consultation with the DOP, the possibility of collecting additional data to include in reports to provide additional demographic information related to protective services staff. The 2015 demographic information about Alaska's child protective services personnel was obtained from the Alaska Department of Administration, Division of Personnel & Labor Relations is provided in tables below. The data is in regards to protective services manager I &II and protective services specialist I – IV.

Table 11: Gender of PSS Staff

2015 Gender of OCS Protective Services Staff		
Female	Male	Total
214	67	281
76%	24%	100%

Source: Alaska Department of Administration, Division of Personnel & Labor Relations (5/15/15)

Table 12: Race of PSS Staff

2015 Self-Identified Race for OCS Protective Services Staff						
ALASKA NATIVE	AMERICAN INDIAN	ASIAN	BLACK	HISPANIC	WHITE	Total
16	4	11	19	15	216	281
6%	1%	4%	7%	5%	77%	100%

Source: Alaska Department of Administration, Division of Personnel & Labor Relations (5/15/15)

Table 13: Age of PSS Staff

2015 Age of OCS Protective Services Staff					
20-29 yrs.	30-39 yrs.	40-49 yrs.	50-59 yrs.	60 yrs. +	Total
47	90	74	45	25	281
17%	32%	26%	16%	9%	100%

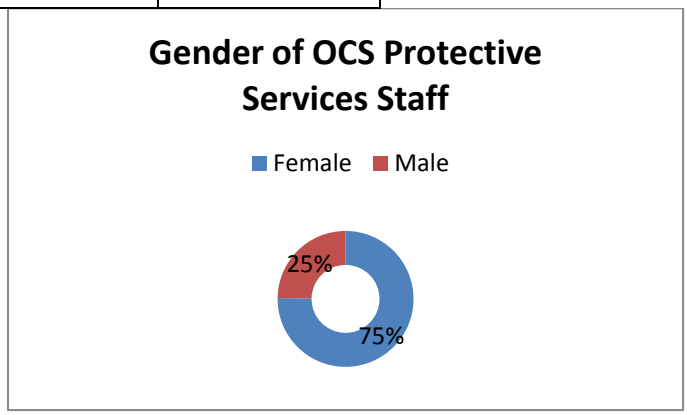
Source: Alaska Department of Administration, Division of Personnel & Labor Relations (5/15/15)

2016 Update: OCS does not have data related to the education level of personnel at the time of hire. Human resource information is maintained by the DOP and additional information is not available. OCS has been in contact with HR staff; they do not collect data specific to the education level of state employees.

There have been minimal changes in the demographic make-up of OCS staff since last year. The majority of OCS staff at the time of this report is identified as white women between the ages of 30 and 49 years old. The 2016 demographic information about Alaska's child protective services personnel was obtained from the Alaska Department of Administration, Division of Personnel & Labor Relations is provided in Tables 14-16, below. This data includes information regarding protective services manager I &II and protective services specialist I – IV.

Table 14: Gender of PSS

Gender of OCS Protective Services Staff		
Female	Male	Total
212	70	282
75%	25%	100%

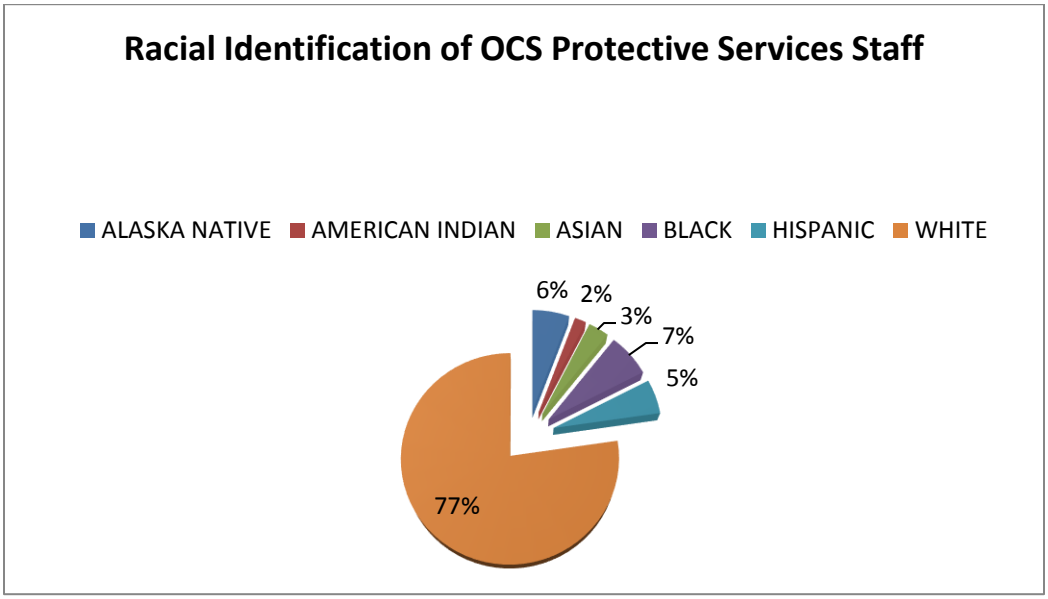


Source: Report by Alaska Department of Administration, Division of Personnel & Labor Relations (3/15/16)

Table 15: Race of PSS Staff

Self Identified Race for OCS Protective Services Staff						
ALASKA NATIVE	AMERICAN INDIAN	ASIAN	BLACK	HISPANIC	WHITE	Total
16	5	9	19	15	218	282
5.7%	1.8%	3.2%	6.7%	5.3%	77.3%	100%

Source: Report by Alaska Department of Administration, Division of Personnel & Labor Relations (3/15/16)

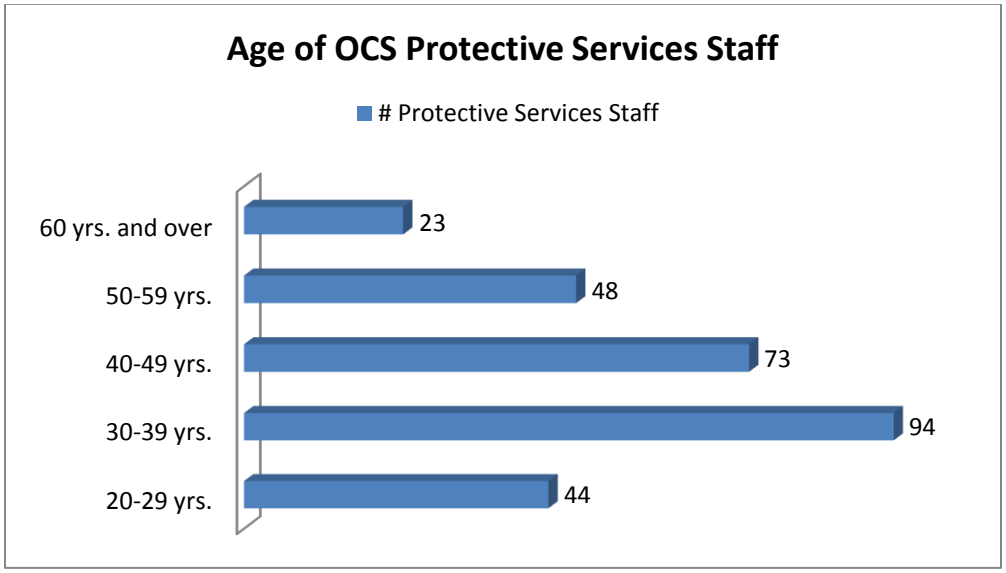


Source: 3/15/16 Report by Alaska Department of Administration, Division of Personnel & Labor Relations

Table 16: Age of PSS Staff

Age of OCS Protective Services Staff					
20-29 yrs.	30-39 yrs.	40-49 yrs.	50-59 yrs.	60 yrs. +	Total
44	94	73	48	23	282
15.6%	33.3%	25.9%	17%	8.2%	100%

Source: 3/15/16 Report by Alaska Department of Administration, Division of Personnel & Labor Relations



Source: 3/15/16 Report by Alaska Department of Administration, Division of Personnel & Labor Relations

2017 Update: OCS does not have data related to the education level of personnel at the time of hire. Human resource information is maintained by the DOP and additional information is not available. OCS has been in contact with HR staff; they do not collect data specific to the education level of state employees.

There have been minimal changes in the demographic make-up of OCS staff since last year. The majority of OCS staff at the time of this report is identified as white women between the ages of 30 and 49 years old. The 2016 demographic information about Alaska's child protective services personnel was obtained from the Alaska Department of Administration, Division of Personnel & Labor Relations is provided in Tables 17-19 below. This data includes information regarding protective services specialist I – IV; protective service managers are not included in this data.

Table 17: Gender of PSS Staff

Gender of OCS Protective Services Staff		
Female	Male	Total
185	69	254
73%	27%	100%

Source: Report by Alaska Department of Administration, Division of Personnel & Labor Relations (12.31.16)

Table 18: Race of PSS Staff

Self-Identified Race for OCS Protective Services Staff						
ALASKA NATIVE	AMERICAN INDIAN	ASIAN	BLACK	HISPANIC	WHITE	Total
16	4	12	20	15	187	254
6.30%	1.57%	4.72%	7.87%	5.91%	73.62%	100%

Source: Report by Alaska Department of Administration, Division of Personnel & Labor Relations (12.31.16)

Table 19: Age of PSS Staff

Age of OCS Protective Services Staff					
20-29 yrs.	30-39 yrs.	40-49 yrs.	50-59 yrs.	60 yrs. +	Total
42	79	70	44	19	254
16.54%	31.10%	27.56%	17.32%	7.48%	100%

Source: Report by Alaska Department of Administration, Division of Personnel & Labor Relations (12.31.16)

Caseload / Workload Information for CPS Professionals

2015 Update: Alaska OCS does not have formal requirements regarding average number or maximum number of cases per worker or supervisor. Protective Services Specialist (PSS) IV is the job class for the 42 supervisors providing direct supervision to line workers. Statewide ORCA data shows that the PSS IV staff average workload includes: supervision of 6.5 workers; oversight of 56.9 cases; and management of 3.4 unlicensed providers. Protective Services Specialist I & II are the job classes used for front line workers. Statewide ORCA data on June 9, 2015 showed that PSS I/II staff had an average assignment of 26 cases.

2016 Update: Alaska OCS does not have formal requirements regarding average number or maximum number of cases per worker. Protective Services Specialist (PSS) IV is the job class for the supervisors providing direct supervision to line workers. Statewide ORCA data shows that the PSS IV staff average workload includes: supervision of 6.4 workers; oversight of 67.4 cases; and management of 1.2 unlicensed providers. Protective Services Specialist I & II are the front line workers at OCS. Statewide ORCA data shows that on April 5, 2016, there were 167 PSS I/II staff in Alaska. At that time, the average caseload statewide was of 28.2 cases; this is an increase from last year. It is noted in the chart below that the Southcentral region has seen a 12% increase in caseload in the past year.

2017 Update: Alaska OCS does not have formal requirements regarding average number or maximum number of cases per worker. Protective Services Specialist (PSS) IV is the job class for the supervisors providing direct supervision to line workers.

Statewide ORCA data shows that the PSS IV staff average workload includes: supervision of 6.4 workers; oversight of 77.2 cases; and management of 1.5 unlicensed providers. This data demonstrates an increase in workload for the PSS IV staff at OCS. Protective Services Specialist I & II are the front line workers at OCS. Statewide ORCA data shows that on April 17, 2017, there were 176 PSS I/II staff in Alaska. At that time, the average caseload statewide was of 29.6 cases. This data shows an increase in number of PSS I/II staff and an increase in average caseload from last year. The information in the paragraph above is provided for comparative purposes to previous years.

OCS is changing how we review caseload data, and looking at it as workload data. Caseload data submitted in prior years has been a straightforward (point in time) comparison of open cases to funded positions. OCS has determined that this approach is not sufficient to accurately calculate caseload. Additional data is being submitted using a new approach that resolves the following problems

1. Point in time data is not reliable. The new approach averages the number of screened in Protective Services Reports (PSRs) each month to derive the Initial Assessment (investigation) caseload. Family Services cases (In Home and Out of Home) are averaged in the same way. The combined results represent a monthly average of open cases.
2. Although most Initial Assessment casework is completed within 30 days, many of these cases remain open for significantly longer. Prior submissions included these cases, which artificially inflates the number of cases per worker. As mentioned in #1, using screened in PSRs to calculate IA cases is the most accurate means of calculating the average IA caseload.
3. Some funded caseworker positions (PCNs), i.e. Intake workers, are not actually case carrying positions. The new code also quantifies the impact of vacancies by calculating the period of time PCNS are not available for case assignment, and reducing the number of case carrying PCNs accordingly.

JUVENILE JUSTICE TRANSFERS

2015 Update: See table below.

2016 Update OCS continues to work closely with the DJJ regarding juvenile justice transfers. As noted in Section 1 of this report, OCS and DJJ are actively working on a dual status project to address the need of this population; more information is provided in Section 1 of this report. The 2015 update provided data by calendar year and in 2016 update OCS began reporting by State Fiscal Year. See table below.

2017 Update: Please see Table 20 below, for updated discharge data.

Table 20: Discharges to DJJ

OCS Discharges to DJJ		
Discharge Year	Discharge Reason	Discharges
SFY11	Transfer to DJJ	3
SFY12	Transfer to DJJ	4
SFY13	Transfer to DJJ	3

SFY14	Transfer to DJJ	5
SFY15	Transfer to DJJ	3
SFY16	Transfer to DJJ	2

Source: State of Alaska Online Resources for Children in Alaska (ORCA) Report to DJJ RR00147

CAPTA FATALITY AND NEAR FATALITY PUBLIC DISCLOSURE POLICY

2015 Update: Alaska statute 47.10.093, Disclosure of agency records, provides for public disclosure of the finding or information about the case of child abuse or neglect which has resulted in a child fatality or near fatality. The statute specifically states that the department may "publicly disclose information pertaining to a child or an alleged perpetrator named in a report of harm or to the department's activities arising from the department's investigation of the report." The inclusion of these provisions encompasses the minimum information required by Section 106(b)(2)(B)(x) of CAPTA to include the release of:

1. The cause and circumstances regarding the child fatality or near fatality:
2. The age and gender of the child;
3. Information describing any previous reports of child abuse or neglect that are pertinent to the abuse or neglect that led to the child fatality or near fatality;
4. Information describing any previous investigations pertinent to the abuse or neglect that led to the child fatality or near fatality;
5. The result of any such investigations; and
6. The services provided by the state and actions of the state on behalf of the child that are pertinent to the child abuse or neglect that led to the child fatality or near fatality.

OCS policy (CPS Policy 6.1.2, Confidentiality) was updated in January 2014 to delineate the public disclosure of the above information in fatal or near fatal cases.

2016 Update: No changes in the past year.

2017 Update: No changes in the past year.

SOURCES OF DATA ON CHILD MALTREATMENT DEATHS

2015 Update: Alaska has a statewide Child Fatality Review Team. OCS participates as a team member in the review of child deaths. The State of Alaska reviews child deaths through the statewide. This team operates under the auspices of the State Medical Examiner's Office (SMEO). The team meets monthly in Anchorage. Members of the team are local law enforcement, the AK State Troopers, the district attorney's office, a representative from the OCS and community physicians. Each team member presents information from their respective fields. The SMEO conducts the autopsy and the manner and cause is determined. The OCS reports the findings from the SMEO in the annual NCANDS report. The OCS collects the child fatality data in two ways:

1. The Alaska Bureau of Vital Statistics generates a monthly report of fetal, infant, and maternal deaths for the Alaska Maternal Infant Mortality Review (MIMR) program (managed by the Division of Public Health). As a participant on this team, the OCS representative gathers information at the monthly meetings and also reviews OCS case records for information.
2. The SMEO maintains a master database of all child deaths. This data base is available to the OCS and is obtained at the time the NCANDS report is prepared and is used to verify the OCS database information.

Additionally, OCS management is part of the Alaska team participating in the National Institute for Children's Health Quality's Infant Mortality COIIN Learning Collaborative.

2016 Update: The procedure for review of child maltreatment deaths remains the same for 2016. OCS continues to use SMEO, BVS, and MMIR sources of child maltreatment fatality data. OCS also receives information from law enforcement regarding child maltreatment deaths.

2017 Update: The procedure for review of child maltreatment deaths remains the same for 2017. OCS continues to use SMEO, BVS, and MMIR sources of child maltreatment fatality data. OCS also receives information from law enforcement regarding child maltreatment deaths.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING VOUCHERS

2015 Update: The ETV served a total of 57 students during the 2014-2015 academic year. There were 56 students enrolled in the Fall semester, and one additional student enrolled in the Spring semester. There was a 73% retention rate from Fall to Spring, and one student graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in Engineering.

2016 Update: The ETV served a total of 40students during the 2015-2016 academic year. The ETV program is anticipating its highest number of graduates of the academic year with nine graduations scheduled to occur.

2017 Update: The ETV served a total of 38 students during the 2016-2017 academic year. The program is showing consistent provision of services to youth over time. Table 21 tracks the awarded ETVs as well as other sources of Post-Secondary Educational support provided by the State of Alaska and Alaska's University system:

Table 21: ETV

Post Secondary Education and Vocational Participation					
Academic Year	# Youth attending Post- Secondary (Under Age 23)	Number of Youth Who Received ETV Funds	Number of Youth Who Received Presidential Tuition Waiver	Number of Youth who Received an OCS Tuition Scholarship	College Graduates
2012-2013	38	38	19 (12 New)	22	1
2013-2014	41	41	23 (12 New)	22	4
2014-2015	50	50	29 (15 New)	12	3
2015-2016	40	40	29 (15 new)	10	3
2016-2017	38	38	23	15	3

INTER-COUNTRY ADOPTIONS

2015 Update: During FFY 2014, two children who were adopted from other countries entered into OCS custody as a result of substantiated abuse and neglect. The adoptions were dissolved and both children have a goal of adoption and are placed in pre-adoptive homes.

2016 Update: During FFY 2015, two children who were adopted from other countries entered into OCS custody as a result of substantiated abuse and neglect. The adoptions were dissolved and both children have aged out of the foster care system. They are currently receiving Independent Living Services.

2017 Update: During FFY 2016, no children were identified as having been adopted from other countries and entering OCS custody as a result of abuse or neglect. A grantee provides supportive post-adoption services including brief case management, crisis intervention, training, and education to adoptive families in order to promote safe and strong homes for adoptive children, regardless of if they were adopted domestically or internationally.

MONTHLY CASEWORKER VISIT DATA

2015 Update: OCS will submit required data on monthly caseworker visits with children in foster care on December 15, 2015, as required. Last year's data showed that the total number of visits made by caseworkers on a monthly basis to children in foster care was less than the required 95%, OCS achieved 83%. This is an increase from the previous year's data (2013 was 80%). The percent of children visited in their home was 69%, which exceeds the 50% federal standard.

2016 Update: OCS will submit required data on monthly caseworker visits with children in foster care no later than December 15, 2016, as required. Last year's data showed that the total number of visits made by caseworkers on a monthly basis to children in foster care was less than the required 95%, OCS achieved 78%. This is an increase from the previous year's data (2013 was 80%). The percent of children visited in their home was 66%, which exceeds the 50% federal standard. OCS has additional caseworker visit data is provided earlier in this report. Because Alaska failed to meet the standard for performance, the FFY 2016, the FFP will be reduced by 3%. More information and data can be found in Section 7 of this report.

2017 Update: OCS will submit required data on monthly caseworker visits with children in foster care no later than December 15, 2017, as required. Last year's data showed that the total number of visits made by caseworkers on a monthly basis to children in foster care was less than the required 95%, OCS achieved 73%. This is a decrease from the previous year's data. The percent of children visited in their home was 663, which exceeds the 50% federal standard. OCS has additional caseworker visit data provided earlier in this report. Because Alaska failed to meet the standard for performance, the FFY 2017, FFP will be reduced. Monthly case worker visits have a history of and continue to demonstrate decreased performance; this item will be addressed in Alaska's Program Improvement Plan. More information and data can be found in Section 7 of this report.

SECTION 15: FINANCIAL INFORMATION

PAYMENT LIMITATIONS – TITLE IV-B, SUBPART I

States may not spend more title IV-B, subpart 1 funds for child care, foster care maintenance and adoption assistance payments in FY 2016 than the state expended for those purposes in FY 2005 (section 424 (c) of the Act). Alaska spent $0 of FFY2005 title IV-B, subpart I funds for child care, foster care maintenance and adoption assistance payments. Alaska used $0 of non-federal funds for foster care maintenance payment as match for the FY 2005 title IV-B, subpart I award.

2015 Update: Alaska spent $0 of title IV-B, subpart I funds for administrative costs.

2016 Update: Alaska spent $0 of title IV-B, subpart I funds for administrative costs. Alaska OCS does not utilize title IV-B I/II funds for administrative costs.

2017 Update: Alaska spent $0 of title IV-B, subpart I funds for administrative costs. Alaska OCS does not utilize title IV-B I/II funds for administrative costs. Required financial reporting forms are located in Appendix J.

PAYMENT LIMITATIONS – TITLE IV-B, SUBPART II

States are required to spend a significant portion of the title IV-B, subpart 2 PSSF grant for each of the four service categories of PSSF: family preservation, community-based family support, time-limited family reunification, and adoption promotion and support services.

2015 Update: Per the submitted CFS-101, Part III, Alaska spent:

- $139,776 or 25% of its FFY2013 award on family preservation services.
- $27,956 or 5% of its FFY2013 award on community-based family support services.
- $279,552 or 50% of its FFY2013 award on time-limited family reunification services.
- $111,819 or 20% of its FFY2013 award on adoption promotion and support services.

Per the attached CFS-101, Part III, Alaska spent $0 or 0% of its FFY2013 award on administrative costs. Title IV-B, subpart 2 funds were not spent on administrative costs for the Monthly Caseworker Visit fund.

2016 Update: Per the CFS-101, Part III, Alaska received $558,082 in FFY 2014 funds from title IV-B, subpart II and spent those funds as follows:

- $251,974 or 45% of its FFY2014 award on family preservation services.
- $31,446 or 6% of its FFY2014 award on community-based family support services.
- $255,344 or 45% of its FFY2014 award on time-limited family reunification services.
- $19,318 or 4% of its FFY2014 award on adoption promotion and support services.

Per the attached CFS-101, Part III, Alaska spent $0 or 0% of its FFY2014 award on administrative costs. Title IV-B, subpart 2 funds were not spent on administrative costs for the Monthly Caseworker Visit fund.

In FFY 2014, OCS did not expend approximately 20% of the grant on each of the four PSSF service categories. OCS was unable to locate documentation to clarify if the disproportion was requested when the state submitted its estimated expenditures during that year. Funds were spent disproportionally during FFY 2014, because of changes in utilization rate of grant services. In calendar year 2013, OCS made a decision to reduce the percentage of title IV-B, subpart II funds used for family support due to other funds available to supplement this service as well as low utilization of the program. OCS utilized other funding sources to support adoption promotion and support services.

2017 Update: Per the CFS-101, Part III, Alaska received $554,003 in FFY 2015 funds from title IV-B, subpart II and spent those funds as follows:

- $138,501 or 25% of its FFY2015 award on family preservation services.
- $0 or 0% of its FFY2015 award on community-based family support services.
- $304,702 or 55% of its FFY2015 award on time-limited family reunification services.

- $110,800 or 20% of its FFY2015 award on adoption promotion and support services.

Per the attached CFS-101, Part III, Alaska spent $0 or 0% of its FFY2015 award on administrative costs. Title IV-B, subpart 2 funds were not spent on administrative costs for the Monthly Caseworker Visit fund. Required financial reporting forms are located in Appendix J.

In FFY 2015, OCS did not expend approximately 20% of the grant on each of the four PSSF service categories. OCS was unable to locate documentation to clarify if the disproportion was requested when the state submitted its estimated expenditures during that year. Funds were spent disproportionally during FFY 2015, because of changes in utilization rate of grant services. In calendar year 2013, OCS made a decision to reduce the percentage of title IV-B, subpart II funds used for family support due to the availability of other funding to support this service, as well as low utilization of the program. OCS utilized other funding sources to support adoption promotion and support services.

As noted in Section 4 of this document, OCS intends to spend future awards for the four identified service categories. However, AK is planning to spend less than 20% on family support services and adoption promotion and support services due to other available funding options.

FUNDING – REVISED BUDGET REQUEST

2015 Update: Alaska will submit a revised FFY 2015 budget form should unneeded portions of other state allocations of title IV-B, CFCIP and ETV funds be reallocated to other states. Alaska does not intend to release funds for reallocation from the title IV-B, subpart 2, the CFCIP, or the ETV Program. Alaska does intend to apply for reallocation of unneeded portions of other state's allocation for the title IV-B, subpart 2, the CFCIP, or the ETV Program.

2016 Update: Alaska will submit a revised FFY 2016 budget form should unneeded portions of other state allocations of title IV-B, CFCIP and ETV funds be reallocated to other states. Alaska does not intend to release funds for reallocation from the title IV-B, subpart 2, the CFCIP, or the ETV Program. Alaska does intend to apply for reallocation of unneeded portions of other state's allocation for the title IV-B, subpart 2 or the CFCIP. Alaska is requesting $100,000 from reallocation of unneeded portions of other state's allocation for the ETV Program.

2017 Update: Alaska will submit a revised FFY 2017 budget form should unneeded portions of other state allocations of title IV-B, CFCIP and ETV funds be reallocated to other states. Alaska does not intend to release funds for reallocation from the title IV-B, subpart 2, the CFCIP, or the ETV Program. Alaska does intend to apply for reallocation of unneeded portions of other state's allocation for the title IV-B, subpart 2 or the CFCIP. Alaska is requesting $100,000 from reallocation of unneeded portions of other state's allocation for the ETV Program. Required financial reporting forms are located in Appendix I.

BUDGET REQUEST – CFS-101, PARTS I AND II

2015 Update: Alaska submitted Alaska has completed Part II to include the estimated amount of funds to be spent in each program area by source, the estimated number of individuals and families to be served, and the geographic service area within which the services are to be provided.

2016 Update: Part I of the CFS-101 form to request title IV-B, subpart I (CWS) and title IV-B, subpart II (PSSF and Monthly Caseworker Visit funds), CAPTA, CFCIP and ETV funds. Alaska has completed Part II to include the estimated amount of funds to be spent in each program area by source, the estimated number of individuals and families to be served, and the geographic service area within which the services are to be provided.

2017 Update: Alaska has completed Part I of the CFS-101 form to request title IV-B, subpart 1 (CWS) and title IV-B, subpart 2 (PSSF and Monthly Caseworker Visit funds), CAPTA, CFCIP and ETV funds. Required financial reporting forms are located in Appendix J. Alaska has completed Part II to include the estimated amount of funds to be spent in each program area by source, the estimated number of individuals and families to be served, and the geographic service area within which the services are to be provided. Required financial reporting forms are located in Appendix J.

TITLE IV-B EXPENDITURE REPORT – CFS-101, PART III

States must track and report annually its actual title IV-B expenditures, including administrative costs for the most recent preceding fiscal year funds for which a final SF-425 Federal Financial Report has come due.

2015 Update: Alaska submitted the CFS-101, Part III to report the actual amount of funds expended in each program area of title IV-B funding by source, the number of individuals and families served, and the geographic service area within which the services were provided.

2016 Update: The FFY 2014 SF-425 was submitted prior to December 29, 2015, for the title IV-B programs. Alaska has completed the CFS-101, Part III to report the actual amount of funds expended in each program area of title IV-B funding by source, the number of individuals and families served, and the geographic service area within which the services were provided.

2017 Update: Alaska has completed the CFS-101, Part III to report the actual amount of funds expended in each program area of title IV-B funding by source, the number of individuals and families served, and the geographic service area within which the services were provided. Required financial reporting forms are located in Appendix J.

FINANCIAL STATUS REPORTS STANDARD FORM (SF) 425

2015 Update: Alaska submitted expenditures under title IV-B, subparts 1 and 2, CAPTA, CFCIP and ETV programs on the Financial Status Report, SF-425.

2016 Update: Alaska reports expenditures under title IV-B, subparts 1 and 2, CAPTA, CFCIP and ETV programs on the Financial Status Report, SF-425. The report is submitted through the ACF Online Data Collection System as recommended in the program instruction and will be submitted no later than December 29, 2016.

2017 Update: Alaska reports expenditures under title IV-B, subparts 1 and 2, CAPTA, CFCIP and ETV programs on the Financial Status Report, SF-425.

STATE CONTACTS

2018 APSR Coordinator Contact information: Noëlle Kennedy, 907-465-2145, Noelle.Kennedy@alaska.gov

On June 30, 2017, Alaska's 2018 APSR can be located on the OCS publications page:

http://dhss.alaska.gov/ocs/Documents/Publications/pdf/2018 APR.pdf

2018 CAPTA Coordinator Contact information: Yvonne Hill, 907-465-3458, yvonne.hill@alaska.gov

SECTION 16: SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Appendix A: Citizen Review Panel Annual Report 2016 and Office of Children's Services Response

Appendix B: Alaska's 2017 Statewide Assessment

Appendix C Staff Development Plan and Training List

Appendix D: Foster and Adoptive Parent Diligent Recruitment Plan

Appendix E: Health Care Oversight Plan

Appendix F: Continuity of Operations (Disaster) Plan

Appendix G: Attachments F & G Governor's Assurances

Appendix H: Annual ETV Data

Appendix I: DHSS Tribal State Strategic Plan Progress Update May 2017

Appendix J: CFS-101 (parts 1, 2, & 3) PDF Version

Appendix K: CFS-101 (parts 1, 2, & 3) Excel Version

Appendix L: 2017 APSR Acronym List

Appendix M: Tribal State Advisory Team Data Indicators

2016

OCS Response to CRP Annual Report

State of Alaska

Department of Health & Social Services

Office of Children's Services

Executive Summary

The Office of Children's Services (OCS) wishes to thank the Citizens' Review Panel (CRP) for its work in the past year to ensure the safety, permanency and well-being of the children of Alaska by engaging the public on the issues and looking at ways to improve the system for those it serves.

The challenges Alaska faces in regards to the high rate of abuse and neglect our State's children experience is not the burden and responsibility of OCS alone, but of every Alaskan. It is only through the collective sense of shared responsibility and duty to keep our youngest citizens safe that we can begin to change the narrative around the story of our beautiful state. In 2015 Alaskans made more than 16,000 reports of maltreatment to OCS that brings to light families who are struggling and may need services that this agency provides. But, not all those families are screened in for an investigation or assessment of child safety. OCS relies on the community to help those families that are struggling but have not yet reached the threshold for a state intervention. We count of our community providers, Tribes and others to provide support and services to these families who may need to be connected. The CRP is uniquely designed to conduct public outreach, educate and to advocate for improvements they or the community identifies that helps to bridge some of this gap.

We know that we cannot do the work necessary to prevent and reduce child maltreatment without the assistance of all of our community partners. We appreciate the CRP for their diligence in examining policies and procedures and practices that then inform recommendations toward systems improvement of the OCS. While there may be different points of view on various issues or potential remedies, we value the time and effort given to keep working towards improvements that will benefit those we serve.

In the coming year, we look forward to making further strides towards increased effective collaboration that produce meaningful change and progress. In the spring of 2017, OCS faces a major federal audit with the coming third round of the federal Child and Family Services Review (CFSR). This review will take a deep dive into case practice and compliance with federal/state laws by doing intensive case record reviews in three locations around the state over the span of a week. We welcome the CRP's participation in this review as well as in the creation of the anticipated Program Improvement Plan that will be an outgrowth of the review. This effort and the proceeding work to bring up poor performing areas will be a mammoth undertaking and will require focus and the support of our partners statewide.

"Coming together is a beginning, staying together is progress, and working together is success." – Henry Ford

CHRISTY LAWTON, DIRECTOR

CRP Recommendation 1:

Consider assigning the CRP a significant role in implementing various priority areas of "Transforming Child Welfare Outcomes for Alaska Native Children: Strategic Plan 2016-2020". With its statutory authority, CRP will be an asset for OCS in implementing this strategic plan. OCS Response:

Since the completion of the final draft of the Department's strategic plan, OCS has sought the CRP's involvement in the implementation phase of the plan's priorities. CRP representatives are now members of three of the six workgroups: Self Governance, Embracing the Values of ICWA, and Community Engagement. Additionally, all work group co-leads send copies of meeting invites, agendas, work plans and notes to the CRP coordinator as we strive to keep all abreast of the implementation of the strategic priorities.

As the CRP's role has transitioned from a "review and recommendation" model to a "review, outreach, and advocacy" approach, OCS and the Tribal State Collaboration Group (TSCG) are exploring ways to compliment and support each other as we strive to improve outcomes for Alaska's children and families.

In November of 2016, the Tribal State Advisory Team met with the CRP to strategize ways to better partner. The first tactic was to review the CRP's BIA Provider survey in order to elicit information that can help guide on the ground strategies to improve communication and relationships between OCS and Tribal partners. This was followed by brainstorming ideas of other ways that TSCG can partner with the CRP to reach a broader community base such as school districts, providers, etc.

CRP Recommendation 2:

Tribal State Collaboration Group (TSCG) should consider a dialogue with the leaders of Alaska Native for-profit corporations to garner their support and any resources they may be able to leverage to enhance child protection services.

It should be noted that OCS does not drive the work or efforts of TSCG unilaterally, we take our lead from our Tribal partners and are actively engaged in efforts of importance to them and the agency, but they are the primary drivers. Any plan to approach for-profit Tribal entities would only be initiated with the full support and guidance from our Tribal partners.

This recommendation will be added to the January 2017 Tribal State Advisory Team's agenda to determine how best to address this proposed strategy. It is anticipated that Tribal Co-Chairs will introduce this recommendation during a subsequent Tribal Caucus meeting. OCS will support Tribal Caucus' decision and plan accordingly. The next scheduled statewide Tribal State Collaboration meeting is May 3-4 2017.

CRP Recommendation 3:

The enterprise of CRP should be evaluated by an external entity to assess its effectiveness with particular attention to:

A. **Internal structure and process of CRP in order to improve efficiency;**
B. **CRP-OCS statutory relationship in order to ensure roles and responsibilities.**

OCS would agree that the CRP as an entity should be evaluated by an external resource that is not in any way associated with the CRP or with OCS, to assess the CRP's effectiveness as it relates to the internal structure and process of the CRP, as well as the relationship (statutory and otherwise) in order to ensure and clarify roles and responsibilities. For OCS the challenge will be to find funding and resources to support such a project, so that the efforts can assist both OCS and the CRP.

Over many years, OCS has worked collaboratively and respectfully with the CRP regarding the relationship, roles and responsibilities for each organization. It is OCS' view that through these continued efforts the relationship, roles and responsibilities have become clearer for all involved.

CRP Recommendation 4:

OCS should consider building on CRP's survey effort by:

A. **Viewing training of frontline workers as a longer enterprise that includes SKILS, and evaluating the entire enterprise for effectiveness;**
B. **Including special sections in the annual staff survey, focusing on a topic of interest, and repeating periodically every two or three years;**
C. **Identifying other similar survey efforts that OCS conducts, and leveraging resources from external entities such as CRP or UAA to conduct them.**

OCS appreciated the opportunity to collaborate in a unique way this past year to create and execute the annual staff survey; however, based on feedback from our staff, we are electing to continue our internal efforts going forth versus outsourcing this survey again.

In regards to A. OCS views training of frontline workers as a never ending enterprise that includes intensive classroom preparation via SKILS, webinars, self-study, job shadowing and "on boarding" activities. Workers are in a state of training through their first year and well into their second year. We meet regularly with the Child Welfare Academy and drive the training needs of our staff accordingly. While, nothing is ever perfect, we believe the larger issue here is the gaps we have in regards to the "transfer of learning" versus what the curriculum includes. When in the classroom setting the depth of understanding and engagement is great, but once out in the field and tasked with applying what was learned in real life complex situations we know workers struggle significantly. To combat this we have been coaching supervisors to develop improved supervisory and critical thinking skills and have started a small effort to create a "mentorship" element in at least the Anchorage office. The idea of the mentor is to liaison

between the CWA, supervisor and worker and help model and coach best practice in the field in real life scenarios to further solidify what was learned in the classroom. While we only have one staff member working in this designated role right now, we very much wish to expand in coming years.

The suggestion noted in B. is duly noted and is a good one. We will definitely look at how to include special sections in future survey efforts.

As to C. at this point, we remain open to the idea of other ways we might collaborate beyond what was done with the staff survey but do not have any identified areas of need at present.

CRP Recommendation 5:

OCS should work with CRP to strengthen CRP's ability for public participation, rely on it to improve public awareness of the nature and content of OCS work.

Throughout the report the CRP has mentioned the challenges that they face with capacity in meeting the mandates and goals that they set for the CRP. This has included the goal of five site reviews, but only being able to make three in FY 16. Additionally, the ability to recruit and keep longer-term CRP members is also a challenge. While OCS would welcome a more robust opportunity for the CRP to increase the public participation process, so that OCS can rely on the improved public awareness, the challenges that the CRP faces, makes this difficult as well. OCS has relied on the CRP reports to assist OCS regarding the public awareness of the agency and possible policy and program adjustments and improvements. These have typically been specifically focused, and rely in part, on the interests of the voluntary board. More appropriately, OCS would recommend that the CRP and OCS enter into a work plan for which a multi-year effort to improve the public awareness aspects of the CRP can be developed and implemented in conjunction with the other public awareness projects, such as the ICWA Strategic Plan and the Child and Family Services Review processes are currently utilizing.

ALASKA CITIZEN REVIEW PANEL

ANNUAL REPORT

2016

Alaska Citizen Review Panel evaluates the policies, procedures, and practices of state and local child protection agencies for effectiveness in discharging their child protection responsibilities. The Panel is mandated through CAPTA 1997 (P.L. 104-235), and enacted through AS 47.14.205.

212 Front Street, Suite 100, Fairbanks, AK 99701

www.crpalaska.org

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Alaska CRP's annual report is released on June 30th each year, and covers the Panel's activities through the period beginning July 1st of the previous year. The Office of Children's Services is required to respond to this report and its recommendations within six months of its release.

This report is distributed to all state legislators, Alaska's congressional delegation, the Children's Bureau, and the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services. It is also available for any interested party and the general public on the Panel's website at www.crpalaska.org.

ABOUT THE PANEL

AUTHORITY: The Alaska Citizen Review Panel (CRP) is federally mandated through the 1996, 2003, and 2010 amendments to the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), and authorized through Alaska Statute Sec. 47.14.205. The Panel operates under a set of operating guidelines, available on the Panel's website.

FUNCTIONS: The primary purpose of Citizen Review Panels is to assist state and local child protection systems to be more responsive to community needs and opportunities in providing child protection services through evaluation and public outreach. In Alaska, the designated child protection agency is the Office of Children's Services (OCS). Therefore the Alaska CRP:

Evaluates the extent to which OCS is effectively discharging its child protection responsibilities under:

- The State Plan submitted to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services under 42 U.S.C. 5106a(b);
- Child Protection Standards under federal and state laws; and
- Any other criteria that the CRP considers important to ensuring the protection of children

Conducts public outreach and gathers public comment on current OCS procedures and practices involving children and family services.

Advocate for relevant actions that would help improve the child protection services system in Alaska.

The Panel is not a grievance redress mechanism, and thus is not equipped to address any concerns on individual cases.

STRUCTURE AND MEMBERSHIP: Membership on the Panel is voluntary, and expected to represent the diversity of the state. The Panel selects its own members, through a formal recruitment process. Members elect a Chair and Vice Chair from among the membership. While members are expected to serve for at least two years, there are no stipulated term limits. The Panel membership during 2015-2016 included the following (* indicates the member resigned during this work year, and + indicates the member joined the Panel during this year):

Chair	Diwakar Vadapalli	Anchorage
Vice Chair	Dana W. Hallett	Haines
Members	Bettyann Steciw	Anchor Point
	Jen Burkmire*	Wasilla
	Joshua Stein+	Barrow
	Margaret McWilliams	Juneau
	Donna M. Aguiniga+	Anchorage
	Rebecca Vale	Anchorage

STAFF SUPPORT: Information Insights, Inc. provided staff support under a contract with the State of Alaska.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Panel expresses its gratitude to all the staff and leadership of the Office of Children's Services for their dedicated work keeping Alaska's children safe, and being available to us through the year. The Panel recognizes the difficult jobs they have, filled with painful decisions, and greatly appreciates their willingness to continue to serve some of the most vulnerable children and families of Alaska.

The Panel also thanks all the partner agencies and their staff for being available for consultation, their thoughtful reflections, and helpful suggestions.

The Panel is thankful to all the individuals that served as resource persons to the Panel.

The Panel thanks Rep. Paul Seaton, Chairman of the House Committee on Health and Social Services, and all the Committee members for encouraging the Panel and providing a forum for meaningful and constructive dialogue.

NOTE

The Citizen Review Panel is tasked with reviewing the policies, procedures, and practices of state and local child protective services in Alaska. In that capacity, this report notes the Panel's observations on various components of the system in Alaska. The Panel's review is intended to provide constructive feedback to inform OCS' policy and practice. No observation should be construed as critical of any individual OCS employee.

Acronyms

ARO	Anchorage Regional Office
BIA	Bureau of Indian Affairs
CAPTA	Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act
CB	Children's Bureau
CCTHITA	Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska
CFSP	Child and Family Services Plan
CFSR	Child and Family Services Review
CIP	Court Improvement Project
CJA	Children's Justice Act
CPS	Child Protective Services
CRP	Citizen Review Panel
DFYS	Division of Family and Youth Services
DHSS	Department of Health and Social Services
HSS	Health and Social Services
IA	Initial Assessment
ICWA	Indian Child Welfare Act
NRO	Northern Regional Office
OCS	Office of Children Services
QA	Quality Assurance
SKILS	Standards, Knowledge, & Insight Leading to Success
SRO	Southeast Regional Office
TCC	Tanana Chiefs Conference
TSCG	Tribal State Collaboration Group
UAA	University of Alaska Anchorage
WRO	Western Regional Office

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Alaska Citizen Review Panel has been focused on critically examining its own purpose, structure, and processes; and made much progress towards better understanding its mandate, and identifying its roles and responsibilities. Out of the four goals identified in this year's work plan, meaningful progress was made on only two. On OCS-Tribal relationships, the Panel found there is reason to be optimistic. Multiple positive developments in recent months, building on more than two decades of persistent advocacy and efforts, augur well for the future of OCS-Tribal relationships. On the Panel's own structure and process, many gaps and areas to improve were found despite the much progress made in the last several years.

While unable to accomplish all it set out to do for the year, the Panel expanded the site visit calendar, conducted the 2016 Annual OCS Staff Survey, and completed the five-part public awareness tool explaining the OCS practice model. The Panel visited four OCS regional offices this year, as opposed to an average of three in the past, each site visit generating a separate site visit report. The 2016 OCS Annual Staff Survey was a semester-long collaboration between OCS, CRP, and a graduate class at UAA, resulting in an extensive report focusing on OCS' frontline workers. The draft five-part public awareness tool explaining the complex OCS practice model is complete. The Panel hopes to develop it into an online interactive tool for children and families served by OCS. The aim is for them to not only understand the process, but also provide feedback to OCS and CRP on both the tool and the quality of engagement with the child protection services system.

2015-2016 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1: *Consider assigning the CRP a significant role in implementing various priority areas of "Transforming Child Welfare Outcomes for Alaska Native Children: Strategic Plan 2016-2020". With its statutory authority, CRP will be an asset for OCS in implementing this strategic plan.*

Recommendation 2: *Tribal State Collaboration Group (TSCG) should consider a dialogue with the leaders of Alaska Native for-profit corporations to garner their support and any resources they may be able to leverage to enhance child protection services.*

Recommendation 3: *The enterprise of CRP should be evaluated by an external entity to assess its effectiveness, with particular attention to:*

A. Internal structure and process of CRP in order to improve efficiency.
B. CRP-OCS statutory relationship in order to ensure clear roles and responsibilities.

Recommendation 4: *OCS build on CRP's survey effort by:*

A. Viewing training of frontline workers as a longer enterprise that extends beyond SKILS, and evaluate the entire enterprise for effectiveness.
B. Including special sections in the annual staff survey, focusing on a topic of interest, and repeating this periodically every two or three years.
C. Identifying other similar survey efforts that OCS conducts, and leveraging resources from external entities such as CRP to conduct them.

Recommendation 5: *OCS should work with CRP to strengthen CRP's ability as a robust mechanism for public participation, and rely on it to improve public awareness of the nature and content of OCS work.*

ANNUAL ACTIVITIES

The Panel's 2015-2016 annual calendar included the following activities. Reports on all major activities are available on the Panel's website at www.crpalaska.org.

QUARTERLY PANEL MEETINGS: In order to improve efficiency, the Panel scaled back its monthly meeting schedule to a quarterly meeting schedule this year. The Panel met on the first Tuesday of every three months. Owing to the geographic dispersion of the Panel members, all meetings by default are held over the telephone. All quarterly Panel meetings are open to public. The meeting agenda, date, time, location, and call-in number are announced a week prior to the meeting, and posted both on the Panel's website and on State of Alaska online public notices website. Summary minutes are posted on the Panel's website. Agency representatives or others with experience and expertise on a specific practice or policy are often invited to present to the Panel at quarterly meetings.

MONTHLY MEETINGS WITH OCS: In order to maintain a healthy working relationship, and stay informed of the latest developments in practice and policy, the Director and the Division Operations Manager of OCS meet with the Panel every month to share mutual progress, discuss latest developments, and respond to mutual queries.

2015-2016 CALENDAR

Panel Quarterly Meetings	Meetings with OCS	Site visits	Other
Sep 26-27, 2015			
Oct 6, 2015		Oct 28-30, 2015 NRO	
	Nov 10, 2015		
Dec 1, 2015	Dec 8, 2015		
	Jan 12, 2016	Jan 11-15, 2016 ARO	
	Feb 9, 2016	Feb 24-27, 2016 SRO	
Mar 1, 2016	Mar 8, 2016		
	April 12, 2016		Apr 2, 2016 Presentation to the legislature
	May 10, 2016	May12-13, 2016 WRO	Jun 6-9, 2016 CRP National Conference
Jun 7, 2016			
Jun 11-12, 2015			

2015-2016 PRESENTATIONS TO THE PANEL

Month	Person	Title
Dec 2015	Tammy Wilson	Alaska House Representative, District 3, North Pole

SITE VISITS: The Panel conducts visits to various OCS regional and field offices to gather information on practice and assess working relationships between OCS and its local partners. The Panel's observations and recommendations are documented in a report and are subsequently discussed with the OCS' state and the regional leadership. All site visit reports are available on the CRP website. The Panel conducted four site visits during 2015-2016.

REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE: Each February, the Panel attempts to present a summary of the previous year's work and an update on the current year's work to the Alaska House Health and Social Services (HSS) Committee. The Panel has been unsuccessful in securing a hearing with the Senate HSS Committee for the last four years. Due to the state budget crisis, the Panel presented to the House HSS Committee over the phone, and did not travel to

Juneau. Thus, the Panel was not able to meet with other legislators, legislative staff, the Governor's office, or the leadership of the Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS). The Chair of the Panel met with DHSS Commissioner Valerie Davidson in September 2015, and updated her on current concerns.

OUTREACH ACTIVITIES: The Panel reaches out to the public and various stakeholder groups to collect public comment. The Panel maintains an active website www.crpalaska.org that hosts all Panel documents and serves as a means for the public to reach the Panel. The Panel also meets with, or participates in meetings of, various other groups, Panels, and commissions to inform them of the Panel's activities. Such activities included:

- Nov 25, 2015 Anchorage Meeting with Tammy Sandoval, Director, Child Welfare Academy
- Nov 25, 2015 Anchorage Meeting with Aileen McInnis, Director, Alaska Center for Resource Families
- Dec 2, 2015 Anchorage Presentation to the ICWA representatives at the BIA Providers Conference
- Dec 17, 2015 Anchorage Presentation to the Court Improvement Project
- Apr 27, 2016 Anchorage Attended 'Community in Unity: Fostering our Future', a public forum sponsored by Alaska Public Media

CRP NATIONAL CONFERENCE: For the second year in a row, the Chair and the Vice Chair of the Panel attended the CRP National Conference. The 2016 conference was in Phoenix AZ, on June 6-9, 2016. This was the 15th annual conference. A detailed report of observations and recommendations, from the Conference, is available on the CRP website. Alaska CRP will be hosting the 16th annual conference in 2017, in Anchorage.

CHANGES TO PANEL OPERATIONS: On average, the Panel conducted three site visits each year in the past, with no particular prioritization plan. To get a comprehensive view of the practice in the field, and to adequately meet its mandate, the Panel decided to pursue five site visits, one to each of the five regions of OCS, each year. However, the Panel only completed four visits, missing a visit to the South Central Regional Office (SCRO). In the process, the Panel discovered some inefficiencies that should be addressed next year, in order to complete all five site visits.

The Panel conducted the 2016 Annual OCS Staff Survey. This is in addition to the annual survey of attendees of the Indian Child Welfare Act workshops, at the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Annual Providers' Conference. The results of both surveys are documented in separate reports, and posted on the CRP website. For the third year in a row, the Panel failed to build capacity to conduct case reviews. This remains a challenge.

PRIMARY FUNCTIONS OF THE ALASKA CITIZEN REVIEW PANEL

Evaluates the extent to which OCS is effectively discharging its child protection responsibilities under:

- The State Plan submitted to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services under 42 U.S.C. 5106a(b);
- Child Protection Standards under federal and state laws; and
- Any other criteria that the CRP considers important to ensuring the protection of children

Conducts public outreach and gathers public comment to inform its review.

Advocate for relevant actions that would help improve the child protection services system in Alaska.

WORK PLAN

The Panel's annual work plan contains three components: (1) **specific goals** as part of the Panel's mandate of review and outreach; (2) associated **travel schedule** including site visits; and (3) specific **activities to change or improve its operations**. The Panel's travel and operational improvements are reported in the previous section of this report. Work plan goals evolve in the course of the Panel's activities.

GOAL 1: Explore the evolving relationships between Tribal organizations and Office of Children's Services (OCS).

Over the years, the Panel has consistently noted that the relationships between OCS and the 229 federally recognized tribes in Alaska, and several Alaska Native regional organizations have been weak or haphazard. Despite a two-decade long history of organized collaboration efforts, relations continue to be challenging. However, recent developments have been very encouraging. Multiple Title IV-E Maintenance Agreements in recent years signify accelerated positive movement. In addition, a DHSS/OCS strategic planning effort to improve these relationships began in May 2015. This goal was identified to systematically examine this evolving relationship.

GOAL 2: Strengthen Panel's skills and organizational policies and capacities.

The Alaska CRP has been functioning since 2002, with increasing autonomy and financial resources. As the Panel assumed more responsibility over the last few years, several structural and procedural challenges became apparent. Further, lack of clarity in the purpose of the Panel, mutual roles and responsibilities of the Panel and OCS, and the role of the Panel Coordinator compounded the challenges. Although the Panel adopted changes as needed, a self-evaluation was necessary. While the Panel did not have the resources to complete a meaningful evaluation, it examined its own purpose and functions.

GOAL 3: Determine whether current and former foster parents' and agency partners' experiences align with OCS' foster care policies.

During last year's exploration of foster care recruitment policies, the Panel noticed several challenges foster parents face in their interactions with OCS. This goal was identified to document and better understand these challenges. The Panel tried to identify a meaningful sample of foster parents from across the state, but were unsuccessful in adequately documenting the challenges in a systematic way. The Panel only partially reviewed OCS foster care policies. Much work remains.

GOAL 4: Evaluate the efficacy and effectiveness of the new administrative review process.

OCS changed its administrative review process in early 2015 from an extended multi-hour review involving all associated parties to a case to a shorter review that met the federal minimum standards. This significant change has substantial implications. The Panel could not accomplish this goal due to lack of resources.

Each goal relates to one or more components of OCS' Practice Model or operations. Where possible, both the stated policy and actual practice of that component are examined under each goal. Recommendations from the Panel are expected to address this gap, and help the child protection system be more responsive to the needs of the children and families it serves.

FINDINGS

GOAL 1: Explore the evolving relationships between Tribal organizations and Office of Children Services (OCS).

Alaska's 229 federally recognized Alaska Native tribes are a diverse group of entities, with a variety of governmental structures and processes. Many of these tribes are small and isolated communities that have limited economic resources and high cost-of-living expenses. Alaska Native tribes lack territorial jurisdiction (with the exception of Metlakatla) and suffer historic trauma from centuries of oppressive relationships with non-Alaska Native population. Maintaining cultural continuity is extremely important for Alaska Native communities, and children are their greatest assets. Approximately 56% of all children in out-of-home care in the state are Alaska Native while their proportion in the general population is approximately 20%. Most of the remote Alaska Native tribes have minimal capacity to provide any child protection services.

OCS is the designated entity with responsibility to provide child protection services across the state. Regardless of tribal membership, OCS is responsible for responding to allegations of maltreatment, intervening in families, and providing the needed services to ensure safety of children and health of families. Service provision in Alaska is generally very challenging and expensive. These challenges are exacerbated for OCS; due to high turnover among its frontline workers. Therefore, providing culturally sensitive child protection services that are responsive to community needs has been considerably challenging.

CRP has long recognized this challenge and has been focused on examining various components of this relationship. This goal was framed to provide a meaningful framework for such an examination. Discussions of OCS-Tribal relationships are often focused on compliance with the provisions of Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA). While that is important, the Panel felt the need to focus on relationships at various levels in practice. The Panel meets with tribal leaders and other members of tribal communities during site visits each year. Attendees at the Annual Providers Conference organized by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Social Services Division have been surveyed each year for the last three years. Attendees at this conference include tribal child protection workers, tribal judges, tribal council members, and other elected and appointed officials from tribal communities across the state. In addition, the Panel obtained several documents from OCS that informed our review. This review is preliminary, and the Panel hopes to continue its examination of this relationship over the years.

Collaboration over the last two decades: In order to further constructive partnerships and improve services, OCS collaborated with several Title IV-B Tribes and Children's Bureau (CB) Region X to form the Tribal State Collaboration Group (TSCG) in 1994. TSCG was created to evaluate the child welfare delivery system; enhance or modify services to better fit the needs of families in their communities; and advocate for a continuum of services that are culturally relevant, coordinated, integrated, and family focused. While TSCG is not statutory, it has a mission remarkably similar to the Citizen Review Panel. It was created two years prior to the 1996 CAPTA amendments that mandated CRP, and speaks to the foresight of Alaska's child protection leaders at the time. For more than 20 years, TSCG has been the forum to discuss and collaborate over various difficult issues in providing child protection services to tribal families and children. The TSCG has an impressive set of accomplishments over the years, and many more planned collaborative efforts ahead. TSCG is led by a set of Co-Chairs from both OCS one of the five regional tribal organizations.

Despite this significant and consistent effort through TSCG, perspectives we gained from site visits identify areas for improvements. Many tribes combine their resources and are served by regional non-profit organizations in each of the five regions of the state. These large tribal non-profits enable economies of scale and have the capacity to intervene in cases on behalf of the tribe and advocate for services. They often have a strong voice and participate in several

statewide partnership efforts, primarily through TSCG, in designing and implementing services. Relations between these large tribal non-profits and OCS tend to be more structured compared to other tribes that are not part of a compact. All large tribal non-profit organizations are located in major hub communities that also have an OCS regional or field office. Frequent interactions between OCS staff and staff from these organizations help in structuring these relationships. Smaller tribes, with fewer staff in remote locations and no OCS presence report less frequent interactions and uncertain relationships.

Results of the 2015 annual survey of tribal personnel at the BIA Providers Conference indicate that almost 40% of the respondents were unaware of TSCG. It is not clear if TSCG claims to be representative, but certainly is diverse geographically, with representatives from each OCS region. Moreover, discussions of the TSCG are relevant to, and seem to have significant impact across the state. Therefore, it is concerning that, TSCG is not as visible as one would expect. Regardless, TSCG as an instrumental and historically successful forum should be structurally integrated into a tribe's child protection organization. Immense diversity across tribes may be a considerable challenge for such an integration. To partially address this concern, and allow TSCG to address more tangible and specific challenges in each OCS region, TSCG is decentralized to a regional level, with a regional TSCG for each OCS region. This strategy was implemented in 2015, and the Panel did not gather any information on its implementation.

Structured relationships: More recent developments are cause for much celebration. OCS entered into a Title IV-E Maintenance Agreement with the Tanana Chief's Conference (TCC), a regional Alaska Native non-profit organization with 37 tribes under its compact. This agreement allows TCC to assess Title IV-E eligibility of tribal children in custody within their region, and provide payments received from OCS. The terms of this agreement are expansive, and the entire agreement is available on OCS website. This agreement is a significant step towards improved tribal participation in administering child protection services. Implementing the terms of the agreement requires TCC to maintain substantial organizational capacity, and both parties to communicate frequently and seamlessly. Another similar agreement with the Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska (CCTHITA), the regional tribal non-profit organization in southeast Alaska, is currently taking shape and is likely to be implemented in late 2016.

This is an example of a structured relationship, for which CRP has been advocating for some years now, between OCS and all tribes in general. While a Title IV-E Maintenance agreement is substantial, and requires significant organizational capacity to implement, other relationships can be more structured. One area for improvement, consistently identified by tribal personnel on the frontlines, is their relationship with OCS frontline workers. Survey results from both 2014 and 2015 indicate that some frontline relationships, where both workers are often in direct contact with families and are very knowledgeable of the context of each family, are haphazard. Interactions between frontline workers is more frequent and less contentious on matters related to initial assessment, case planning, relative search, placement decisions, administrative reviews, and adoption decisions. Close to 30% of all those responding to the survey indicated that they rarely or never collaborate with OCS frontline workers and their interactions are more contentious than collaborative on these matters. Interactions are less frequent and more contentious on matters related to independent living decisions and termination of parental rights. The group of respondents to this survey is not homogenous and includes frontline ICWA workers, tribal judges, and other personnel.

Towards a better future: Perhaps the most significant development in tribal-OCS relationships is the most recent effort on a strategic plan to reorient the relationship. Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) and OCS began a strategic planning effort in May 2015, involving various state and tribal agencies to craft a vision for the future of OCS-tribal relationships. A smaller group came together over the next few months and developed a strategic plan "Transforming Child Welfare Outcomes for Alaska Native Children: Strategic Plan 2016-2020". The vision statement, "Alaska Native culture keeps Alaska Native children safe" directly addresses the importance of culture and dispels any mythical challenges to child safety stemming from cultural differences.

It is a direct challenge to policy makers and administrators to work in partnership with the Alaska Native cultural stewards and identify culturally sensitive policy options and service modalities. This is well overdue.

The strategic plan document identifies six priority areas:

1. Respectful Government-to- Government Collaboration & Partnership. Achieve formal, friendly and forever recognition of Tribes by the state.
2. Self-Governance. Tribes self-govern the welfare of their children, and have the resources to do so.
3. Embrace and implement the spirit of the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA). Embrace the spirit and values of ICWA to ensure Alaska Native children are with their families and community.
4. State Government Alignment. Ensure State government systems are aligned and provide services based on the values and spirit of ICWA.
5. Community Engagement. Alaska's child welfare system operates as a partnership among the community, tribal, state and federal governments to keep Alaska Native children with their family and culture.
6. Culturally Specific Services and Supports. Provide a continuum of culturally specific supports that ensure the safety, permanency and well-being of Alaska Native children.

Designated OCS representatives, in collaboration with tribal representatives, are leading six workgroups, each focusing on one priority area identified above. Workgroups are charged with the responsibility to implement the strategic plan priorities. More importantly, the plan initiated discussions on several longstanding and desired goals including compacting options between OCS and individual tribes for child protection services. This can result in several structured agreements between individual tribes and OCS, and significantly improve local capacity in providing services.

The Panel congratulates OCS, several other state agencies, TSCG, and many leaders of all the tribes involved in this successful collaboration, and look forward to its results. Actions resulting from this strategic plan are likely to address many of the challenges CRP continues to identify in this realm. Relations on the frontlines between ICWA workers and OCS workers are not structured, resulting in gaps in service provision. Multiple priority areas of the strategic plan can potentially address this. TSCG does not appear to have any statutory authority. This strategic plan certainly speaks to the sustained contribution of TSCG, and will likely improve its visibility and instrumentality among tribal communities and families.

Steps for implementation included in the plan document suggested that priority area groups should identify timeline, tactics, and resources to implement various ideas within each priority area. For example, the Court Improvement Project (CIP) was identified as a natural home for several projects that involve judicial review. The CRP was neither informed nor invited to participate during the planning phase. Since CRP is a statutory mechanism to enable public participation in child protection, CRP would be a valuable asset to at least one priority area – community engagement. The Panel was invited to participate in each priority group as a stake holder.

Resources: Resources required to provide services to communities and families in the far corners of this vast state are always in short supply. With the current fiscal situation in the state, budgetary resources are vulnerable to cuts. In addition, OCS, as most child protection agencies in other states, struggles with a 25% - 30% turnover rate among its frontline workers. Regardless of the increased scope of prevention services, there will be significant need for child protection services in the near future. While the strategic plan above addresses many longstanding difficult challenges, it does not address the resource issue.

While many partner agencies, tribal leaders, and others involved in child protection were either directly involved or will likely find a meaningful role in implementing the strategic plan, the Panel felt that the for-profit Alaska Native corporations may have been an advantageous addition to the discourse. All Alaska Native adults and children involved with child protection services in the state are either shareholders or likely eligible to be shareholders of one or more of the for-profit corporations. Alaska Native for-profit corporations are likely sensitive to the disproportional representation of Alaska Natives in child protection services. Health and wellness of their shareholders is important to the corporations, and they are likely to invest in service provision.

Recommendation 1: *Consider assigning the CRP a significant role in implementing various priority areas of "Transforming Child Welfare Outcomes for Alaska Native Children: Strategic Plan 2016-2020". With its statutory authority, CRP will be an asset for OCS in implementing this strategic plan.*

Recommendation 2: *Tribal State Collaboration Group (TSCG) should consider a dialogue with the leaders of Alaska Native for-profit corporations to garner their support and any resources they may be able to leverage to enhance child protection services.*

GOAL 2: Strengthen Panel's skills and organizational policies and capacities.

Over the last several years, Alaska CRP has been focused on clearly identifying its roles and responsibilities, restructuring its operations, and improving its relevance and visibility. Established in response to the 1996 amendments to the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), Alaska CRP produced its first annual report in 2002. OCS directly provided staff support in the early years. However, since 2005, OCS provides staff support through a contract. The Panel's statutory mandate clearly identifies two core functions:

1. Evaluate the extent to which OCS is effectively discharging its child protection responsibilities under:
   - The State Plan submitted to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services under 42 U.S.C. 5106a(b);
   - Child Protection Standards under federal and state laws; and
   - Any other criteria that the CRP considers important to ensuring the protection of children
2. Conduct public outreach and gather public comment to inform its review.

Although advocacy was not clearly identified in the mandate, the Panel always maintained a strong advocacy voice.

CRPs are designed as mechanisms for public participation in child protection policy and practice in order to assist child protective services (CPS) agencies be more responsive to community needs. Alaska CRP's role is to organize and facilitate such participation by reviewing OCS' policy and practice to evaluate the agency's performance against three specific criteria; conduct public outreach to inform such a review; and advocate for actions that the Panel sees as relevant and meaningful to improve child protection services. CRPs are composed of volunteers, and CPS agencies are to provide staff support and any required data and information desired by a CRP.

With an expansive mandate, volunteer membership, and small budget ($82,000 in FY 16), the Panel recognizes the need for more consistent, structured, and responsive operations. The Panel began to take a critical look at its own operations in 2012 and implemented a series of basic changes to improve its effectiveness. Changes include adopting an annual calendar for its operation that begins with a work plan in August and ends with the annual report in June, being intentional in its relationships through scheduled regular meetings with OCS, streamlining its operations through standardized templates for

workflow, and maintaining an active website. Despite all these changes, several challenges remain. Short of an evaluation, the Panel attempted a critical self-examination and identified several areas of its operation that need further clarification or improvement. Two critical gaps are identified below:

Many changes are required in the operational guidelines to ensure efficient operations. The Panel operated without any policies or procedures for more than a decade. Despite this, the Panel strived to be highly functional, with extensive output to inform the public discourse on child protection in Alaska. The Panel produces three to five site visit reports with observations and recommendations regarding the status of child protection practice in each OCS region throughout the year. In addition, the Panel produces the annual report with details of activities of the Panel throughout the year, and specific recommendations for OCS. As part of the Panel's public outreach mandate, members of the Panel present at various public fora and conduct surveys. The Panel informs the Alaska legislature every year, and actively participates in the national CRP community.

For more effective and efficient operations, and seamless transition in leadership, the Panel recognized the need for a clear set of policies and procedures. A set of "Operational Guidelines" were adopted in December 2014, approximately 12 years since its inception. As the Panel tried to operate according to the guidelines, many gaps surfaced. For example, the guidelines call for a probation term for new members that ends with an assessment to determine if continued membership is in the best interests of the Panel. However, "best interests" are not adequately defined. Moreover, CRP members are volunteers and are vetted through a reasonably structured and meaningful recruitment process. Consequently, the probationary period should be focused on orienting the new member and enabling required supports to integrate. The Panel's new member orientation process is not systematic and needs more structure. Another example is the purpose and process of establishing quorum and conducting a vote. CRP is not a decision-making or legislative body. It is more of a task force. The Panel does not vote on anything and Robert Rules of Order are not applicable to its meetings. Therefore, provisions on quorum and voting are confusing and need to be critically examined for their relevance and meaning in the context of a CRP. Other examples include a lack of structure for leadership succession, conducting outreach, new member orientation, and volunteer management.

CRP-OCS relationship should be structured better with adequate protocols to improve efficiency. In order for a group of volunteers to evaluate a complex and large public agency with a difficult mandate, constructive relationships and efficient protocols are extremely important. Both CRP and OCS invest considerable amounts of time in nurturing a constructive relationship. The Director and the Division Operations Manager of OCS meet with the Panel every month to share mutual progress, discuss latest developments, and respond to mutual queries. A large majority of the OCS' staff in each OCS regional and field office always manage to find time to meet with the Panel during site visits. Many senior staff respond to frequent requests from the Panel. While all this has helped in establishing trust and sharing information, there are large inefficiencies.

Despite its active role and presence over 14 years, the Panel is not recognized either on the DHSS or OCS organization charts. Beyond the state and federal statutes, there is no existing policy or regulation clarifying mutual roles and responsibilities of CRP and OCS. CRPs in some states have a memorandum of understanding that defines the relationship. However, such instruments may not be applicable in Alaska CRP's case because the Panel does not have a legal identity and thus cannot be a signatory to any agreement or contract. State statute enacted in 2005 directs the DHSS Commissioner to institute regulations to guide CRP operations. Such regulations have yet to be created. Entire budget for the Panel operations is routed through a consulting contract for coordination services, leaving room for a number of conflicts of interest. The Panel's budget for FY 2016 was cut by 18% midyear, and the Panel was informed that the Commissioner of DHSS decided not to extend any contracts or grants. This implies that the Panel is treated as a grantee or a contractor rather than a statutorily required public entity. CRP is rarely invited to or informed of an initiative in the planning stages. For meaningful public

participation as envisioned by Congress, CRP should be invited to participate in planning stages of relevant initiatives, not just be provided information after the fact.

Equipped with statutory authority but no regulations, OCS-CRP relations were irregular over the years. Given that evaluation can often be a contentious affair, relations have sometimes been difficult. While both entities strive to maintain constructive relations, the absence of regulation meant that mutual roles were often defined by opportunities and constraints of context rather than statute. For an effective Panel as envisioned by Congress and enacted through federal law, this statutory relationship between OCS and CRP should be better structured.

Recommendation 3: *The enterprise of CRP should be evaluated by an external entity to assess its effectiveness, with particular attention to:*

A. Internal structure and process of CRP in order to improve efficiency
B. CRP-OCS statutory relationship in order to ensure clear roles and responsibilities

GOAL 3: Determine whether current and former foster parents' and agency partners' experiences align with OCS foster care policies.

CRP began efforts to understand the foster care system; and recruitment and licensing of foster homes during the Panel's 2014-2015 work year. The Panel examined the recruitment efforts of OCS, and suggested a few changes. This year, the Panel set out to examine the experiences of foster parents and agency partners, and their alignment with the stated policies of OCS. The Panel met with several foster parents over the year during site visits. However, the Panel found itself unequipped to successfully reach out to as many foster parents as would have been ideal. In addition, methods of eliciting information and the type of information obtained through interviews have not been consistent. Therefore, this information could only be used to complete site visit reports. It was not consistent or complete enough to draw any conclusions about either foster parents' or agency partners' experience with the foster care system.

The Panel made some progress in trying to understand the foster care policies. The CRP recruited an undergraduate intern to prepare a series of flowcharts to enable CRP members to quickly examine the foster care licensing manual and other foster care policies. These flowcharts are similar to the flow charts CRP prepared for public consumption to assist with community understanding of the OCS practice model. The foster care policies flowcharts are not included with this report.

GOAL 4: Evaluate the efficacy and effectiveness of the new administrative review process

Administrative reviews are reviews of all cases where children are placed out-of-home. The 1980 Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act (P.L. 96-272) mandated all states to institute reviews of all out-of-home care cases once every six months. At least one of these reviews each year should be in court. States were given the option of either instituting a Citizen Review, Administrative Review, or a Judicial Review of each case for the other 6-month review of each case every year. Alaska had a citizen review in place from 1991 through 1996, involving citizens from across the state. This citizen-led foster care review board was called the "Citizen Review Panel", not to be confused with the current Citizen Review Panel that issued this report. The early 1990s' Citizen Review Panel reviews were unsuccessful, producing only three reports in six years. That Panel was repealed in 1996, and a new Administrative Review was instituted. This process was led by the then Division of Family and Youth Services (DFYS) staff. Overtime, these reviews grew in scope and

included many aspects that were beyond the scope intended by congress in P.L. 96-272. Most parties to a case were invited, and the review process evolved into a comprehensive review and discussion of all aspects of the case. While this was helpful to most parties, review meetings lasted longer and consumed more resources than expected. By 2014, nine positions (ICWA Specialists and Permanency Planning Specialists) were constantly engaged in conducting administrative reviews.

In August 2015, OCS announced a restructuring of the Administrative Review process in a bid to streamline the process and free up staff resources to improve compliance with ICWA provisions. This restructuring primarily focused on sharply reducing the scope of administrative reviews to meet the minimum standards required by P.L. 96-272 outlined below:

1. Continuing necessity for and appropriateness of the placement;
2. Extent of compliance with the case plan;
3. Extent of progress which has been made toward alleviating or mitigating the causes necessitating placement in foster care; and
4. To project a likely date by which the child may be returned to the home or placed for adoption or legal guardianship

The streamlined reviews are to be conducted by the Quality Assurance (QA) section within OCS, and two new positions were added to the QA section for this purpose. In effect, the work being accomplished by 9 individuals will now be completed by 2 individuals. OCS did not have any plans to evaluate the impact of this planned transition. The Panel decided to examine the new process in comparison to the old process.

Examining the whole administrative review process is an involved exercise. The Panel, with limited resources, could only make limited progress this year. The Panel did not review the past review process. Beyond what is outlined above, the Panel did not review the current review process. However, the Panel asked community stakeholders and OCS' partner agencies for their impressions of the change during our site visits, (the Panel visited four out of the five OCS regions). Below is the summary of responses:

- The change was appreciated by OCS regional management. They clarified that many aspects of a case reviewed and discussed during the past version of Administrative Review process were covered during other meetings and reviews, and did not need to be part of the Administrative Reviews. They were appreciative of the availability of regional ICWA specialists to focus on ICWA compliance instead of conducting Administrative Reviews.
- Community stakeholders, specifically tribal partners, were skeptical of the change. Most importantly, they felt that Administrative Reviews gave them the opportunity to get to know other parties to the case, and check on the status of various aspects of the case being reviewed. Although the review consumed more time, they appreciated the opportunity to conduct an expansive review. They reported that the new process is often very short (approximately half hour as opposed to more than two hours in the past), and limited to the four items identified above. Besides losing the opportunity to cover all different aspects of the review, there were no clear objections to the new process.

Changing a major review process will likely cause concerns. OCS informed the CRP of this change in August 2015, immediately after implementing it. Presumably, all concerned parties were informed at that time or prior to that. Perhaps informing the parties of OCS' intentions while in the planning stages might have helped assuage any concerns. However, OCS senior management, including the regional managers, all reported that the additional aspects that are now removed from administrative review process are covered as part of various other processes. While this change is significant, it does not appear to alter the totality of OCS functions concerning out-of-home case reviews. It appears to be a simple restructuring to realize some efficiency.

OTHER IMPORTANT WORK THIS YEAR

Every year, during the course of its work, the Panel comes across various issues of importance to the delivery of child protection services in Alaska. Many of these issues are interconnected, and overlap with the goals for that year. Below are issues the Panel considered during 2015-2016. These are reported here to give the readers a more complete account of the Panel's work, and also to help readers understand the depth and scope of the Panel's work. While its mandate is broad and covers everything that the state and local child protection system does in Alaska, the Panel is limited by the available resources. Thus, this list does not include several other issues that could have been considered during this year.

2016 OCS Annual Staff Survey

In response to the 2015 CRP recommendations to improve OCS survey instruments and reporting of results on various surveys that the OCS internal QA unit conducts, OCS asked CRP to lead the effort on conducting the 2016 annual OCS staff survey. This survey solicits employees' opinions on a variety of topics, and data is used to understand various opportunities and challenges employees have in their jobs. This is a significant survey to inform the decision-making of OCS senior leadership on topics such as worker training, safety, workload, recruitment, retention, communication, etc.

CRP accepted the task as a collaborative effort between CRP and OCS and not a CRP project *for* OCS. However, since CRP does not have capacity to review the survey instrument, conduct the survey, and report the results, the Panel recruited the help of a graduate research methods class in the Public Administration program at the College of Business and Public Policy, UAA. Fifteen graduate students under the supervision of the instructor (who is also the Chair of the CRP) reviewed the survey instrument, and reorganized it. In addition, several questions were clarified. The OCS Director distributed the online survey link to all staff, and sent three reminders and a couple of clarification emails in response to concerns. The survey received 54.4% response rate. A complete report of the survey results, after substantial review by OCS senior management, was submitted to CRP and OCS. This has been a very constructive partnership, and was successful in generating some actionable information for both OCS and CRP. Three major findings from the report are:

- Supervisor-frontline worker relationship is the most positive factor among all factors that influence retention at OCS. Frontline workers overwhelmingly reported that they value their supervisors highly, and rely on them for advice and support.
- Training of frontline workers is not adequately addressed in the survey. Questions were limited to the perceptions of frontline workers on the effectiveness of SKILS, the two- or three-week mandatory training for all frontline workers upon hire. Future versions of the survey should address training as a longer enterprise, comprising orientation of new workers prior to attending SKILS, the actual SKILS training sessions, and any subsequent on-the-job training available to workers. Prior research indicates that less than 20% of what is learned in a training session is retained, and structured on-the-job training opportunities are critical for workers to retain what was learned during training.
- Workers believe that the community at large has minimal understanding of the OCS' Practice Model. This is a major concern that CRP addressed in the past. Community awareness of the nature and purpose of the work OCS does is extremely important for the agency's effectiveness. While OCS invested in multiple award-winning public service announcements, public awareness of the basic purpose and nature of OCS' work remains an area for improvement. Moreover, a frontline worker's perception that the community may not understand the purpose or nature of their visit to a family or a child in a community would be detrimental to the quality of their work.

Community awareness of OCS' work is also of direct concern for CRP. The Panel is a statutory mechanism for public participation in child protection policy and practice. The Panel's mandate implies that it is responsible for improving community's awareness around the nature and content of OCS' work. The Panel is expected to enable a common ground for constructive dialogue to address issues of concern. Therefore, the workers' perception that the community at large is not aware of the OCS' Practice Model is a direct challenge for CRP. The Panel recognized this challenge and has been developing tools and reaching out to the community in various ways to improve general awareness. Last year, the Panel developed a flowchart to explain the workflow of the OCS' Intake Process. The flowchart was reviewed by OCS, and is available on the CRP website. The Panel continued that work this year, developing flowcharts for all components of OCS' Practice Model. These additional flowcharts are awaiting OCS' review. Much work remains.

The survey instrument does not cover many critical aspects of OCS' employees work and context. Issues such as secondary trauma, staff development plan, and many on-the-job training opportunities were addressed only peripherally. It is common for surveys of this nature to focus on special topics during certain years.

The survey effort was a major undertaking for the Panel, and demonstrates the resources that the Panel can leverage. In addition, the entire process is a demonstration of constructive partnerships that can benefit OCS' efforts in providing services. The Panel sincerely hope that OCS considers using this model of collaboration with the university, CRP, or both in strengthening its various research and evaluation efforts.

Recommendation 4: *OCS should consider building on CRP's survey effort by:*

A. *Viewing training of frontline workers as a longer enterprise that includes SKILS, and evaluating the entire enterprise for effectiveness.*
B. *Including special sections in the annual staff survey, focusing on a topic of interest, and repeating this periodically every two or three years.*
C. *Identifying other similar survey efforts that OCS conducts, and leveraging resources from external entities such as CRP or UAA to conduct them.*

CRP's community engagement

The Panel's mandate requires CRP to not only understand the child protection services system in the state, but also conduct public outreach to raise awareness in the community at large about the nature and content of child protection policy and practice. In other words, CRP is a mechanism for informed public participation in child protection and practice, with a goal to help OCS be more community focused. To ensure that CRP meets its public outreach mandate, CRP needs to be visible, relevant, and connected to OCS' efforts in community engagement. All concerned should be aware of CRP's roles and responsibilities and be willing and prepared to leverage this statutory role.

The Panel schedules several outreach activities during the year. Site visits allow the Panel to not only collect public comment on policy and practice, but also an opportunity to disseminate information about various issues. Panel members present to multiple gatherings through the year, sharing the work of the Panel and raising awareness in the process. CRP reaches out to other review bodies such as the CIP and the Children Justice Act (CJA) Task Force each year. The Panel presents to Alaska's House HSS Committee each year. These activities improved the Panel's visibility over the years. Similarly, the Panel stays relevant to the challenges and opportunities of child protection in Alaska by providing opportunities for public participation through its survey of all ICWA workers each year, public meetings each quarter, and an active website that provides space for public input. The Panel is available through email.

In May 2015, the Panel received an invitation to participate in a day-long gathering facilitated by the First Alaskans Institute in Anchorage. "Alaska conversations that matter – The wellbeing of our children" was a gathering of approximately a hundred leaders from multiple state agencies and tribal entities. The Commissioner of the DHSS addressed the gathering and challenged the group to re-envision child protection in Alaska. Much was discussed throughout the day. Despite multiple attempts over the next several months, the Panel did not receive an update on the progress beyond this gathering in Anchorage. The Director of OCS updated the Panel in April 2016 that a draft strategic plan is almost complete and will be shared shortly. "Transforming Child Welfare Outcomes for Alaska Native Children Strategic Plan 2016-2020" is the product of several discussions of a smaller group representing multiple state agencies and tribal entities. The plan identifies six priority areas, with 'community engagement' being one of them. The Panel is now invited to join any of the six priority area working groups to implement the strategic plan. The Panel was specifically legislated to enable and foster community engagement in child protection and practice. Despite community engagement being a strategic priority area of the plan that intends to fundamentally change child protection enterprise in Alaska, there was no identified role for the Panel. OCS confirmed that this was not simple oversight.

Similarly, the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) (third round is underway in Alaska) is a missed opportunity to engage the Panel. CFSR is an extensive review of a state's child protection services, and has substantial room for community engagement. The Panel has been requesting information from OCS on the status of the process for some time. While OCS senior management shares the status, the Panel is not assigned any specific role in the process. With a specific mandate to facilitate public participation, the Panel can be an asset to meet the extensive requirements of CFSR for collecting stakeholder input.

Despite these lost opportunities, the Panel recognizes its role and continues to add value to public discourse on child protection. A consistent finding across multiple surveys and interviews over the years is the community's lack of a clear understanding of the OCS' Practice Model. Multiple stakeholders report a lack of understanding of OCS' roles and responsibilities. The Panel realizes that child protection is not the responsibility of just one agency. In an attempt to raise awareness and improve public involvement, the Panel began efforts last year to prepare flowcharts to explain the OCS practice model. This year, drafts of all five components of the practice model are completed. OCS is currently reviewing them. Static versions of these flowcharts will be available on the Panel's websites. The Panel hopes to make them interactive and accessible to the community at large, particularly the families served by OCS. These flowcharts can help readers easily understand the steps in an investigation or foster home licensing or other similar processes of OCS. The Panel is not aware of any other similar tools available to the public.

These efforts by the Panel are vindicated by the results of the 2016 OCS Annual Staff Survey. An overwhelming majority (96%) of the frontline workers feel that the community does not have a clear understanding of the OCS' Practice Model. This perception is a significant impediment to frontline worker's own perceptions of their safety in the field, their ability to collaborate with other service providers and community at large, and their quality of work.

The Panel can be instrumental in engaging the community in a constructive conversation on child protection. It is in the best interests of OCS to find ways to use a statutorily mandated mechanism for public participation in promoting its own community engagement purposes. While CRP has an independent role to review OCS, that does not prohibit a collaborative relationship with OCS on community engagement.

Recommendation 5: *OCS should work with CRP to strengthen CRP's ability as a robust mechanism for public participation, rely on it to improve public awareness of the nature and content of OCS work.*

PROGRESS ON 2015 RECOMMENDATIONS

The CRP had six recommendations in the June 2015 Annual Report. OCS responded to each recommendation and identified specific action steps by December 31, 2015. Many of the recommendations address longstanding challenges, and will continue to be relevant over the next few years. Therefore, the Panel asked OCS to provide progress updates on the recommendations. Below is the update the Panel received. OCS is a complex agency with many moving parts. Several initiatives have multiple impacts that may not always be intentional and will likely impact one or more areas of practice. Therefore, this update is not comprehensive.

Recommendation 1: OCS continues to implement the Panel's 2013-2014 recommendations on the intake policy

Update: A new statewide intake manager was hired on June 1, 2016. This is a significant event because OCS anticipates that having a single manager over this program area will help increase accuracy, consistency, and help the agency move faster on improvements.

Recommendation 2: OCS constitutes an internal taskforce to specifically focus on the in-home service model. This task force should be tasked with operationalizing Strategy 2.A.2 of the 2015- 2019 CFSP.

Update: OCS is currently exploring the possibility of contracting in-home services out to community providers. The initial assessment (IA) will still be conducted by OCS. This strategy is different from a Differential Response strategy where cases are screened out prior to an IA to private contractors.

Recommendation 3: OCS should address the root cause of the Initial Assessment (IA) backlog.

Update: There were 2,897 incomplete IAs in June 2015. By June 2016, OCS had 3,560 open IAs, of which 1833 have been open longer than 90 days. The root cause of the backlog is the excessive workload. Many related challenges such as turnover and supervision contribute to this. However, excessive workload is the primary driver. Since this is not a new challenge, OCS has been continuing efforts to stay current with new reports, and has increased attention on high risk infants as a special population within IA. Although OCS is seeing some success with this effort, it is early to judge. In addition, OCS implemented Eckerd Rapid Safety Feedback in May 2016 to help focus on the children most at risk of repeat maltreatment. Despite these initiatives to focus on high priority children, the IA backlog continues to be a challenge.

Recommendation 4: Improve efforts to recruit and retain resource families across the state.

Update: OCS is working with Beacon Hill to renew the Heart Gallery. This will be modeled after the Colorado Heart Gallery and is scheduled to open in September 2016.

Recommendation 5: Improve the survey instruments and reporting of results on various surveys that the OCS QA unit conducts to assess important components of OCS operations.

Update: OCS collaborated with CRP to restructure and conduct the employee staff survey. The report is available on the CRP website.

Recommendation 6: Adopt a method to identify, measure, and assess various components of workload of frontline workers.

Update: OCS is currently evaluating a workload management tool discovered through the Public Children Services Association of Ohio.

2017 NATIONAL CRP CONFERENCE

Alaska CRP will be hosting the 2017 National CRP Conference in Anchorage in May 2017. The national conference is a gathering of Panel coordinators, members, CPS personnel, and other leaders in public participation in child protection from across the country to discuss and deliberate various opportunities and challenges facing the CRP enterprise. Alaska CRP attended the last two conferences and gained much information that helped improve the Panel's process and structure. Moreover, Alaska CRP is considered among the leaders in the field, and is often consulted for best practices.

Organizing a conference is a considerable challenge. Despite being volunteers, Panel members are excited to welcome the national community to Alaska. The Panel will need help and support from many individuals and organizations across the state. There will be many opportunities for sponsorships and volunteering. The Panel hopes to recruit robust help and invites any encouragement. So far, the following organizations have pledged support for the conference:

The Alaska Children's Trust

UAA College of Business and Public Policy

UAA College of Health

UAA Center for Community Engagement and Learning

Please contact the Panel with any questions or to join in hosting the conference. Brief reports with agendas of conferences in 2015 and 2016 are available on the Panel's website.

The Power of Community

NCRP

Ending Child Abuse and Neglect.

2017 National CRP Conference

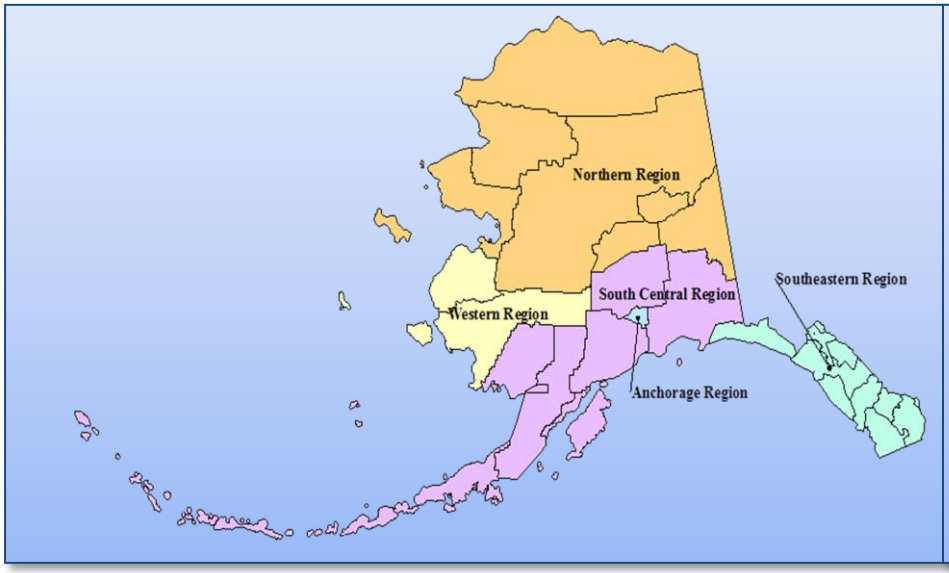
Anchorage, AK

May 10-12, 2017

APPENDIX

Appendices are not included with this report. They are available on the CRP website at www.crpalaska.edu. Please refer to them for further information.

1. Northern Region Site Visit Report
2. Anchorage Region Site Visit Report
3. Southeast Region Site Visit Report
4. Western Region Site Visit Report
5. BIA Providers Conference Survey Results Report
6. 2016 OCS Annual Staff Survey Report
7. Update to the Alaska House HSS Committee
8. CRP National Conference Report



CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES IN ALASKA are administered through a complex network of various government, non-government, tribal, for-profit, non-profit, and private agencies and organizations. A majority of these entities are located in Anchorage, or other major urban centers or hub communities across the state. The Office of Children's Services (OCS) is a state-designated agency, primarily responsible for responding to and addressing reports of child maltreatment and providing child protective services in Alaska. It is situated within the Department of Health and Social Services. OCS operates through 5 regional offices and 25 field offices. In addition, OCS provides a number of its services through contracts and grants to numerous organizations located across the state.

Child and Family Services Review

2017 STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT

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Introduction

Alaska is the largest of the 50 United States. At 663,627 square miles, Alaska constitutes over 17% of the entire country, and Alaska is nearly 2.5 times larger than the second largest state, Texas. Yet this vast area is home to only 710,000 people. Alaska's urban centers, such as Anchorage, Wasilla, Fairbanks and Juneau, have adequate access to services and resources. Communities in rural Alaska, however, have such limited road systems that small plane, boat, and snowmobile travel are required for service delivery.

The child welfare system in Alaska is a state-administered, serving families and children across a vast geographic area. Alaska's child welfare system consists of many agencies and stakeholders who are all committed to safe children, strong families. The primary child welfare agency in Alaska is the Office of Children's Services; other members of the child welfare system includes the Alaska Court System; Alaska's 229 federally-recognized Tribes, partners from the Department of Law, the Public Defender Agency, Guardians ad Litem, the Court Improvement Project, the Citizens' Review Panel, the Child Welfare Academy, the Alaska Center for Resource Families as well as community-based service providers and partners located throughout the state.

Of the 189,380 children living in Alaska in CY 2016, 1 in 10 was reported to OCS for child maltreatment. Of the 18,291 alleged victims that were reported to OCS in CY 2016, 13,010 had one or more screened in reports, and 1413 children entered foster care. When added to the existing children in out-of-home care, there were 4,191 children total (or 2% of the overall child population of Alaska) who spent a part, or all, of 2016 in out-of-home care. Since 2014, Alaska has seen a 52.5% increase in children in out-of-home care since.

Factors impacting Alaska's child welfare system include an increase in the deaths of young children (primarily infants 0-3 years of age), which led to a partnership with the Division of Public Health regarding Safe Sleep practices for new parents in 2014. Additionally, Alaska continues to experience a disproportionate number of Alaska Native children in the custody of OCS; currently 55% of all children in foster care are of Alaska Native heritage, yet, Alaska Native children make up 18.9% of the overall population of children in Alaska. (State of Alaska: Department of Labor population estimates, July 2015).

Since CY 2014, Alaska has been facing an unprecedented economic downturn, spurred by the precipitous drop in the price of oil on the national and global markets, which has directly impacted the availability of services and resources in Alaska. For families, cuts to the annual Permanent Fund Dividend checks, the loss or reduction of vital services in our communities and the impacts of the opioid epidemic that is plaguing the United States generally, are assaulting our families and children at levels that Alaska has never seen before in all regions of Alaska. The criminal elements that accompany the opioid epidemic are profound. In 2016, Anchorage experienced the highest ever homicide rate for the city; an increasing rise in the rates of drug-related property crime and the rates of domestic violence and sexual assault in all of our communities continued to grow as well. At the heart of these statistics are Alaska's children and families who are experiencing the aftermath of these impacts.

Similar to many child welfare agencies in other states, OCS is facing significant challenges in meeting the needs of families. Worker vacancy and turnover is at 34%, with most new workers staying on the job a short 18 months. The state and federal requirements placed on Alaska's child protection workers at both the state and federal level are nearly impossible to successfully meet in every case. OCS attempts to balance workloads among the available positions utilizing the Child Welfare League of America guidelines; however, with the high rate of turnover, caseloads remain at double the national (CWLA) guidelines. OCS workers are also challenged with the increasing threats of violence to their personal safety through this work; however, OCS has worked diligently to improve safety in OCS offices at most sites. The impacts of large caseloads due to the impacts of worker turnover, results in workers inability to

complete the necessary requirements of monthly caseworker visits, case planning, and work towards safe and stable permanency through reunification. OCS has seen a slight increase in the number of children who have reunified with their families, but OCS continues to be well below the national standard for this federal outcome.

Despite these challenges the Department of Health and Social Services, which oversees the work of the OCS, has initiated several initiatives to assist with improving outcomes for children and families who are in the OCS system. Most profoundly, is the collaborative work with Alaska's Tribes and Tribal organizations: In 2016, Alaska developed and is implementing a 5-year strategic plan called *Transforming Alaska's Child Welfare System (2016-2020)*, in which transformation is focused on improving the outcomes for Alaska Native children, their families and Tribes through a six-pronged approach. The strategic plan can be found at: http://dhss.alaska.gov/ocs/Documents/Publications/pdf/AK-Transforming-Child-Welfare-Outcomes_StrategicPlan.pdf. Other state initiatives focused on better screening decisions for our youngest citizens, children 0-5 years of age and are showing improvements in the reduction of reported infant deaths to OCS in years 2015, and 2016. Initiatives targeting diligent relative search efforts are showing improvements in the identification and placement of more children with relatives, yet challenges for relatives to be considered for placement options remain.

The Office of Children's Services, along with other partners and stakeholder groups has completed the 2017 Statewide Assessment as the first part of the Child and Family Services Review which is scheduled for May 22-26, 2017. This is a transparent and honest assessment of the strengths and challenges that Alaska's child welfare system is experiencing. Alaska wishes to thank the many staff and stakeholders who contributed to the development of the 2017 Statewide Assessment. The reader will notice in this assessment that the major areas of impact identified throughout the assessment:

1) Increases in the number of children in out-of-home care 52.5%;
2) Rising caseloads due to high worker turnover;
3) Impacts of opioids, alcohol and other substances resulting in families' inability to keep their children safe; and
4) Limited resources for vital services preventing custody and/or facilitating timely reunification.

Alaska looks forward to reviewing the results of the CFSR, to help inform our child welfare system of areas requiring focus for the federal Performance Improvement Plan (PIP).

The following information is largely from the federal OMB Control Number: 0970-0214, Expiration date: 2/28/2018. Where relevant, Alaska has added clarifying information to inform the reader as to the CFSR process in Alaska.

The Child and Family Services Reviews (CFSRs), authorized by the 1994 Amendments to the Social Security Act (SSA), are administered by the Children's Bureau, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (Children's Bureau). The goals of the CFSR are to:

- Ensure substantial conformity with title IV-B and IV-E child welfare requirements using a framework focused on assessing seven safety, permanency, and well-being outcomes and seven systemic factors;
- Determine what is happening to children and families as they are engaged in child welfare services; and
- Assist states in helping children and families achieve positive outcomes.

The CFSR Process

The CFSR is a two-phase process, as described in 45 CFR 1355.33. The first phase is a statewide assessment conducted by staff of the state child welfare agency, representatives selected by the agency who were consulted in the development of the Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP), and other individuals deemed appropriate and agreed upon by the state child welfare agency and the Children's Bureau.

The second phase of the review process is an onsite review. The onsite review process includes case record reviews, case-related interviews for the purpose of determining outcome performance, and, as necessary, stakeholder interviews that further inform the assessment of systemic factors. The onsite review instrument and instructions are used to rate cases, and the stakeholder interview guide is used to conduct stakeholder interviews.

Information from both the statewide assessment and the onsite review is used to determine whether the state is in substantial conformity with the seven outcomes and seven systemic factors. States found to be out of substantial conformity are required to develop a Program Improvement Plan (PIP) to address the identified areas out of substantial conformity. States participate in subsequent reviews at intervals related to their achievement of substantial conformity. (For more information about the CFSRs, see the *Child and Family Services Reviews* at http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb.)

In Alaska, the Children's Bureau, previously conducted CFSR reviews in 2002 and 2008, respectively. Alaska, like all states did not pass the entire CFSR in either of the previous reviews, nor is it expected that Alaska will pass all areas of the 2017 review. In collaboration with our federal and state partners the Office of Children's Services will be developing a 2-year PIP based on the findings of the 2017 CFSR. Additionally, the PIP will assist Alaska with further development of our next CFSP which will be in effect from 2019-2024. The CFSP will guide the program and practice development in Alaska towards improving outcomes for children and families beyond the completion of the PIP.

Integration of the CFSP/APSR and CFSR Statewide Assessment

The CFSR process is intended to be coordinated with other federal child welfare requirements, such as the planning and monitoring of the CFSP. The Children's Bureau is encouraging states to consider the statewide assessment as an update to their performance assessment in the state's most recent CFSP and/or Annual Progress and Services Report (APSR) rather than a separate assessment process and reporting document. Most of the content for the statewide assessment overlaps with the CFSP/APSR and the same expectations for collaboration with external partners and stakeholders exist across all planning processes. States can use the statewide assessment process to re-engage these partners and stakeholders in preparation for the CFSR.

The Statewide Assessment Instrument

The statewide assessment instrument is a documentation tool for states to use in capturing the most recent assessment information before their scheduled CFSR. Each section, as outlined below, is designed to enable states to gather and document information that is critical to analyzing their capacity and performance during the statewide assessment phase of the CFSR process.

- Section I of the statewide assessment instrument requests general information about the state agency and require a list of the stakeholders that were involved in developing the statewide assessment.
- Section II contains data profiles for the safety and permanency outcomes. These include the data indicators, which are used, in part, to determine substantial conformity. The data profiles are developed by the Children's Bureau based on the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and

Reporting System (AFCARS) and the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS), or on an alternate source of safety data submitted by the state.

- Section III requires an assessment of the seven outcome areas based on the most current information on the state's performance in these areas. The state will include an analysis and explanation of the state's performance in meeting the national standards as presented in section II. States are encouraged to refer to their most recent CFSP or APSR in completing this section.
- Section IV requires an assessment for each of the seven systemic factors. States develop these responses by analyzing data, to the extent that the data are available to the state, and using external stakeholders' and partners' input. States are encouraged to refer to their most recent CFSP or APSR in completing this section.

The Children's Bureau encourages the state to use this document "as is" to complete the assessment, but the state may use another format as long as the state provides all required content. The statewide assessment instrument is available electronically on the Children's Bureau website at http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/resource/round3-cfsr-statewide-assessment.

Completing the Statewide Assessment

The statewide assessment must be completed in collaboration with state representatives who are not staff of the state child welfare agency (external partners or stakeholders), pursuant to 45 CFR 1355.33 (b). Those individuals should represent the sources of consultation required of the state in developing the Title IV-B State Plan and may include, for example, Tribal representatives; court personnel; youth; staff of other state and social service agencies serving children and families; and birth, foster, and adoptive parents or representatives of foster/adoptive parent associations. States must include a list of the names and affiliations of external representatives participating in the statewide assessment in section I of this instrument.

Alaska has engaged partners and stakeholders through the CFSP, APSR and now the CFSR processes. Our partners have been instrumental in the development of Alaska's Statewide Assessment and many will participate as reviewers in the CFSR.

The Children's Bureau encourages states to use the same team of people who participate in the development of the CFSP to respond to the statewide assessment. Additionally, the Children's Bureau also encourages states to use this same team of people in developing the PIP. Members of the team who have the skills should be considered to serve as case reviewers during the onsite review.

How the Statewide Assessment Is Used

Information about the state child welfare agency compiled and analyzed through the statewide assessment process may be used to support the CFSR process in a range of ways. The statewide assessment is used to:

- Provide an overview of the state child welfare agency's performance for the onsite review team;
- Facilitate identification of issues that need additional clarification before or during the onsite review;
- Serve as a key source of information for rating the CFSR systemic factors; and
- Enable states and their stakeholders to identify early in the CFSR process the areas potentially needing improvement and to begin developing their PIP approach.

THE PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT OF 1995 (Pub. L. 104–13)

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 240 hours for the initial review and 120 hours for subsequent reviews. This estimate includes the time for reviewing instructions, completing the assessment, and reviewing the collection of information.

An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Statewide Assessment Instrument

Section I: General Information

Name of State Agency: Alaska Department of Health and Social Services; Office of Children's Services

CFSR Review Period

CFSR Sample Period:

- April 1, 2016 through February 28, 2017
- Period of AFCARS Data: AFCARS FFY 16A & FFY 16B data
- Period of NCANDS Data: NCANDS FFY16 (10/1/2015 – 9/30/2016)
- (Or other approved source; please specify if alternative data source is used):Online Resources for Children in Alaska (ORCA): the Office of Children's Services' Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS)
- Case Review Period Under Review (PUR): April 1, 2016 through on-site review (May 22-26, 2017)

State Agency Contact Person for the Statewide Assessment

Name: KariLee Pietz

Title: Social Services Program Administrator

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Statewide Assessment Participants

Provide the names and affiliations of the individuals who participated in the statewide assessment process; please also note their roles in the process.

State Response:

INTERNAL PARTNERS
Christy Lawton, OCS Director
Tracy Spartz Campbell, OCS Deputy Director
Travis Erickson, Division Operation Manager
KariLee Pietz, Social Services Program Administrator
Kim Guay, Social Services Program Administrator
Bernita Hamilton, Social Services Program Officer
Tim Morse, Research Analyst IV
Dana Penner, ORCA Project Manager
Yvonne Hill, Social Services Program Officer
Naomi Davidson, Social Services Program Coordinator
Richard Bloomquist, Social Services Program Coordinator
Bunti Reed, Social Services Program Coordinator
Barbara Cosolito, Social Services Program Officer
Tandra Donahue, Community Care Licensing Specialist III
Yurii Miller, Community Care Licensing Specialist III
Dara Lively, Social Services Program Officer
Lisa Marx, Social Services Program Coordinator
Christopher Kane, Social Services Program Coordinator
Casey Groat, Social Services Program Coordinator
Kristie Swanson, Tribal Affairs Advisor
Miriha Aglietti, Administrative Operations Manager II
Brooke Katasse, Social Services Program Officer
Gennifer Moreau Johnson, Social Services Program Officer
John Luchansky, Psychiatric Nurse IV
Sharon Fleming, Protective Services Manager II SERO
Coleen Turner, Protective Services Manager II NRO
Sara Childress, Protective Services Manager II ARO
Tim Bolles, Protective Services Manager II SCRO

Fennisha Gardner, Protective Services Manager II WRO
Lindsay, Bothe, Protective Services Manager I, Centralized Intake
Mindy Swisher, Protective Services Specialist IV, Supervisory Leadership Council
Talia Robinson, Protective Services Specialist IV, Supervisory Leadership Council
Tim Huffman, OCS Contractor, Huffman Services
EXTERNAL PARTNERS
Lucille "Lou" Johnson, Bristol Bay Native Association
Francine Eddy Jones, Central Council Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska
Mary Johnson, Tanana Chiefs Conference
Lola Stepetin, Nome Eskimo Community
Kim Sweet, Kenaitze Indian Tribe
Carla Erickson, State of Alaska, Department of Law
Diwakar Vadapalli, Citizens' Review Panel
Robert Polley, Alaska Court Improvement Project
Tammy Sandoval, University of Alaska; Child Welfare Academy
Aileen McInnis, Alaska Center for Resource Families
Stefanie Baird, Alaska Court System
Jessica Pierson, State of Alaska, Public Defender Agency
Linda Beecher, State of Alaska, Public Defender Agency
Sarah Redmon, Facing Foster Care in Alaska
Anita Alves, State of Alaska, Office of Public Advocacy (GAL)
Jamie Yaletchko, Facing Foster Care in Alaska

Section II: Safety and Permanency Data
State Data Profile

Alaska

Child and Family Services Review (CFSR 3) Data Profile

September 2016

Submissions as of 6-8-16 (AFCARS) and 6-23-16 (NCANDS)

Calculations based on 2015 Federal Register syntax (revisions pending)

Risk Standardized Performance (RSP)

Permanency Outcome 1

		13B14A	15B16A
Permanency in 12 months (entries)	RSP	27.1%	
	RSP Interval	24.6% - 29.7%	
	National standard (NS)	40.5%	
	Performance relative to NS	Not met	
	Data used	13B-16A	
Permanency in 12 months (12 - 23 mos)	RSP		32.8%
	RSP Interval		29.4% - 36.3%
	National standard (NS)		43.6%
	Performance relative to NS		Not met
	Data used		15B-16A
Permanency in 12 months (24+ mos)	RSP		28.4%
	RSP Interval		25.3% - 31.6%
	National standard (NS)		30.3%
	Performance relative to NS		No diff
	Data used		15B-16A
Re-entry to foster care	RSP	5.6%	
	RSP Interval	3.7% - 8.4%	
	National standard (NS)	8.3%	
	Performance relative to NS	No diff	
	Data used	13B-16A	
Placement stability (moves/1,000 days in care)	RSP		4.62
	RSP Interval		4.35 - 4.9
	National standard (NS)		4.12
	Performance relative to NS		Not met
	Data used		15B-16A

DQ = Performance was not calculated due to failing one or more data quality (DQ) checks for this indicator. See the data quality table for details.

The colors highlight performance (RSP Interval) relative to the National Standard:

Met | No diff | Not met

Alaska

Child and Family Services Review (CFSR 3) Data Profile

September 2016

Submissions as of 6-8-16 (AFCARS) and 6-23-16 (NCANDS)

Calculations based on 2015 Federal Register syntax (revisions pending)

Risk Standardized Performance (RSP)

Safety Outcome 1

		15AB, FY15	FY14-15
Maltreatment in care (victimizations/100,000 days in care)	RSP	14.96	
	RSP Interval	12.27 - 18.23	
	National standard (NS)	8.50	
	Performance relative to NS	Not met	
	Data used	15A-15B, FY15	
Recurrence of maltreatment	RSP		23.1%
	RSP Interval		21.3% - 25.1%
	National standard (NS)		9.1%
	Performance relative to NS		Not met
	Data used		FY14-15

DQ = Performance was not calculated due to failing one or more data quality (DQ) checks for this indicator. See the data quality table for details.

The colors highlight performance (RSP Interval) relative to the National Standard:

National Standard (NS) is the observed performance for the nation as described in the May 2015 Federal Register notice.

Risk-Standardized Performance (RSP) is derived from a multi-level statistical model and reflects the state's performance relative to states with similar children and takes into account the number of children the state served, the age distribution of these children, and, for some indicators, the state's entry rate. It uses risk-adjustment to minimize differences in outcomes due to factors over which the state has little control and provides a more fair comparison of state performance against the national standard.

Risk-Standardized Performance (RSP) Interval is the state's 95% confidence interval estimate for the state's RSP. The values shown are the lower RSP and upper RSP of the interval estimate. The interval accounts for the amount of uncertainty associated with the RSP. For example, the CB is 95% confident that the true value of the RSP is between the lower and upper limit of the interval.

Performance relative to the national standard (NS) indicates whether the state's 95% interval showed that the state met, did not meet, or was no different than the national standard. "No Diff" means the interval includes the NS. For the permanency in 12 months indicators, "Met" is used when the entire interval is above the NS; "Not Met" is used when the entire interval is below the NS. For the remaining indicators, "Met" is used when the entire interval is below the NS; "Not Met" is used when the entire interval is above the NS.

Data Used refers to the initial 12-month period (see description for the denominator in the Data Dictionary) and the period(s) of data needed to follow the children to observe their outcome. The FY (e.g., FY13) or federal fiscal year, refers to NCANDS data, which spans the 12-month period Oct 1st – Sept 30th. All other periods refer to AFCARS data: 'A' refers to the 6-month period Oct 1st – March 31st. 'B' refers to the 6-month period April 1st – Sept 30th. The two-digit year refers to the calendar year in which the period ends (e.g., 13A refers to the 6-month period Oct 1, 2012 – March 31, 2013).

The colors highlight performance (RSP Interval) relative to the National Standard:

Met | No diff | Not met

Alaska

Child and Family Services Review (CFSR 3) Data Profile

September 2016

Submissions as of 6-8-16 (AFCARS) and 6-23-16 (NCANDS)

Calculations based on 2015 Federal Register syntax (revisions pending)

Observed Performance

Observed performance is the percent or rate of children experiencing the outcome of interest, without risk adjustment. For a complete description of the numerator and denominator for each statewide data indicator, see the Data Dictionary.

		13B14A	15B16A
Permanency in 12 months (entries)	Denominator	1,019	
	Numerator	296	
	Observed performance	29.0%	
Permanency in 12 months (12 - 23 mos)	Denominator		598
	Numerator		206
	Observed performance		34.4%
Permanency in 12 months (24+ mos)	Denominator		484
	Numerator		164
	Observed performance		33.9%
Re-entry to foster care	Denominator	288	
	Numerator	14	
	Observed performance	4.9%	
Placement stability (moves/1,000 days in care)	Denominator		243,056
	Numerator		1,087
	Observed performance		4.47

		15AB, FY15	FY14-15
Maltreatment in care (victimizations/100,000 days in care)	Denominator	871,262	
	Numerator	97	
	Observed performance	11.13	
Recurrence of maltreatment	Denominator		2,592
	Numerator		473
	Observed performance		18.2%

DQ = Performance was not calculated due to failing one or more data quality (DQ) checks for this indicator. See the data quality table for details.

Denominator: For Placement stability and Maltreatment in care = number of days in care. For all other indicators = number of children.

Numerator: For Placement stability = number of moves. For Maltreatment in care = number of victimizations. For all other indicators = number of children.

Percentage or rate: For Placement stability = moves per 1,000 days in care. For Maltreatment in care = victimizations per 100,000 days in care. For all other indicators = percentage of children experiencing the outcome.

Alaska **September 2016**

Child and Family Services Review (CFSR 3) Data Profile

Submissions as of 6-8-16 (AFCARS) and 6-23-16 (NCANDS) Calculations based on 2015 Federal Register syntax (revisions pending)

Data Quality

Setting national standards and measuring state performance on statewide data indicators relies upon states submitting high-quality data. Data quality checks are performed prior to calculating state performance against the national standards. States that exceed established data quality limits are excluded from statewide data indicator calculations (and marked with a "DQ" on the RSP tables). All values represent the percentage of problem cases in a state. **Values in orange in the table below indicate the percentage of problem cases exceeds the data quality limit.** A blank cell indicates there was no data quality check assessed for that particular data period. 'DQ' indicates the data quality check was not performed due to data quality issues. For example, there were underlying data quality issues with the AFCARS or NCANDS data set such as AFCARS IDs not being included or a DQ threshold was exceeded on a related data quality check.

AFCARS Data Quality Checks

	Limit	MFC	Perm	PS	11B	12A	12B	13A	13B	14A	14B	15A	15B	16A
AFCARS IDs don't match from one period to next	> 40%	•	•	•	16.8%	20.9%	17.9%	19.8%	17.2%	19.6%	16.1%	18.6%	13.8%	
Age at discharge greater than 21	> 5%	•	•	•	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Age at entry is greater than 21	> 5%	•	•	•	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Date of birth after date of entry	> 5%	•	•	•	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Date of birth after date of exit	> 5%	•	•	•	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Dropped records	> 10%	•	•	•	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	0.2%	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%	
Enters and exits care the same day	> 5%	•	•	•	0.0%	0.2%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%
Exit date is prior to removal date	> 5%	•	•	•	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
In foster care more than 21 yrs	> 5%	•	•	•	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Missing date of birth	> 5%	•	•	•	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Missing date of latest removal	> 5%	•	•	•	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Missing discharge reason (exit date exists)	> 5%		•		0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Missing number of placement settings	> 5%			•	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Percentage of children on 1st removal	> 95%	•	•	•	86.0%	85.8%	85.8%	85.9%	86.2%	86.1%	85.2%	85.6%	85.8%	86.2%

NCANDS Data Quality Checks

		MFC	RM	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2012	2013	2014	2015
Child IDs for victims match across years	< 1%		•	6.1%	8.2%	6.6%				
Child IDs for victims match across years, but dates of birth and sex do not	> 5%		•	1.6%	0.3%	0.6%				
Missing age for victims	> 5%	•	•				0.3%	0.6%	0.5%	0.2%
Some victims should have AFCARS IDs in child file	< 1%	•						100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Some victims with AFCARS IDs should match IDs in AFCARS files	N -	•						Y	Y	Y

MFC Maltreatment in foster care
Perm Permanency indicators (Permanency in 12 months for children entering care, in care 12-23 months, in care 24 months of more, and Re-entry to care in 12 months)
PS Placement stability
RM Recurrence of maltreatment

FAIL DQ PASS

Section III: Assessment of Child and Family Outcomes and Performance on National Standards

Instructions

Refer to the section in the state's most recent Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) or Annual Progress and Services Report (APSR) that provides assessment information on state performance on each of the seven child and family outcomes. Review the information with the statewide assessment team and determine if more recent data are available that can be used to provide an updated assessment of each outcome. If more recent data are not available, simply refer to the most recent CFSP or APSR document by indicating the document name/date and relevant page numbers where the information can be found for each outcome. Analyze and explain the state's performance on the national standards in the context of the outcomes.

For Alaska specifically, the current CFSP and APSR can be found at the following links:

- CFSP: http://dhss.alaska.gov/ocs/Documents/Publications/pdf/2014-2019_CFSP.pdf
- APSR: http://dhss.alaska.gov/ocs/Documents/Publications/pdf/2017_APR.pdf

In past CFSRs, Alaska included in the data analysis the statewide data indicators as outlined in the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) data reports (found in Section II of this report). For Round 3 of the CFSR, the Children's Bureau issued Technical Bulletin # 9 on October 16, 2016, which stated, in part, that for states that have a CFSR in FY 2016 or in subsequent years, the CB will utilize the AFCARS data indicators for context, but will not utilize them for the final report on substantial conformity. For this reason, Alaska's state performance for CFSR Items 1-18, will be primarily based on the outcomes from the OCS Quality Assurance Case Reviews, as well as through the data reporting from the OCS Online Resource for Children of Alaska (ORCA) data system that used the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) data dictionary to replicate the CFSR measures.

The OCS operates an ongoing quality assurance case review system to monitor quality of care and adherence to state and federal practice standards. The reviews are conducted through the Evaluation Unit (QA) which is located organizationally in state office and reports to the Director. Reviews are conducted in a manner similar to the CFSR process. The reviews follow a standard protocol to include use of the federal review instrument (OSRI, On-site Review Instrument), telephonic interviews with parents, Tribes, Guardians ad Litem, and the worker or supervisor for the case. Cases are randomly selected for the on-going reviews to include both foster care and in-home cases. The review findings are compiled in a report distributed to management and the field office and a debriefing is held with the field office. The findings are incorporated into the Continuous Quality Improvement Process (CQI) through the CQI Committee. Field Offices prepare a plan of improvement in response to the review findings. In 2016 twelve field offices were reviewed from across the regions with 149 cases reviewed.

A. Safety

Safety Outcomes 1 and 2

Safety outcomes include: (A) children are first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect; and (B) children are safely maintained in their own homes whenever possible and appropriate.

- For each of the two safety outcomes, include the most recent available data demonstrating the state's performance. Data must include state performance on the two federal safety indicators, relevant case record review data, and key available data from the state information system (such as data on timeliness of investigation).
- Based on these data and input from stakeholders, Tribes, and courts, include a brief assessment of strengths and concerns regarding Safety Outcomes 1 and 2, including an analysis of the state's performance on the national standards for the safety indicators.

State Response:

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

CFSR Item 1: Timeliness of initiating investigation of reports of child maltreatment.

The percentage of Initial Assessments initiated within state policy timeframes will be 95% or more.
(Note: For purposes of the Statewide Assessment, the Office of Children's Services refers to investigations as Initial Assessments).

Timeliness of Initiation

Year	Case Count	Strength	Area Needing Improvement	Strength Rating
2016	79	43	36	54%
2015	177	98	79	55%

Source: OCS Quality Assurance Annual Reports. CY 2015 and CY 2016

- CFSR Measure: Maltreatment Recurrence

Of all children who were victims of a substantiated maltreatment report during a 12-month period, the percentages who were victims of another substantiated maltreatment report within 12 months will be 9.1% or less.

Maltreatment Recurrence

Initial Substantiation Year	Children with 1 or more Substantiations	Subsequent Substantiation within 12 Months	Rate
2015*	3219	588	18.6%
2014	2690	510	19.0%
2013	2523	501	19.9%

Source: OCS CFSR Report 001, Recurrence of Maltreatment.
*2016 data are not missing; it is used to calculate recurrence for 2015. Full information on federal data rules is located in Appendix I.

- CFSR Measure: Maltreatment in Out-of-Home Care

Of all children in out-of-home care during a 12-month period, the victimization rate per 100,000 days of care will be 8.5 or less.

Maltreatment in Out of Home Care*

Calendar Year	In OOH Care	Total Days	Substantiated Maltreatment	Rate
2016	4021	1018587	100	9.8
2015	3662	912630	136	14.9
2014	3185	753628	99	13.1
2013	2833	693969	83	12.0

Source: OCS CFSR Report 002, Maltreatment in Foster Care.

*OCS stakeholders are accustomed to looking at this data in terms of the number or percent of children that were maltreated by a foster parent during a specified period. The federal measure considers children on trial home visits to be in foster care, and it includes maltreatment by anyone (i.e., the parent of a child on a trial home visit). The federal measure addresses the issue of differing durations of care (i.e., a child in care only 30 days vs. a child in care 365 days by dividing the total number of maltreatment events by the total number of days in care.

The rate of maltreatment by foster parents only is considerably lower. This data is not included to dispute the data in the Maltreatment in Out-of-Home Care table (above), but rather, to provide additional information on the role of foster parents regarding maltreatment in out-of-home care.

Maltreatment in Care by Foster Parents

Calendar Year	In Care	Total Days	Substantiated Maltreatment	Rate
2016	4021	1018587	35	3.4
2015	3662	912630	42	4.6
2014	3185	753628	27	3.6
2013	2833	693969	42	6.1

Source: OCS CFSR 002 Maltreatment in Foster Care.

Assessment of Safety Outcome 1 Strengths and Concerns

The CFSR Item 1, Timeliness to Initiating Investigation of Reports of Harm, is supported by two CFSR measures related to Maltreatment in Foster Care. The data for this item shows that the Office of Children's Services (OCS) state performance did not meet either of the two CFSR safety data indicators for the national standard for Safety Outcome 1.

Above, the QA case review data shows that the rating for CFSR Item 1: Timeliness of Initial Assessment decreased from 55% to 54 % case review sample data. This is consistent with the ORCA data below, for all Initial Assessments completed in the year, which shows marginal improvement since 2014, but a rate of 56.8% that is well below the national performance of 95%. The impacts of high caseloads are likely the primary reason that the rate for this item is not higher.

Timeliness of Initiation

Year	Completed Initial Assessments	Initiation Rate
2016	8309	56.8%
2015	7759	52.9%
2014	7101	52.4%

Source: ORCA Data Report, RR 00050 Completed Initial Assessment Between Dates.

Alaska has a priority response system outlined in the OCS Child Protective Services Manual, for which workers are mandated to respond to Protective Services Reports (PSRs) in the following priority:

OCS Protective Services Report (PSR)—Priority Response

Priority Level	Response level
Priority 1	PSRs must be responded to as soon as possible but no later than 24 hours of the time the report is received by OCS.
Priority 2	PSRs must be responded to no later than 72 hours of the time the report is received by OCS.
Priority 3	PSRs must be responded to within seven days of the time the report is received by the OCS.

Source: OCS Child Protection Services Manual, Chapter 2: Intake, policy 2.1, pgs. 3-4.Revised 10/1/2016)

When looking at the data as it specifically relates to each priority response level, timely response is more frequent with higher priority level PSRs. The timely response rate in 2016 was: priority 1, 71.9%; priority 2, 60.1%; priority 3, 51.3%. This is the percentage of reports to which the OCS had face-to-face contact with each alleged victim within the response priority time.

Timeliness of Initiation by Priority

Year	Initial Assessments	Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3	All
2016	8309	71.9%	60.1%	51.3%	56.8%
2015	7474	72.5%	58.1%	45.7%	52.9%
2014	7386	71.4%	62.8%	44.7%	52.4%

Source: ORCA Data Report, RR 00050 Completed Initial Assessment Between Dates.

While workers are making face-to-face contacts with each alleged victim, the contacts are not always timely and workers struggle with completing the necessary documentation for the Initial Assessments in a timely manner. Of the 4,050 Initial Assessments open as of 1/10/17, 1,687 had been open over 120 days. High staff turnover causes many of these Initial Assessments to be reassigned to caseworkers that are already carrying caseloads well above the Child Welfare League of America (CWLA) recommended maximum caseload size (Appendix II). The reassigned workers, generally, have no history with the case. When the departed worker did not adequately document work, the reassigned worker may need to duplicate family and collateral contacts to assess and establish safety. Over many years, Alaska has engaged in numerous targeted efforts to address this problem; each reduced the number of open Initial Assessments temporarily, but these gains could never be sustained due to:

- *Chronically high staff turnover.* In 2016, 34% of case carrying positions became vacant. Long term analysis is challenging due to incomplete record keeping, but it appears this rate is consistent with historical norms.
- *Chronically high caseloads.* Caseloads have exceeded the CWLA recommended standard of 12 cases per worker for many years, and were 25% above the CWLA standard in 2016.
- *Failure to maintain a consistent Initial Assessment practice model.* Prior to 2006, OCS followed the Structured Decision Making (SDM) model. Transition to a Safety Initial Assessment model began in 2006, and took several years to be fully implemented. Following

full implementation, results did not meet expectations. In response, a series of additional changes to training and/or practice followed. The net impact has been that Safety Assessment significantly increased the amount of time required to fully complete an Initial Assessment, but did not improve outcomes for timeliness of Initial Assessments.

Alaska's state performance and rating for the CFSR measure, Maltreatment Recurrence, is nearly double the national standard of 9.1% or less; in Alaska the QA case review results show a rate at 18.6%. OCS is addressing a number of contributing factors involving identification, monitoring, and decision making with regards to high-risk children.

- *Screen in rates dropped below 40% in 2012.* In response, a comprehensive file review was conducted by managers in conjunction with the Alaska Child Welfare Academy (CWA) at the University of Alaska, Anchorage. These case reviews revealed that too many reports were being screened out due to incorrect inclusion of Impending Danger standards into Intake screening decision making. While Impending Danger is useful in determining child safety as a part of the Initial Assessment, it can only be reliably assessed following the type of face-to-face contacts that occur during Initial Assessments. Incorporating Impending Danger principles into Intake screening decisions resulted in PSRs reported to OCS being screened out because the child was perceived as safe at the time of the report, despite the allegations that maltreatment had occurred recently.

Screening Rates by Year

Year	Reports	Screened In Reports	Screen In Rate
2016	17402	9502	54.6%
2015	16564	9164	55.3%
2014	15678	8133	51.9%
2013	15726	7474	47.5%
2012	16118	6404	39.7%

Source: OCS CFSR 003 Screening Rate by Jurisdiction Region.

The chart above outlines the data that shows an increase in the number of screened in reports in the last five years.

Nationally, states have moved towards an intake model in which receiving, documenting and screening decisions for PSRs is centralized to ensure that screening decisions are determined on a consistent and standardized basis statewide. In Alaska, OCS began transitioning towards centralized intake in 2016, in order to minimize variances between field offices and regions as to how PSRs are processed. Intake supervisors were consolidated to Anchorage (2) and Wasilla (1); these supervisors make final screening decisions on intakes received by staff in the Anchorage, Northern, Southcentral, and Southeast Regions. The Anchorage Region receives and screens reports for the Western Region. Supervision of these supervisors was transferred to a statewide Intake manager, who has working closely with staff to improve the consistent application of screening decision standards. The following table shows the high degree of consistency between regions in 2016 as compared to prior years.

Screening Rates by Jurisdiction Region*

Year	Anchorage	Northern	Southcentral	Southeast	Western	Statewide
2016	53.5%	54.0%	53.5%	53.8%	65.8%	54.8%
2015	59.5%	46.7%	54.0%	54.7%	67.4%	55.4%
2014	51.4%	43.9%	54.6%	55.1%	74.2%	51.6%
2013	42.4%	46.8%	52.9%	52.9%	72.0%	47.3%
2012	39.9%	30.0%	47.6%	44.1%	66.1%	39.3%

Source: OCS CFSR 003 Screening Rate by Jurisdiction Region.

*Jurisdiction Region is the Region where the alleged maltreatment occurred

- Identifying and monitoring high-risk children was also identified as an area needing attention. Efforts in this area garnered additional attention following a spike in infant mortality events in 2014. OCS has several pilot projects in place, although only the initiatives involving children under age one are statewide. The number of infant mortality incidents was unchanged in 2015 and significantly decreased in 2016; at this point, it is not possible to directly correlate this decrease to any of the following OCS efforts:

  - An Anchorage initiative, "Five and Five," required additional case staffing for screened in reports when at least one alleged victim was under age six and
    - five or more prior maltreatment reports; or
    - any child in the family has been removed from the home; or
    - any caretaker has had parental rights terminated in the past.

    Five and Five Initial Assessments are still flagged in the Open Initial Assessment Report (OCS ORCA Report, RR00159), and additional scrutiny is given if the screened in reports have been open longer than 90 days. Outcome comparison data is not available.

  - The High-Risk Infants (HRI) effort flags Initial Assessments that have a child under age one, and

    - the family has three or more prior maltreatment reports; or
    - any child in the family has been removed from the home.

    These Initial Assessments are flagged in the Open Initial Assessment Report, (OCS ORCA Report, RR00159) and additional scrutiny is given if they have been open longer than 45 days. Outcome comparison data is not available.

  - OCS is partnering with Eckerd Kids in a statewide trial initiative that identifies high-risk children under age three that are alleged victims of maltreatment in a maltreatment report. The Eckerd Kids Rapid Safety Feedback initiative uses proprietary algorithms to identify high risk children. Additional tracking and case

staffing are facilitated by the OCS Evaluation Unit; outcome comparison data is not available.

- The Maltreatment Assessment Protocol (MAP) effort requires users to follow a standardized decision tree process to determine when maltreatment allegations should be substantiated. The MAP began as a paper process in February, 2015, and was incorporated into ORCA in June, 2015. There were three goals: 1) reduce the wide variances in regional substantiation rates by incorporating a research-based substantiation model; 2) allow substantiations based on risk by including AS 47.10.011 statutory definitions; 3) improve due process for alleged perpetrators by automating notices informing them of findings and attaching the form required to appeal the finding. The following chart shows that although the statewide substantiation rate has remained nearly constant, variations between regions have decreased. Continued work in these areas may reduce these differing rates further, but other factors are involved. For example, case reviews conducted by the OCS Division Operations Manager for Field Operations indicate that reporters are less likely to report maltreatment events deemed minor or questionable, which are the types of reports that are more likely to be not substantiated. Fewer, potentially "not substantiated" reports, result in a higher substantiation rate.

Substantiation Rate

REGION	2014	2015	2016
Anchorage	11%	19%	21%
Northern	33%	35%	31%
Southcentral	30%	36%	30%
Southeast	22%	27%	18%
Western	41%	33%	37%
Statewide	**23%**	**26%**	**26%**

Source: OCS ORCA Report, RR 00050 Completed Initial Assessments Between Dates

*PSRs substantiated during the year (regardless of report date)

The combined result of these efforts has been a significant increase in the number of PSRs assigned to Initial Assessment workers (a 48% increase since 2012), even though the overall number of maltreatment reports received during this period has increased only 7% (OCS CFSR Report, 0016, Allegations, Screening, Substantiation). There has been a corresponding, and significant, increase in the count of children removed from their homes, as outlined in the section: Assessment of Safety Outcome 1 Strengths and Concerns, earlier in this report.

The rate of maltreatment for children residing in out-of-home care decreased significantly in 2016. OCS asserts the stated rate of 9.8% is artificially low due to the high number of incomplete Initial Assessments, awaiting documentation and completion. In 2016, only 100 maltreatment reports were substantiated on children in care; however, 157 additional reports had at least 1 unresolved allegation. There is still a small backlog from 2015 on reports of maltreatment for children in out-of-home care; 26 children have unresolved allegations. It is not likely that a high number of these will be substantiated, but it can be stated with confidence that this rate for this

measure would be higher, if Initial Assessments for children in out-of-home care were completed in a timelier manner.

A significant aspect to the rates of maltreatment for children in out-of-home care is that this rate includes those children who are residing in their parents' home on a trial home visit. The case review data shows that parents and their partners are twice as likely to maltreat children in care during a trial home visit as foster parents who are caring for a child. This suggests that ongoing safety assessment of children on trial home visits is an area that can be improved. The following table shows the percentages of maltreatment by perpetrator role.

Perpetrators of Maltreatment

Year	Foster Parent Perpetrator	Parent Perpetrator	Other Perpetrator*
2016	35.0%	65.0%	13.0%
2015	30.9%	60.3%	13.2%
2014	27.3%	65.7%	14.1%

Source: OCS CFSR 002 Maltreatment in Foster Care.

*Note: "Other Perpetrator" is generally another adult resident, often a paramour, in the home.

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

CFSR Item 2: Services to family to protect child(ren) in the home and prevent removal or re-entry into foster care.

The percentage of cases in which the agency took least intrusive actions to control present or impending danger will be 95% or more.

2016 Safety Maintained In Home When Possible and Appropriate

Case Type	Case Count	Strength	Area Needing Improvement	Strength Rate
Out of Home	40	37	3	93%
In Home	52	31	21	60%
Total	**92**	**68**	**24**	**74%**

Source: OCS Quality Assurance Annual Report, CY 2016

2015 Safety Maintained In Home When Possible and Appropriate

Case Type	Case Count	Strength	Area Needing Improvement	Strength Rate
Out of Home	97	70	27	72.2%
In Home	92	34	58	37.0%
Total	**189**	**104**	**85**	**55.0%**

Source: OCS Quality Assurance Annual Report, CY 2015

CFSR Item 3: Risk and Safety Assessment and Management

The percentage of cases in which the agency took sufficient actions to control present or impending danger will be 95% or more.

2016 Sufficient Actions to Control Present/Impending Danger

Case Type	Case Count	Strength	Area Needing Improvement	Strength Rate
Out of Home	83	61	22	73%
In Home	66	28	38	42%
Total	**149**	**89**	**60**	**60%**

Source: OCS Quality Assurance Annual Summary, CY 2016

2015 Sufficient Actions to Control Present/Impending Danger

Case Type	Case Count	Strength	Area Needing Improvement	Strength Rate
Out of Home	166	102	64	61.4%
In Home	111	23	88	20.7%
Total	**277**	**125**	**152**	**45.1%**

Source: OCS Quality Assurance Annual Summary, CY 2015

Assessment of Safety Outcome 2 Strengths and Concerns

Alaska's state performance did not meet either of the two Safety Outcome 2 national standards.

Although OCS state performance falls short of the national standards in most items, the strength ratings for out-of-home cases are generally far better than ratings for in-home cases. For example, CFSR Item 2, Services to Family to Protect Child(ren) in the home and prevent removal or re-entry into foster care, outlines a rating for out-of-home cases at 93% that nearly meets the national performance of 95%, but the in-home rating of 60%, is significantly lower than the national performance. However, the data from both in-home and out-of-home populations in this measure represents significant improvements from 2015, whereby OCS improved from 55% to 74% for Item #2.

Risk and Safety Assessment and Management, CFSR Item 3, strength ratings are also higher for out-of-home cases. Both ratings are significantly higher than the previous year, with the out-of-home rating 31% higher than the in-home rating in 2016. OCS QA case reviewers note that OCS has been relatively strong at ongoing safety assessment, but weaker at initial safety assessment. Improvement in this area is largely attributed to better needs assessment, increased use of safety plans as an intervention to manage safety for in-home cases, and improved quality of safety plans. Additionally, improved documentation contributed to the higher rating in 2016. QA case reviewers noted a decrease in situations in which activities appeared to have occurred, but insufficient documentation prevented verification of the item. The improved documentation by caseworkers likely accounted for the higher ratings for this item from 2015 to 2016.

One significant factor encompassed under the Item 3 ratings is Alaska's high rate of maltreatment recurrence. Many cases, especially in-home cases, are opened following an incident of repeat maltreatment. These cases cannot be rated as a strength area even if all other elements of this item are met. QA case reviewers note a high number of cases each year in which this is the only factor preventing the cases from being rated as a strength.

OCS has struggled with in-home case identification and management, over the years. It has long been an OCS philosophy that children should be maintained in their own homes whenever possible. Trainings for the OCS practice model adopted in 2006 asserted that effectively applying the model would result in a shift to far more in-home cases as the new safety planning strategies were employed. The reality has been far different. Although the number of in-home cases increased significantly after implementation, subsequent case reviews by the OCS Division Operations Manager for field operations (and others) determined that the majority of these cases should not have been opened as in-home cases,

but rather, the children should have been removed due to the presence of safety threats that could not be reasonably managed in the home.

In some situations, high caseloads were the problem. In-home cases require a higher level of monitoring, more intensive case management services, and more frequent caseworker visits than cases with children placed in out-of-home care. The OCS Child Protection Manual, (Policy 2.2.10.2 Case Decision) requires cases determined to be 'high risk' to be opened for services. Although there were provisions for overriding the high risk determination, some supervisors believed policy required opening these cases, even when they knew no services would be provided and no subsequent contact would be made. Many such cases were opened despite the knowledge that caseload size made it impossible to provide the required services. Many, in fact, never had a single OCS contact after the Initial Assessment was complete.

In other situations, needed resources simply were not available. Alaska has hundreds of very small communities with no road access, no OCS office in the community, and extremely limited local services. Service providers and OCS workers can only reach these locations via small aircraft, and weather delays are common. Such contact generally occurs monthly, although some areas are somewhat more frequent. Tribal social services agencies provide assistance, but they face the same travel problems as OCS workers. In these areas, it is simply not practical to develop a safety plan that requires frequent contact with OCS workers or service providers in order for the child to safely remain in the home.

The most concerning problem, though, was the incorrect determination of safety. Incorrect interpretation of Impending Danger standards resulted in many children remaining in their homes that should have been removed. Too often, households experiencing temporary sobriety or absence of violence were misinterpreted as safe for children to remain in, despite evidence that these conditions were chronic in nature. Children left in these homes were subjected to additional maltreatment.

Incorrect in-home safety determinations can also be the result of widely varying interpretations by judges in some regions as to whether evidence presented in court constitutes subjection to maltreatment as defined in AS 47.10.011. In areas, where judges are reluctant to make this finding, caseworkers are faced with a difficult choice: remove children from unsafe homes knowing they will quickly be returned by the court, or do not attempt removals that would otherwise be advised because they are not likely to prevail in court. The result is the same: in-home cases with safety threats that cannot be fully managed.

Even in areas with many resources and OCS has dedicated in-home caseworkers, outcomes were poor for children and families in in-home cases. The high incidence of subsequent maltreatment reports, substantiations, or removals for children served in in-home cases, supports the previous assertion that, had Impending Danger been correctly assessed, a significant percentage of these children should have been removed from their homes. Increased attention to these issues has resulted in a decrease of over 50% in the number of in-home cases since 2015.

QA case reviewers identified a few areas that are historically problematic for these items, but progress in these areas is partially responsible for the improved ratings.

- *Persistent attempts to reach parents following unsuccessful contact attempts.* Failure to reach a parent can be misinterpreted as evidence that the contact information is no longer valid, which in turn decreases the likelihood the worker will attempt to contact them again.
- *Maintaining efforts to involve parents that are not in close proximity to the child and/or have been less engaged that the other parent.* Although it is logical to actively work towards reunification with the more engaged and compliant parent, efforts to contact and engage with

the other parent must continue.

Insufficient contact with parents and children is also a contributing factor in this rating. High caseloads and turnover are believed to be the most significant factors. Caseworkers are required to have monthly face-to-face contact with each child and parent. QA case reviewers noted that, as the month progressed and it became clear that there was not enough time to see all children/parents, workers engaged in a triage of sorts in which they determined which children/parents most needed to be seen, leaving other children/parents without the mandated monthly visit.

B. Permanency

Permanency Outcomes 1 and 2

Permanency outcomes include: (A) children have permanency and stability in their living situations; and (B) the continuity of family relationships is preserved for children.

- For each of the two permanency outcomes, include the most recent available data demonstrating the state's performance. Data must include state performance on the four federal permanency indicators and relevant available case record review data.
- Based on these data and input from stakeholders, Tribes, and courts, include a brief assessment of strengths and concerns regarding Permanency Outcomes 1 and 2, including an analysis of the state's performance on the national standards for the permanency indicators.

State Response:

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

CFSR Item 4: Stability of Foster Care Placement.

The percentage of cases in which placements will be stable and in the best interests of the child will be 95% or more.

Stability of Foster Care Placement

CY Year	Cases	Strength	Strength Rating
2016	83	74	89%
2015	166	127	77%

Source: Quality Assurance Annual Review Summary, CY 2015 and 2016.

- CFSR Measure: Placement Stability

Of all children who enter care in a 12 month period, the rate of placement moves, per 1,000 days of out-of-home care will be 4.12 or fewer.*

Rate of Placement Moves per 1,000 Days in Care

CY Year	Entered Care During Period	Days in Care During Period	Placement Moves	Moves per 1,000 days in Care
2016	1406	237061	1621	6.84
2015	1486	309912	1898	6.12
2014	1328	286797	1602	5.59

Source: OCS CFSR 004 CFSR Placement Stability.

*OCS stakeholders are accustomed to looking at this data in terms of the number of moves per child (i.e., 2 moves a year). This approach does not differentiate between children with 2 moves in 30 total

days of care, and children with 2 moves in 365 (or more) total days of care. The federal measure seeks to account for this by dividing the total number of placement changes by the total number of days in care.

Interpreting the rate is difficult, even with some context. Children entered care throughout the year, were in care an average of 169 days, and averaged 1.2 moves. Meeting the national standard of 4.12 would have required 645 fewer moves. See the Assessment section for more analysis on placement stability.

CFSR Item 5: Permanency Goal for the Child

The percentage of cases where the child's permanency goal is appropriately matched to the child's needs and established in a timely manner, and Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA). Termination of Parental Rights (TPR) requirements are met, will be 95% or more.

Permanency Goal for Child

CY Year	Cases	Strength	ANI	Strength Rating
2016	80	60	20	89%
2015	158	119	39	75%

Source: OCS Quality Assurance Annual Review Summary, CY 2015 and 2016

CFSR Item 6: Achieving Reunification, Guardianship, Adoption, or Other Planned, Permanent Living Arrangement

The percentage of cases concerted efforts are made to achieve reunification, guardianship, adoption, or other planned permanent living arrangement will be 95% or more.

Achieving Reunification, Guardianship, Adoption, or Other Planned Permanent Living Arrangement

CY Year	Cases	Strength	ANI	Strength Rating
2016	83	57	26	69%
2015	166	92	74	55%

Source: OCS Quality Assurance Annual Summary, CY 2015 and 2016

- CFSR Measure: Permanency in 12 Months of Entry

Of all children who enter care in a 12 month period and stay for 8 days or more, the percent who discharge to permanency within 12 months of entering care will be 40.4% or more.

Permanency within 12 Months of Entry

Year	Entered Care During Period	Discharged to Permanency Within 12 Months	Rate
2015*	1443	393	27.2%
2014	1280	356	27.8%
2013	1014	329	32.4%

Source: OCS CFSR 005 Permanency in 12 Months for Children Entering Foster Care.

*2016 data is not missing; it is used to calculate permanency for children entering care in 2015. Full information on federal data rules is located in Appendix II.

- CFSR Measure: Re-entry to Care in 12 Months

Of children who enter care in a 12 month period, who discharged within 12 months to reunification, live with relative, or guardianship, the percent who re-entered care within 12 months of their discharge will be 8.3% or less

Re-entry to Care in 12 Months

Year	Entered Care During Period	Discharged to Permanency Within 12 Months	Foster Care Re-Entry	Rate
2015*	1439	320	31	9.7%
2014	1275	285	23	8.1%
2013	1008	234	26	11.1%

Source: OCS CFSR 007 Re-entry to Care in 12 Months.

*2016 data is not missing; it is used to calculate re-entry to care for children discharged in 2015. Full information on federal data rules is located in Appendix II.

- CFSR Measure: Permanency in 12 Months for Children in Care 12 to 23 Months

Of children in care on the first day of the 12 month period who had been in care between 12 and 23 months, the percent discharged to permanency within 12 months of the first day will be 43.7% or more.

Permanency in 12 Months for Children in Care 12 to 23 Months

Year	In Care on 1st Day	Discharged to Permanency Within 12 Months	Rate
2016	794	291	37%
2015	555	175	32%
2014	504	158	31%

Source: OCS CFSR 006 Permanency in 12 Months for Children In Care Over 12 Months.

- CFSR Measure: Permanency in 12 Months for Children in Care 24 Months or More

Of children in care on the first day of the 12 month period who had been in care for 24 months or more, the percent discharged to permanency within 12 months of the first day will be 30.3% or more

Permanency in 12 Months for Children in Care 24 Months or More

Year	In Care on 1st Day	Discharged to Permanency Within 12 Months	Rate
2016	615	211	34%
2015	498	170	34%
2014	494	126	26%

Source: OCS CFSR 006 Permanency in 12 Months for Children In Care Over 12 Months.

Assessment of Permanency Outcome 1 Strengths and Concerns

OCS did not meet the national standard for the Items #4, #5, and #6, in Permanency Outcome 1; however, there have been significant improvements from the prior year in several items and CFSR measures. These improvements occurred despite a 52.5% increase in the number of children in out-of-home care since 1/1/14. The rate of increase to the children in care population slowed to 7% in 2016, as the number of removals decreased slightly.

Unique Children Entering Out-of-Home Care

CY Year	In Care on 1st Day*	Removed During Year**	Change From Previous Year	Percentage Change
2017	2984	--	--	--
2016	2778	1413	-73	-5.2%
2015	2271	1486	157	10.6%
2014	1956	1329	269	20.2%
2013	1859	1060	59	5.9%

Source: OCS CFSR 008 In Care on 1st Day of Period, and OCS CFSR 009 Removals by Year Unique Children.

*includes youth over 18 of age and Trial Home Visits over six months
** 2017 data for removals will not be available until 1/1/18

Despite the continued increases in the number of children in out-of-home care, the majority of children served in out-of-home care have stability in their living situations. The OCS QA case review 2016 rating of 89% for CFSR, Item #4, Stability of Foster Care Placement, is near the national performance, and represents a 12% improvement over 2015. In 2016, 69% of children entering care had one or fewer placement changes, which represents an increase of 5% over 2015. Another 20% of the children in care had only two placement changes. The combined rating for these children is 4.36 moves per 1,000 days in foster care, which is near the national performance of 4.12; however, the number of placement changes for the remaining 21% of children elevates the overall rate to 6.84. When looked at in combination, these data points reinforce the conclusion that most children have stability in their living situations, but there remain too many children with too many placement changes. The QA case review

rating is somewhat higher because reviewers can consider additional factors when rating this item as a strength (i.e., a move was in the best interests of the child).

OCS QA case reviewers rated Item 5, Permanency Goal for the Child, as a strength in 89% of reviewed cases in 2016. QA case reviewers noted improvements in timely filing of Petitions for Termination of Parental Rights (TPR) as one factor in the 14% improvement from the 2015 rating. Although reviewers generally found permanency planning was timely and the goals were appropriate to the child, these efforts did not translate into a timely written case plan. Since 2014, the percentage of children with a completed case plan within 60 days of removal has decreased from 39.6% in 2014 to 26.1% in 2016. This decrease corresponds with the surge of children entering care for the same period of time making it likely the decreasing documentation of written case plans is related to increased caseloads.

Initial Case Plan (Permanency Plan)

Year	Removed and In Care > 60 Days	Timely Case Plan	Rate
2016	1224	319	26.1%
2015	1486	542	36.5
2014	1328	526	39.6

Source: OCS CFSR 011 Permanency Plan Timeliness.

Improvements were also observed for CFSR Item 6, Achieving Reunification, Guardianship, Adoption, or Other Planned Permanent Living Arrangement; although the 69% rating is well below the national standard. QA case reviewers attribute this improvement to the relationship with Item 5, in which improvements in filing timely TPR petitions show corresponding improvements in this Item for finalized guardianships, adoptions and other planned permanent living arrangements.

Permanency efforts were significantly impacted by the surge of children in out-of-home care. Higher removal counts, combined with a decreasing percentage of children exiting within 12 months, caused the population of children in care over 12 months to balloon. Those in care 12-23 months increased 70%, and those in care between 24-35 months increased 115%. The following chart tracks the ripple effect from the surge of removals that began in 2014. Children removed in 2014 that did not achieve permanency during the year were in care 0-12 months on 1/1/2015, 13-23 months on 1/1/16, and 24-35 months on 1/1/17 (follow highlighted cells left to right).

Children in Out of Home Care by Duration

In Care on 1st Day of	In Care 0 To 12 Months	In Care 13 To 23 Months	In Care 24 To 35 Months	In Care 36 To 47 Months	In Care 48 To 59 Months	In Care >= 60 Months	Total
2017	1248	814	567	198	66	91	2984
2016	1310	801	372	134	54	97	2768
2015	1169	566	267	107	63	95	2267
2014	897	511	249	130	61	106	1954

Source: OCS CFSR 005 Permanency in 12 Months for Children Entering Care and OCS CFSR 006 Permanency in 12 Months for Children In Care Over 12 Months.

Alaska's Permanency Within 12 Months of Entry rate of 27.2% is well below the national performance of 40.4%. This is nearly identical to the 27.8% rate from 2015, and down from 32.4% in 2014. The decrease directly correlates to the increase of children in care that overwhelmed the system. Caseworkers did not have sufficient capacity to manage all caseload responsibilities, including effective identification and pursuit of permanency options.

The Re-entry to Care rate, 9.7%, is near the national performance of 8.3%. This is the rate at which children that entered during a 12 month period, were discharged within 12 months to reunification, live with relative, or guardianship, and subsequently re-entered care. Although 9.7% is a 1.6% increase over the prior year, it is lower than the 2014 rate of 11.1%. Factors responsible for these changes are not known.

Children in care 12-23 months on 1/1/16 discharged to permanency at a rate of 37%. This is below the national performance of 43.7%, but a 5% improvement over the prior year. Discharges to adoption decreased from 352 in 2014, to 285 in 2015. Over the past several years, OCS responded by initiating a number of efforts designed to focus on timely permanency. These included:

- 'Hot for Permanency' focused on permanency for children in care over 24 months that were currently placed with a relative.
- Administrative Review responsibilities were removed from Permanency Planning Specialists (formerly titled Regional Adoption Specialists), and regular permanency manager meetings were established.
- OCS partnered with Casey Family Programs to bring the Director's Executive Team, regional and state office managers, ICWA specialists, Permanency Specialists, and numerous partners to the table to identify strategies for improvement in this area in September, 2016.

In part due to these efforts, the count of discharges to adoption increased to 347 in 2016, and increasing counts of signed adoption subsidy agreements are expected to result in a significant increase in 2017.

The number of children in care 24 months or more discharged to permanency at a rate of 34% each of the last two years, which exceeds the national performance of 30.3%. The work related to the bulleted permanency efforts mentioned above are likely responsible for maintaining this high rate despite the increasing number of children in this cohort.

The foster care re-entry to care rate is near the national performance. Since 2013, the statewide rate decreased from 11.1% to 9.7%. As the chart below shows, regional rates vary significantly. More analysis is required to determine why the Southeast and Western regions have had the highest rates for the past two years (2014 rates: 17.6% and 10.3%). It should be noted, however, that Western region's entire area of jurisdiction involves remote villages with few or none of the services generally utilized for long-term support of reunified families.

Foster Care Re-Entry Rate by Region

Region	Entered Care During Period	Permanency in 12 Months From Removal	Foster Care Re-Entry	Rate
Anchorage	634	172	17	9.9%
Northern	256	58	4	6.9%
Southcentral	356	43	2	4.7%
Southeast	101	19	3	15.8%
Western	92	28	5	17.9%
Statewide	**1439**	**320**	**31**	**9.7%**

Source: OCS CFSR 007 Re-entry within 12 Months.

Permanency Outcome 2: The Continuity of Family Relationships and Connections is Preserved for Children

CFSR Item 7: Placement with Siblings

Of cases with at least two siblings in Out of Home care, the percentage in which all siblings are placed together will be 95% or more.

Placement with Siblings

Year	Case Count	Strength	Area Needing Improvement	Strength Rate
2016	39	35	4	90%
2015	89	71	18	79.8%

Source: OCS Quality Assurance Annual Reports, CY 2015 and CY 2016

CFSR Item 8: Visiting with Parents and Siblings in Foster Care

The percentage of cases where children in out-of-home care have visits of sufficient quality with their parents and siblings at a frequency consistent with the child's safety and best interest will be 95% or more.

Visiting with Parents and Siblings in Foster Care

Year	Case Count	Strength	Area Needing Improvement	Strength Rate
2016	74	62	12	84%
2015	141	86	55	61.0%

Source: OCS Quality Assurance Annual Reports. CY 2015 and CY 2016

CFSR Item 9: Preserving Connections

This measure determines whether concerted efforts were made to maintain the child's connections to his or her neighborhood, community, faith, extended family, Tribe, school, and friends.

Efforts Made to Maintain Connections

Year	Case Count	Strength	Area Needing Improvement	Strength Rate
2016	83	78	5	94%
2015	165	145	20	87.9%

Source: OCS Quality Assurance Annual Reports. CY 2015 and CY 2016

CFSR Item 10: Relative Placement

The percentage of cases where maternal and paternal kinship placements are sought and considered will be 95% or more.

Kinship Placements are Sought and Considered

Year	Case Count	Strength	Area Needing Improvement	Strength Rate
2016	83	79	4	95%
2015	162	150	12	92.6%

Source: OCS Quality Assurance Annual Reports. CY 2015 and CY 2016

CFSR Item 11: Relationship of Child in Care with Parents

The percentage of cases where concerted efforts were made to promote, support, and/or maintain positive relationships between the child in foster care and his or her mother and father or other primary caregiver(s) from whom the child had been removed through activities other than just arranging for visitation will be 95% or more.

Relationship of Child in Care with Parents

Year	Case Count	Strength	Area Needing Improvement	Strength Rate
2016	73	58	15	79%
2015	81	53	28	65.4%

Source: OCS Quality Assurance Annual Reports. CY 2015 and CY 2016

Assessment of Permanency Outcome 2 Strengths and Concerns

Alaska is at or near the national standard for three items in Permanency Outcome 1, and strength ratings improved significantly for each item from 2015. QA case reviewers note that the quality of casework in this area was similar to the prior year, but more cases were rated as a strength in response to federal scoring guidance. Had 2015 QA case reviews been completed with the same scoring protocol, they would be at or near 2016 ratings.

Permanency Outcome 2 2015 to 2016 Comparison

Item	2015 Strength Rating	2016 Strength Rating
Placement with Siblings	80%	90%
Visiting with Parents and Siblings in Foster Care	61%	84%
Preserving Connections	88%	94%
Relative Placement	93%	95%
Relationship of Child In Care with Parents	65%	79%

Source: OCS Quality Assurance Annual Reports. CY 2015 and CY 2016

Placing siblings together CFSR, Item 7 is one of the highest OCS priorities. This item determines if concerted efforts were made to ensure that siblings are placed together. The 2016 strength rating of 90% represents a significant improvement over 2015 case review findings, and is very near the national standard of 95%. Of the 2444 children in an active foster care placement on 1/1/2017, 1747 children had a sibling in care. Of these, 1408 (80.6%) were placed with a sibling. This represents a 4% increase from 1/1/2016. Notice, that the QA case review score is higher because it measures concerted efforts to place siblings together. Cases can be rated as a strength if efforts were made, even if the siblings were not ultimately placed together.

Children Placed with Siblings*

Year	Children	No Siblings	Placed w/ Sibling	Not Placed with Sibling	Percent Placed w/Sibling
2017	2444	697	1408	339	80.6%
2016	2233	599	1243	391	76.1%

Source: OCS Quality Assurance Annual Reports. CY 2015 and CY 2016

*Children in current foster care placement, excluding Trial Home Visits and residential care placements.

The strength rating for Item 8, Visiting with Parents and Siblings in Foster Care, improved 23% from 2015, and at 85% is approaching the national performance of 95%. This improvement occurred even as the number children in Out of Home care continued to grow.

QA case reviewers identified two factors in 2015 that were less common in 2016, but were often present in cases that were not rated as a strength for Item 8. The first factor involves cases in which one parent is more compliant and/or engaged than the second parent. In these situations, caseworkers did not make sufficient efforts to engage with the less compliant parent. The second factor is similar; unsuccessful attempts to contact a parent were too often interpreted as evidence the parent was refusing contact or had moved to an unknown location. Caseworkers then ceased efforts to contact and/or engage with these parents. QA case reviewers were later able to contact many of these parents using existing contact information from the case file as a part of the case review process. QA case reviewers noted that in many of these cases where they were able to locate the parent, the parent expressed interest in being involved with the case planning process for the child(ren). For purposes of the QA case reviews, cases in which there is no contact with a parent cannot be rated as a strength unless the parent's whereabouts were unknown, or the parent explicitly stated he/she did not want to be involved.

The Item 9, Preserving Connections, performance rated 94%, and is only 1% below the national standard. OCS attributes this to systematic efforts to identify and coordinate with Tribes, and to identify and place children with relatives. QA case reviewers note Tribal workers generally praise OCS efforts to keep the Tribe apprised of events and to ensure that children in out of preference foster placements are afforded opportunities to participate in cultural events. Of the 1525 Alaska Native/American Indian children in care on 1/12/17, over 70% were in a preference placement. Of these, 50.4% were in a first preference placement.

2017 ICWA Placement Preference Level

	First	Second	Third	Fourth	Out of Preference	Total
Preference	768	108	153	40	456	1525
Rate	50.4%	7.1%	10.0%	2.6%	29.9%	100.0%

Source: ORCA Data Report, RR 00163 Children in Out of Home Placement.

Alaska meets the national standard for Item 10 Relative Placement with a strength rating of 95%. This item rates efforts to seek and consider maternal and paternal kinship placements. With 229 federally recognized Tribes and 55% of children in care Alaska Native/American Indian (AN/AI), most placement decisions involve the placement preferences outlined in the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA). Alaska also has a state law setting forth similar placement preferences for non-AN/AI. Caseworkers and Tribes work together to identify relatives as soon as possible after removal. Tribal workers and relatives are participants in placement review meetings, such as Team Decision Making (TDM), which are held for the vast majority of placement changes.

The percentage of children placed with relatives has risen over 10% since 1/1/2014.

Placed with Relative Snapshot

Year	All Children	Alaska Native/American Indian	Non-Alaska Native/American Indian
2017	51.8%	51.8%	51.8%
2016	46.9%	44.6%	49.9%
2015	45.0%	44.3%	46.0%
2014	41.4%	41.2%	41.6%

Source: OCS CFSR 014 Relative Placements.

A significant number of children that are not currently placed with a relative have been placed with a relative in the past. Relative placements can disrupt for a number of reasons, including:

- After placement, it is discovered that a child physical or mental health needs exceed the level of care that can be provided in a home setting;
- The impact of harassment by biological parents creates an untenable situation; this is exaggerated when the parent and relative foster parent reside near each other or in a small community;
- Relative foster parents underestimate the impact of caring for additional children on their household;
- Support services in remote locations are often extremely limited.

Accounting for disrupted placements gives a more accurate view of overall relative placement efforts. The table below includes children placed with a relative (on first day of the year) and those that are not currently placed with a relative but have had at least one relative placement since removal.

At Least 1 Relative Placement since Removal*

Year	All Children	AN/AI	Non-AN/AI
2017	65.7%	67.3%	63.5%
2016	63.2%	63.2%	63.1%
2015	60.8%	63.2%	57.3%
2014	61.1%	64.9%	54.6%

Source: OCS CFSR 015 Relative Identification.

The strength rating for CFSR Item 11, Relationship of Child in Care with Parents, increased to 79% in 2016, up 14% from 2015, but Alaska's state performance is still well below the national standard of 95%. This item is impacted by some of the issues discussed earlier. For instance, workers do not always make sufficient efforts to engage parents that are less compliant, especially when another parent is more involved. Secondly, failure to persistently attempt to reach parents following unsuccessful contact attempts; too often, this is misinterpreted as evidence that the contact information is no longer valid, which in turn decreases the likelihood the worker will attempt to contact them again. The QA case reviewers contacted many of these parents using existing contact information, and many of those parents thought to be refusing or resistant to engagement expressed a desire to be more involved.

Early identification of relatives is a critical component to all aspects of Permanency Outcomes 1 and 2. In 2015, only 4.4 relatives were identified per child within 45 days. A pilot program began in 4/1/16 in Anchorage, with the goal of increasing the percentage of children with at least 4 maternal and 4 paternal relatives identified, and increasing the percentage of identified relatives that receive a notice of their legal right to request placement.

2015 Relative Identification and Notification (Baseline)

REGION	Notice Compliance	At Least 4 Maternal Relatives	At Least 4 Paternal Relatives	Average Relatives Per Child
Anchorage	2.3%	15.5%	9.1%	3.1
Statewide	11.7%	23.9%	12.3%	4.4

Source: OCS CFSR 015 Relative Identification.

Pilot (since 4/1/16 thru 10/31/16) Relative Identification and Notification

REGION	Notice Compliance	Maternal Relative Compliance	Paternal Relative Compliance	Average Relatives Per Child
Anchorage	46.2%	43.2%	21.6%	6.2
Statewide	35.9%	32.4%	16.0%	5.0

Source: OCS CFSR 015 Relative Identification.

As this Anchorage pilot progressed, rates of both relative documentation and notification of the right to request placement improved. Analysis of the pilot outcomes will identify barriers that prevented compliance rates from being higher, and to determine which elements of the pilot can be implemented statewide. Insufficient time has passed to evaluate the effectiveness of this program; however, it is hoped there will be corresponding increases in relative placements, fewer relative placement disruptions, and decreased time to permanency.

October 2017 Relative Identification and Notification

REGION	Notice Compliance	Maternal Relative Compliance	Paternal Relative Compliance	Average Relatives Per Child
Anchorage	57.5%	58.8%	26.5%	8.0
Statewide	42.4%	33.3%	17.7%	5.7

Source: OCS CFSR 015 Relative Identification.

The Anchorage efforts have also demonstrated concerted efforts to identify of relatives of Alaska Native/American Indian children that are not in an ICWA preference placement. In Anchorage, for example, there were 588 AN/AI (or are listed in ORCA with an undetermined race and were considered as AN/AI) children with 1 or fewer relatives identified in the ORCA. An extensive file review found that most had multiple relatives identified, but not entered into ORCA; therefore, these relatives did not receive a legal notice of their right to request placement. Identified relatives that were entered into ORCA, received the required notice of right to request placement. When few or no relatives could be identified, external search engines were utilized as an additional effort to identify relatives for the child; as of January, additional relatives were identified for all but 17. Diligent relative searches have been conducted on all, and no additional relatives found.

C. Well-Being

Well-Being Outcomes 1, 2, and 3

Well-being outcomes include: (A) families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs; (B) children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs; and (C) children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs.

- For each of the three well-being outcomes, include the most recent available data demonstrating the state's performance. Data must include relevant available case record review data and relevant data from the state information system (such as information on caseworker visits with parents and children).
- Based on these data and input from stakeholders, Tribes, and courts, include a brief assessment of strengths and concerns regarding Well-Being Outcomes 1, 2, and 3.

State Response:

Well-Being Outcome 1: Families Have Enhanced Capacity to Provide For their Children's Needs.

CFSR Item 12: Needs and Services of Child, Parents, and Foster Parents

The percentage of cases in which the needs and services of the child(ren), parents, and foster parents are assessed and necessary services provided will be 95% or more.

2016 Needs and Services of Child, Parents, and Foster Parents

Case Type	Case Count	Strength	Area Needing Improvement	Strength Rate
Out of Home	83	55	28	66%
In Home	66	36	30	55%
Total	**149**	**91**	**58**	**61%**

Source: OCS Quality Assurance Annual Reports. CY 2015 and CY 2016

2015 Needs and Services of Child, Parents, and Foster Parents

Case Type	Case Count	Strength	Area Needing Improvement	Strength Rate
Out of Home	166	70	96	42.2%
In Home	111	21	90	18.9%
Total	**277**	**91**	**186**	**32.9%**

Source: OCS Quality Assurance Annual Reports. CY 2015 and CY 2016

CFSR Item 12A: Needs Assessment and Services to Children

The percentage of cases in which the needs of the child(ren) are assessed and necessary services are provided will be 95% or more

2016 Needs Assessment and Services to Children

Case Type	Case Count	Strength	Area Needing Improvement	Strength Rate
Out of Home	83	75	8	90%
In Home	66	48	18	73%
Total	**149**	**123**	**26**	**83%**

Source: OCS Quality Assurance Annual Reports. CY 2015 and CY 2016

2015 Needs Assessment and Services to Children

Case Type	Case Count	Strength	Area Needing Improvement	Strength Rate
Out of Home	166	139	27	83.7%
In Home	111	45	66	40.5%
Total	**277**	**184**	**93**	**66.4%**

Source: OCS Quality Assurance Annual Reports. CY 2015 and CY 2016

CFSR Item 12B: Needs Assessment and Services to Parents

The percentage of cases in which the needs of the parents are assessed and necessary services are provided will be 95% or more

2016 Needs Assessment and Services to Parents

Case Type	Case Count	Strength	Area Needing Improvement	Strength Rate
Out of Home	69	49	20	71%
In Home	66	41	25	62%
Total	**135**	**90**	**45**	**67%**

Source: OCS Quality Assurance Annual Reports. CY 2015 and CY 2016

2015 Needs Assessment and Services to Parents

Case Type	Case Count	Strength	Area Needing Improvement	Strength Rate
Out of Home	138	50	88	36.2%
In Home	111	23	88	20.7%
Total	**249**	**73**	**176**	**29.3%**

Source: OCS Quality Assurance Annual Reports. CY 2015 and CY 2016

CFSR Item 12C: Needs Assessment and Services to Foster Parents

The percentage of cases in which the needs of the foster parents are assessed and necessary services are provided will be 95% or more

2015 and 2016 Foster Parents Needs Assessed and Necessary Services Provided

Year	Case Count	Strength	Area Needing Improvement	Strength Rate
2016	155	123	32	79%
2015	80	71	9	89%

Source: OCS Quality Assurance Annual Reports. CY 2015 and CY 2016

CFSR Item 13: Child and Family Involvement in Case Planning

The percentage of cases in which concerted efforts were made to actively involve the child and family in case planning will be 95% or more

2016 Child and Family Actively Involved in Case Planning

Case Type	Case Count	Strength	Area Needing Improvement	Strength Rate
Out of Home	78	57	21	73%
In Home	66	30	36	45%
Total	**144**	**87**	**57**	**60%**

Source: OCS Quality Assurance Annual Reports. CY 2015 and CY 2016:

2015 Child and Family Actively Involved in Case Planning

Case Type	Case Count	Strength	Area Needing Improvement	Strength Rate
Out of Home	159	57	102	35.8%
In Home	111	20	91	18.0%
Total	**270**	**77**	**193**	**28.5%**

Source: OCS Quality Assurance Annual Reports. CY 2015 and CY 2016

CFSR Item 14: Caseworker Visits with Children

The percentage of cases in which the frequency and quality of visits between caseworkers and children are sufficient to ensure the safety, permanency and well-being of the children and promote achievement of case goals will be 95% or more

2016 Caseworker Visits with Children

Case Type	Case Count	Strength	Area Needing Improvement	Strength Rate
Out of Home	83	43	40	52%
In Home	66	28	38	42%
Total	**149**	**71**	**78**	**48%**

Source: OCS Quality Assurance Annual Reports. CY 2015 and CY 2016:

2015 Caseworker Visits with Children

Case Type	Case Count	Strength	Area Needing Improvement	Strength Rate
Out of Home	166	53	113	31.9%
In Home	111	20	91	18.0%
Total	**277**	**73**	**204**	**26.4%**

Source: OCS Quality Assurance Annual Reports. CY 2015 and CY 2016

CFSR item 15: Caseworker Visits with Parents

The percentage of cases in which the frequency and quality of visits between caseworkers and parents are sufficient to ensure the safety, permanency, and well-being of the children and promote achievement of case goals will be 95% or more

2016 Caseworker Visits with Parents

Case Type	Case Count	Strength	Area Needing Improvement	Strength Rate
Out of Home	69	9	60	13%
In Home	66	19	47	29%
Total	**135**	**28**	**107**	**21%**

Source: OCS Quality Assurance Annual Reports. CY 2015 and CY 2016:

2015 Caseworker Visits with Parents

Case Type	Case Count	Strength	Area Needing Improvement	Strength Rate
Out of Home	137	13	124	9.5%
In Home	111	14	97	12.6%
Total	**248**	**27**	**221**	**10.9%**

Source: OCS Quality Assurance Annual Reports. CY 2015 and CY 2016

Assessment of Child and Family Well-Being 1 Outcome Strengths and Concerns

Alaska's state performance for Well-Being I, did not meet the national standards for all items in this outcome as is outlined in the seven CFSR Items 12-15. According to the OCS QA case reviews, in most cases, ratings are significantly worse for in-home cases, which reflect the issues with in-home cases discussed earlier in the Assessment of Safety Outcome 2 section. The only exception is CFSR Item 15, Caseworker Visits with Parents, in which ratings for both in-home and out-of-home case are poor.

Specific to each of the Items 12-15, the following analysis is provided. Needs and Services of Child, Parents, and Foster Parents CFSR Item 12 improved from 32.9% in 2015 to 61% in 2016, but remains well below the national standard of 95% or more. QA case reviewers noted improvements in needs assessments, as reviewers were seeing more assessments in the case file and the assessments were better addressing the needs. Common characteristics in cases that were not rated as strengths were failure to include non-parent adults, either living in, or frequently present in, the home, in the needs assessments (generally non-parent paramours). Incarcerated parents were also not included in the needs assessments, even when they were expected to return to the home upon release from prison. Additional factors included difficult service delivery in some locations, and, for in-home cases, a tendency to focus only (or mainly) on the identified victim; with in-home cases, needs must be assessed for each child, not just the identified victim, in the home in order for the case to be rated as a strength. In contrast, only the identified child is reviewed in out-of-home cases.

- For CFSR Item 12A Needs Assessment and Services to Children, improved 26% from 2015. The rate for out-of-home cases, 90%, approaches the national standard of 95%.

- The rate for CFSR Item 12B, Needs Assessment and Services to Parents, improved from 29.3% to 67% in 2016. As mentioned above, improved needs assessments were the main area of improvement.

- The rating for Item 12c, Needs Assessment and Services to Foster Parents, decreased significantly. QA case reviewers note that the decrease is due to a scoring change requirement with the instrument rather that deterioration in practice. Prior to October 2015, payments to foster parents allowed for this item to be rated a strength. However, technical guidance issued in October, 2015, instructed reviewers to give less credit for foster care payments as evidence of support, which resulted in fewer cases being rated as a strength.

Caseworker Visits with Children CFSR Item 14, improved 22% over 2015, but the 2016 rate of 52% remains well below the national standard of 95%. Although ORCA data shows that 72% of the total required caseworker visits were conducted, the number of cases receiving visits in each month was considerably smaller. Additionally, too many visits were insufficient to frequency, duration or quality. The 52% increase in children in care since 2013 has made it extremely difficult for caseworkers to complete all required tasks. QA case reviewers observed situations in which as the month progressed and it became clear that there was not enough time to see all children/parents, workers engaged in a triage of sorts in which they determined which children/parents most need to be seen, thus, not seeing all children on a caseload as required.

The Item 15 rating, Caseworker Visits with Parents, is poor. This rating can be partially attributed to issues addressed earlier in Items 8,9, and 11: failure to persistently attempt to reach parents following unsuccessful contact attempts, and failure to continue engagement efforts with parents that live apart and/or have different levels of engagement and compliance.

In response to high caseloads and as part of ongoing Tribal collaboration efforts, in May 2016, OCS received permission from the Children's Bureau to include the count of visits by Tribal workers as caseworker visits, based on information that the Tribal workers provide input into the child's case plan, make recommendations/decisions about services, placements, permanent plans, etc. based on those visits and/or in addition to those visits. This effort is specific to Tribes that are a part of the Rural Child Welfare Services grants or Tribal Title IV-E Maintenance Agreements. It is too early to determine if these efforts will improve ratings for Items 14 and 15.

Well-Being Outcome 2: Children Receive Appropriate Services to Meet Their Educational Needs

CFSR Item 16: Educational Needs of the Child

The percentage of cases in which the educational needs of the child(ren) are assessed and services to address identified needs are provided will be 95% or more.

2016 Child Education Needs

Case Type	Case Count	Strength	Area Needing Improvement	Strength Rate
Out of Home	74	73	1	99%
In Home	16	12	4	75%
Total	90	85	5	94%

Source: OCS Quality Assurance Annual Reports. CY 2015 and CY 2016

2015 Child Education Needs

Case Type	Case Count	Strength	Area Needing Improvement	Strength Rate
Out of Home	150	149	1	99.3%
In Home	43	26	17	60.5%
Total	193	175	18	90.7%

Source: OCS Quality Assurance Annual Reports. CY 2015 and CY 2016

Assessment of Child and Family Well-Being 2 Outcome Strengths and Concerns

Alaska's state performance with Item 16, Meeting the Educational Needs of Children is a strength. The overall rate of 94% is just below the federal standard of 95%, and the rate for out-of-home cases is 99%. QA case reviews show that performance with in-home cases is significantly lower. A review of the 2015 case rating summaries shows no identifiable areas of improvement for out-of-home cases. As mentioned previously, in-home case were rated lower due to the failure to ensure educational needs assessments occur for all children in the household, not just the identified victim, with services provided when indicated in the needs assessment.

Well-Being Outcome 3: Children Receive Adequate Services to Meet Their Physical and Mental Health Needs

CFSR Item 17: Physical Health of the Child

The percentage of cases in which the physical health needs of the child(ren) are assessed and services to address identified needs are provided will be 95% or more.

2016 Physical Health Needs Assessed and Services Provided

Case Type	Case Count	Strength	Area Needing Improvement	Strength Rate
Out of Home	83	81	2	98%
In Home	24	20	4	83%
Total	107	101	6	94%

Source: OCS Quality Assurance Annual Reports. CY 2015 and CY 2016

2015 Physical Health Needs Assessed and Services Provided

Case Type	Case Count	Strength	Area Needing Improvement	Strength Rate
Out of Home	166	163	3	98.2%
In Home	46	30	16	65.2%
Total	212	193	19	91.0%

Source: OCS Quality Assurance Annual Reports. CY 2015 and CY 2016

CFSR Item 18: Mental/Behavioral Health of the Child

The percentage of cases in which the mental health needs of the child(ren) are assessed and services to address identified needs are provided will be 95% or more

2016 Mental Health Needs Assessed and Services Provided

Case Type	Case Count	Strength	Area Needing Improvement	Strength Rate
Out of Home	64	56	8	88%
In Home	48	27	21	56%
Total	112	83	29	74%

Source: OCS Quality Assurance Annual Reports. CY 2015 and CY 2016

2015 Mental Health Needs Assessed and Services Provided

Case Type	Case Count	Strength	Area Needing Improvement	Strength Rate
Out of Home	136	99	37	72.8%
In Home	97	27	70	27.8%
Total	233	126	107	54.1%

Source: OCS Quality Assurance Annual Reports. CY 2015 and CY 2016

Assessment of Child and Family Well-Being Outcome 3 Strengths and Concerns

Alaska's state performance for CFSR Item 17, the Physical Health of the Child, is at 94% which is just below the national standard of 95%. The rate for out-of-home cases is 98.2%. A review of the 2015 case rating summaries shows no identifiable areas of improvement for out-of-home cases. As mentioned previously, in-home ratings can improve by ensuring needs assessments occur for all children in the household, not just the identified victim, with services provided when indicated.

In Alaska, nearly all of the children in foster care are eligible for Medicaid. There are some instances in which Medicaid is the secondary coverage, due to the child having existing coverage through the parents' insurance plans.

Efforts by foster parents are a critical component in Alaska's performance with this item. Foster parents take children to the appointments, schedule assessments with support of caseworkers, and are called upon to offer the support necessary for children placed in their foster homes. They maintain medical, dental, immunization, and treatment records for the children.

With rare exceptions, all children in the custody of the OCS are eligible for Medicaid; thus medical services for children are generally covered through Medicaid. OCS policy 6.3.1 requires foster parents to arrange for an Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSDT) screening within 30 days of placement for all children. The EPSDT screening assesses the various medical and behavioral needs of the child. The following table shows that compliance with this requirement decreased over the past year. EPSDT information is usually entered by an OCS specialty unit that receives regular reports from the Medicaid database. A new Medicaid database was implemented in 2015, and it is suspected that the new report code inadvertently omits some EPSDT data.

EPSDT Compliance

Year	Children in Care	Any EPSDT	Rate	EPSDT within 180 Days	Rate
2016	2578	2220	86.1%	2073	80.4%
2015	2064	1986	96.2%	1825	88.4%

Source: OCS CFSR 016 EPSDT Documentation Report.

The CFSR item 18 Mental/Behavioral Health of the Child, is rated at 88% for out-of-home cases and 56% for in-home cases. The overall rate for this item is 74%. These rates all represent significant increases from 2015. QA case reviewers attribute the increase for this item to better needs assessments. Improvements in in-home cases are attributed to a decrease in situations in which efforts

were focused on the one child that was subjected to maltreatment. As discussed earlier, in order for in-home cases to be rated as a strength, all children in the household must be assessed and services provided when indicated.

Regional Psychiatric Nurses play an important role in monitoring children in custody who have mental health needs and/or are on prescribes psychotropic medications. The OCS Psychiatric Nurses play a vital role by serving as the liaisons between OCS and mental health providers and facilities. The nurses help identify in-state and out-of-state facilities for children that need in-patient, residential care, and are notified when children are placed in acute psychiatric facilities, participate in Team Decision-Making meetings, and coordinate discharge planning for the children from the residential care facilities. The OCS Psychiatric Nurses use quarterly psychotropic medication reports, generated by the Division of Health Care Services (DHCS), to monitor psychotropic medications for children in care. Additionally, OCS has an agreement with DHCS for which Seattle Children's Hospital (SCH) provides secondary medication reviews for children in OCS custody who are on 2 or more psychotropic medications. If there are concerns about the medications a child is receiving, the nurses will arrange for doctor-to-doctor consults between SCH and the child's prescribing physician. Records are reviewed to ensure each child's medication plan of care involves age appropriate dosages, avoids contraindications, and controls for and/or minimizes side effects. Psych Nurses report that, in the years since these procedures were put into place, instances of overmedication and inappropriate medication have decreased significantly. They attribute this both to the monitoring they do and a greater awareness by physicians.

Psychotropic Medications Quarterly Summary

Region	Children by number of Medications					Total children	Avg count meds/child
	1 Med	2 Med	3 Med	4 Med	5 Med		
Anchorage	44	26	14	7	2	93	1.7
Northern	16	7	4	1	2	30	1.9
Southcentral	29	16	12	3	0	60	1.8
Southeast	12	4	2	0	0	18	1.4
Western	7	6	2	1	0	16	1.8

Source: OCS ORCA Report, RR 00183 Psychotropic Medications Quarterly Summary, 2/13/2017.

OCS Psychiatric Nurses note that, as OCS staff stay longer in their jobs, they gain awareness of these issues for children. Although the importance of assessing for and providing mental health services is covered in training, new workers with big caseloads are not able to make this an area of focus. This often changes following the first-hand experience of having a child on their caseload is admitted to an acute care facility.

EPSDT evaluations contain a mental health assessment. Compliance with EPSDT requirements helps make sure children receive early mental health assessments.

One factor that can contribute to lower strength ratings is waitlists for services; these waitlists can delay service provisions for children with education, physical health, or mental/behavioral health needs. These delays can prevent a case from being rated as a strength for Items 16, 17, 18.

Section IV: Assessment of Systemic Factors

Instructions

The statewide assessment information for systemic factors is used in determining ratings for substantial conformity. Therefore, it is imperative that the statewide assessment team ensures that information in this section speaks to how well each systemic factor requirement functions across the state. To complete the assessment for each systemic factor, state agencies should:

1. Review the *CFSR Procedures Manual* (available on the Children's Bureau Web site at http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb), which elaborates on key concepts and provides examples of data that are relevant to the assessment of systemic factor requirements.
2. Respond to each assessment question using the requested data and/or information for each systemic factor item. Relevant data can be qualitative and/or quantitative. Refer to the section in the state's most recent Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) or Annual Progress and Services Report (APSR) that provides assessment information on state performance for each of the seven systemic factors. Review the information with the statewide assessment team and determine if more recent data is available that can be used to provide an updated assessment of each item. If more recent data are not available, refer to the most recent CFSP or APSR document by indicating the document name/date and relevant page numbers where the information can be found for each systemic factor item.
3. Emphasize how well the data and/or information characterizes the statewide functioning of the systemic factor requirement. In other words, describe the strengths and limitations in using the data and/or information to characterize how well the systemic factor item functions statewide (e.g., strengths/limitations of data quality and/or methods used to collect/analyze data).
4. Include the sources of data and/or information used to respond to each item-specific assessment question.
5. Indicate appropriate time frames to ground the systemic factor data and/or information. The systemic factor data and/or information should be current or the most recent (e.g., within the last year).

The systemic factor items begin with #19 instead of #1 because items #1 through 18 are outcome-related items covered in the onsite review instrument used during the onsite review. Items related to the systemic factors are items #19 through 36.

A. Statewide Information System

Item 19: Statewide Information System

How well is the statewide information system functioning statewide to ensure that, at a minimum, the state can readily identify the status, demographic characteristics, location, and goals for the placement of every child who is (or within the immediately preceding 12 months, has been) in foster care?

> Please provide relevant quantitative/qualitative data or information that show the statewide information system requirements are being met statewide.

State Response:

Alaska asserts that the Statewide Information System is a strength area. Alaska's statewide information system, the Online Resources for Children in Alaska (ORCA), is accessible to all staff in all OCS field offices statewide. ORCA ensures that the state can routinely identify the status, demographics, location, and goals for placement of every child in foster care. Alaska asserts that the ORCA system is functioning and that users can readily identify the necessary information in ORCA.

In order to assess the data validity and reliability within ORCA, Alaska looked first to the system rules and processes around placement documentation and due process notifications to providers. Alaska then compared the ORCA demographic data with the same data with the Electronic Vital Record System (EVRS), located with the DHSS Division of Public Health, Bureau of Vital Statistics, to verify data accuracy for name and date of birth information. Additionally, Alaska produced information from the OCS Automated Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) specific to the demographic error rates as additional verification of data reporting. Finally, Alaska utilizes several internal ORCA reports regarding children in placement, one of which is integral to a weekly monitoring process to identify missing placement data.

Identification of status:
Alaska asserts that the identification of status is an area of strength. Court events, or Legal status, documentation is virtually centralized, meaning that one individual is responsible for entering all legal statuses for the Anchorage, Southcentral and Western Region, while two other individuals document legal statuses for the Southeast and Northern Regions, respectively. Centralizing the data entry ensures that the process for data entry is standardized, which increases accuracy.

Identification of demographic characteristics: Alaska asserts that the accuracy of demographic characteristics is seen as an area of strength. OCS has established practice protocols under CPS Policy and Procedure Manual 6.2.1.4: *Verifying Citizenship and Immigration Status*, for requesting and collecting birth certificates of all children. ORCA requires a gender and date of birth to be documented for all children in placement. The date of birth is necessary for the system to determine if the correct service type is selected for the placement, as Alaska's foster care base rates are determined by the child's age. The system checks for the existence of a gender and date of birth each time a child's placement changes.

In September of 2016, ORCA staff sampled 33 records of children currently in out-of-home placement to compare the demographic data documented in ORCA with the demographic data documented in Alaska's Vital Statistics database, Electronic Vital Record System (EVRS). Seven of the 33 individuals were not in the EVRS database. Of the 26 individuals in EVRS, the following number of records matched between EVRS and ORCA:

Element	% Match
Date of Birth	100
Last Name	92
First Name	96

Source: ORCA staff sample log, 9/2016

For children in custody who were not located in EVRS when this sampling occurred, a cross-comparison of these seven profiles was conducted with the OCS Permanent Fund Dividend (PFD) database. The State of Alaska issues an annual payment to every Alaskan; for children in OCS custody, OCS is statutorily mandated to apply for the children's PFD each year the child is in custody. The PFD is then held in trust until the child's 18th birthday. A PFD check cannot be issued unless there is proof of eligibility, which is generally verified, in part, through birth certificate verification. The PFD database was able to identify all of the seven remaining children; however, birth certificates could only be verified on two of the seven children.

The OCS Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) files include data from the ORCA system. Twice a year, OCS completes an AFCARS test run in preparation for submission. ORCA staff utilizes the results of the test run to identify missing AFCARS data. ORCA staff then contacts the appropriate caseworker to enter the missing data. A data quality report for Alaska's AFCARS FFY2016A demonstrates low error rates for demographic data elements. In this submission, Alaska had no error rates above 10%, which is the threshold for an AFCARS penalty. Below is a chart documenting shows the number of missing demographic records in the FFY 2016A AFCARS report:

Element Name	Records Missing	% Failing
FC-06 Date of Birth	0	0
FC-07 Sex	0	0
FC-08 Race	0	0
FC-09 Hispanic Origin	213	6.37
FC-18 First Removal Date	0	0
FC-20 Last Discharge Date	0	0
FC-21 Latest Removal	0	0
FC-41 Current Placement Setting	0	0
FC-42 Out of State	0	0

Source: Alaska Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System data quality report, for review period FF2016A

Identification of location:

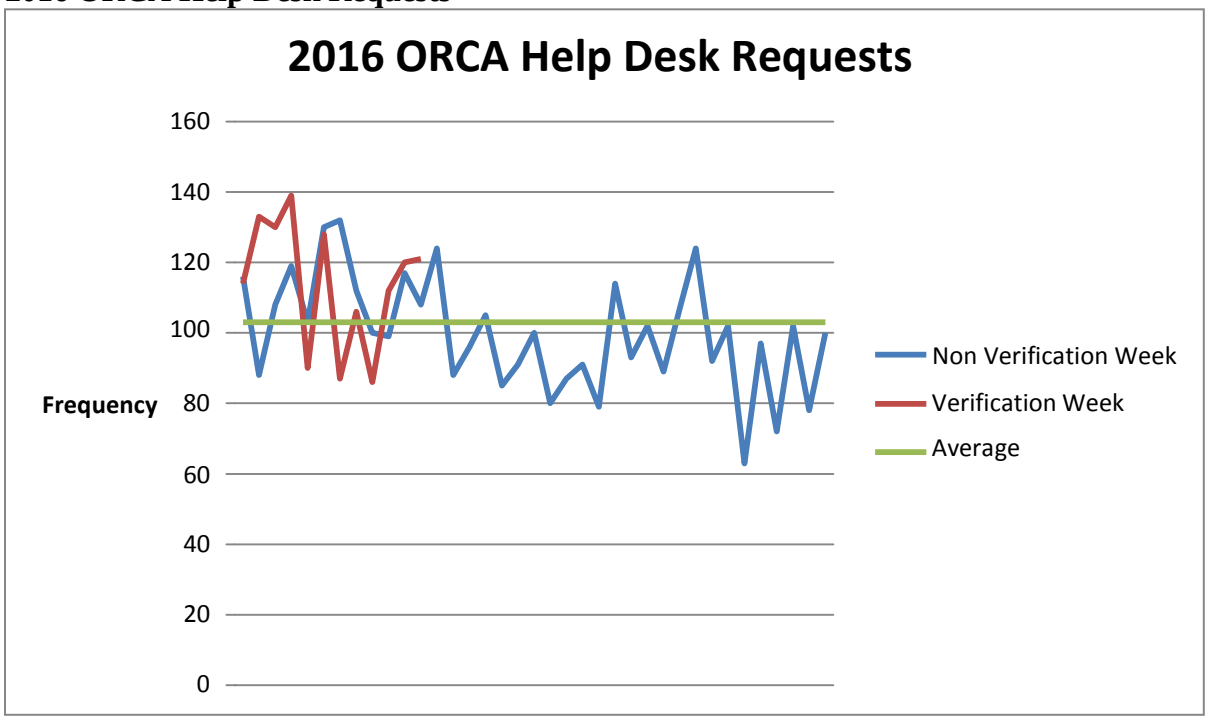
Alaska asserts that the identification of location is an area of strength. When a child is in the custody of OCS and placed in a foster home or facility, a placement must be documented in ORCA to indicate where the child is physically located. The initial placement in ORCA is necessary for initiating a title IV-E eligibility status review, legal notifications to relevant parties, generating payments to providers, tracking caseworker visit compliance and requesting special needs funds.

Each month, primary caseworkers review the list of children placed with licensed providers and indicate that the data is accurate by 'verifying' the placement information. This is completed in ORCA by checking a box for each placement information row. While caseworkers do verify information for children placed with licensed providers each month, this verification process does not include unlicensed providers. The information in each verification row includes:

- Case Name
- Child Name
- Provider Name
- Start Date of Placement
- End Date of Placement (if applicable; absence of an end date indicates the child is still placed with this provider)
- Custody End Date (if applicable)

The end result of this activity is that a payment is distributed to the provider. OCS does not collect data on how often the placement information needs to be corrected prior to verification. However, data on customer service assistance proves that user assistance needs do not spike unusually during placement verification weeks. When the number of requests during placement verification weeks is compared to non-verification weeks, OCS does not see a significant difference that could be definitively attributed to data modifications during the placement verification week. Below is a chart displaying the number of requests for assistance the ORCA Help Desk staff received each week during CY 2016.

2016 ORCA Help Desk Requests



Source: ORCA Help Desk requests for CY 2016.

Additionally, OCS sends each placement provider a monthly provider statement which details placement information for the current month, and for the two months prior. Providers contact the OCS Provider Payments Unit, or the primary caseworker, if any of the information in the Notice of Change of Placement is inaccurate. If there is a discrepancy noted by the provider, the provider is instructed to contact the OCS Provider Payments Unit to correct any of the information within the ORCA system:

- Child Name
- Start of Placement
- End Date of Placement (if applicable)

An internal report, the OCS Children in Out-of-Home Placement RR00163, contains data regarding children in a current AFCARS removal episode, including demographics, location, permanency goal, and provider contact information. The report allows users to filter/sort by relevant information:

- Region
- Office
- Supervisor
- Primary caseworker

The OCS ORCA Report, OCS Children in Out-of-Home Placement RR00163, is reviewed each week by ORCA staff to identify children who are missing placement documentation. If missing data is identified, the ORCA staff contacts the primary caseworker and supervisor to call attention to the issue and offer assistance with documenting the placement. Various report runs of this report indication that very few children who are entered into ORCA have missing placement documentation:

Date or Report run	Number of children with placement documentation in ORCA	Number of children with missing placement documentation in ORCA	Percent with of children missing placement documentation in ORCA
8/9/2016	3012	14	0.4
9/23/2016	2983	7	0.2
12/16/2016	3025	27	0.8

Source: OCS ORCA Report, RR 00163 OCS Children in Out-of-Home Placement, 8/9/2016, 9/23/2016, and 12/16/2016...

Goals for placement for every child: Alaska asserts that Goals for placement of every child is an area of strength. The OCS ORCA Report, Plan Summary Report RR00072, includes a row for all children in a documented out-of-home placement on the day the report is run. On this report users can see the goal, or lack of goal, as well as dates that indicate whether or not the permanency goal (case plan) review is current or overdue. This information is available on demand and is refreshed with production data approximately every 15 minutes. The OCS AFCARS data files include data from the ORCA system. Twice a year, ORCA completes an AFCARS test run in preparation for submission. ORCA staff utilizes the results of the test run to identify missing data. ORCA staff then contacts the appropriate case worker to enter the missing data. A data quality report for Alaska's AFCARS FFH 2016A demonstrates low error rates for the Goal for placement of every child data element. In this submission, Alaska's error rate for this was 6.35%, which is well under the 10% threshold for an AFCARS penalty.

Alaska has demonstrated that the OCS ORCA can readily identify the status, demographic characteristics, location and goals for the placement of every child who is in care. Additionally, the ORCA system has various reports to check, monitor, verify and follow up on missing data elements as described above. It is for these reasons, that Alaska asserts that the Alaska statewide information system, ORCA as a strength.

B. Case Review System

For purposes of the Systemic Factor, Alaska looks at OCS processes for case planning and reviews, as well as the court processes and hearings on key federal requirements related to Alaska's Case Review System. The items that are assessed for this section include:

- Item 20: Written Case Plan
- Item 21: Periodic Reviews
- Item 22: Permanency Hearings
- Item 23: Termination of Parental Rights
- Item 24: Notice of Hearings and Reviews to Caregivers

Alaska asserts that the Case Review System is an area needing improvement. In the 2015-2019 Child and Family Services Plan, Alaska indicated that it was not in substantial conformity with this item. The reasons stated at that time remain true today: 1) case plans are not consistently developed with the child's parents; 2) Alaska does not have a way to track the percent of cases in which a Termination of Parental Rights petition was filed on time; and 3) notification of caregivers for court hearings and reviews is an area of need.

Item 20: Written Case Plan

How well is the case review system functioning statewide to ensure that each child has a written case plan that is developed jointly with the child's parent(s) and includes the required provisions?

> Please provide relevant quantitative/qualitative data or information that shows each child has a written case plan as required that is developed jointly with the child's parent(s) that includes the required provisions.

State Response:

Written case plans continue to be an area needing improvement for the State of Alaska Office of Children's Services. The child's parents are not always included jointly in case planning and not all cases have a current case plan document to guide the plan participants. The case plans utilized by OCS have the required provisions included; however, ORCA data and quality assurance data show that case plans are not completed timely and/or are not always completed jointly with the family.

The Office of Children's Services determined in early 2016, that changes to the case planning process were needed to improve outcomes for timely case plans, which became effective 9/28/2016. Insufficient time has passed to determine if this revised model is providing the desired outcomes for case plan improvements. For purposes the discussion of this item, OCS has elected to utilize ORCA case planning data from 9/28/2016 point in time.

Timely Case Plans:

Initial case plans: As noted in Permanency Outcome 1 data for CFSR, Item5 in Section III of this document, OCS QA case reviewers found that timely and appropriate case plan goals are established, but that case plans not are completed timely. According to ORCA data, there has been a decrease in the documentation of the initial case planning since 2014. During this same period of time, the OCS experienced a significant increase in the number of children in out-of-home care. The decrease in the timely completion of initial case plans appears to correspond with an increase in children entering care for the same period of time. The following table demonstrates the decrease in timely initial case plans:

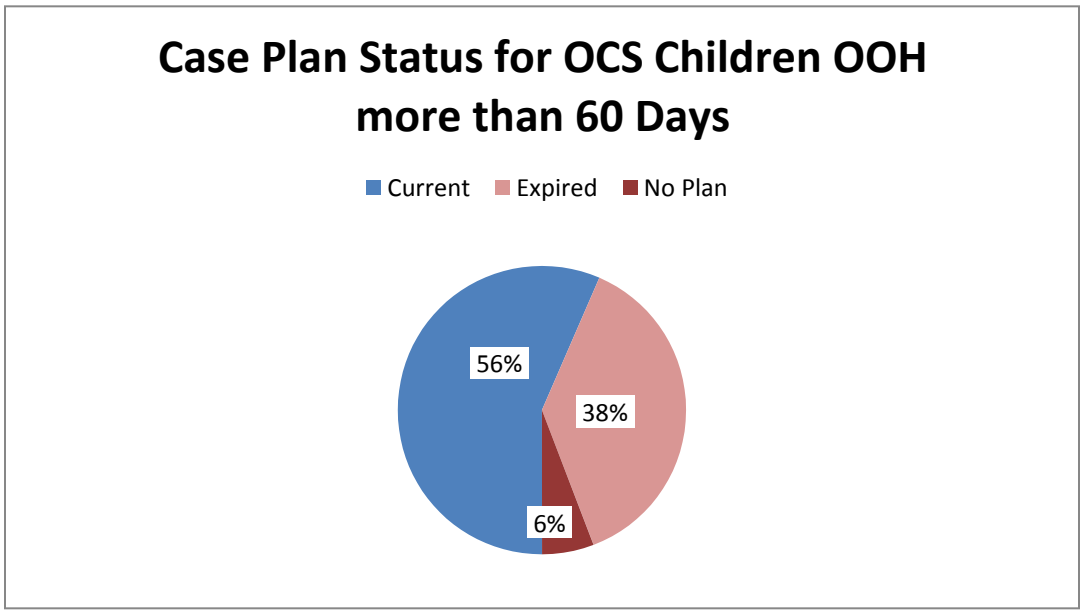
Initial Case Plan (Permanency Plan)

Year	Removed and In Care > 60 Days	Timely Case Plan	Rate
2016	1224	319	26.1%
2015	1486	542	36.5%
2014	1328	526	39.6%

Source: OCS CFSR 011 Perm Plan Timeliness.

All case plans: The chart below provides information regarding the completion of all case plan documents, not just the initial case plan. This chart depicts ORCA data from a point-in-time on 09/28/2016 and shows that 56% of cases with a child out of the home for 60+ days had a current case plan. This is a decrease from the April 2016 data used in the 2017 APSR, which noted 65.8% had a current case plan. Additionally, the point-in-time data indicates that on 9/28/2016, 6% of children who were in out-of-home care after 60 days did not have an active case plan entered into ORCA. QA case reviewers note that timely documentation and updates are areas that Alaska can improve. As outlined in Assessment of Permanency Outcome 1 Strengths and Concerns, case planning is occurring in a timely manner, but the written case plans are not completed in a timely manner and case plans are not updated as frequently as policy would require. However, most expired case plans accurately reflect the current needs of the children and parents. The chart below shows that updating the case plans is an area needing improvement.

ORCA Case Plan Status for OCS Children in Out-of-Home Care



Source: OCS ORCA Case Plan Summary. 9/28/2016.

Joint Development of Case Plans:

CPS policies, 2.9.3, Family Services Assessment: Case Planning with Parents and 2.9.4 Family Services Assessment, Case Planning with Children, mandates that all case plans must be developed jointly with the parents and the child. The OCS QA case review data specific to joint development of case plans indicates

two things: 1) In CY 2016 children and families were included in case planning 60% of the time; and 2) In CY 2015, children and families were included in case planning less than a third of the time. Generally, the QA case review data shows that involvement of the child and family in case planning is lacking. However, it is important to note that OCS has shown a large improvement from one year to the next. The reason for this change is not determined, although the agency is hopeful that the focus on case planning and the changes made to the Family Services Assessment process (FSA 2.0, explained below) will continue to impact improvements in this area.

2016 Child and Family Actively Involved in Case Planning

Case Type	Case Count	Strength	Area Needing Improvement	Strength Rate
Out-of-Home	78	57	21	73%
In-Home	66	30	36	45%
Total	144	87	57	60%

Source: OCS Quality Assurance Annual Reports. CY 2016

2015 Child and Family Actively Involved in Case Planning

Case Type	Case Count	Strength	Area Needing Improvement	Strength Rate
Out-of-Home	159	57	102	35.8%
In-Home	111	20	91	18.0%
Total	270	77	193	28.5%

Source: OCS Quality Assurance Annual Reports. CY 2015

As part of the program improvement plan following the 2008 CFSR, OCS indicated that to improve child and parent involvement in case planning, OCS would implement a Family Services Assessment (FSA) model which was achieved in October 2013. In 2015, after receiving feedback from staff and stakeholders and reviewing and analyzing QA case review data related to case plan compliance regarding parent engagement, OCS identified that the FSA model as implemented, was not effective in improving outcomes for case planning involvement with children and parents; OCS was not achieving the desired outcomes. The trends with the FSA model that OCS identified were that, like every other case planning model, FSA promoted family engagement; however, the model did not produce the expected level of family engagement. Additionally, it was determined that workers were not completing the necessary needs assessments for case planning.

In response, the FSA model was revised into FSA 2.0 and changed the case planning process documentation. In March 2016, OCS piloted the FSA 2.0 and then implemented statewide in September 2016. The new case plan process under FSA 2.0 requires that the child's case plan be completed in ORCA; however, parent case plans are completed on a paper template with the parents at locations that may be outside of the OCS office. Once completed, the parents' case plans are scanned into ORCA. OCS expects that it will be easier to engage parents in case planning if the documents are developed and reviewed in the field where workers meet with families. OCS will monitor case plan data to determine the impact FSA 2.0 on completion, engagement, and involvement of child and family in case plan development.

Alaska asserts that Item 20 is an area needing improvement. OCS data outlined above shows that case plans are not completed within desired timelines and are not developed jointly with the children and parents. Until recently, all case planning needed to be completed in ORCA, whereby, the worker has had to rely on

completing the plan on the office computer and not in the field where a worker is more likely to meet with parents and children. Current, technologies for the OCS ORCA system do not include mobility options for workers to access electronic case files and/or complete necessary documentation in the field. Additionally, increased caseloads and high worker turnover may also contribute to low levels of family engagement with case planning. Alaska is hopeful that the documentation improvements in this area and anticipate that the program change made in September 2016 related to case planning will assist in increasing compliance in this area.

Item 21: Periodic Reviews

How well is the case review system functioning statewide to ensure that a periodic review for each child occurs no less frequently than once every 6 months, either by a court or by administrative review?

> Please provide relevant quantitative/qualitative data or information that show a periodic review occurs as required for each child no less frequently than once every 6 months, either by a court or by administrative review.

State Response:

Alaska asserts that item 21 is a strength area. For many years in Alaska, the federally-mandated administrative reviews were conducted by OCS staff, located in each of the five OCS service regions. In 2016, OCS elected to consolidate the administrative reviews with the QA Unit staff centralized in Anchorage. Most of this report thus far, has focused on the work that the QA Unit has conducted with regards to the on-going, case reviews for purposes of federal compliance with the CFSR. However, administrative reviews follow the mandates outlined in both federal and state guidance; for each out-of-home case, an administrative review must be conducted one every 6 months. Thus, the QA Unit is conducting both the CFSR case reviews as well as the federally-mandated administrative reviews for children and families.

Specific to the administrative reviews, the QA case reviewers utilize OCS ORCA Admin Reviews Due, RR00024 Report, to gather data about the administrative reviews. This report shows how many cases should be reviewed, how many are due for review in the current month and next, and how many are overdue for an administrative review. OCS has historically shown a high rate of compliance with timeliness of completed administrative reviews, as noted in the ORCA Admin Reviews Due RR 00024 Report. Since July 2014, OCS has not experienced a month with less than 87% compliance with timely administrative reviews the average in calendar year 2015 was 90% compliance rate.

OCS has an ORCA report available to staff and managers to track the Administrative Reviews that are due and overdue. Below is a table showing the results from the January 25, 2017 Admin Review Due report.

Administrative Review Status

Region	Overdue	Total children by region
Anchorage	0	1224
Northern	0	523
Southcentral	1	849
Southeast	1	179
Western	2	201
Statewide	3	2,976

(Source: 01/25/2017 OCS ORCA Report Admin Review Status Due RR00024, 1/25/2017.)

This table shows that on 1/25/2017, there were 2976 total children in out-of-home care and only three children considered overdue for an administrative review, as of 1/25/2017. The ORCA data shows that 99.9% of the administrative reviews are timely. Each month the OCS QA team members review any cases that are considered overdue for review. For the three cases identified as overdue in this report, data entry errors were identified related to custody date and discharge information; after internal review, they have been determined that they are not overdue.

Alaska has demonstrated through the data and the information stated in this section, that OCS has a fully functioning administrative review system that ensures periodic reviews no less than every six months for custody cases. The QA Unit has successfully developed a process to conduct the administrative reviews from a centralized location in Anchorage for every child in care while maintaining a high rate of functioning on a statewide basis.

Item 22: Permanency Hearings

How well is the case review system functioning statewide to ensure that, for each child, a permanency hearing in a qualified court or administrative body occurs no later than 12 months from the date the child entered foster care and no less frequently than every 12 months thereafter?

> Please provide relevant quantitative/qualitative data or information that show a permanency hearing as required for each child in a qualified court or administrative body occurs no later than 12 months from the date the child entered foster care and no less frequently than every 12 months thereafter.

State Response:

OCS asserts that this is an area of strength for Alaska. The OCS does not have reliable ORCA data available to demonstrate compliance with this item; however, the Alaska Court System maintains data to demonstrate that Alaska does provide for a permanency hearing no less than 12 months from when the child entered foster care.

The Alaska Court System maintains permanency data for Child in Need of Aid (CINA) cases. The following table shows that 67% of children entering care in 2014 and 2015 had a Permanency Hearing within 12 months of the filing of the CINA petition.

Permanency Hearing within 12 Months

Year	Entered Custody	Perm Hearing Within 12 Months	Rate
2015	967	655	67.7%
2014	989	665	67.2%

Source: Alaska State Court System, CourtView Date System, SFY 2016

The next table shows how timelines of permanency hearings varies across judicial districts in Alaska.

Permanency Hearings for Children Removed in 2015*

Judicial District	Children	Within 12 Months	Rate
First	79	47	59.5%
Fourth	143	96	67.1%
Second	59	30	50.8%
Third	686	482	70.3%
Total	**967**	**655**	**67.7%**

Source: Alaska State Court System, CourtView Date System, SFY 2016

*2016 is not missing; it is used to calculate compliance for children removed in the prior year

Permanency Hearings for Children Removed in 2014

Judicial District	Children	Within 12 Months	Rate
First	57	33	57.9%
Fourth	182	130	71.4%
Second	63	19	30.2%
Third	687	483	70.3%
Total	**989**	**665**	**67.2%**

Source: Alaska State Court System, CourtView Date System, SFY 2016

The majority of children have a permanency hearing within the first year. However, in looking deeper into the data also shows that OCS Southeast Region, which is located in the First Judicial District, holds their first permanency hearing sooner, with the average being 337 days from the date of the initial CINA custody petition. Conversely, the Fourth Judicial District, which primarily covers the OCS Northern and Western Regions, holds their first permanency hearing later than the statewide average, with the average of 369 days. This court district average was significantly influenced by four cases in one rural community, which took an average of 687 days to hold the first permanency hearing; the low case numbers in some communities has significant impact on the regional averages.

The Alaska Court System data system also tracks data related to the timeliness of subsequent permanency hearings. This data shows that permanency hearings occur no less frequently than 12 months from the previous hearing. According to the Alaska Court System data report for CINA cases closed in state fiscal year 2016, the average time between permanency hearings was 226 days.

The court system data demonstrates that this item is a strength area for Alaska as the statewide average to timely permanency hearings are occurring within the 12-month federal requirement, both for initial as well as subsequent permanency hearings. Although there are cases that may be outside the statewide average of 361 days to the first hearing and 226 days to the required subsequent hearings, the majority of cases are heard timely by the court.

Item 23: Termination of Parental Rights

How well is the case review system functioning statewide to ensure that the filing of termination of parental rights (TPR) proceedings occurs in accordance with required provisions?

> Please provide relevant quantitative/qualitative data or information showing that filing of TPR proceedings occurs in accordance with the law.

State Response:

Alaska asserts that this item is an area needing improvement. The OCS does not have an automated system to ensure that Termination of Parental Rights (TPR) petitions are filed timely and there is not available data to show how often the presence of compelling reasons not to file are the reason for delayed filing. The OCS ORCA system does not record the date a TPR petition is *filed.* Additionally, the OCS administrative reviews and QA case reviews do not collect data related to the filing of TPR proceedings.

The table below shows the majority of TPR petitions are filed within 15 months of removal with a much higher rate in 2015 than 2014.

Time to TPR Petition

Year	TPR Petitions Filed	Filed within 15 Months	Rate
2015	580	419	72.2%
2014	734	458	62.4%

Source: Alaska State Court System, CourtView Date System, SFY 2016

In Alaska, many termination cases finalize through a voluntary consent to adopt process, whereby, a petition to terminate parental rights would not be filed. The ORCA system does not track consent to adopt data separate from TPR filing data. The Alaska Court System reports that of CINA cases closed in state fiscal year 2016, there were 26 TPR petitions closed with a consent to adoption or guardianship listed as the disposition. Additionally, because compelling reasons not to file a TPR petition are often noted verbally during the court hearing, the Alaska Court System does not track cases in which compelling reasons have been found.

The Alaska Court System report, *Time to Termination of Parental Rights Petition (Toolkit measure 4H)*, shows that the average time for filing a TPR is in accordance with the timeframes with this law, as 455 days, equals 15 months for the average filing of TPR petition.

2015 TPR Petitions Filed Within 15 Months of CINA Petition*

Judicial District	TPR Petitions Filed	Filed Within 15 Months	Rate
First	49	41	83.7%
Second	3	3	100.0%
Third	396	261	65.9%
Fourth	132	114	86.4%
Total	**580**	**419**	**72.2%**

Source: Alaska State Court System, CourtView Date System, SFY 2016

*2016 data is not missing; it is used to calculate compliance for prior years

2014 TPR Petitions Filed Within 15 Months of CINA Petition

Judicial District	TPR Petitions Filed	Filed Within 15 Months	Rate
First	35	25	71.4%
Second	14	6	42.9%
Third	542	322	59.4%
Fourth	143	105	73.4%
Total	**734**	**458**	**62.4%**

Source: Alaska State Court System, CourtView Date System, SFY 2016

In summary, this item is an area needing improvement. Alaska does not have a data system to ensure TPR petitions are filed in a timely way and does not have a method to track when the court has found compelling reasons not to file a TPR petition.

Item 24: Notice of Hearings and Reviews to Caregivers

How well is the case review system functioning statewide to ensure that foster parents, pre-adoptive parents, and relative caregivers of children in foster care are notified of, and have a right to be heard in, any review or hearing held with respect to the child?

> Please provide relevant quantitative/qualitative data or information that show foster parents, pre-adoptive parents, and relative caregivers of children in foster care (1) are receiving notification of any review or hearing held with respect to the child and (2) have a right to be heard in any review or hearing held with respect to the child.

State Response:

The state asserts that this item is an area needing improvement. Alaska does not have a consistent, standardized method to provide notices of court hearings to caregivers. Alaska does not notify caregivers of administrative reviews, unless the youth's goal is Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA) and does not invite caregivers to other administrative reviews. OCS does not have adequate data to document that caregivers receive the necessary notices outlined in this item. For those caregivers that were mailed a notice, OCS does not have a way to track whether or not the caregiver received the notice.

The Department of Law (DOL) consistently provides initial notice of court hearings to grandparents; however, the notices are mailed and there is not a tracking mechanism to show if the notices are received by the grandparents or not. After the initial hearing, the responsibility for notifying caregivers of court hearings rests with the assigned CPS case worker. There is no mechanism to track whether or not the relative caregivers were notified of court hearing; nor is there a process to verify if the caregiver received the notice if the notice was sent. The OCS Northern, Western Regions, and the Juneau Field Office have staff assigned to centralize the noticing function. Support staff is notified of court hearing dates and have various methods to track hearings. The support staff sends notices to foster parents and grandparents when their address is known.

Alaska does not have a system to document and track notification to caregivers for court hearings and administrative reviews. Foster parents or caregivers are not invited to participate in the administrative reviews, with the exception of administrative reviews for youth with a goal of APPLA. For APPLA cases, OCS provides notice of administrative reviews to all foster parents. Since centralizing the administrative reviews, OCS is confident that notices for APPLA case reviews are sent consistently. OCS utilizes the

United States Postal Service, but OCS does not have a method to track that the provider received the notice.

Additional information related to this item can be gathered from the 2015 OCS Foster Parent Survey conducted by the OCS Evaluation Unit. This survey included both relative and non-relative licensed foster families. 743 of the 1290 foster parents responded to the survey for a 58% response rate. This data highlighted in the three tables that follow are from the 2015 foster parent survey results. The results of the survey show that foster parents do not consistently receive notice of hearings; however, for those who do receive notice of hearings, many attended court hearings and offered comments to the court. The OCS asserts that if notice of hearings were provided consistently to caregivers, they would attend hearings and provide information to the court. The results from the foster parent survey demonstrate consistency across the state in regards to the responses provided. It is unknown why there is uniformity across the regions or what that uniformity means for the state's system.

This table provides information about notice of court hearings to foster parents. In all regions, nearly a third of foster parents state that they did not receive notice of hearings. Statewide responses show that 63% of respondents received notice of court hearings; however, in 12% of these responses foster parents report being notified less than a week before the hearing. OCS policy 6.6.3 (C)(2), Notification of Court Hearings and Conferences, Administrative Reviews, Removals, and Assumption of Custody, states that OCS will provide written notice at least 10 days prior to the scheduled date of the hearings to the out-of-home care provider, except in emergency hearings.

OCS Foster Parent Survey, Notifications for Court Hearings

Period of Time Prior to Court Hearing Foster Parent Informed of Hearing Region	Number of Foster Parents	Three to Four Weeks in Advance	One to Two Weeks in Advance	One Week in Advance	Not Notified
Anchorage	264	20%	31%	9%	39%
Northern	83	22%	31%	16%	31%
Southcentral	127	15%	34%	14%	37%
Southeast	101	18%	30%	15%	38%
Western	30	13%	33%	17%	37%
Statewide	**605**	**19%**	**32%**	**12%**	**37%**

Source: OCS Quality Assurance Unit, OCS Foster Parent Survey, 2015

According to the OCS Foster Parent Survey results, the following table provides information about foster parents attending court hearings. More than half of the foster parents who responded to the survey report indicated that they attended court hearings regarding the child placed in their home.

OCS Foster Parent Survey, Attendance of Foster Parents at Court Hearings

Region	Number of Foster Parents	Attended	Percent	Did Not Attend	Percent
Anchorage	267	160	60%	107	40%
Northern	85	51	60%	34	40%
Southeast	105	61	58%	44	42%
Southcentral	130	75	58%	55	42%
Western	30	18	60%	12	40%
Statewide	617	365	59%	252	41%

Source: OCS Quality Assurance Unit, OCS Foster Parent Survey, 2015

Additionally, the table below speaks to foster parents having a right to be heard in court. Again, more than half of the survey respondents note that they had opportunity to make comments in court. Of the 36% of respondents who state comments were not provided to the court, it is unknown if they were invited by the court to make comments or not.

Foster Parents Able to Make Comments at Court Hearings

Region	Number of Foster Parents	Comments Provided	Percent	Comments not provided	Rate
Anchorage	159	104	65%	55	35%
Northern	49	29	59%	20	41%
Southcentral	75	50	67%	25	33%
Southeast	59	37	63%	22	37%
Western	18	12	67%	6	33%
Statewide	360	232	64%	128	36%

Source: OCS Quality Assurance Unit, OCS Foster Parent Survey, 2015

The three smaller OCS regions (Northern, Southeast-Juneau Field Office, and Western) report that having a standardized method to notify caregivers of court hearings. Administrative reviews specific to APPLA goals consistently send notices of administrative reviews to caregivers regarding scheduled reviews. However, because there is not a standardized system in all field offices and regions, there is not a method to track notices being received by the caregivers, and because caregivers are not included in all administrative reviews related to children, Item 24 is an area of need for Alaska**.**

C. Quality Assurance System

Item 25: Quality Assurance System

How well is the quality assurance system functioning statewide to ensure that it is (1) operating in the jurisdictions where the services included in the CFSP are provided, (2) has standards to evaluate the quality of services (including standards to ensure that children in foster care are provided quality services that protect their health and safety), (3) identifies strengths and needs of the service delivery system, (4) provides relevant reports, and (5) evaluates implemented program improvement measures?

> Please provide relevant quantitative/qualitative data or information showing that the specified quality assurance requirements are occurring statewide.

State Response:

The Quality Assurance System is an area needing improvement for Alaska. In the 2014-2019 CFSP, Alaska identified that there is a "strong commitment to the concept of a continuous quality improvement process to include, as a component, the case review quality assurance." At the time, Alaska also identified a "strong base" by which to build a strong CQI process, to include the development of a CQI team to "plot the course" for a CQI process. Today, Alaska continues to work towards a CQI process, but has not yet affected a consistent, statewide, data-driven process, that assesses, evaluates and informs policy and practice improvements and outcomes based on the totality of the data available to the agency. Alaska understands that strong CQI must demonstrate how data informs the entire agency of program and practice improvements, gaps, strengths, and barriers but data does not necessarily drive practice change, nor does the CQI process fully consider all of the data available consistently across the agency and across the OCS service regions.

In Alaska, a distinction needs to be made between Quality Assurance and CQI: The OCS QA team provides a significant role in conducting statewide case reviews by mimicking the federal CFSR case review process. Alaska asserts that the case review process through the OCS Evaluation Unit, which conducts the QA case reviews, is a strength area, in that it consistently assesses the quality of the case records in each region/field office in Alaska, and is able to provide reports on statewide trends and opportunities for program improvement. The Evaluation Unit provides regular, consistent reports to the regional managers and the CQI team about case review results and outcomes. Additionally, the Evaluation Unit works with the regional managers and the Division Operations Manager to identify possible trends and focus on program improvement based on the case review data findings.

The CQI process in Alaska is primarily focused on improvement outcomes at the regional and field office level, relying heavily on case review data reports from both the Quality Assurance team and the ORCA data reports. OCS collects and maintains a great deal of data, but data alone does not change outcomes or practice. The OCS must bridge the gap between having data and using the data to inform practice changes to improve outcomes for children and families. Additional elements that are lacking is consideration and review of available data sources such as the eligibility data outcomes, data from services provided through grants and contracts, data from the OCS payment system to help to inform service needs and resources for children and families in Alaska, as well as local knowledge about community standards, local services such as Tribal, and strengths and needs of the local areas. Due to the lack of solid and integrated CQI by which the data helps to inform both practice direction and improvement across all aspects of the agency from the field, to the regions, to the services and programs needed to support families, this systemic factor is identified as an area needing improvement.

(1) The state is operating an identifiable quality assurance system that is in place in the jurisdictions where the services included in the CFSP are provided, it evaluates the

quality of services, identifies strengths and needs of the service delivery system, provides relevant reports, and evaluates implemented program improvement measures.

The Office of Children's Services is operating an identifiable QA case review system. While the QA case review system operates in all jurisdictions of the state, the larger CQI system is centrally administered and focuses heavily on the improvements to the case work at the field level, with less focus on programmatic and community-based services improvements to support children and families who are involved with OCS. The CQI system is not consistent or uniform across Alaska, and therefore, inconsistencies in practice and program outcomes create for inconsistent data results that are less helpful to the service array and program supports for children and families.

The OCS Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Committee meets monthly and includes regional and state office program managers. CQI meetings include a review and discussion of data from ORCA and QA Unit case review system. Discussion of the trends in data, new initiatives, and recommendations for change occur in the CQI meetings. Although the CQI committee has finalized a CQI policy manual, identified appropriate committee members, and has access to data and reports, the committee has not yet developed into and effective mechanism to create program improvement or practice change across the OCS.

ORCA provides a large amount of quantitative data and reports created to assist field, regional and state office staff to manage their work. Data is available through on-demand reports related to case worker visits with children and parents, case plan completion, permanency goals, and much more. The on-demand reports allow managers to have access to important information about what is happening in their offices and programs, and allows the CQI team to discuss statewide trends or differences from region to region. Data from ORCA and the QA case reviews is available with statewide, regional, or field office summaries, however, OCS does not have a consistent process to use data to guide practice change. While OCS has a robust amount of data available, generally, only a small portion is being utilized effectively,

In addition to QA case review and ORCA data, OCS stakeholder input is important to the quality assurance system, which comes in the form of surveys, community cafés, and stakeholder meetings. The information can provide rich dialogue for OCS related to how programs and services are working and where there are trends or patterns. Unfortunately, OCS has not identified standardized methods to review, analyze, and follow-up on information received from the surveys. The surveys OCS and partners completed in 2015 or 2016 include:

- Through the collaborative efforts with the Citizens' Review Panel, an annual staff survey was sent out to all OCS staff in Alaska. OCS has close to 500 employees. The survey received completed responses from 281 individuals; nine of whom declined to participate, leaving 272 or 54% of the staff that completed the survey. The information received was reviewed by the Director's Executive Team and management. A large amount of information is available from the survey results, but OCS does not have a standardized method to analyze the data and implement change to improve outcomes or worker satisfaction.

- A Tribal survey is sent to Tribal partners throughout Alaska every other year. In 2015 the survey was sent to 217 ICWA and Tribal workers, with 96 responding to the survey. There was an increase in the response rate with 44% responding in 2015 compared to only 30% in 2013. The survey results were reviewed by the Director's Executive Team, OCS managers, and the Tribal State Advisory Team.

  A foster parent survey is completed every other year with licensed foster parents throughout Alaska. In 2015 the survey was sent to 1290 foster parents, and 743 responses were received; this

is a 58% response rate. The purpose of this survey is to gather information from foster parents regarding their experiences with the foster care program. The information received was reviewed by OCS management.

(2) The state has standards to evaluate the quality of services (including standards to ensure that children in foster care are provided quality services that protect their health and safety).

Through the quality assurance case review system OCS is able to document and track performance for safety, permanency, and well-being of children through the 18 CFSR items outlined in Section III of this report. This method allows a standardized review and data is available by field office, region, or statewide. Since OCS centralized the administrative reviews to the OCS QA unit, a system has been implemented by which a memorandum is sent to OCS management if there are concerns for safety or well-being of children is identified as a concern. In calendar year 2016, several memos were sent because of significant concerns. The memos are reviewed by OCS managers and action was taken as needed to remedy the condition. Additionally, if there are questions that arise in the reviews related to ICWA status or Tribal issues, the QA unit notifies the ICWA specialist for follow-up.

OCS has practice and procedure standards across the span of child welfare services, adoption, foster care licensing, eligibility, and provider payment services; as defined in federal and state law. OCS has a comprehensive policy and procedure manual to direct and guide staff in meeting the requirements of the law and providing for the best interest of children and families; this is one mechanism to provide standards for quality services for safety, permanency and well-being by the OCS staffs. However, OCS has long recognized that the process for consistent policy development, implementation and maintenance is a challenge for Alaska, for which a rigorous method for consistent policy maintenance and review does not exist. CQI should inform the standardized policy processes for Alaska.

For grant and contract services provided by the OCS, program expectations and reporting requirements are clearly outlined in the final agreements with the grantee or contractor. Although OCS may evaluate the reports received from grantees, there is not a standardized system to analyze the effectiveness of the programs as they relate to safety, permanency, and well-being. Information regarding assessment of need and grant review is provided in CFSR Item 29 regarding the services array later in this report.

(3) The state identifies strengths and needs of the service delivery system.

Data is collected through the QA case reviews and through ORCA to rate the strength of needs assessment and service provision to children, parents, and foster parents (see Well-Being Outcome 1, CFSR Items 12, 12A, 12B and 12C). By reviewing the QA case review data the CQI committee is able to identify strengths and needs in our system.

Through collaboration with partners, OCS is able to gather data to identify strengths and needs of the service delivery system. Because Alaska is large and has minimal services available in some communities, OCS has numerous grant and contract services available to assist in providing necessary services to children and families. Each grant and contract program is required to provide quarterly performance data regarding service usage and program outcomes. There is currently no consistent method to evaluate this data to evaluate the service delivery system in Alaska.

OCS program coordinators review grant and contract reports each quarter to determine how well the program is meeting the client needs, and also assesses if additional services or changes to the service may be needed. The data is also reviewed to assess if we are utilizing the grant to the fullest extent and if funding changes may be needed due to increases or decreases in grant usage. In 2016 increases were made to the Child Advocacy Center grants due to increased need and utilization. Additionally, OCS utilized Community Cafes completed in 2016 to identify strengths and needs of the service delivery

system or support findings from ORCA and case reviews. More information on the Community Café findings is located in the systemic factor section related to Services Array.

(4) The state provides relevant reports.

The OCS has a robust system of reports available providing details from ORCA and the QA case reviews. Case specific data is accessible to OCS staff, including case workers, supervisors, and managers. Reports are available and provide data regarding caseload information, timely initiation of child abuse and neglect assessments, monthly contacts with children and parents, and identification of Alaska Native children in out of preference placements, to name a few. ORCA provides quantitative data and the QA reviews provide quantitative and qualitative data.

Safety and permanency data is available to the public and can be accessed: http://dhss.alaska.gov/ocs/Pages/statistics/default.aspx. The public statistics page is updated monthly. OCS also provides customized reports, such as the "score card" for managers, which is a quick reference report that compares data from previous months showing summaries for important areas of work. This report was developed and is being used by regional and state office managers.

(5) The state evaluates implemented program improvement measures.

OCS does not have a consistent method to evaluate implemented program improvement measures. Alaska collects and reviews data available through many sources, including ORCA, QA reviews, and surveys; however, Alaska has not developed a consistent process to analyze the success of the program improvement measures; and therefore, is not systematically utilizing the data to effectively improve policy, or practice improvements.

The quality assurance system, CFSR Item 25 is an area needing improvement. OCS has many components to build on for an effective Quality Assurance System. Unfortunately, Alaska is not using the data and information collected to make informed decisions or improvements across the child welfare system, on a consistently systematic basis. OCS has a strong QA case review process and large amounts of relevant data available through the case reviews and the ORCA system, however, as a whole, this systemic factor is an area of need because OCS does not have a standardized method to use data collected to consistently inform practice change**.**

D. Staff and Provider Training

For this Systemic Factor, Alaska looks at the OCS staff training as well as the foster parent and adoptive parent training. The items that are assessed for this section include:

- Item 26: Initial Staff Training
- Item 27: On-going Staff Training
- Item 28: Foster and Adoptive Parent Training

Alaska asserts that the systemic factor, Staff and Provider training, is a strength. The 2014- 2019 CFSP outlined in detail the level of initial and on-going staff training provided to OCS frontline worker and supervisors.

Item 26: Initial Staff Training

How well is the staff and provider training system functioning statewide to ensure that initial training is provided to all staff who deliver services pursuant to the CFSP that includes the basic skills and knowledge required for their positions?

Staff, for purposes of assessing this item, includes all contracted/non-contracted staff who have case management responsibilities in the areas of child protection services, family preservation and support services, foster care services, adoption services, and independent living services pursuant to the state's CFSP.

Please provide relevant quantitative/qualitative data or information that show:

- staff receive training pursuant to the established curriculum and time frames for the provision of initial training; and
- how well the initial training addresses basic skills and knowledge needed by staff to carry out their duties.

State Response:

Alaska asserts that Item 26 as a strength. Through partnership with the University of Alaska, Anchorage Child Welfare Academy (CWA), OCS provides training to new Protective Service Specialists (PSS), Social Service Associates (SSA), and frontline supervisors. The CWA provides OCS bi-annual reports that outline how many participants were trained, as well as data regarding the specific segments of the required initial staff training. The OCS is meeting the requirement to provide initial staff training that includes the basic skills and knowledge required for the Protective Services Specialist (PSS) positions.

Pursuant to title IV-E standards, all PSS positions are required to attend Standards, Knowledge & Insight Leading to Success (SKILS), core training within the first two months of employment through the CWA. Prior to attending SKILS, the employee must complete Pre-SKILS functions such as shadowing senior PSS, attend and observe court hearings, review client records, and other tasks assigned by the supervisor. In addition, all PSS staff must take twelve online courses that are aimed at giving the employee basic knowledge before they attend the skills-based, classroom training. Online modules include:

- Introduction to the Practice Model;
- Mandatory Reporting;
- Introduction to ICWA;
- Cultural Humility;
- HIPAA;
- MEPA;
- Interviewing Basics;

- Child Interviewing;
- Adult Interviewing;
- Adult Functioning;
- Permanency; and
- Crisis Prevention Intervention.

Each online module averages one hour in length and they are designed to orient the new worker to basic information about OCS and child welfare, so that when they get to the SKILS classroom, the participants have a shared foundation. The online modules are monitored for completion on specific course sites, through a learning management system, called a Blended Learning Center (BLC) (through the Blackboard technology) employed by the CWA. This data is then reported to OCS before the start of SKILS. There is a 95% – 100% completion rate of the online modules before attendance at SKILS. If it appears that a PSS will not complete the online modules, it is reported to OCS management, who contacts the supervisor to remind them the worker must complete all modules before attending SKILS. If a worker does not complete the required Pre-SKILS work, they are not able to participate in the SKILS training; within the past two years, only a few workers did not complete the necessary pre-SKILS training before SKILS. In these cases where workers did not complete the pre-SKILS training, some were either waived, or allowed to attend SKILS, with the completion of the pre-SKILS training after SKILS was completed. In other circumstances, new workers have had to wait until the next SKILS starts.

Once a worker attends SKILS, the length of time that a PSS must attend SKILS is determined by the type of work the PSS was hired to do. For instance, an Initial Assessment (IA) PSS attends 10 classroom days, while a Family Services PSS attends 15 classroom days of SKILS. Family Services PSS staff are to attend additional training days because they are responsible for completing initial assessments as part of their ongoing management of a case, whereas the IA staff is not responsible for family services work.

SKILS training focuses on building practical skills through hands-on exercises, including a simulation of the first knock on the door, videotaped information collection and case planning, home visits (utilizing actors who pose as the parents of a mock case) that goes through the life of the case while in SKILS. Other topics covered in SKILS embrace topics such as; values of child protection, intake, documentation in ORCA, safety decision-making, safety planning, relative searches, information collection standards, risk assessment, substantiation standards, trauma-informed care, worker safety and resiliency, children's court rules, parent visitation, separation, grief and loss, special considerations for youth, licensing foster parents, assessment, engagement, permanency, case planning, brokering and teaming with service providers, evaluation of case plans, and case closure.

The CWA trainers debrief the training at the completion of each day to make revisions and course corrections based on the needs of the learners. The trainers and director of the CWA meet as a team each month to review the SKILS training evaluations and discuss whether changes need to be made to the curriculum and/or plan different ways to train a topic based on the comments and ratings. The SKILS data is collated and reported in the CWA bi-annual report to OCS. The CWA director is in frequent contact with the OCS management to ensure training and policy and practice are closely aligned.

Transfer of Learning (TOL) teleconferences are scheduled once a week with PSS staff who have completed SKILS. The TOL meetings are intended to help integrate what was learned in the classroom to best practices in the field, applying scenarios from cases that have been assigned to the PSS after return from SKILS. During the TOL meetings, different aspects of the OCS practice model are reinforced and applied to real case dynamics as presented by the PSS. Attendance is taken at the TOL meetings; should a PSS miss more than one session the supervisor is contacted to ensure attendance. The TOL teleconference attendance varies from 47 – 83%, as reported by data collected by the CWA. Workers report the TOL

meetings to be very helpful, however, they report having a difficult time attending due to caseload demands.

From January – June 2016, a total of 36 PSS staff were hired and attended SKILS training at CWA. SKILS training is also available to Tribal and other community members; 2 Tribal and/or community partners attended SKILS during the same reporting period.

The effectiveness of the SKILS training is evaluated in two ways: 1) a survey is collected at the end of each day of training by the CWA training staff, and 2) the CWA conducts a Pre/Post Test for each cohort. The CWA recently revised their training evaluations to become a weekly evaluation versus daily and amended the evaluation questions to better reflect the PSS' preparedness to do the job upon completion of SKILS.

The table below shows the percentage of all SKILS participants who rate the three questions on a Likert scale. The majority of SKILS participants rate their understanding of topics covered, activities helpful and ability to apply learning to their job as high.

SKILS Training Feedback from PSS staff

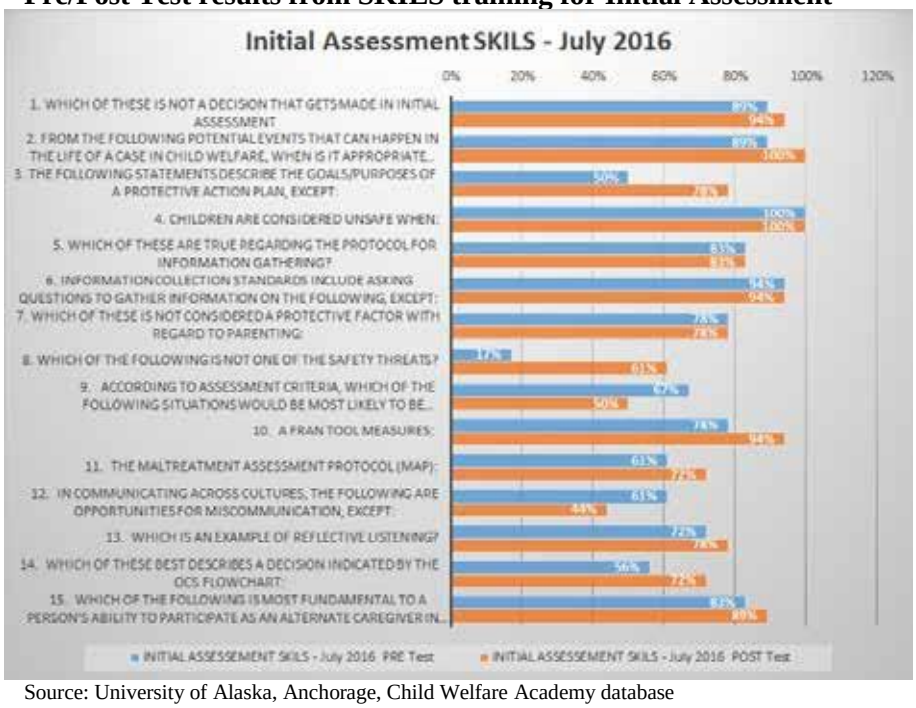
131/133 SKILS Training Feedback, Jan - Jun 2016	Low ←			→ High
Please rate the Training in the following areas:	1	2	3	4	5
Rate your understanding of the topics covered in class today.	0%	0%	2%	38%	59%
The learning activities helped prepare me to do my job.	0%	1%	3%	32%	65%
Rate you initial ability to apply what you learned today to your job.	0%	1%	6%	34%	58%

Source: University of Alaska, Anchorage, Child Welfare Academy database

In addition, the OCS has conducted annual staff surveys and uses this survey to inquire about SKILS and evaluate the qualitative nature of SKILS. In 2016, the OCS staff survey was administered through partnership with the Citizen's Review Panel; the survey included a significant portion addressing the training needs for staff. OCS has made many changes to SKILS based upon survey results, exit surveys, and feedback from SKILS participants.

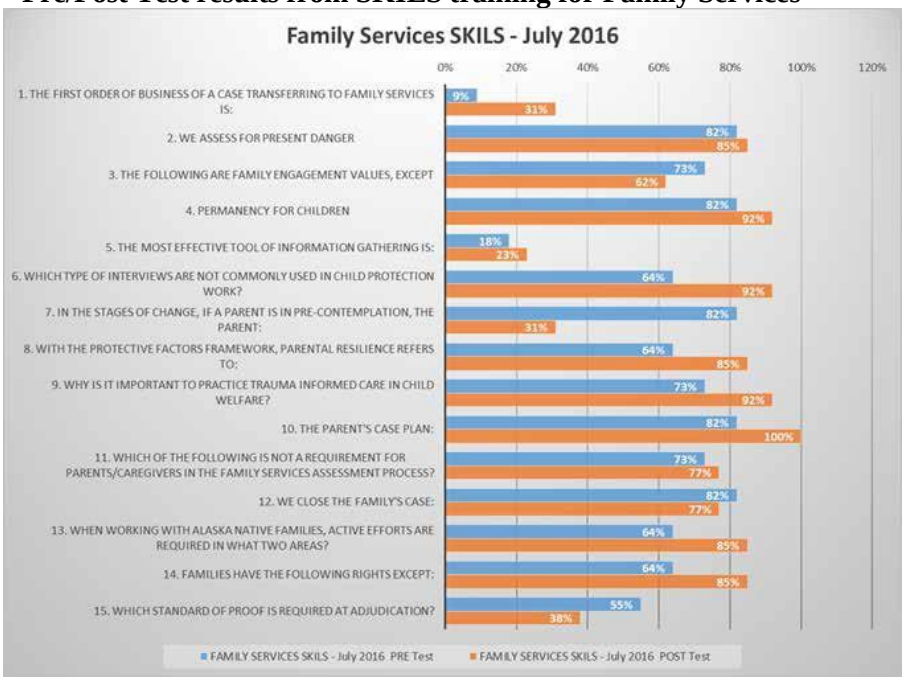
A pre/post-test has recently been designed and implemented beginning with the July 2016 SKILS Cohort. The two charts below indicate data regarding knowledge of the OCS practice model for individuals who attended SKILS training in July 2016.

Pre/Post Test results from SKILS training for Initial Assessment



Source: University of Alaska, Anchorage, Child Welfare Academy database

Pre/Post Test results from SKILS training for Family Services



Source: University of Alaska, Anchorage, Child Welfare Academy database

The charts above demonstrate that generally the participants rate their knowledge higher in the post-test. The pre/post test questions were reviewed and revised in December 2016 based on analysis of the rate of difference between pre and post correct percentages. Questions with less than a 5% difference between pre/post responses were revised to make the learner have to dig a bit deeper to demonstrate knowledge learned. The revised pre/post-test was implemented with the January 2017 SKILS Cohort.

OCS also provides 25 short videos specific to the introduction and navigation of ORCA. The ORCA videos are mandatory for all new frontline employees and are required within six weeks post-SKILS training. The videos also serve as refresher training, as they can be viewed at any time, when needed. The videos provide basic information on how to use and enter information into the ORCA system.

In addition to SKILS, there are several other training requirements for new workers, including: ICWA I; ICWA II; Child Functioning; Knowing Who You Are (KWYA); Child Forensic Interviewing (for Initial Assessment staffs); Foster Parent Orientation; Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) 101; Car Seat Training and much more. Attendance for ICWA II; Child Functioning; Child Forensic Training and KWYA has always been tracked through the CWA database system. The CWA works with OCS regional management to schedule the post-SKILS training so that the required staffs can attend.

Every newly-hired PSS is required to complete a Staff Development Plan (SDP) that encompasses a variety of educational learning requirements in several different learning formats, throughout the first year of employment with OCS. The SDP requirement is communicated to the new PSS by OCS administration upon hire and the CWA upon enrollment in initial training. The SDP begins with on-boarding activities to orient the new PSS to the agency including general expectations, NASW Code of Ethics, policy and procedure specific to their position, reviewing the OCS vision, mission, guiding principles, and OCS practice model. The SDP, required for the past three years, is reviewed and revised each time there is a significant practice or policy change. The SDP was revised and reissued in January 2017. Revisions focused on additional policy requirements, giving the supervisor more discretion with regard to timing of required tasks and adding pertinent topics such as human trafficking training. Plans have been made for CWA to track the other SDP requirements beginning in spring 2017.

In the past year more Social Services Associates (SSAs) were hired to help the PSS staff with the demanding workload by conducting various routine tasks such as monitoring family contacts. All SSAs also go through training at the CWA, which is held one time per year for SSA staff. There currently is no SDP for the SSA staffs, but data regarding the training is gathered, however, from January – June 2016, all newly hired SSA (11) attended SSA core training.

The table below shows rating for importance, satisfaction, and application of learning of SSAs to their jobs. The table below demonstrates that nearly all of the participants found the training topics to be important to their job, expressed satisfaction with the training and had a high confidence level in applying what they had learned to their jobs. The CWA has recently revised their training evaluation tool to be more in line with rating the staffs' preparation to do their job.

Training Feedback from Social Services Associates

140 SSA Training Feedback, Feb 2016	Low ←			→	High
Please rate the Training in the following areas:	1	2	3	4	5
How would you rate the importance of the topics covered in class today to your job?	0%	0%	0%	47%	53%
Overall, what was your level of satisfaction with today's session?	0%	3%	3%	30%	63%
Rate your level of confidence in applying what you learned today to your job.	0%	0%	0%	40%	60%

Source: University of Alaska, Anchorage, Child Welfare Academy database

While OCS places a heavy emphasis on the training of frontline workers, Social Service Associates and supervisors, OCS also provides limited training to other OCS staff. The OCS state office program staff has received training from the CWA. This training occurs one time per year by CWA, and includes topics related to the OCS practice model and any specific requests that staff appear to be struggling with

according to data or other reports. Additionally, supervisors provide program specific training to their staff. State office program managers who work closely with children, families, or field staff attend SKILS training within their first year of employment.

Additionally, foster care licensing staff receive basic licensing training provided by the Community Care Licensing Managers. This two day, face–to-face training is coupled with hands-on training and on-boarding provided by the licensing supervisors. Because licensing staff do not have a high turnover rate, the training is offered as needed, but usually on an annual basis. Currently, licensing staff do not receive OCS practice model training as many staff in licensing have transferred from the frontline child welfare work.

Alaska, has demonstrated through that Item 26 is a strength area. There is a comprehensive and consistent initial training system in place statewide that ensures new workers have the basic skills and knowledge needed to perform their jobs. This includes training provided to frontline workers, supervisors, support staff, as well as Tribal and community partners**.**

Item 27: Ongoing Staff Training

How well is the staff and provider training system functioning statewide to ensure that ongoing training is provided for staff that addresses the skills and knowledge needed to carry out their duties with regard to the services included in the CFSP?

Staff, for purposes of assessing this item, includes all contracted/non-contracted staff who have case management responsibilities in the areas of child protection services, family preservation and support services, foster care services, adoption services, and independent living services pursuant to the state's CFSP.

Staff, for purposes of assessing this item, also includes direct supervisors of all contracted/non-contracted staff who have case management responsibilities in the areas of child protection services, family preservation and support services, foster care services, adoption services, and independent living services pursuant to the state's CFSP.

Please provide relevant quantitative/qualitative data or information that show:

- that staff receive training pursuant to the established annual/bi-annual hour/continuing education requirement and time frames for the provision of ongoing training; and
- how well the ongoing training addresses skills and knowledge needed by staff to carry out their duties with regard to the services included in the CFSP.

State Response:

Alaska asserts that Item 27, Ongoing Staff Training, is an area of needing improvement. Alaska does not have a requirement for annual training hours for staff. OCS struggles to track and prescribe set training or training hours for staff after their first year. While trainings are available, the trainings are not adequately tracked to insure that they are consistently applied and utilized. PSS staff has several options available to gain additional and ongoing training after their first year with OCS. Child Welfare Academy (CWA) provides up to 10 days of training and/or technical assistance to each of the 5 OCS regions annually. Each region uses the QA case review data to identify needs and gaps in practice to determine the use of the training/technical assistance days. Additionally, the CWA tracks what trainings were provided to which regions. In the past year regions requested the following on-site training sessions:

- leadership development, such as emotional intelligence;
- case plan development, including strengthening families;

- effective safety plans; and
- practice model overview.

The CWA has designed and maintained their website to locate additional learning opportunities for workers, which come in different learning formats. The website includes micro-learning videos, podcasts, archived webinars, online modules, and other resources. Protective Services Managers around the state also bring in local professionals to provide training within staff meetings on specific topics of interest or need for the regions. There is currently no data kept on how often staff access these offerings.

When OCS rolls out a new or significant practice change, the CWA provides mandatory training to all PSS staffs, including supervisors and managers. Attendance at mandatory trainings is tracked in the CWA database. OCS offers a wide variety of webinar- based training throughout the year in an effort to reinforce policy and provide an additional method for adult learners to understand practice changes. The webinars are recorded and available for new staff to view or review; on the CWA website (https://www.uaa.alaska.edu/academics/college-of-health/departments/school-of-social-work/child-welfare-academy/Webinars/). In CY 2016, webinars provided trainings to include: Prudent Parent Standard, Building Protective Factors, and "What is an MDT or CAC?" The CWA does not track participation in webinars; and OCS does not have a process to accurately verify attendance. Additionally, OCS provides staff with training information through micro-learning videos, the biennial child maltreatment conference, OCS website information, and publication of a monthly newsletter.

The CWA offers a seven-day supervisor training in which the content of the supervisor training is primarily focused on critical thinking, emotional intelligence, coaching, resiliency, and leadership skills. Based upon the responses to the evaluations and feedback received from the supervisors, modifications were made to this training. Most recently, the feedback received indicated that supervisors need more training on brain development and leadership, so the curriculum was modified to add brain and heart intelligence. Additionally, the understanding of transfer of learning from classroom to practice for all line staff is now emphasized in the supervisor training.

In 2015, to better support best practice and improve critical thinking, OCS and the CWA developed a new program, Coaching Supervisors to Best Practice (CSBP). To date, 3 cohorts have completed the 21-week program. Cohorts have included up to 8 supervisors in each; the current cohort includes five supervisors in the coaching program, 20 have completed it, and there are 26 supervisors who have not yet participated in this program. The coaching program was implemented to benefit frontline supervisors, and with that population in my mind, the program was designed to provide long-term coaching while having a minimal "workload" impact. To reduce workload impact, this program is spread out over 21 weeks. The program consists of weekly readings, an assignment based on the reading and one hour of coaching employed by the CWA. Following feedback the supervisors provided in the first cohort, changes to this program were made by reducing the amount of required homework for participants.

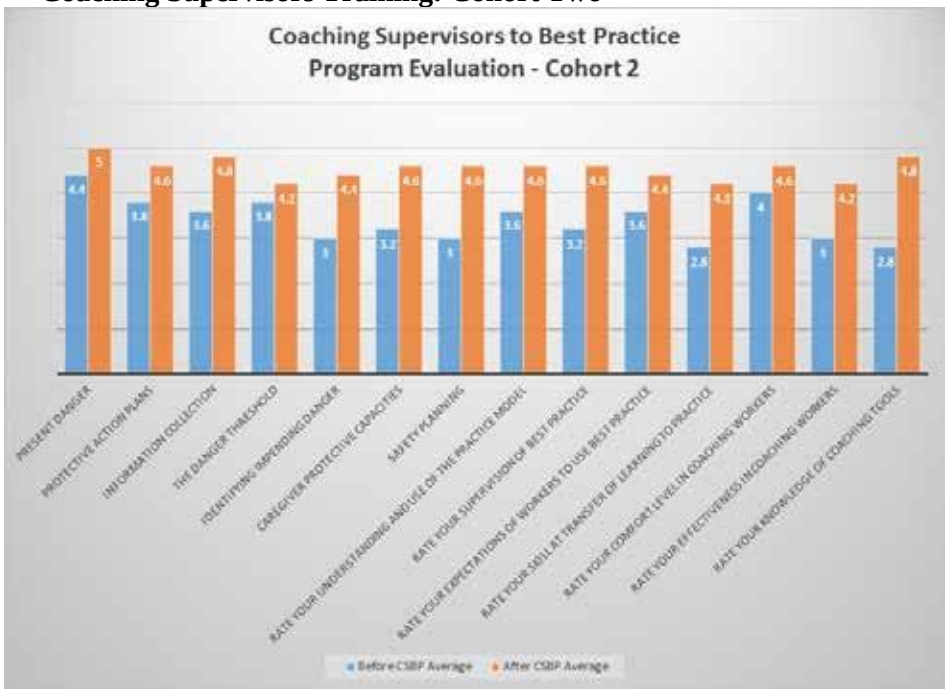
Both quantitative and qualitative evaluation is completed on the CSBP program. For the first cohort, Dr. Elizabeth Sirles, Director of the School of Social Work at the University of Alaska Anchorage, completed a qualitative survey of both supervisor and coaches. Summary qualitative data from the 1st cohort results in many improvements to the program. Cohort 1 was a group of the newest supervisors that had been hired in the past year. Cohort 2 was a cohort of experienced supervisors who voluntarily applied to take the program.

The two charts on the following page outline pre and post-test on understanding the OCS practice model and tools used in effective supervision. Both charts demonstrate that supervisors who participated in the CSBP program increased their knowledge, skills, and abilities of all areas identified.

Coaching Supervisors Training: Cohort One

Source: University of Alaska, Anchorage, Child Welfare Academy database

Coaching Supervisors Training: Cohort Two



Source: University of Alaska, Anchorage, Child Welfare Academy database

The OCS recognizes the need to further assess the training needs of ongoing staff. The CWA is planning to implement additional evaluation of training needs and assessment of overall data collection in this fiscal year. One area that will be a focus is looking at the data analysis regarding how training is impacting the work.

Alaska recognizes Item 27 as an area needing improvement because there is not a standardized way to ensure ongoing training is readily available and accessible to all staff statewide to provide them with the

skills needed to carry out their work with families and children. Although Alaska has a variety of training methods available, there is not a systematic way to ensure all staff receive the training needed and there is not a minimum training hours requirement for OCS staff.

Item 28: Foster and Adoptive Parent Training

How well is the staff and provider training system functioning to ensure that training is occurring statewide for current or prospective foster parents, adoptive parents, and staff of state licensed or approved facilities (that care for children receiving foster care or adoption assistance under title IV-E) that addresses the skills and knowledge base needed to carry out their duties with regard to foster and adopted children?

> Please provide relevant quantitative/qualitative data or information with respect to the above-referenced current and prospective caregivers and staff of state licensed or approved facilities, that care for children receiving foster care or adoption assistance under title IV-E, that show:
>
> - staff receive training pursuant to the established annual/bi-annual hourly/continuing education requirement and time frames for the provision of initial and ongoing training.
> - how well the initial and ongoing training addresses the skills and knowledge base needed to carry out their duties with regard to foster and adopted children.

State Response:

Overall, Foster and Adoptive Parent Training, Item 28 is a strength for Alaska. The information in this section will demonstrate how OCS is ensuring that provider training is occurring statewide for current or prospective foster parents, adoptive parents, and residential child care facilities (RCCF) and addresses the skills and knowledge base needed to carry out their duties with regards to foster and adoptive children. Alaska has a robust training curriculum which provides initial and ongoing training to meet foster home, adoptive home and residential child care facility needs regarding children in placement.

The OCS provides grant funding to facilitate the training and support to foster and adoptive families in Alaska. The current grantee is the Northwest Resource Associates / Alaska Center for Resource Families (ACRF). ACRF receives the Resource Family Training grant and the Services for Adoption Support grant. The Resource Family Training grant funds the provision of initial Core Training for resource families. ACRF tracks resource family training information, provides ongoing training for resource families, and offers a toll free phone number to receive inquiries from foster and adoptive families.

Licensed families must complete Core Training within one year from the date of the initial licensure. Core Training covers: Understanding OCS and the role of the resources parent; the impact of child abuse and neglect; separation, grief and loss; appropriate discipline and positive parenting; understanding culture and working with birth parents; and transitions and reunification. Core Training is conducted through onsite, web-based, CD-based, and workbook style, self- study programs. The onsite Core Training consists of 18 hours in the classroom with 5 hours of homework, and the web-based, CD based, workbook style, and self-study program is 16 hours.

A total of 545 homes participated in Core Training during SFYs 15 and 16. 392 homes completed Core Training and 153 homes participated in some amount of Core Training but did not receive a certificate of completion. During this time period, there were 1343 new foster homes in the ACRF database, meaning these homes were licensed and should have participated in the Core Training.

An example of how Core Training prepares families to carry out their duties as foster parents may be demonstrated by OCS' high compliance rates with Well-Being Outcomes listed in Section III of this document. OCS consistently demonstrates an ability to meet the medical, mental health and educational

needs of children and youth in care. During Core Training, foster parents are taught about their responsibility to get the initial physical exam (EPSDT) for the foster child in the first 30 days; their responsibility for transportation to appointments including medical and therapeutic; and that children should remain in their school of origin unless there is a reason to move them. OCS believes one of the reasons for high compliance rates with Well-Being is that foster parents understand their role in providing for education and medical needs of children.

ACRF provides services statewide with four offices located in Juneau, Wasilla, Anchorage, and Fairbanks. The ACRF has 12 staff to respond to inquiries and provide training. Training is available and accessible statewide for current or prospective foster and adoptive parents.

- **In Alaska, foster and adoptive parents receive training pursuant to the established annual/bi-annual hourly/continuing education requirement and time frames for the provision of initial and ongoing training.**

ACRF tracks the annual training requirement for foster homes. Alaska foster homes are required to receive ongoing training (10 hours for a single parent household and 15 hours for a two-parent household). Foster care providers are entered into the ACRF database with the date of their foster care license as the start date to measure the annual training period. Foster parents must complete the required training hours by the end of each licensure year.

ACRF calculates a point in time, the number of foster parents with completed yearly training requirements. For example, on January 19, 2017, of the 1722 licensed homes at the end of 2nd quarter who are in the ACRF database, 904 have completed their yearly training requirement. This number reflects all families who, at this point in time, from their anticipated renewal date have completed their 10 to 15 hours training requirement. This does not mean the rest of the foster homes are out of compliance; those foster homes are still in their current licensing year and have time to complete the required training hours. The foster parents are allowed to complete training anytime within the 12 month licensing period.

When a foster parent is caring for a child with special needs, the OCS PSS or Community Care Licensing Specialist may make a referral to ACRF for additional training. If a foster parent requests training on a topic that ACRF does not have, ACRF will prepare training for the requested topic or refer to an agency or organization that presents training on the topic.

Foster Care licensing specialists request the training records for foster families from ACRF and review the records for compliance with annual requirements. If a foster parent does not meet the required hours, they become not fully licensed and payment is issued through state general funds instead of title IV-E funding. Alaska does not have an established training requirement for unlicensed relatives or adoptive parents.

- **In Alaska, the initial and ongoing training addresses the skills and knowledge base needed to carry out their duties with regard to foster and adopted children.**

ACRF office provides consistent curricula: Core Training for Resource Families, Connecting While Correcting, Trauma-Informed Caregiving for Resource Families, and the Adoption Learning Path classes (Core + Adopting through OCS + Building Families through Adoption). In addition, ACRF partners with OCS to develop new curriculum to meet State and Federal requirements. For example, new curriculums that were developed since 2015 include 1) Public Law 113-183, Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act, and 2) the federally-mandated Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard. For both efforts, OCS and ACRF participated on a workgroup, developed a work plan, and identified the key strategies to provide training and technical assistance to foster families. ACRF developed the training materials and worked with OCS licensing staff to provide mailings, webinars and individual outreach to families.

The ACRF 2016 Satisfaction Survey was conducted from August 24 through September 21, 2016. The survey was sent to 2300 foster and adoptive parents, and OCS staff. 226 individuals responded to the

survey, for a response rate of approximately 10%. Of the 226 individuals, 85.23% found the topics and subjects current and useful to the foster parent's situation. The yearly satisfaction survey assists ACRF and OCS to measure whether the foster and adoptive parent training system is functioning effectively to address information and skills needed to carry out their duties as foster and adoptive parents.

ACRF uses training evaluation forms for all training delivered. The training evaluation forms are completed by participants at the end of each training delivered. The evaluations include the following question: "How well do you feel these classes will help you with/add to your skills/knowledge?" In SFY 2016, 575 surveys were returned for classroom and on-site training, not including CORE. Of these, 87% of participants of onsite classroom training stated that the trainings were excellent or good for increasing the knowledge they need to be a foster parent. In addition, in SFY 2016, 2055 evaluations were returned for CORE Training for Resource Families. Of these, 89.2% of participants of onsite classroom training stated that the trainings were excellent or good for increasing the knowledge they need to be a foster parent.

The OCS QA Unit conducted a 2015 survey of licensed foster parents. The survey was sent to 1290 licensed foster parents. There were 743 foster parents who returned the survey for a response rate of 58%. Of those responding to the survey, 85% reported that the training provided has prepared them for the challenges of providing care for children. Foster parents were asked their perceptions of the training program, and how prepared they were for the challenges of providing care.

Training Prepared Foster Parents for Challenges of Providing Care

Region	Number of Foster Parents	Agree	Percent	Do Not Agree	Percent
Northern	88	78	89%	10	11%
Southcentral	119	102	86%	17	14%
Anchorage	249	214	86%	35	14%
Western	28	24	86%	4	14%
Southeast	93	74	80%	19	20%
Total	**577**	**492**	**85%**	**85**	**15%**

Source: OCS Quality Assurance Unit, OCS Foster Parent Survey, 2015

The table above provides the data results specifically related to the training provided to foster and adoptive parents who participate in training. Statewide, an overwhelming number of foster parents find it helpful in providing knowledge and skills needed to be successful in their role.

Adoption Training

OCS does not have ongoing training requirements for adoptive families, but encourages families to continue to seek support through continuing education opportunities. ACRF maintains a listing of the families who have adopted through OCS and notifies them of trainings and events. Families may also be referred to ACRF post-adoption by the OCS adoption unit if a family contacts them for support or subsidy changes. The ACRF provides a wide variety of adoption specific courses and also encourages adoptive and guardianship parents to utilize the trainings developed for resource families.

If specialized or individualized training needs arise, the PSS may make referrals to ACRF for adoptive families. Once the adoption home study referral has been completed, ACRF invites these families to

classes, places the family on the ACRF mailing list, and provides a training assessment and develops a training packet for adoptive families. An adoptive family can receive training from ACRF at any time to assist with issues that arise while parenting their adopted child. These services are available to all adoptive families in Alaska. If post-adoption needs arise, the family can continue to access support and services. If the family contacts the OCS adoption unit, they may refer the family to ACRF as well.

The Preparation for Adoption Readiness for Kids in Alaska program (PARKA) was created to provide intensive preparation training to families interested in adopting special needs children from foster care. This program began in 2010 and serves the Anchorage community and those families in driving distance. Once the family has been through the program, OCS purchases a home study for the family, and the PARKA project partners with the OCS regional offices to provide matching services. Since the inception of the program in 2010 through June 2016 the PARKA program has trained and prepared 60 families for adopting special needs children. Since the program began 35 children were placed with PARKA families; 25 children have finalized adoptions through this process.

Residential Child Care Facilities

The State of Alaska has 51 licensed Residential Licensed Child Care Facilities (RCCF). Each facility has a system for training staff. Regulation 7 AAC 50.250(e) Orientation and Training states that a residential child care facility shall ensure that each caregiver, other than volunteer, receives a minimum of 15 hours of training a year. The 15 hours must be in addition to orientation, training in CPR, and first aid.

RCCFs may be licensed to provide specializations services such as: boarding care, emergency shelter care, emergency shelter care for runaway children, supervised transition living, care for pregnant and parenting adolescents, substance use, wilderness and adventure experiences and maternity homes. Each specialization has additional training requirements outlined in Alaska regulations. Each facility monitors the effectiveness of their training. The Division of Health Care Services (DHCS), Residential Licensing Unit monitors that training requirements are met during on-site inspections for the purpose of licensing, a licensing renewal, or an investigation.

Generally, RCCF licenses are renewed once every two years. During SFY 16, the DHCS completed 28 on-site inspections for RCCFs scheduled for license renewal. During the non-renewal year facilities, are provided a self-inspection packet to complete and submit to the Department. During a licensing inspection, the licensing specialist reviews and documents training hours per state statutes and regulations. Employee orientation and training documentation are reviewed for full time, part-time and volunteer staff. The Department reviews all new hires and a sample of continuously employed staff including auxiliary staff (maintenance, cooks, janitorial, office, etc.). No data is available to determine if training prepares RCCF staff for the position they are employed.

When training hours are not met for RCCFs, a corrective action is required. Of the 28 facilities that had training records reviewed onsite, nine facilities had one or more staff out of compliance, with a total of 27 staff members not having the required number of annual training hours documented. Two of the nine facilities had previous corrective actions for the training regulation and were given a warning notice as well as required to submit a plan of correction.

Alaska has demonstrated through the data and information above that CFSR, Item 28 is a strength area. Alaska has a comprehensive training curriculum available statewide for current or prospective foster parents, adoptive parents, and staff of state licensed or approved facilities. The training addresses the skills and knowledge needed to carry out their duties with and meet the needs of children in care.

E. Service Array and Resource Development

The systemic factor related to Service Array and Resource Development is an area of need in Alaska. Alaska has determined that we do not have a fully functioning/effective service array. Alaska has limited services and not all services are available in all areas of the state. The following items will be addressed in this systemic factor:

- Item 29: Array of Services
- Item 30: Individualizing Services

Item 29: Array of Services

How well is the service array and resource development system functioning to ensure that the following array of services is accessible in all political jurisdictions covered by the CFSP?

- Services that assess the strengths and needs of children and families and determine other service needs;
- Services that address the needs of families in addition to individual children in order to create a safe home environment;
- Services that enable children to remain safely with their parents when reasonable; and
- Services that help children in foster and adoptive placements achieve permanency.

Please provide relevant quantitative/qualitative data or information that show:

- The state has all the above-referenced services in each political jurisdiction covered by the CFSP;
- Any gaps in the above-referenced array of services in terms of accessibility of such services across all political jurisdictions covered by the CFSP.

State Response:

Alaska asserts that Item 29 is an area needing improvement. Alaska utilizes a variety of contracted and community providers, including Tribes for service provision. The OCS Service Array section has reviewed its resource use, expenditure data; performance based grants, and the types, duration and intensity of service provision as well as a recent community survey to make this determination.

The OCS provides child protection services to all communities and villages in Alaska, with the exception of three Tribal communities with exclusive jurisdiction. Due to the vast geographical nature of Alaska, it is difficult to ensure all services are accessible in all political subdivisions. While this cannot be changed, it is the number one challenge regarding having a fully functioning service array.

There are significant gaps in the services array throughout the state, especially in rural areas where communities are not connected by roads. A visual representation of Alaska's regional geography is provided in Appendix III. The map illustrates the vastness between Alaska's communities as well as colored dots to indicate where existing grant services are located.

The OCS Service Array Section manages funding for services provided under Title IV-B Subparts 1 & 2, Chafee, ETV, CAPTA, Title IV-E, CBCAP, Adoptions and Legal Guardianship Incentive Funds, and state general funds to provide services including:

- Child Advocacy Centers (CAC)s and the associated Multi-Disciplinary Teams (MDT);

- Family Support Services: Community prevention services available to non-OCS involved families;
- Family Preservation Services: In-home services to prevent removal for families identified by OCS to have children at high risk of maltreatment;
- Family Reunification Services: Services to promote the return of children to their parents' home following out-of-home placement. These services include family contact/visitation services;
- Emergency Shelter Services: Supporting the needs of youth in transition;
- Mentorship Services: Identifying and fostering supportive relationships for youth;
- Chafee Independent Living Services: Assisting youth in their transition to independence;
- Education and Training Voucher Program: post-secondary education support services for youth;
- Services for adoption and guardianship support;
- Adoption and Guardianship Assistance.

As a part of the 2008 CFSR, Alaska identified in the statewide assessment, this item was rated as an area in need of improvement, in part, due to the lack of services available, specifically substance abuse and mental health treatment services statewide. The Division of Behavioral Health provides mental health and substance abuse services to address the needs of children and families in Alaska. Numerous barriers exist to Alaska's OCS involved children and families, in being able to access these types of residential and outpatient services statewide. According to the Alaska Behavioral Health Systems Assessment Final Report (2015), mental health and addiction issues in Alaska create a high need for improved service provision. With the limited amount of federal and state funding allocated to the OCS Service Array section programs, it is difficult to meet the needs of children, youth and families in all communities across the State.

Alaska is in the infancy stages of performance-based contracting which will, within the next few years, enable the Department to track service outcomes to identified needs and case outcomes. In the past, Alaska was focused on the numbers of services provided or individuals served, as opposed to whether those services are effective or efficient. Alaska has worked to implement Results-Based Budgeting performance measures into its statewide grant processes. This process has not yet resulted in data which we can use to determine if the services provided are meeting the needs or whether they should be discontinued or modified. Much of the information regarding functioning of each grant comes from informal contact between the regional OCS offices that refer the children and families, as well as from quarterly grant reports which report statistical and anecdotal information about services delivered. The Service Array section continues to refine strategies and integrate new evaluation elements as practice shifts over time for each region, while also working with managers and stakeholders to define what grant programs are necessary, which are functioning and which need to be modified.

OCS relies on grantees, community agencies and organizations to deliver services to children and families. OCS administers grants and contracts for service provision and is only starting to develop ways to adjust existing resources and to develop new ones to meet identified needs. OCS leadership provides direction to Service Array for the development and direction of grant and contract services based on agency priorities as well as available funding sources. Once a grant is awarded to a grantee in a competitive process, the grantee enters into program funding for approximately three years. At each new fiscal year during this cycle, a new continuation grant is awarded. This gives OCS the opportunity to formally clarify and give new programmatic direction to the grantee to change or modify grant services or funding as needed. At this time, quarterly grant reporting and meetings with the OCS offices who interact with the grantee inform changes, modifications and corrections to the grantee's process, which helps improve the grant program or grantee functioning.

Alaska's system of granting funds does not meet the extent of Alaska's needs. The awarded grantee agency typically provides services within the community of their location, and sometimes communities

located nearby. The amount of funding awarded is not always sufficient to pay for the personnel or travel which would be necessary for adequate service provision in areas outside of the immediate community. Alaska has a significant number of remote communities which are only accessible by plane or boat. Based on the history of grant awards, it is clear that efforts to solicit for a grantee are often unsuccessful in the more rural areas, particularly in the Southeast and Western Regions. The map provided in Appendix III shows the lack of formal OCS grant service provision in those regions. There are many theories as to why this may be, but again, there has been no formal survey or needs assessment to determine why community agencies or Tribes do not apply for available grant awards. As the grant solicitation is a formal competitive process, there is no built in opportunity for feedback from the community about why they did or did not submit a proposal to provide the solicited services.

In an effort to determine statewide needs for strengthening families in Alaska communities, OCS conducted a one-time community assessment; these Community Cafes were completed in SFY16, and was completed so that OCS could learn about what communities need to help strengthen their families. The needs assessment was qualitative in nature, its quality was high. Participants of the Community Cafés included a broad representation from each community, including interested community members, professionals, leaders and parents of children. The Cafés occurred in all five of the OCS service regions and included the communities of Anchorage (providers n=30) (families n=50), Hooper Bay (n=100), Kotzebue (n=40), Sitka (n=15), Sutton (n=15), and Wasilla (n=25). Qualitative data was collected and analyzed. This needs assessment focused on gathering community and parent input on what the priorities are for each area to strengthen families in their communities. There was surprising uniformity in the top priorities across the various cafes conducted in the different regions.

Here is a list of the top community needs identified through the Community Cafes:

- Provide services locally;
- Connect families with someone to help them access services;
- Encourage workplaces and employers to be flexible and understanding;
- Connect families with someone to help them access services;
- Host community gatherings and events;
- Share cultural traditions, language, stories and skills;
- Hands-on, in-home coaching for new parents;
- Engage elders and extended family to support new parents;
- Help parents tend to their own personal and emotional needs;
- Help parents provide an environment for their children that is nurturing and loving.

Other important themes received from the findings from the Community Cafés related to the OCS Service Array:

- In all of the cafés, participants expressed the need for service providers and the children and families they serve to build trust, form alliances and bridge cultural and other divides. This was expressed through concerns from service providers about how to engage families in services and supports, how to share information about resources that exist; and from families about the lack of support and feeling that the service provider was working against them and not towards a common aim.

- Participants identified the need to increase access to mental health services for parents, particularly for parents with FASD and other cognitive deficits.

- Participants consistently prioritized connecting families with a helpful, trusting person who can help families advocate, navigate and connect to needed resources. While most participants agreed there were resources available in their communities, often families

and service providers were not aware of available services. A peer helper, or family navigator, is necessary to create bridges and connect families with resources.

The café findings are consistent with the 2015 Tribal survey (n=217) with a response rate of 44% where qualitative comments underscored the need for service availability in local communities as a means to prevent removal, for outreach to AK Native families to encourage them to become foster parents and for services to be more supportive and responsive and less judgmental. OCS is using the data in various ways. The themes produced by the Tribal survey report are being used in decision making about improvements and changes to existing grants or the formulation of new grants which can help fill gaps across regions. The information has informed the development of a parent navigation program to meet the identified needs of connecting OCS-involved parents to services and supports.

1. **Services that assess the strengths and needs of children and families and determine other service needs.**

OCS partners closely with the Tribes and other community service providers to assess strengths and needs and to determine other service needs. In addition, OCS case workers are often relied upon by the community and OCS-involved children and families, to identify the child and family strengths and needs; the informal and community resources available; and ways to meet the identified needs when there are no other resources available within the community.

The OCS case worker is often the conduit for the family to access services as the case worker makes the formal referral for the necessary service and will authorize special needs funding to help the family pay for services if there are no other resources available. OCS utilizes special needs funds to pay for services and/or transportation to services which might not otherwise be available to children and families to meet their needs, such as substance abuse and mental health assessments for parents and children. OCS provides special needs funding for services and travel to services because not all services are accessible throughout the different OCS service regions, children and families cannot afford to pay for the services and there may be a lack of Medicaid providers to help cover necessary services.

While the Medicaid system should be able to pay for some services, barriers in the system make it difficult to impossible for the child or family to obtain these services using Medicaid resources. Some of these challenges include: 1) no Medicaid providers in the community;2) the Medicaid providers available are not seeing new clients; or 3) the agency in the community who can provide the services has chosen not to be a Medicaid provider due to the billing challenges of the Medicaid system.

In Section III of this document, under Well-Being 1, Alaska included data and tables related to the OCS QA case review data regarding CFSR, Item 12 for Needs Assessment and Services for Children, and Needs Assessment and Services for Parents, for calendar years 2015 and 2016. Item 12 noted that the Needs Assessment and Services of Child, Parents and Foster Parents improved from 32.9% in 2015 to 61% in 2016; however, OCS remains well below the national standard of 95% or more for this item.

Alaska does not have a formal, established routine for collecting needs assessment data from communities regarding service array, resource development and service gaps. Nor, is the service array routinely included as an aspect of the OCS CQI processes. Although OCS frequently engages in meaningful discussions about needs and gaps in various community and stakeholder meetings, there is no process to systematically evaluate the data in order to make decisions which will contribute to an improved functioning of services array.

The need for an increase of the number and quality of services to meet identified needs is a recurring theme in various community needs assessments which have been conducted by other state agencies and communities. Areas of need continue to be identified, specific to mental health and substance abuse

services. The Alaska Behavioral Health Systems Assessment Final Report (2015) listed various barriers facing Alaska's Behavioral Health System. OCS faces these same barriers with the children and families served and would concur with the findings of this report. These barriers are:

- Gaps in the continuum of care for mental health and substance abuse services;
- Medicaid presents challenges to Alaska's behavioral health system, billing capacity is lacking;
- Documentation challenges presented by requirements of Medicaid;
- Workforce development to meet increased need for behavioral health services;
- Geographic differences make it difficult to know what which resources are available; and divides between the behavioral health system and other systems.
  Source: Alaska Behavioral Health Systems Assessment Final Report (10/22/15), http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&ved=0ahUKEwis7_r2u73QAhVT3mMKHWNED40QFggmMAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.healthymatsu.org%2FLiteratureRetrieve.aspx%3FID%3D132208&usg=AFQjCNFIGRsSSfdC-MH7NNpo6Cr4CQRTIg

The OCS Independent Living (IL) program provides assessment and independent living services to eligible youth ages 16 and older is available statewide. Currently, there are seven Regional Independent Living Specialists who specialize in services to older youth; these specialists provide the Casey Life Skills needs assessments for youth and assist them in developing individualized transition plans which identify needed resources and services to help youth meet their goals. NYTD data for FFY15 shows that approximately 62% of youth received an Independent Living Needs Assessment. This is an improvement from FFY13 where only 45% of youth received this needs assessment. Approximately 45% of eligible youth received IL services in SFY16. Youth in foster care, received a slightly higher percentage of IL services (48%) compared to youth out of foster care (42%).

NYTD Outcome data from FFY15 indicates that the areas of financial self-sufficiency, educational attainment and homelessness outcomes for foster youth are areas in need of improvement in Alaska. Available housing supports are highly utilized, with the program providing direct housing support and housing vouchers in multiple communities through a partnership with the Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC). Despite the existing resources, housing continues to be a challenge, with housing supports not available in the remote areas of the state and the high cost of housing overall. Overall, housing stability has proven difficult for youth once they obtain housing indicating a need for service array to target case management and support for youth who need both housing and housing stability.

2. Services that address the needs of families in addition to individual children in order to create a safe home environment.

OCS has a strong evidence of statewide availability across regions to Child Advocacy Center (CAC) services which are services that can help address the needs of families in addition to individual children in order to create a safe home environment. The CACs are currently the largest grant programs managed within the OCS Service Array Section. CACs respond to the high volume of child sexual and physical abuse allegations in the state. If a community does not have a functioning CAC, travel is provided by OCS or law enforcement to the identified CAC for the area. There are currently 11 fully-established CACs which provide assessment and determine other service needs for children and families in Alaska. Additionally, there is a developing CAC in Barrow (serving the North Slope Borough) which is expected to become fully functional in 2017. The CAC in Nome was accredited in SFY16 by the National Children's Alliance, making it the fourth CAC in Alaska to achieve this goal. OCS supports the accreditation process through grant funding, and training and technical assistance to CACs to help them meet the rigorous national standards necessary for accreditation. The OCS grants require the CACs to offer victims of abuse and their non-offending caregivers quality and comprehensive services that meet all

of their critical medical, mental health, case management, legal and other needs following an incident of abuse.

In SFY16, CACs served 2156 children. Data from CAC quarterly grant reports indicate that 96% of parents surveyed (for 1162 survey responses), parents reported satisfactory safety, and positive or neutral effect on child's anxiety. The percentage of children who engage in follow-up mental health services (40%) indicates this is an area needing improvement and this was confirmed through a needs assessment conducted in May 2016. The needs assessment asked the existing CACs to identify the needs of their program and to justify those needs based upon the numbers they serve and their accreditation requirements. This assessment identified gaps in the availability of follow-up services for clients including specialized, trauma-focused, mental health services; advocacy services for families; and specialized medical services. Statewide, there are waitlists for specialized mental health services for children recovering from trauma. There are regional gaps in CAC services due to turnover of forensically-trained, medical providers in rural Alaska. Alaska recognizes that funding for CACs has remained unchanged from SFY 2009-2016 while service delivery has increased across the majority of the CACs.

3. Services that enable children to remain safely with their parents when reasonable

Current in-home or family preservation grant services are not sufficient or accessible statewide, and there is no quantitative or formal qualitative information to show that the existing services are effective. OCS has experienced an increase in the number of children in custody; an effective family preservation service may be useful as a means to try to useful as a means to ensure that children with manageable safety threats can be maintained in their own homes. . OCS does not have a formal in-home service model; however, OCS CPS policy, 2.2.10.2, Case Decision, indicates that OCS must open a case if a child is at high risk of future maltreatment or the child is unsafe, but can be maintained in their own home with a safety plan in place. It has long been an OCS philosophy that children should be maintained in their own homes whenever possible; however, OCS has struggled over many years with in-home case identification and management.

2016 Safety Maintained In-Home When Possible and Appropriate

Case Type	Case Count	Strength	Area Needing Improvement	Strength Rate
Out-of-home	40	37	3	93%
In-home	52	31	21	60%
Total	**92**	**68**	**24**	**74%**

Source: OCS Quality Assurance Annual Reports. CY 2016

2015 Safety Maintained In Home When Possible and Appropriate

Case Type	Case Count	Strength	Area Needing Improvement	Strength Rate
Out-of- home	97	70	27	72.2%
In-home	92	34	58	37.0%
Total	189	104	85	55.0%

Source: OCS Quality Assurance Annual Reports. CY 2015

When OCS opens a case for in-home case management, OCS may refer the family to in-home family preservation services delivered by OCS grantees. The chart below shows the communities with available grantees as well as numbers served and an effectiveness measure.

SFY16 Family Preservation Data

Community	Families Served	Children Served	Percentage of Contact Hours Met	% Reported Increase in Parental Ability
Anchorage	9	27	70%	80%
Ketchikan	12	14	55%	90%
Fairbanks	35	76	40%	75%
Homer	15	28	76%	70%
Mat-Su	40	76	180%	48%
Nome	11	37	76%	70%
Totals	**122**	**258**	**---**	**---**

Source: OCS Family Preservation Grant Reports, SFY16, 7/1/2015 to 6/30/2016.

OCS is beginning to collect data on the effectiveness of in-home services provided by services providers who receive an OCS grant. The data has no comparison since these measures were not collected by every grantee during SFY 2016. OCS would expect to see that the population who received these in-home preservation services resulted in outcomes of children being able to remain safely in their home, at a higher rate than families who did not receive the services. This is an aspect of data collection within grant service provision that needs more development and refining. While the grantee self-report of effectiveness based on established Results-Based Budgeting measures is important, it will also be important for OCS to check those performance measures against the outcomes OCS is seeing in the population served.

In evaluation of anecdotal information collected from quarterly grantee reports and telephonic meetings with grantees, services can be underutilized by families when the communication between the grantee and the OCS office is poor, or when the grantee is having staffing and turnover issues. Alaska's service grantees have similar turnover and workforce issues as OCS. When there is turnover, service provision to families decrease or new referrals are not made. This grantee staff turnover has the most impact in the rural area grants when the grantee agency may only have one or two staff delivering the services. Aside from formal in-home family preservation grant services, there are in-home services being delivered by Tribal entities or other community service providers. OCS does not collect data from these community providers regarding the numbers or quality of the services they deliver to OCS-involved families.

4. Services that help children in foster and adoptive placements achieve permanency

a. Services to promote reunification of children with their families

The OCS Family Reunification grant program provides services to families referred by OCS who have a child in out-of-home care. These services consist of supervised visitation, parent coaching and support, and assistance with coordination of case plan activities. The total number of children served from existing reunification family contact grants in SFY16 is about 24% of the population of children who were in out-of-home care. ORCA data indicate that during calendar year 2016, 57% of discharges from out-of-home placement were to reunification with the parent. The rate has improved slightly since 2014 when 51% of the discharges were for the reason of reunification. This data indicates both lack of accessibility to the services and a lack of services to promote reunification.

SFY16 Family Reunification Data

Community served	Provider	Families Served	Children Served	% Reported Increase in Parental Ability
Anchorage	Salvation Army Booth	58	125	unknown
Anchorage	Cook Inlet Tribal Council	46	112	95%
Fairbanks	Fairbanks Counseling and Adoption	45	82	90%
Ketchikan	Women in Safe Homes	41	50	90%
Mat-Su	Alaska Family Services	249	303	unknown
Nome	Nome Community Center	32	73	80%
Totals		471	745	

Source: SFY16 Grantee Reports

The above chart shows a summary of SFY16 data compiled from quarterly grant reports for the OCS Family Reunification grants in which families are self-reporting increases in their parenting abilities. While grantees are also reporting high percentages in the increase of protective capacities there is not currently information to show how this is related or correlated to reunification rates for the families who receive these services. Evaluation is a growth area for this program as well as across the OCS service array in order to show the effectiveness and quality of the services, so OCS can make determine whether the services are having the desired impact.

Due to the significant increase in children in care since 1/1/2014, the need for timely and effective family reunification services is extensive. The family reunification grantees do not report that there are waitlists for services however, OCS is aware that the family reunification services are not meeting the need compared to the numbers of children who are in out-of-home care.

The specific need for supervised visitation to meet the needs of children and parents to have family contact during the out-of-home stay has been a driving force behind OCS referrals, more so than the parent coaching and case plan services provided by the family reunification grants. Family contact requires time-intensive efforts including: coordinating schedules, arranging transportation, supervision of the contact and documentation. This high need has prompted a SFY17 increase of funding award for grantees located in the urban Anchorage and Southcentral regions. OCS Caseworker workloads mean that a high level of support is needed from grant services or Tribal organizations, other community providers, or the foster parents in order to meet the family contact needs for families.

b. Services to Promote Adoption and Guardianship when children cannot be reunified

Sadly, the number of children who cannot be returned home and need permanent homes each year exceeds the number of families who are available to meet this need. Based on ORCA data as of October 2016, there were 402 children in out-of-home care who are legally free. While many of these children may be placed with relatives or other potentially permanent homes, an undetermined number are not with a permanent placement. Data entry into ORCA is not a reliable source of information as to whether children are with an identified permanent placement or not. It is important for OCS to have accuracy in the data regarding how many children in out-of-home care are not in potentially permanent homes, in order to target strategies to promote adoption or guardianship for these children and youth.

OCS funds grantees to provide guardianship and adoption home studies for families who have been identified as permanent placements for specific children in OCS foster care. Home studies serve as an assessment of the prospective permanent family, but they are also designed to help the family prepare and develop awareness about the concept of adoption and guardianship and some of the changes they may expect for their family and the child. Home studies are required to finalize an adoption or guardianship in Alaska, therefore, they promote permanency for children. Home study services are delivered statewide by grantees who are assigned to each region of the state. Grantee home study writers travel to where the potential adoptive or guardianship family is living in Alaska in order to provide the services and they must complete the home study. Quarterly reports submitted by the grantee show high adherence to timely completion of the home study despite challenges due to family schedules, weather delays, and the assessment of sometimes complicated family situations. Home study delays can also be caused by OCS worker delay in referring the family for a home study in a timely manner. There are no measures to determine quality of the home study, although the OCS Regional Permanency Specialists in the region are responsible for reviewing the studies for quality and completeness. If the study does not meet quality standards, they send the home study back to the grantee for revisions. Data is not maintained regarding how often studies are returned for revisions.

Subsidized adoption and guardianships are provided to families who adopt and become guardians for children who cannot return to their home of origin; this is available statewide and for families adopting, or becoming guardians of, OCS children who reside in other states. This service promotes adoption and guardianship by helping defer some of the costs of meeting the child's ongoing needs in post-adoption or guardianship. This service may provide a monthly payment negotiated to assist the family in meeting the special needs of the child, and most subsidies provide Medicaid coverage, which is important for families in meeting the children's medical and behavioral health needs in post-adoption.

Adoption and Guardianship Annual Data, SFY 2013-2016

Adoptions Funded through Title IV-E Funds	**2013**	**2014**	**2015**	**2016**
Current (Continuing + New - Aged Out - Disrupted)	2219	2339	2554	2622
Adoptions Funded by the State of Alaska				
Current (Continuing + New - Aged Out - Disrupted)	631	620	634	595
Guardianships Funded through Title IV-E Funds				
Current (Continuing + New - Aged Out - Disrupted)	28	37	49	60
Guardianships Funded by the State of Alaska				
Current (Continuing + New - Aged Out - Disrupted)	93	80	72	53
TOTALS				
Continuing Adoptions & Guardianships	2850	2971	3129	3309
Children in Active Subsidies at the end of the FY	**2971**	**3076**	**3309**	**3330**

Source: OCS Subsidized Adoption and Guardianship Annual data for SFYs 2013, 2014, 2015, and 2016.

The above table shows the numbers of the number of adoption and guardianship subsidies signed in SFY 2013 – SFY 2016. Services to promote adoption and guardianship for children is an emergent need, considering that nearly 50% of children in care are reunified, the other 50% will need to exit through another permanency option such as adoption and guardianship. As the table indicates, the number of new

adoption and guardianship subsidies signed in SFY16 fell from the previous year although the numbers of children entering care increased during that fiscal year.

It is clear from the data and analysis that CFSR, Item 29 Array of Services, is an area needing improvement. The array of services is not fully functioning, and there are many services that are not available in all communities of Alaska. The services that are available do not have automated or standardized referral processes, and families and workers may not always be aware of what services and resources are available to them.

Item 30: Individualizing Services

How well is the service array and resource development system functioning statewide to ensure that the services in item 29 can be individualized to meet the unique needs of children and families served by the agency?

> Please provide relevant quantitative/qualitative data or information that show whether the services in item 29 are individualized to meet the unique needs of children and families served by the agency.
>
> - Services that are developmentally and/or culturally appropriate (including linguistically competent), responsive to disability and special needs, or accessed through flexible funding are examples of how the unique needs of children and families are met by the agency.

State Response:

The state asserts that CFSR Item 30, Individualizing Services, is an area in need of improvement. While there are available flexible funding resources and developmentally and culturally appropriate services supported by the State, these resources are not sufficient to meet the unique needs children and families in Alaska. Given the amount of limited funding available to support services, coupled with the limited availability of community-based supports for families, individualized services and meeting the unique needs of families and children is an ongoing challenge. In CY 2016, OCS has developed a web-based resource listing of all of the OCS- funded grants available statewide, including the communities the grantees serve in order to assist OCS workers in linking families and children with the services to meet their individualized needs (located at: http://dhss.alaska.gov/ocs/Documents/GrantMap/default.htm). Additionally in the last year, OCS staff were trained regarding the availability of OCS Service Array programs funded by OCS. There is an additional need to focus on identifying other community resources which meet developmental and cultural needs of children and families.

In CFSR Item 29, the OCS Tribal Survey outlined of the findings from the survey. This survey also indicated an average 57% agreement from the respondents that collaborations between OCS and Tribal workers have strengthened the quality of services for Alaska Native children. The survey findings rated the item "*cultural continuity of Alaska Native children in maintained"* at low 37% while a child is in out-of-home care. While these percentages show that OCS' efforts to individualize services are resulting in an improvement of the quality of services, there is more that needs to be done regarding cultural continuity to have higher functioning in this area.

OCS is committed to continuing to strengthen its service array by working closely with Tribes and Tribal organizations. Alaska is making efforts to fill service gaps by partnering with Tribes to facilitate

culturally competent and local resources to help families who need services. A five-year strategic plan entitled, "Transforming Child Welfare Outcomes for Alaska Native Children", was developed in partnership with community and Tribal partners to identify objectives to transform outcomes for Alaska Native children. One of the six primary objectives identified in the plan is the ability to provide a continuum of culturally-specific supports to Alaska Native families in the child welfare system. An inter-departmental work group formed to tackle this issue by addressing systemic barriers in how traditional services are identified, procured, and integrated into family service plans. This work group is in the process of compiling regionalized lists of traditional healing/wellness methods/activities, vetted by elders and traditional healers. These types of services may be available in virtually every corner of this state regardless of the remoteness of location and in some instances may be used as in lieu of traditional western services, or as a supplement to formal services in the form of pre or post care.

Alaska recognizes that a cultural and racial barrier exists within the delivery of services to minority populations in Alaska. OCS workers often have difficulty engaging with Alaska Native families because of fear and mistrust by the families and lack of cultural competency of OCS workers. As a result, families are often unwilling to open their door, or to engage in services. Cultural interventions are not universally accepted in the current system which is a barrier to individualizing services. Provision of services through the Rural Child Welfare grant to local Tribal organizations helps bridge the gap between the Office of Children's Services organization and Alaska Native families in select rural areas where grants were applied for an awarded.

The OCS Rural Child Welfare (RCW) grants are provided to rural organizations to help fill gaps in formal service provision in specific rural communities. In SFY16, the grantees were all Tribal agencies or organizations who provided services, primarily to Alaska Native families, including, facilitate/monitor/update Tribal In-Home Safety or Case Plan, make referrals/help complete applications for services, one-on-one parenting guidance/support, engage/take/teach parents and children about cultural activities (subsistence, dance, art), relative searches, relative placement support, and foster parent recruitment.

While data is available to show the numbers of individuals being served by the Rural Child Welfare grant in identified rural areas of the state, it is clear that Alaska cannot meet the individualized needs, based on the actual number of children served through RCW compared to the percentage of children who are residing in out-of-home care in a rural areas (not including the communities of Anchorage Eagle River, JBER, Wasilla, Ft. Wainwright, North Pole or Fairbanks). Narrative reports from RCW grantees and verbal reports from OCS workers indicate that some of the factors related to relatively low numbers served by the RCW grant has to do with a variety of factors, to include: 1) low caseload sizes of RCW workers to account for the amount of travel they have to do to meet with rural families; 2) communication difficulties in the referral process; 3) staff turnover, both for OCS workers who make the referrals and for RCW workers who perform the service provision. Data collection has not focused on whether the service provision for RCW by Tribal entities has improved outcomes for the Alaska Native population served in the rural areas.

Source data from the RCW grantee and ORCA data reports, indicate that the RCW grants are serving nearly 19% of the Alaska Native / American Indian children who are placed in out-of-home care and residing in rural Alaska communities. This type of service provision in collaboration with Tribes and Tribal organizations is an important step in meeting the cultural needs children or families in these rural areas.

The OCS Service Array Section provides training and technical assistance to offer professional development opportunities for grantee and contract providers to help increase the quality of service delivery in meeting the needs of the population served. Examples of training and technical assistance topics include: 1) trauma-informed care; 2) cultural awareness; and 3) working with children and parents

with disabilities. Increased training and the specialization of staff in various areas of service delivery promote individualized service delivery; however staff turnover for both OCS and with providers of services is one of the barriers to achieving this goal. While grantees report that the training and assistance is helpful and appreciated, OCS does not currently have a process to assess the effectiveness of these efforts.

Due to limited services being available, individualized services are not always available or accessible to children and families Alaska has determined that CFSR, Item 30, Individualizing Services, is an area needing improvement.

F. Agency Responsiveness to the Community

For this Systemic Factor, the following items will be addressed:

- Item 31: State Engagement and Consultation With Stakeholders Pursuant to CFSP and APSR
- Item 32: Coordination of CFSP services with Other Federal Programs

Item 31: State Engagement and Consultation With Stakeholders Pursuant to CFSP and APSR

How well is the agency responsiveness to the community system functioning statewide to ensure that in implementing the provisions of the CFSP and developing related APSRs, the state engages in ongoing consultation with Tribal representatives, consumers, service providers, foster care providers, the juvenile court, and other public and private child- and family-serving agencies and includes the major concerns of these representatives in the goals, objectives, and annual updates of the CFSP?

> Please provide relevant quantitative/qualitative data or information that show that in implementing the provisions of the CFSP and related APSRs, the state engages in ongoing consultation with Tribal representatives, consumers, service providers, foster care providers, the juvenile court, and other public and private child- and family-serving agencies and includes the major concerns of these representatives in the goals, objectives, and annual updates of the CFSP.

State Response:

The state asserts that CFSR, Item 31, State Engagement and Consultation with Stakeholders Pursuant to CFSP and APSR, is a strength area for Alaska. The OCS includes internal and external partners in ongoing consultation and includes their feedback and concerns in decision-making and annual updates to the CFSP and related APSRs. Community cafes were facilitated around the state to assist in gathering the input and feedback from stakeholders.

Alaska's 2015-2019 CFSP was developed with input and recommendations provided by key statewide stakeholder groups during their regularly scheduled meetings. External groups include: Tribal-State Collaboration Group (TSCG), Court Improvement Project (CIP), Alaska Citizens' Review Panel (CRP), Facing Foster Care in Alaska (FFCA), OCS grantees and contractors, the Health Oversight Committee (HOC), Resource Family Advisory Board (RFAB), and the Children's Justice Act Task Force (CJATF). Internal OCS groups include: the Staff Advisory Board (SAB), the Executive Steering Committee (ESC), and the OCS Supervisory Leadership Council (SLC).

The concerns and feedback from these groups directly influenced the development and implementation of CFSP goals and objectives. Feedback and areas of concern identified by these partners was used to develop objectives in the CFSP. For example, partners identified the need to improve relative searches and the importance of surveying youth after a change in foster care placement to identify any issues in the home; both of these are currently objectives in the CFSP.
OCS continues to routinely engage with, and solicit feedback and ideas from, numerous and diverse statewide partners as a means of reviewing and assessing the identified priorities and strategies to improve outcomes and services to children and families. Stakeholder input is gathered throughout the year during ongoing program-specific workgroups and committee meetings at state and local levels; OCS uses this input to inform the APSR. Partners are included in the OCS policy committee and the implementation of change initiatives to ensure their feedback is taken into consideration.

OCS facilitates quarterly CFSP/APSR teleconferences or webinars with all stakeholders: these meetings allow staff and partners to learn about the CFSP, ask questions, hear about trends and implementations, and provide feedback and/or voice concerns regarding the strategies and objectives outlined in the CFSP. OCS invites a diverse group of stakeholders to the quarterly meetings to include the following partners: Tribal State Collaboration Group (TSCG), Tribal-State Advisory Team (TSAT) partners, Public Defender Agency, Department of Law, Guardians Ad Litem (GAL), Court-Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), Court Improvement Project (CIP), Citizens' Review Panel (CRP), Facing Foster Care in Alaska (FFCA), OCS regional and program managers, Alaska Center for Resource Families (ACRF), Child Welfare Academy (CWA), and Supervisory Leadership Council (SLC).

These quarterly meetings have encouraged discussion, but to date, there have not been recommendations for changes in the goals and objectives of the CFSP. Internal and external stakeholders continue to attend the meetings and be supportive of the goals and objectives as well as the areas needing improvement as identified in the CFSP. In the January 2017 call, the group was asked "How can OCS gather feedback and suggestions from Tribal and Community Partners?" The group discussion and recommendations included the following:

- Email proposed changes and provide a comment period;
- Ongoing communication with the Resource Family Advisory Board was recommended for issues about resource families;
- Consider how OCS staff are oriented to the legal parties and learn about the role of GAL, PD, and AAG (Anchorage does training);
- "Fix-it meetings" in Anchorage were helpful for problem-solving and partnering; and including partners in change initiatives like was done in family contact plan work several years ago;
- Frontline articles (the OCS staff newsletter) or policy changes being emailed to partners would help partners be aware of practice changes.

Because the meeting occurred in 1/2017, no changes to practice have been made. However, OCS managers will review the suggestions and determine if any will be implemented. In the April quarterly call, OCS will report out on the outcomes of the suggestions.

- **In implementing the provisions of the CFSP and related APSRs, the state engages in ongoing consultation with *Tribal representatives* and includes the major concerns of these representatives in the goals, objectives, and annual updates of the CFSP.**

OCS works closely with the Tribal-State Advisory Team (TSAT) and Tribal-State Collaboration Group (TSCG) in an ongoing partnership which has assisted OCS in identifying areas of need and developing plans to improve services in Alaska. Through these groups and other partnerships, there is bidirectional sharing of data and information around the development, implementation, and updating/adjustment of the CFSP and APSR, as well as the consideration of the feedback from the Tribes during that process. The TSCG has been a forum to discuss the state compliance with ICWA, services related to permanency planning for Tribal children, and independent living programs and services.

Input from Tribal partners was gathered in development of the CFSP and APSR: the 2017 APSR has a detailed work plan which lists specific areas of collaboration and partnership with the Tribes. The items in the work plan were developed after recommendations from Tribal partners. An example includes the development of the Tribal Confidentiality Agreement; the agreements allow OCS and Tribes to share information regarding Tribal members involved in the child protection system. The agreement was completed in 2016 and many Tribes have signed the agreements to allow information sharing.

Additionally, the Alaska Federation of Natives, First Alaskans Institute, Alaska DHSS/OCS, the Tribal-State Collaboration Group, and Casey Family Programs continue to partner with OCS and Alaska Native

Tribes on several projects to improve the lives of children, identify pathways to move forward, and align efforts improve outcomes for Alaska Native children, families and communities. Tribal representatives are invited to the quarterly CFSP calls and were included in the meeting with Children's Bureau to review the Statewide Assessment in August 2016. Tribal representatives participate on the OCS policy development workgroup, the Executive Steering Committee, and have been included in planning and implementation to assist with Alaska meeting the requirements of Public Law 113-183 (Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act). There are currently Tribal partners who participate in policy committee meetings; through these meetings Tribal partners have opportunity to impact policy changes by making recommendations and suggestions, or stating concerns. With the recent policy changes driven by the ICWA / BIA regulation changes, the Tribal partners input assisted OCS in updating and developing policy to guide staff in their work.

Since 2014, OCS has included a Tribal representative as a part of the OCS interview teams for key OCS positions. This collaboration has strengthened OCS' ability to hire staff that have strong values towards working with Alaska Native families.

- **In implementing the provisions of the CFSP and related APSRs, the state engages in ongoing consultation with *consumers* and includes the major concerns of these representatives in the goals, objectives, and annual updates of the CFSP.**

In partnership with the FFCA, OCS works with current and former foster care youth to gather input, concerns, and feedback. Three times a year, FFCA hosts a retreat for youth, and OCS independent living (IL) program staff participates in portions of the retreat to interact, share information, and receive feedback from the youth. In March of 2016, the IL program met with youth during a youth retreat to collect input about youth placement disruptions and ideas for OCS to effectively address this issue.

Youth input was used to develop the 2015-2019 CFSP, as several youth around the state participated in the Community Café meetings. Based on strong feedback from older youth and FFCA representatives regarding concerns in foster homes that may cause a placement change, an objective was added to the CFSP to develop and implement a system to receive youth feedback following placement changes. OCS began collaboration on this effort in March 2016 with FFCA youth, and is partnering with FFCA to meet complete this objective. The OCS Director's Executive Team meets with FFCA leadership three times per year to review goals and discuss current work and objectives. FFCA representatives are invited to the quarterly CFSP calls and were included in the meeting with Children's Bureau to review the Statewide Assessment in August 2016.

OCS does not have a direct method of collecting feedback or input from birth parents; however, the Public Defender Agency (which often represents parents in legal CINA proceedings) participates in the quarterly CFSP calls. In January 2016, a representative from the Public Defender Agency had questions regarding relative searches and placement requests from relatives. Following that discussion, separate phone calls were facilitated to gather input and feedback about the process. Based on that feedback, OCS provided additional information to regional and field office staff regarding the importance of relative searches, guidance on how to complete relative searches, and the importance of documenting relative searches in ORCA. The CFSP includes an objective related to early identification of relatives, and this closely ties to the feedback received by the Public Defender Agency.

OCS works in partnership with the Citizens' Review Panel (CRP) on improvements to the child welfare system. The CRP attempts to provide site reviews in each of the 5 OCS service regions each year, and based on the results of these site visits, provides to OCS and the Alaska State Legislature an annual report of their findings and recommendations. OCS meets with the CRP monthly to discuss the various concerns of the CRP and also, develops strategies for CRP assistance. In FY 2016, the CRP collaborated with OCS on the annual staff survey. The CRP, in turn, partnered with the University of Alaska,

Anchorage to complete the staff survey. The results of the staff survey were shared with staff across the agency.

- **In implementing the provisions of the CFSP and related APSRs, the state engages in ongoing consultation with** *service providers* **and includes the major concerns of these representatives in the goals, objectives, and annual updates of the CFSP.**

As part of the development of the 2015-2019 CFSP, community cafes were facilitated around the state, in CY 2014. Through these organized discussions, OCS was able to gather the input and feedback from stakeholders, which included services providers in all regions of the state. In the discussions, the following areas were consistently identified by stakeholders as being essential to enhance Alaska's child welfare system. Consequently, all of these concepts are incorporated into Alaska's 201-2019 plan for improvement:

- early interventions with families;
- better collaboration with community providers;
- quality case plans;
- stronger assessment of resource families;
- increased placement with relatives/ stronger supports for relative caregivers;
- retention of caseworkers; and
- smaller caseloads for caseworkers.

Efforts to engage service providers in the provision of the CFSP and APSR include the 2016 Community Cafes, to collect input regarding prevention services in Alaska. Currently, there is not a clearly defined process to seek ongoing feedback from service providers statewide for purpose of the APSR. Alaska has not identified a consistent method to gather ongoing feedback from service providers in all areas of the state.

- **In implementing the provisions of the CFSP and related APSRs, the state engages in ongoing consultation with** *foster care providers* **and includes the major concerns of these representatives in the goals, objectives, and annual updates of the CFSP.**

The Resource Family Advisory Board (RFAB) is comprised of current and past foster, adoptive, and guardianship resource families, as well as OCS staff, Tribal partners, and community partners such as the ACRF. The RFAB vision is to "strengthen and improve support for resource families and OCS as we partner to care for Alaska's children". OCS has two staff who are members of the RFAB. The RFAB met with OCS Director's Executive Team and other key OCS managers on October 7, 2016 to discuss their current work, concerns that have arisen from foster parents, and provide feedback to OCS.

OCS leaders meet with the RFAB each spring prior to submission of the APSR to review and discuss the objectives and progress on goals. OCS has identified resource family assessment and support as strategy 1.C.2 in the CFSP and supports the work of the RFAB as one component of support to families. The team was supportive of strategies identified in the CFSP Plan for Improvement, including improving background checks, supporting relative caregivers, and early identification of relatives. The group discussed situations they have been involved with that relative identification did not happen quickly, and expressed concerns about the delays in the identification of relatives by OCS. The link to the APSR and CFSP were provided to this group for review, no comments or feedback were received from the RFAB members.

- **In implementing the provisions of the CFSP and related APSRs, the state engages in ongoing consultation with the** *juvenile court* **and includes the major concerns of these representatives in the goals, objectives, and annual updates of the CFSP.**

OCS partners with the Court Improvement Project (CIP), the Department of Law, and the Public Defender Agency and has included the participation from these agencies in the quarterly CFSP calls and the meeting with Children's Bureau to review the Statewide Assessment in August 2016. OCS, DJJ and the Alaska Court system continue to work towards piloting the "Dual Status Youth" initiative in Anchorage which targets DJJ youth who are also in legal custody with OCS to improve services to this population of youth.

OCS and the CIP work together on improvements to the court services for children and families. The OCS Director participates in regularly scheduled CIP committee meetings. CIP and OCS have partnered to continue their efforts at systemic improvements for Alaska's children & families in need of aid. The CIP coordinator has participated in planning teleconferences for the CFSP and APSR, in order to provide input and feedback from the CIP and court system perspective. Additionally, the CIP coordinator collaborated with OCS by participating in the title IV-E review in November 2015. The CIP and the Alaska Court System work with OCS on Systemic Factor B: Case Review System, as they track and maintain data needed to respond to the items in that factor.

OCS partners with the Department of Law and involved the Chief Assistant Attorney General in the development of the Statewide Assessment, as well as ongoing development of the CFSP and the APSRs. In addition, Assistant Attorneys General (AAG) participate in committees with the OCS as part of the normal process to provide legal support and recommendations. These collaborative efforts include AAG participation in TSCG and OCS Policy Committee. The AAG works with OCS on Systemic Factor B: Case Review System and Systemic Factor C: Quality Assurance, as they have an active role in the completion of items in those factors.

- **In implementing the provisions of the CFSP and related APSRs, the state engages in ongoing consultation with** *other public and private child- and family-serving agencies* **and includes the major concerns of these representatives in the goals, objectives, and annual updates of the CFSP**.

Alaska values partnership and team work with other agencies; additional information may be found in Systemic Factor E: Services Array regarding specific work with other agencies. OCS routinely engages with, and solicits feedback and ideas from, numerous and diverse statewide partners as a means of reviewing and assessing the identified priorities and strategies to improve outcomes and services to children and families. The 2017 APSR includes an extensive listing of the partnerships and collaborative efforts OCS has in place to engage partners in the work related to the CFSP and APSR, including efforts to illicit feedback regarding concerns. Stakeholder input is gathered throughout the year during ongoing program or population specific workgroups and committee meetings at state and local levels. Additional information specific to how OCS engages in ongoing consultations regarding the provisions of the APSR and CFSP include the following:

- OCS works closely other Department of Health and Social Services divisions to implement the provisions of the CFSP. OCS partners with the Division Health Care Services for the accurate and timely completion of criminal background checks through the HCS centralized background check program, as well as assistance with determining Medicaid reimbursable services and claiming for custody children in need of medical care. Timely background checks are an objective of the CFSP. If there are delays in the completion of background checks, if fingerprint are rejected, or if there are other concerns that may cause delays in this process, OCS and the HCS background check program work together to resolve them.

- OCS is fortunate to have a strong partnership with Casey Family Programs (CFP), which provides significant technical and financial resources in Alaska, without which many positive partnerships and practice enhancements would not be possible. CFP provides support, consultation, and technical assistance to Alaska's state and Tribal child welfare services to strength partnership with Alaska Tribes with a goal to decrease disproportionality in the child welfare system.

CFP enhanced efforts to increase understanding and importance of permanency values for OCS managers and Tribal and community partners. Improving the timeliness of permanency for children is an objective of the CFSP, and this collaboration provided OCS staff and partners with a solid foundation to move forward in demonstrating improvements related to permanency for children. Through analysis of the data related to the increased number of children in custody, OCS identified a need to focus on permanency needs for children and youth in OCS custody in an effort to exit children from care when it was safe and appropriate.

In September 2016, through partnership with Casey Family Programs, OCS was able to bring the Director's Executive Team, regional and state office managers, ICWA specialists, Permanency Specialists, and numerous partners to the table to identify strategies for improvement in this area. During small group work, regions were able to identify strategies that would assist them in moving forward to reduce the number of children in Out-of-Home care by achieving permanency for children. This additional support and focus appears to be making a difference in the achievement of permanency through adoption and guardianship. In SFY 16 OCS finalized 299 subsidized adoptions and guardianships. In the first six months of SFY 17 OCS has finalized more than 266 subsidized adoptions and guardianships.

In summary, Item 31is a strength area for Alaska. OCS engages and seeks feedback from internal and external partners. Tribal and community partners are include in identifying concerns, reviewing data, and developing and implementing change efforts. The CFSP and related APSRs were developed with input and through ongoing consultation with Tribal representatives, consumers, service providers, foster care providers, the juvenile court, and other public and private child- and family-serving agencies. Through the examples provided above, OCS has documented that we engage partners and utilize the feedback from them to improve policy and practice**.**

Item 32: Coordination of CFSP Services With Other Federal Programs

How well is the agency responsiveness to the community system functioning statewide to ensure that the state's services under the CFSP are coordinated with services or benefits of other federal or federally assisted programs serving the same population?

> Please provide relevant quantitative/qualitative data or information that show the state's services under the CFSP are coordinated with services or benefits of other federal or federally assisted programs serving the same population.

State Response:

Alaska asserts that Item 32, Coordination of CFSP Services with Other Federal Programs, is a strength. State services under the CFSP are being coordinated with services and benefits of other federal programs that assist the same service population. Through the collaborative efforts the state asserts that services to meet client needs are improved.

Twice a month, Administrative Operations Managers (AOMs) from the nine divisions of the Department of Health and Social Services meet for the purpose of programmatic and budgetary alignment, utilizing a Results-Based Budgeting framework. By assuring intra-departmental and inter-departmental activities are

planned and executed in a manner that considers both short and long-term results, and reduces duplication of services, the State of Alaska maximizes the generation of federal and other non-state revenues. An example of this work includes recent technology changes: the AOMs collaborated in the implementation of the two recent technical upgrades in accounting and personnel management software, including establishing structure, evaluating department-wide communication plans, and a support system at go-live. Another example is the collaborate work to strength the departments workforce: the Human Resources manager attends these meetings and receives coordinated feedback from the AOMs in regard to areas of need regarding employee recruitment and hiring.

During CY 2016, Alaska has been transitioning to a new statewide accounting system, Integrated Resource Information System (IRIS) in which continued efforts for department-specific, chart of account elements in which tracking of federal, state and other non-state revenues can be tracking and followed.. The chart of account elements designed are intended to provide efficiencies for the future of financial management to department divisions, offices, boards, and sections.

OCS relies on close relationships with a wide range of partners and interdependencies to improve the outcomes for Alaskan children and families. Through open communication, the divisions and other partners are collaborating in efforts to best service the population. Specific examples of active partnerships with other agencies who receive federal funding include the following:

- Title XIX medical eligibility: OCS has partnered with other divisions to insure a seamless transition for former foster care youth in accessing Medicaid until age 26. This benefits clients by ensuring they are able to access medical care when they leave foster care.

- Division of Behavioral Health: Through collaboration efforts, DBH is able to leverage existing grants and services so that OCS clients can benefit. The DBH is working to enroll more Medicaid providers to meet the needs of children and families in Alaska; at this time OCS does not have data to demonstrate improvements in this area. OCS also works closely with DBH on medical-necessity determinations for children in need of residential or psychiatric residential care.

- Division of Health Care Services and Department of Public Safety: OCS partners with these agencies to ensure timely and accurate background checks are received for OCS resource families. OCS has reimbursable billing agreements with both agencies to pay for background checks and fingerprints completed. All fully licensed foster families and all adoptive families who receive a subsidy, have completed a background check.

- Division of Health Care Services: The Alaska Medicaid Coordinated Care Initiative (AMCCI) provides services to benefit children in foster care. This service is provided through MedExpert, in which a MedExpert staff is available to work with OCS on the coordination of medical services and supports for children in foster care.

- Division of Public Assistance: OCS has partnered with DPA to leverage TANF federal dollars towards existing OCS services. In FY2016 OCS and DPA reviewed programs that could possibly be covered under TANF funding. The focus was on those grants that were funded, or primarily funded, with State General Funds. The description was compared to what was allowable under either purpose 3 or 4 of TANF and the logic in connecting the TANF purpose to the grant. OCS and DPA have identified OCS efforts that may be used as maintenance of efforts for the state. Through this effort the following services were implemented:

    - It was determined that the CAC grants could be funded from TANF funds, this has allowed for an increase in grant funding to serve children and families.

- Programs like the Emergency Relief Support program, a pilot project to provide to provide time-limited financial support to relatives providing unlicensed foster care to children in OCS custody, are funded through State General Funds dollars, but maybe used by DPA to support their maintenance of efforts requirements. This program provides increased support to relatives caring for relative children, and allows the needs of children to be met.

Additionally, OCS works closely with the Child Care Program Office of DPA to ensure foster parents have access to child care support and funding for children in OCS custody when needed for employment. Because this is a prioritized population for this program, DPA has established a Reimbursable Services Agreement (RSA) with OCS to provide this funding directly to foster parents. OCS has since centralized this work to one small unit, so foster parents and OCS staff no longer needs to work through the cumbersome request for funds process, which sometimes causes delays in reimbursement to foster parents.

For the past two years, the DHSS, as a whole, has been involved in significant Medicaid reform and expansion efforts for Alaska. Two statutes were passed in the 2016 legislative session, SB 74 and SB 91, which are focusing on these reform and expansion efforts. As a part of these efforts, the DHSS is actively developing an 1115 Medicaid waiver application. As a part of this effort, the children and families involved with the child welfare system are seen as a priority for expanded services, especially in the areas of behavioral health treatment and substance abuse, which means they should have more access to services.

OCS and Tribal partners have worked together on the Tribal title IV-E partnership since the late 1990s. The purpose of the Tribal title IV-E reimbursement program is to pass federal title IV-E funds to the Tribe/Tribal entities through the OCS to increase child welfare services to Tribal citizens. The program allows the OCS to make title IV-E foster care administration funds and title IV-E training funds available to the Tribe/Tribal Entity as a reimbursement for expenses incurred by Tribe/Tribal entity. OCS currently has agreements with 11 Tribes/Tribal entities and is actively seeking new partners across the state. In addition, OCS is currently in the initial implementation phase with two Tribal title IV-E maintenance partners.

As the title IV-B/title IV-E agency, the OCS shares information with the following partners through approved memorandum of agreement (MOA) to: access services for children or families, verify income and resources for parents to determine eligibility, verify eligibility for services, monitor health care services, locate potential resources, and provide legal documentation for children by obtaining their birth certificates. MOAs assist in collaboration efforts with Department of Revenue (Permanent Fund Dividend), Department of Education, and Bureau of Vital Statistics.

Finally, the Children's Justice Task Force (CJATF) completed the update to the Mandatory Reporter Training in 2016. This is an online training for which all OCS staff as well as various providers in Alaska should complete in order to understand Alaska's mandated reporter laws.

In summary, OCS is working closely with partners to ensure that the state's services under the CFSP are coordinated with services or benefits of other federal or federally-assisted programs serving the same population. Through the partnership and collaborative opportunities listed above, OCS is able to maximize the efforts to improve services to children and families and address the objectives in the CFSP. For these reasons, Alaska has determined that CFSR, item 32 is a strength. The provisions of the CFSP are coordinated with services or benefits of other federal or federally-assisted programs serving the same population. OCS has a close partnership with other state and private agencies, Tribal organizations, and community partners to ensure funds are used in an effective manner to support services to children and families.

G. Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention

For this Systemic Factor, the following items will be addressed:

- Item 33: Standards Applied Equally
- Item 34: Requirements for Criminal Background Checks
- Item 35: Diligent Recruitment of Foster and Adoptive Parents
- Item 36: State's Use of Cross-Jurisdictional Resources for Permanent Placement

As outlined below, Alaska asserts that Items 33-35 as strength, while Item 36 is an area needing improvement. Alaska has a foster and adoptive parent licensing, recruitment, and retention system that functions in a standardized manner in all jurisdictions in the state; however, placements across state lines and placements crossing jurisdictions in the state do not function consistently and do not meet required timelines.

Item 33: Standards Applied Equally

How well is the foster and adoptive parent licensing, recruitment, and retention system functioning statewide to ensure that state standards are applied to all licensed or approved foster family homes or child care institutions receiving title IV-B or IV-E funds?

> Please provide relevant quantitative/qualitative data or information that show the state's standards are applied equally to all licensed or approved foster family homes or child care institutions receiving title IV-B or IV-E funds.

State Response:

Alaska has identified CFSR, Item 33, Standards Applied Equally, as a strength area. . The below information will demonstrate how OCS is ensuring that state standards are applied to all licensed or approved foster family homes or child care institutions receiving Title IV-B or IV-E funds.

For a child in the custody of OCS and residing in out-of-home care, OCS will place the child in one of three placement options: 1) a licensed foster home, 2) an unlicensed relative home, or in 3) a residential child care institution. Licensed foster homes and residential child care institutions are required to meet state statutory and regulatory licensing standards under AS 47.32, 7 AAC 50 and 7 AAC 10. Unlicensed relative homes are exempt from licensing statutes and regulations and they do not receive foster care payments. State statutes, regulations, and the Community Care Licensing Manual provide essential information about the rules, licensing standards, and procedures to ensure licensing practices are applied equally across the state.

On January 24, 2017, Alaska had 2,314 foster homes: Of these homes, 1,312 of these homes were fully licensed, and received foster care payments funded through title IV-E and state general fund dollars. There were 563 fully licensed; these not fully licensed homes do not receive payments through title IV-E funds., but instead are funded through state general fund dollars only.

Licensing Standards

Licensing requirements are defined by law in Alaska statutes and regulations. To become a licensed foster parent, there are specific requirements; the foster parent must be at least 21 years old, regulations require three references at least two of whom are unrelated, a criminal history background check, the foster home must meet basic fire, safety, and sanitation standards, the foster home must have enough room and beds for a foster child, attend core training, and complete training requirements.

Foster homes can become "not fully licensed" when key licensing standards are not met. These changes may include; not completing annual training requirements, or lack of a background check for a family

member living in the home. Children placed in "not fully licensed" homes are temporarily ineligible for title IV-E payments. For this reason, each quarter, the licensing supervisors provide OCS State Office with data on the number of providers in each region who are not fully licensed, the number of children temporarily title IV-E ineligible during the past quarter due to missing licensing documentation, and the reasons the homes are not fully licensed. Data in the following table shows the number of providers temporarily ineligible for quarter ending 9/30/2016, compared to the number of children who are temporarily ineligible for title IV-E foster care payments for the quarter. Child safety is monitored during monthly caseworker visits.

Number of Title IV-E Children placed in a Not-Fully Licensed Foster Home

Region	Foster Homes	Children
Anchorage	20	36
Northern	11	20
Southcentral	23	49
Southeast	4	6
Western	15	33
Total	**73**	**144**

Source: Licensing Manager Title IV-E Compliance Spreadsheets, Quarter report on 9/30/2016.

The chart on the below provides a summary of the data related to reasons for which foster homes are not fully licensed for the quarter ending 9/30/2016. The table shows that the Southcentral Region has the highest number of missing documents for fingerprint results, references and training hours. Additionally, the table shows that the missing standard by standard (home inspection) documentation is uniformly missing at relatively the same levels across all regions with 1-3 provider files in each region not having a completed standard by standard (home inspection. The data also shows that background checks are generally consistently documented in the providers file in all regions.

Reasons Foster Homes were Temporarily Ineligible*

Region	Fingerprints	References	Background Check Issues	Home Inspection	Training	Other
Anchorage	6	4	0	2	4	6
Northern	1	2	1	3	3	10
Southcentral	10	5	0	3	10	5
Southeast	3	2	0	3	1	0
Western	4	4	1	1	7	1
Total	**24**	**17**	**2**	**12**	**25**	**22**

Source: Licensing Manager Title IV-E Compliance Spreadsheets

*There may be multiple reasons that apply to the same home; thus, counts for this chart will not match the number of foster home in the previous chart.

If a region identifies a trend with foster homes and the reason they are not fully licensed, the licensing manger and supervisor address that need. For example, NRO determined a number of foster homes were not fully licensed in a rural section of Northern region due to fingerprints not being completed. Fairbanks licensing staff traveled to the different communities to complete fingerprinting to alleviate this issue. Another example of how this data is used to ensure the standards are applied equally: WRO identified eight foster homes not fully licensed due to training, so the licensing supervisor referred those providers to ACRF, who contacted the foster parents to complete training. After ACRF contacted the providers and mailed out training materials, two providers have met training requirements.

OCS Licensing Investigations, Maltreatment in Care, Residential Child Care Facility Licensing Investigations

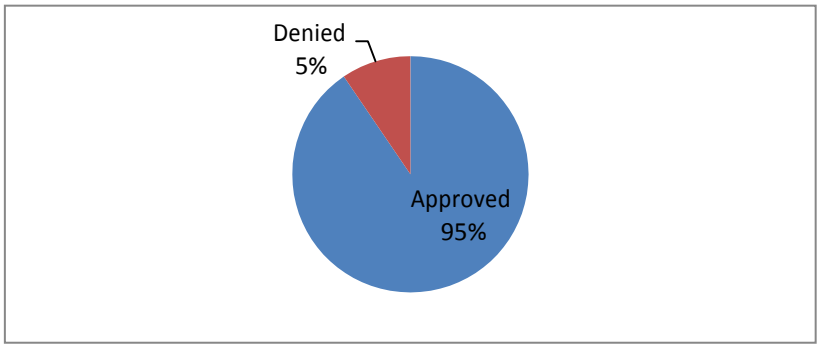
The OCS regional foster care licensing units receive complaints alleging violation(s) of licensing the statute or regulations, which may include reports of abuse or neglect within a licensed foster home. The regional licensing supervisors will screen the licensing complaint as "screen in" or "no merit". The "no merit" decision means the complaint has been screened out. A screened in licensing investigation is assigned to a Community Care Licensing Specialist (CCLS) as a licensing investigation.

Training waivers

A licensed foster care provider who cares for a relative child can request a training waiver when annual training hours have not been met. Training waivers are available statewide. Of the training waivers submitted, 72% have been approved. For a training waiver to be approved, the family must demonstrate they are able to meet the child's needs without completing the required training hours and the primary Protective Services Specialist must make agree with the approval of the training waiver.

Training waivers are denied if there is an open investigation, or there has been a recent investigation and OCS determines training will remedy the reason for the investigation. Training waivers are denied when the PSS has concerns about the foster home and training will support the foster parent. In calendar year 2016 there were 40 training waivers submitted. Of these, 38 were approved and 2 were denied. Below is chart indicating the percentage of training waivers approved or denied in calendar year 2016:

Training Waivers CY 2016



Source: OCS Training Waiver Tracking Log

Barrier Crimes and/or Conditions:

Federal law prohibits title IV-E reimbursement for adoption, guardianship, or foster care payments for a child who is placed in a foster home, adoptive, or guardian home where a foster parent, prospective adoptive parent, or guardian has committed any of the following crimes:

- a felony conviction at any time for child abuse or neglect;
- spousal abuse;
- a crime against children;

- a crime involving violence including rape, sexual assault, or homicide, and
- a felony conviction with the past 5 years for physical assault, battery, or a drug-related offense.

Alaska regulations identify a barrier crime as a criminal offense that is inconsistent with the standards for licensure, certification, approval, or eligibility to receive payments and are outlined in 7 AAC 10.905. A barring condition is outline in AS 47.05.310(c)(1) as an individual who has been found by a court or agency of this or another jurisdiction to have neglected or abused a child. An individual who wants to be a licensed provider or adopt a child from OCS, and has a barrier crime or condition, can request a background check variance, as outlined in Alaska statute and regulation. All variance applications are reviewed first by the OCS regional barrier crime variance committee and then forwarded to the statewide DHSS Barrier Crime Variance Committee for recommendation to the DHSS Commissioner. The applicant may request a reconsideration of the Commissioner's determination. The DHSS Barrier Crime Variance Committee has set considerations by which determinations of approved or denied decisions are made. These considerations include: complete application, barring offense related to job duties, does offence provide a safety concern, time span since offence, personal statement, and rehabilitation/treatment. This process is consistent across the state.

The majority of the variance requests for barriers are made by relatives. During CY 2016, only 15% of OCS barrier crime or conditions variances were for non-relative/non-child specific placements.

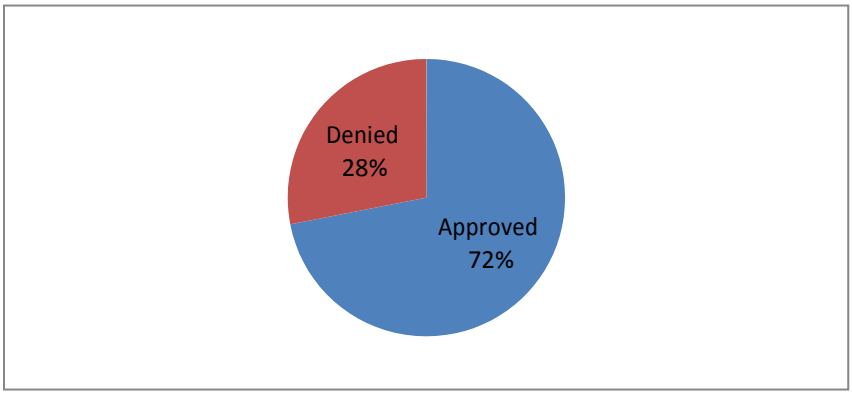
In CY 2015, there were a total of 33 barrier crime variance applications submitted by OCS resource families. Of those, 23 were approved OCS barrier crime and conditions variances, and 10 were denied (70% were approved). In CY 2016 (to date) there have been 57 barrier crime variance applications submitted by OCS resource families. Of those, 41 were approved OCS barrier crime and conditions variances, and 16 were denied (72% were approved).

Variance Applications for Barrier Crime and Condition

Year	Count	Approved	Denied	Denial Rate
2016	57	41	16	28.1%
2015	33	23	10	30.3%

Source: DHCS Barrier Crimes Variance Committee Tracking Log

OCS Barrier Crime and/or Conditions Variances CY 2016



Source: DHCS Barrier Crimes Variance Committee Tracking Log

The table and pie chart above provide data related to the number of barrier crime variances that were approved and denied. The majority of the applications are approved, which means those individuals are able to be foster or adoptive parents with OCS.

General Variances:

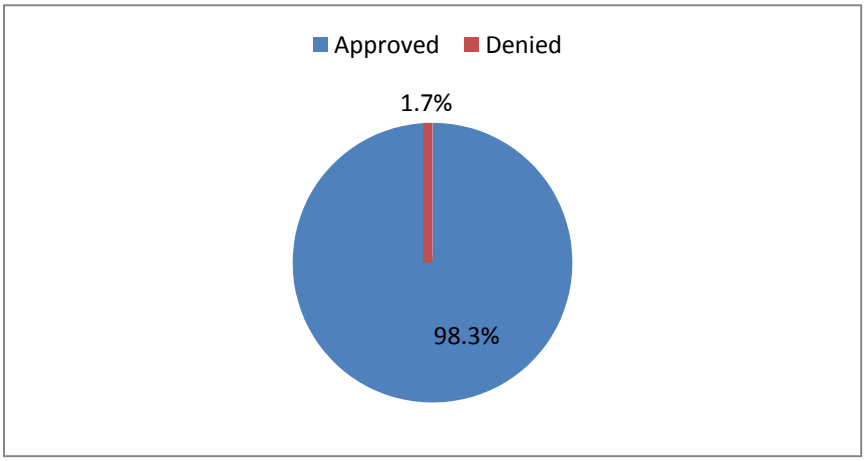
Licensed foster homes and applicants can apply for a general variance for non-health and safety items listed in the licensing regulations. OCS may grant a general variance to identify alternative methods for meeting the general licensing requirements, and upon demonstration that the requirement can be met through an acceptable alternative. For example, window size not meeting licensing standards, water temperature, or increasing the capacity on the license.

General various requests are reviewed by the OCS regional variance committees. The regional variance committee consists of at least four members and includes an OCS community care licensing manager, community care licensing supervisor, child protection supervisor or manager, and a Tribal representative. The two licensing managers participate in all general variance committee meetings to ensure consistency across the state.

When a general variance is denied at the regional general variance committee, the recommendation is sent to the statewide general variance committee for determination second level review.

In calendar year 2016 there were 363 general waivers submitted. Of these, 357 were approved and 6 were denied. The chart below shows the percentage of general variances approved or denied in calendar year 2016:

OCS General Variances CY 2016



Source: OCS Licensing Supervisor Tracking Log

The general variances that were denied in CY 2016, were due to safety concerns and no alternate method to satisfy safety provided. For example, the windows in the bedrooms on the second floor of a two story house did not meet egress requirements and the structure of the windows would make it hard to break through the frame. Another example, young children slept on the second floor and parents on the first floor and the window in the children's bedroom did not open.

Residential Child Care Facilities utilize the same process for barrier crime and/or condition variances. A Residential Child Care Facilities variance may be for admitting a child when the facility is at capacity or a youth turns 18 while in treatment and needs to finish treatment.

Review of licensing files

In November of 2015, The Children's Bureau, Administration for Children and Families conducted a secondary review of Alaska's title IV-E foster care program. For the title IV-E audit, 191 licensing files were reviewed. The Children's Bureau determined that Alaska was in substantial compliance with federal eligibility requirements. One licensing error was found due to a title IV-E payment being made for a child placed in a foster home that did not meet the licensing requirements.

In August of 2016, a single audit was conducted on 60 licensing files. There were no errors were found due to licensing. The intent of Alaska's single audit, regulation 2 AAC 45, is to parallel the federal Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996, OMB Circular A-133 and its successor the Uniform Grant Guidance 2 CFR part 200 to a significant extent. This enables the State to receive audits conducted for the federal government that also meet state agency information needs, resulting in an efficient and effective method of gathering information. Because the files were available following the single audit, the Social Services Program Officer (SSPO) reviewed 20% of the 60 files for title IV-E compliance as another method of quality assurance.

Adoption

Licensed foster families or unlicensed relatives may eventually adopt or become the guardian of the child placed in their care if the child cannot return home. In order to finalize an adoption or guardianship, the family must participate in a home study and the study must be approved by the Regional Permanency Specialist in the region.

Home studies must be conducted using a standardized format covering required content, including an assessment of the family and verification that CPS check and fingerprint base background checks were completed. Regional Permanency Specialists (RPS) are responsible for ensuring the studies contain the required content but must also utilize their permanency expertise in reviewing the quality of the assessment of the family. After reviewing the homestudy the RPS makes a decision, based on study as well as other pertinent information known to OCS, about whether the family should be recommended for adoption of the specific child.

In summary, Item 33 is a strength area because Alaska applies the standards equally statewide as demonstrated by the information provided above.

Item 34: Requirements for Criminal Background Checks

How well is the foster and adoptive parent licensing, recruitment, and retention system functioning statewide to ensure that the state complies with federal requirements for criminal background clearances as related to licensing or approving foster care and adoptive placements, and has in place a case planning process that includes provisions for addressing the safety of foster care and adoptive placements for children?

> Please provide relevant quantitative/qualitative data or information that show the state is complying with federal requirements for criminal background clearances as related to licensing or approving foster care and adoptive placements and has in place a case planning process that includes provisions for addressing the safety of foster care and adoptive placements for children.

State Response:

Item 34 is a strength area for the Office of Children's Services (OCS). The below information demonstrates how OCS is ensuring that Alaska is complying with federal requirements for criminal background clearance as related to licensing or approved foster care and adoptive placements and has in place provisions for addressing the safety of foster care and adoptive parents.

APSIN Background Checks

Prior to the placement of a child, Alaska Public Safety Information Network (APSIN) checks are completed on a relative who requests placement and any member of the relative's household 16 years of age or older; on an applicant for a provisional foster care license under emergency conditions and members of the applicant's household. These standards are applied across all regions when a provider is applying for a provisional emergency foster care license.

According to the user agreement between OCS and the Department of Public Safety (DPS), OCS flags licensed foster parents and active relative placements. When a provider is flagged, anytime the provider receives a criminal charge or has an information alert (to locate/warrant), OCS receives a message form DPS (flag hit).

When the OCS Background Check Unit receives a flag hit from DPS on a licensed home, the OCS Background Check Unit emails the details from the flag hit to the licensing worker, supervisor, and manager. For unlicensed relative homes, the flag hit details are emailed to the PSS, supervisor, and manager. In calendar year 2016, there have been 142 licensed provider flag hits and 45 unlicensed relative flag hits. All flag hits are reviewed and a determination is made regarding if an investigation is required..

The OCS Background Check Unit monitors the Set Flag Report in ORCA. On 8/22/2016, the Set Flag Report showed 60 licensed homes missing fingerprints; this includes 3 parents and 57 household members, and 16 unlicensed relative homes missing APSIN checks. This last group includes household members. The OCS Background Check Unit emails the assigned licensing worker or PSS regarding the incomplete background checks and directs the individual to complete the required checks. The Background Check Unit reports the individual as not being flagged in ORCA.

Alaska Background Check Program

The Alaska Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) has a dedicated program, called the Alaska Background Check Program (BCP), located with the Division of Health Care Services. The BCP provides centralized background check, and in partnership with the Department of Public Safety, processes fingerprint-based criminal history checks for individuals associated with licensed and/or certified entities under the authority of DHSS or are otherwise eligible to receive payments, in whole or in part, from the Department.

BCP background checks consist of two parts. First, is a name-based search requiring a review of at least 10 registries available to the department. The registries include:

- Alaska Public Safety Information Network (APSIN),
- Alaska Court System/Court View and Name Index, Juvenile Offender Management Information System,
- Certified Nurse Aide Registry,
- National Sex Offender Registry,
- Office of Inspector General,
- Alaska Medical Assistance Exclusion List,
- Child Care Program Office child care provider database,
- Child abuse / neglect registry, and
- Any other records/registries the Department deems are applicable.

Secondly, a background check determination includes a review of State and Federal fingerprint-based criminal history results. The BCP completes the background checks for licensed foster homes, Tribally-licensed foster homes, unlicensed relative, adoptive and guardianship homes, Child Placement Agency (CPA) foster homes, and Residential Child Care Facilities.

The Office of Children's Services (OCS) uses Live Scan machines to capture fingerprints for electronic submittal, retrieval of information through the BCP and DPS systems. OCS has 27 Live Scan machines, including 18 portable units, to ensure statewide access to fingerprinting. The prints are forwarded electronically to the Department of Public Safety (DPS) immediately. DPS sends the fingerprint results electronically to the New Alaska Background Check System (NABCS). These results are automatically filed with each individual's profile in the system.

NABCS is the Department of Health & Social Services' database program for the processing and tracking of criminal history checks for individuals in contact with Alaska's vulnerable populations receiving services in licensed and/or certified entities. OCS and Residential Child Care licensing staff, supervisors, and managers have access to NABCS. The BCP reports that the average timeframe from fingerprint submission to the BCP's final determination is 15 days for SFY17. Each division is able to review their own background check data.

Individuals who have an active background check through the BCP are flagged for barring crimes. This means that if a new barrier crime occurs, the BCP is notified, at which time the BCP will revoke the current background check and issue a revocation notice to the individual and notify OCS of the action.

Adoption and Guardianship

All families must have an approved guardianship or adoption home study, to include CPS and fingerprint based background checks in order to finalize an adoption or guardianship of a child in care. Background checks are a requirement for state and title IV-E federal adoption and guardianship subsidies to be implemented to assist families in meeting the special needs of the children. The OCS adoption and guardianship eligibility team verifies that fingerprint background checks have been completed as part of the eligibility determination for the adoption or guardianship subsidy. In calendar year 2016, 259 eligibility determinations were completed, and found to be in compliance with the fingerprint requirements.

In summary, Item 34 is a strength in Alaska. Alaska has a fully functioning system to ensure required background checks are completed. This is consistent statewide and includes a variance process to address safety issues with foster and adoptive families.

Item 35: Diligent Recruitment of Foster and Adoptive Homes

How well is the foster and adoptive parent licensing, recruitment, and retention system functioning to ensure that the process for ensuring the diligent recruitment of potential foster and adoptive families who reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of children in the state for whom foster and adoptive homes are needed is occurring statewide?

> Please provide relevant quantitative/qualitative data or information that show the state's process for ensuring the diligent recruitment of potential foster and adoptive families who reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of children in the state for whom foster and adoptive homes are needed is occurring statewide.

State Response:

Alaska has identified that CFSR, Item 35, Diligent Recruitment of Foster and Adoptive Homes, is a strength. OCS has a process to ensure that the diligent recruitment of potential foster and adoptive families reflects the ethnic and racial diversity of children in the state for whom foster and adoptive homes are needed statewide. On December 16, 2016, OCS had 3,014 children who were in the custody of the state. Of this number, 1,254 or 41.61% were placed with relatives. Additionally, OCS had a total of 1,653 licensed foster homes and group homes and 219 child placement agency licensed foster homes. Of these 1,653 licensed foster homes, 584 are child-specific relative homes and 373 are ICWA homes.

The table on the following page shows the number of Alaska Native/American Indian children in care by region who are placed in Alaska Native/American Indian home, by region and race of all children. This data includes children who are out-of-home, not on a trial home visit, not in a relative placement, and not in a child placement agency or residential facility. As mentioned above, OCS has 41.61% of the children out of the home placed with relatives. Relatives may be licensed or unlicensed.

Alaska Native/American Indian Children by Region

REGION	Children in Care	Alaska Native/ American Indian	Percent Alaska Native/ American Indian
Anchorage	1224	713	58.3%
Northern	522	357	68.4%
Southcentral	849	322	37.9%
Southeast	175	131	74.9%
Tribal Northern	1	1	100.0%
Tribal Southeast	2	2	100.0%
Western	196	196	100.0%

Source: OCS Custom ORCA Report, run 12/15/2016.

Children in Out of Home Care by Race (as of 1/26/17)*

	Alaska Native/ American Indian	Asian	Black	Pacific Island	White
Count	1722	76	256	123	1365
Percent of Total	58.0%	2.6%	8.6%	4.1%	46.0%
Total Children	2969	2969	2969	2969	2969

Source: OCS ORCA Report, dated 1/26/2017

*The "Count" of the races exceeds "Total Children" because many children have more than one race.

Alaska Native/ICWA Foster Homes

In Alaska, Alaska Native and American Indian individuals make up about 20% of the state's population. The information in the previous graphs show that there are a disproportionate number of Alaska Native

children in out-of-home placements compared to the number of Alaska Native foster homes. Foster parent(s) who have identified their race as American Indian, Asian, Black, Pacific Island, White and undetermined are proportionate to the children in out-of-home placements, for this reason, OCS focuses efforts of recruiting Alaska Native/ICWA homes

An ICWA-preference foster home is a foster home where the provider indicated a race of Alaska Native/American Indian and the foster parent provided their Certificate of Indian Blood, or Bureau of Indian Affairs card, indicating tribal enrollment. The Tribe recognizes these homes as ICWA preference placements. In the past year, OCS has increased the number of ICWA homes by 42; on January 19, 2017, there were 365 licensed ICWA homes. This increase can be attributed to regional recruitment efforts being held in the communities, collaboration with Tribal partners, and the support of the Casey Family Program to implement regional recruitment teams/plans. Nevertheless, Native children in care outnumber the ICWA homes licensed to care for them. Currently, 443 Alaska Native children are in out of preference placement and 152 children available for adoption are in out of preference placement.

OCS is collaborating with Tribal partners to develop a process to place Alaska Native children who are in state custody into tribally-licensed foster homes. The State of Alaska is developing a Memorandum of Agreement to allow OCS to place children in care into Tribally-licensed foster homes. This will provide localized and culturally-appropriate care by increasing the pool of Alaska Native foster homes available for children in the department's custody. No implementation date has been set at this time.

OCS has a statewide process for the diligent recruitment of potential foster and adoptive families who reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of children in the state and special needs for whom foster and adoptive homes are needed. The recruitment and retention activities are described in regional recruitment and retention plans. Each region has a Recruitment and Retention Committee. The regional recruitment committees meet quarterly to discuss recruitment and retention events and to view data from the previous quarter to determine if they are on track for their goals. The data reviewed includes the number of ICWA homes, and homes identified to care for sibling groups or medically fragile children. Beginning in FY 17, all five regional recruitment and retention teams identified recruitment needs by establishing baseline numbers in their plans in order to track progress toward identified goals such as increasing:

a. ICWA preference resource families;
b. Resource families willing to care for children with complex medical needs;
c. Resource families willing to care for sibling groups and teens;
d. The number of Emergency Shelter Care and therapeutic foster Care in rural Alaska; so that therapeutic foster homes in rural Alaska allow for children to remain in their communities.

To track statewide progress each regional recruitment and retention team provides data to state office on a quarterly basis. Examples of regional recruitment and retention events scheduled to promote and increase the number of foster homes are included in the bullets below.

- OCS is currently developing flyers to send to statewide individuals with current Alaska medical licenses.
- OCS is running a nine month TV ad for foster care recruitment. This TV ad was filmed in the rural communities of Western region. The theme of the ad is that you don't have to live in a big city, have a big house, fancy car or lots of money to be a foster parent. At this time, four individuals have request additional information on how to become a foster parent after seeing the TV add.
- As part of the growing need for therapeutic foster care homes in rural Alaska, OCS in conjunction with two Child Placement Agencies (Presbyterian Hospitality House and the Alaska Child and Family Services) have explored providing Therapeutic Foster Care (TFC) services in the communities of Nome and Bethel. In December 2015, Tanana Chiefs Conference, in partnership with the OCS and the Alaska Center for Resource Families, hosted a two-day training "Raise Awareness and Foster Dreams" from the surrounding villages in the interior of Alaska. The event

was considered a success with 14 Tribal applications and 7 OCS applications being completed. To date, 6 of the 7 OCS applicants have been issued a foster care license.

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- The Anchorage Foster Care Licensing Unit sent out training invitations to Tribal partners. A Licensing 101 Basic Training Class, Licensing 201 Home Visit Expectations, and Mandated Reporter Training were offered to tribal families. OCS staff was trained on how to engage Alaska Native families. Nineteen team home visits were conducted for the purpose of listening to ICWA foster parent experiences as foster parents, gathering suggestions for improvement, and getting to know them better. The goal to increase the number of ICWA compliant foster homes in the Anchorage area by 10 was exceeded; 14 new ICWA homes were licensed.
- OCS implemented the Emergency Relief Support (ERS) pilot program in the Southeast region, Western Region and Northern Region. The purpose of the Emergency Relief Support program is to provide time-limited financial support to relatives providing unlicensed foster care to child in OCS custody. Resource Families participating in the ERS receive a monthly support payment in the amount of $500.00 per child, per placement for up to 3 months, while they pursue licensure or public/Tribal assistance programs.

Adoption

Alaska facilitates listings on four Adoption exchange websites to provide for general and child-specific recruitment of adoptive homes for waiting children. These exchanges are the Alaska Adoption Exchange, the Northwest Adoption Exchange, and the Adopt US Kids and A Family for Every Child website exchanges. Currently 24 children, including one sibling group, are listed as waiting for permanent homes. In the last 5 years, 44 out of 68 listed children have been adopted, for a total of 68%. The numbers of children listed on the exchanges are lower than the numbers of legally free children in the state. The low use is likely due to a variety of issues including:

- a lack of worker skill and knowledge regarding the actions needed to photo list a child;
- difficulty in obtaining good quality photographs;
- negative personal beliefs about photo listing recruitment strategies; and
- concerns from other legal party regarding listing children, particularly Alaska Native children, on national exchanges.

Child-specific recruitment is completed by use of the exchanges but also by diligent relative searches, OCS data on the numbers of children placed with relatives and/or in ICWA-preferred placements who have finalized adoptions:.

- Wendy's Wonderful Kids (WWK) is a program delivered by a non-profit agency located in the Anchorage and Wasilla area; serving 12 children. WWK provides diligent efforts to locate adoptive homes for children who are legally free, and monitoring of 10 additional children who are in a pre-adoptive placement. These services are individualized for the child.

- The Preparation for Adoption Readiness for Kids in Alaska (PARKA) project provides intensive preparation and training to approximately 10 families per year who are interested in adopting children with special needs from foster care. Once the family has been through the program, OCS purchases a home study for the family and the PARKA project partners with the regional offices to provide matching services. These services take into consideration the child's individual needs. Since 2010, 35 hard-to-place children with special needs have been placed with families who have graduated from the program.

  The Heart Gallery, which is collaboration between OCS and a faith-based organization with the assistance of many community partners, is providing adoptive home recruitment for special needs children in OCS custody without an identified adoptive home. The faith-based organization,

called Beacon Hill organized professional photos, completed narratives to go with each photo, is managing the photo listing website, and is fielding inquiries from interested families and offering orientation for those who are interested in adoption. This service is currently available in Anchorage and Southcentral regions of Alaska, with plans for expanding to waiting children statewide. Currently, there are 26 children listed on this website and OCS is working with the Heart Gallery on preparing families to adopt children from foster care and matching children with families that will best meet their needs.

In summary, the information provided in this section demonstrates that Item 35 is a strength area. OCS has a fully functioning, statewide process to license, recruit, and retain foster and adoptive families for meet the ethnic and racial diversity of the children in out-of-home care**.**

Item 36: State Use of Cross-Jurisdictional Resources for Permanent Placements

How well is the foster and adoptive parent licensing, recruitment, and retention system functioning to ensure that the process for ensuring the effective use of cross-jurisdictional resources to facilitate timely adoptive or permanent placements for waiting children is occurring statewide?

> Please provide relevant quantitative/qualitative data or information that show the state's process for ensuring the effective use of cross-jurisdictional resources to facilitate timely adoptive or permanent placements for waiting children is occurring statewide.
>
> Please include quantitative data that specify what percentage of all home studies received from another state to facilitate a permanent foster or adoptive care placement is completed within 60 days.

State Response:

Item 36 is an area in need of improvement for Alaska. The information in this section will demonstrate how OCS needs to improve the process for ensuring the effective use of cross-jurisdictional resources to facilitate timely adoptive or permanent placements for waiting children is occurring statewide. Overall, the numbers on completed Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children (ICPC) within 60 days will make this item an area needing improvement.

As a member of the Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children (ICPC), the State of Alaska is bound by the Compact's regulations; Alaska Statute and OCS policies support the ICPC regulations. ICPC cases are divided into ICPC-Out cases, in which children in the custody of Alaska OCS may be sent to other states; and ICPC-In cases, in which children from other states may be placed in Alaska to live with parents, relatives, or other foster care providers. On September 30, 2016, there were 212 Alaska children involved in the ICPC services through OCS, of which161 were ICPC-Out cases, and 135 children in 93 ICPC-In cases.

According to ICPC regulation #2 regarding non-expedited requests, the ICPC home study report is to be completed within 60 calendar days after receiving a home study request. The receiving state shall, directly or by contract, complete a study of the home environment for purposes of assessing the safety and suitability of the child being placed in the home. If the home study report cannot be provided within 60 days due to delays caused by OCS, its contractor, or placement resource, a statement explaining the delay must be submitted to the sending state with a projected time as to when the report will be completed.

The following two tables show the rates by which the State of Alaska is completing home studies in a timely manner. The first table shows the percentage of ICPC home studies completed within 60 days and 90 days, and more than 90 days from 2012 – 2016. Data used for this determination has been derived from the OCS ORCA database, specifically from the ICPC record for each home study requested. These home studies are for public adoption, foster care in a family setting or with parents and relatives.

Total number of ICPC-In Home Studies Completed by Calendar Year

Year	Total	Completed in 60 Days	Percentage in 60 Days	Completed in 61-90 Days	Percentage in 61-90 Days	Completed in more than 90 Days	Percentage Over 90 Days
2012	85	28	32.9%	14	16.5%	43	50.6%
2013	107	36	33.6%	27	25.3%	44	41.1%
2014	99	37	37.4%	23	23.2%	39	39.4%
2015	78	30	38.5%	15	19.2%	33	42.3%
2016	49	21	42.9%	9	18.3%	19	38.8%

Source: OCS ORCA ICPC Homestudy Completion Time Report, RR 301170120t

2016 Home Study Completion Compliance

Type	Total	Completed in 60 Days	Percentage in 60 Days	Completed in 90 Days	Percentage in 90 Days	Over 90 Days	Percentage Over 90 Days
Adoption	3	0	0.0%	1	33.3%	2	66.7%
Licensed	14	5	35.7%	5	35.7%	4	28.6%
Parent	7	1	14.3%	1	14.3%	5	71.4%
Relative	10	7	70.0%	0	0.0%	3	30.0%
Total	**34**	**13**	**38.2%**	**7**	**20.6%**	**14**	**41.2%**

Source: OCS ORCA ICPC Homestudy Completion Time Report, RR 20170120

The second table above shows the percentage of ICPC home studies completed within 60 days, 90 days, and over 90 days, for specific ICPC-In types, adoption, licensed, parent, and relative placement. As indicated above, OCS is not successful in completing the home studies within the required timeframe. OCS completed 0% of the ICPC adoption home studies requests timely, 34.7% of licensed requests, 14.3% of parent requests, and 70% of the relative requests within 60 days. OCS has reviewed the data and has identified the following barriers to completing an adoption home study within 60 days that includes: Adoption home study requests are referred to a grantee agency; the grantee agencies have 90 days to complete a home study. In addition, OCS must complete the fingerprint-based, criminal background check, and receive the results before making the home study referral to the grantee, this process could take at minimum 30 days. When the home study is completed, the Regional Permanency Specialist reviews and approves the home study, which may take 30 days. On average, an ICPC –In adoption home study is taking five months to complete.

As indicated in the table above, OCS has completed 35.7% of the licensed foster care home studies within 60 days. Previously, the ICPC Program Coordinator was sending completed packets to the sending state. The Program Coordinator determined this was causing a delay in the timeliness and not meeting ICPC regulations. Currently, the Program Coordinator is sending the home study to the sending state, if the home study is completed before the rest of the documents are obtained. This process is expected to increase the timeliness.

Additionally, the table further indicates that OCS completed 14.3% of parent placement home studies. Delays are frequently due to fingerprinting not being completed until after the home study has been finished. As with foster care placement requests, the ICPC Program Coordinator is now sending the home study to the sending state as a preliminary report while awaiting the fingerprint results in order to increase the timeliness.

For all types of home study requests, worker turnover and caseload sizes are significant factors causing delays in timely completion. New workers with limited experience and knowledge of the ICPC processes create delays in the timely completion of home studies. With the increase in caseloads often workers who were designated to work ICPC cases are assigned additional cases. For example, the ICPC worker may be assigned initial assessment cases.

In mid-August 2016, the ICPC program Coordinator began sending preliminary reports (home study or notice as to why home study will be late) without waiting for final paperwork such as the foster care license, or fingerprint-based, criminal background check results, in order to increase compliance with 60-day timelines. Data from mid-August 2015 to December 31, 2016 indicates that compliance with sending the home study report within 60 days has increased significantly for all but adoption home studies (see data in the table below).

August thru December 2016 Homestudy Completion Compliance

Type	Total	Completed in 60 Days	Percentage in 60 Days	Completed in 90 Days	Percentage in 90 Days	Over 90 Days	Percentage Over 90 Days
Adoption	3	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	3	100.0%
Licensed	6	3	50.0%	2	33.0%	1	16.7%
Parent	2	1	50.0%	0	0.0%	1	50.0%
Relative	4	4	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Total	**15**	**8**	**53.3%**	**2**	**13.3%**	**5**	**33.3%**

Source: OCS ORCA ICPC Homestudy Completion Time Report, RR 20170120s

Out of Town Requests

Each OCS office within the state will accept requests for services and assistance from other OCS office. These requests are completed through the Out-of-Town Requests (OTR). There are three types of OTR requests: initial assessment interviews, placement and secondary worker assignment, and unlicensed relative home study requests. Three of the five regions have dedicated staff for OTRs: Anchorage, Wasilla, and Fairbanks. Each region has an OTR email box for the transmission of OTR requests and assigned staff to monitor the OTR email box.

In Alaska, children cannot be placed in another region without sending an OTR to the receiving region. Due to ongoing concerns with the responsiveness and ongoing collaboration for OTR cases, a workgroup was developed to review the current system and work to improve this process. This workgroup meets includes the regional Protective Services Managers I. This group worked to identify changes in the current system that would have a positive impact on the services to children and families involved in the OTR case. Solutions resolved by the workgroup include:

- Developed standard language in the subject line of the OTR email, each region now has an OTR contact person who is a supervisor or manager, and a change in OCS value about OTRs.

- Direction to consider the children in state custody as "our children", not an individual regions child.

OTR issues still being addressed include: quality of information in the OTR, unlicensed relative home studies not being completed in a timely manner, OTR policy and ORCA data. Each region currently has individualized spreadsheets to track OTR data. OCS is working on creating a standardized spreadsheet. The Anchorage region is meeting every other month with regional OTR contacts to talk about children who have been out of their home community for more than 180 days. They are developing a plan to return the children to their home community.

Alaska has not been successful in demonstrating uniform and concise documentation of OTR requests. Each region has their own spreadsheet for tracking OTRs coming into the region or going to another region. Each regional spreadsheet looks different in regards to how data is tracked. Two of the five managers reported, OTR data is not logged on to the OTR spreadsheet when they are on vacation.

OCS staff turnover and caseloads may contribute to delays in the completion of OTR requests. There are only three offices that have workers dedicated to the OTR cases (Wasilla, Fairbanks, and Anchorage). The other offices incorporate the requests in with all of the primary worker assignments.

Adoption

Alaska is a member state of the Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance (ICAMA). ICAMA is an agreement between and among its member states that enables them to coordinate the provision of medical benefits and services to children receiving adoption assistance in interstate cases. ICAMA prevents or eliminates geographic barriers that may delay or deny the provision of medical assistance and post-adoption services to families who have adopted children with special needs. In SFY 16, Alaska had 394 adopted/guardianship children from other states utilizing Alaska Medicaid through this process. In the same year, 724 of Alaska's children were receiving Medicaid in other states.

OCS works closely with services which provide diligent recruitment efforts and matching of placement resources for children who are legally free and need permanent homes. The PARKA project promotes intra-state adoptions between regions by providing intensive preparation and training to 10 families per year who are then matched with children statewide who are in foster care. Wendy's Wonderful Kids services, Beacon Hill's Heart Gallery and Alaska's Adoption Exchange promotes both intra and interstate adoptions by recruiting adoptive homes for specific children who are legally free through methods such as photo listings, matching activates and file mining for potential placement resources.

Child Specific Recruitment is completed by use of the adoption exchanges but also by diligent relative searches, OCS data on the numbers of children placed with relatives and/or in ICWA preferred placements who have finalized adoptions:

In summary, Item 36 is an area of need for Alaska. Alaska does not have a fully functioning system to ensure successful placement across region or state lines. Although Alaska has methods to facilitate inter- and intra-jurisdictional placements, the practice is inconsistent and timelines are not met consistently or timely.

Appendix I

CWLA Guidelines for Computing Caseload Standards

The most requested CWLA Standards are those that provide recommended caseload ratios for workers in child welfare program areas, such as child protective services, foster care, adoption, and residential services. These ratios of clients to staff members offer guidance based on the field's consensus of what constitutes best practice. They're also supported by the findings of caseload and workload studies and by projects that show particular success in reaching agency goals.

The following broad principles provide a context for agencies as they approach the task of computing caseloads for child welfare workers:

People are the key ingredient in an effective child welfare system. Child welfare work is labor intensive. Caseworkers must be able to engage families through face-to-face contacts, assess the safety of children at risk of harm, monitor case progress, ensure that essential services and supports are provided, and facilitate the attainment of the desired permanency plan. This cannot be done if workers are unable to spend quality time with children, families, and caregivers. [2]

Computing caseloads is an inexact science. When in doubt, err on the side of safety.
When systems are short-staffed, bad things can happen. Studies of critical incidents, including child deaths, child injuries, and children missing from foster care, almost always involve an overworked caseworker who didn't have sufficient time to adequately assess or monitor the child's situation. In addition to leading to such tragedies, insufficient staffing results in inefficient services. [3]

Our goal is to ensure safety, permanency, and well-being for all children who come to the attention of the child welfare system. We need to focus on what it takes to achieve these service goals. In the federal Child and Family Service Reviews, those states that showed strength in such areas as family involvement and worker contact with children in foster care were more likely to achieve safety and permanency goals. [4] **Caseloads must permit such activities and opportunities.** Currently no universally accepted formula for computing caseloads exists. But the following general rules of thumb can guide jurisdictions in determining the number of workers necessary to meet CWLA's recommended standards:

The CWLA caseload standards are expressed in terms of maximum cases per worker. Any formula should result in caseloads *no greater than* the maximum recommended number, rather than exceed it. For example, anticipated vacation and sick leave time, agency holidays, and regularly scheduled training events should be deducted from the number of calendar days to arrive at the total actual workdays available per worker per month. This should be done before computing caseloads.

Some caseload ratios are expressed in terms of cases per month, whereas others are expressed in terms of the number of cases on any given day. These variations need to be accounted for in computing cases. For example, for investigative workers in child protective services, the recommended caseload is 12 active cases per month. This number should not be construed to mean 12 active cases at any point in time, but 12 active cases in the workdays available during a designated 30-day period or month.

Moreover, if the worker is carrying forward cases from the previous month, the number of new cases should be reduced accordingly.

Caseloads should be computed separately for each worker category. For example, when computing any category of workers, staff who may play a role in service delivery but are not performing the specific functions of this category, should not be included in the worker count. Though helpful, case aides, supervisors, and others who may assist with cases, do not perform the same functions, and including them provides a misleading caseload count.

Case transfers and changes in case status should receive careful consideration. Caseload counts should accrue to the worker, not to the case. Multiple workers may address the practice needs of a family and its children in a given period. Whenever cases transfer from one worker to another within a specified period, they should be counted on each worker's caseload. The fact that this is a *single* case does not negate the need to count it as part of *each* worker's caseload. The same principle applies to changes in case status.

Caseloads and workloads. A U.S. Children's Bureau document, *Workload Standards for Children and Family Social Services*, differentiates caseload and workload measures as follows:

Caseloads are defined as the amount of time workers devote to direct contacts with clients.

Workloads are defined as the amount of time required to perform a specific task. [5]

Although CWLA recommends caseload ratios for each area of child welfare practice, workloads are best determined through careful time studies conducted within the individual agency. They should be based on the responsibilities assigned to complete a specific set of tasks or units of work for which the worker is responsible. For those agencies interested in developing their own specific workload figures, time required to conduct the following tasks should be calculated: travel; collateral visits, outreach activities, and court schedules; emergencies that interrupt regular work schedules; supervision, consultation, and collaboration; work with community groups; attendance at staff meetings, staff development, professional conferences, and administrative functions; case management; and telephone contacts, reading of records, case recording or computer entry, and reports of conferences and consultations.

Notes

The Public Children Services Association of Ohio, which last studied the workload issue in 1997, found that a social worker putting in a normal 40-hour week can conduct about 11 investigations per month. (Knox, D., & Higgins, J. [September 3, 2003]. Caseload Definition in Dispute. Akron Beacon Journal.) A recent Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, study concluded that investigative workers could conduct 16 investigations per month, with the qualification that this number would not permit them to conduct "best practice." They suggested a lower caseload ratio, such as CWLA's recommended 12 investigations per month, would permit best practice. (Yamatani, H., & Engel, R. [November 2002]. Workload Assessment Study. Allegheny County Office of Children, Youth, and Families. Unpublished.)

The Oregon Project was successful in achieving permanency for children in foster care. This project recommended a maximum caseload of 15 children per worker (Emlen, A.; Lahti, J.; Downs, G.; McKay, A.; & Downs, S. [1977]. Overcoming Barriers to Planning for Children in Foster Care. Portland, Oregon:

Regional Research Institute, Portland State University), consistent with CWLA's caseload recommendations of 12-15 children per worker for foster care. A study in Idaho and Washington State showed that when caseloads were reduced to no more than 10 children per worker, permanency for children was accomplished in a timely manner (Katz, L. [1990]. Effective permanency planning for children in foster care. Social Work, 35, 220-26.)

The General Accounting Office, in its March 2003 report, states, "Some of the caseworkers we interviewed handle double the number of cases recommended by advocacy organizations and spend between 50 and 80 percent of their time completing paperwork, thereby limiting their time to assist children and families." (U.S. General Accounting Office. [2003]. Child Welfare: HHS Could Play a Greater Role in Helping Child Welfare Agencies Recruit and Retain Staff' [GAO-03-357]. Available at www.gao.gov/atext/d03357.txt.)

A 1998 study of New York's child welfare services found that high workload resulted in incomplete abuse and neglect investigations, an inability of workers to regularly monitor clients, and prolonged permanency decisions for children. (State of New York Comptroller, Division of Management Audit. [1998]. Caseworker Deployment in Selected Child Welfare Programs Report (96-S-52).)

Results of the 2001 and 2002 Child and Family Service Reviews. (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, ACF, ACYF, Childrens Bureau. Results of the 2001 and 2002 Child and Family Service Reviews. Power point presentation, available at www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/cwrp/results.htm.)

Developing Workload Standards for Children and Family Social Services. Prepared by Peat, Marwick, Mitchell, and Co., in association with CWLA, for the United States Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1978.

Appendix II CFSR Data Dictionary

CFSR Measure	Description	Denominator	Numerator	Exclusions	Notes
Permanency in 12 months for children entering care	Of all children who enter care in a 12 month period, what percent discharged to permanency within 12 months of entering care?	Number of children who enter care in a 12-month period	Number of children in the denominator who discharged to permanency within 12 months of entering care	• Children in care < 8 days • Children who enter care at age 18 or older	• Trial home visit adjustment is applied • Youth entering at 17 but who turn 18 while in care or discharge at age 18 are not counted as achieving permanency
Permanency in 12 months for children in care 12-23 months	Of all children in care on the first day of a 12-month period who had been in care (in that episode) between 12 and 23 months, what percent discharged to permanency within 12 months of the first day?	Number of children in care on the first day of a 12-month period, who had been in care (in that episode) between 12 and 23 months	Number of children in the denominator who discharged to permanency within 12 months of the first day	• Children age 18 or more on the first day of the year	• Youth age 17 on the first day but who turn 18 while in care or discharge at age 18 are not counted as achieving permanency

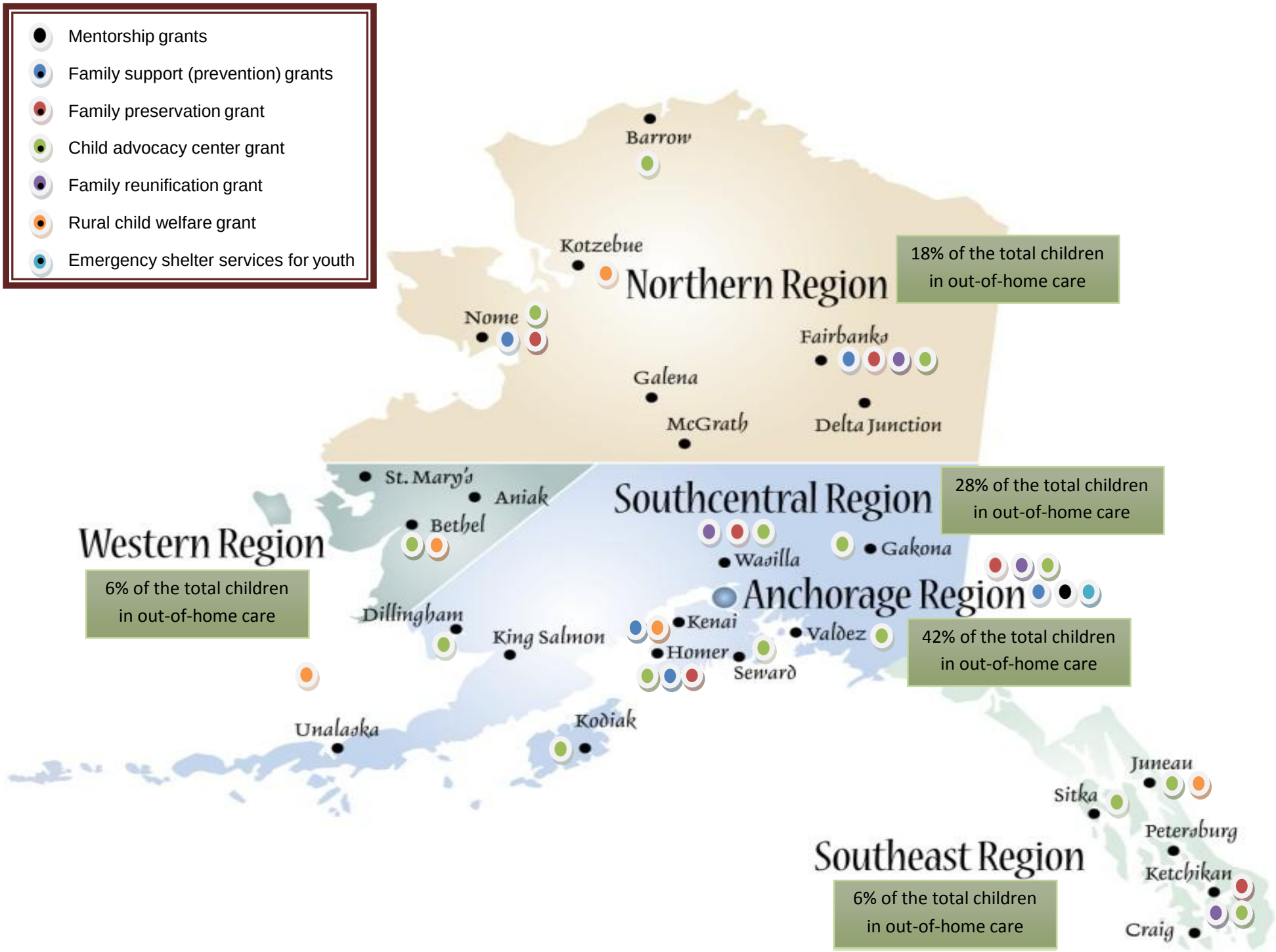
CFSR Measure	Description	Denominator	Numerator	Exclusions	Notes
Permanency in 12 months for children in care 24 months or more	Of all the children in care on the first day of a 12 month period who had been in care (in that episode) for 24 months or more, what percent discharged to permanency within 12 months of the first day?	Number of children in care on the first day of a 12-month period, who had been in care (in that episode) for 24 months or more	Number of children in the denominator who discharged to permanency within 12 months of the first day	• Children age 18 or more on the first day of the year	• Youth age 17 on the first day but who turn 18 while in care or discharge at age 18 are not counted as achieving permanency
Re-Entry to foster care in 12 months	Of all children who enter care in a 12-month period, who discharged within 12 months to reunification, live with relative, or guardianship, what percent re-entered care within 12 months of their discharge?	Number of children who enter care in a 12-month period, who discharged within 12 months to reunification, live with relative, or guardianship	Number of children in the denominator who re-enter care within 12 months of their discharge	• Children in care < 8 days • Children who enter or exit care at age 18 or older	• If a child has multiple re-entries within 12 months of their discharge, only his first re-entry is selected

CFSR Measure	Description	Denominator	Numerator	Exclusions	Notes
Placement Stability	Of all children who enter care in a 12-month period, what is the rate of placement moves, per day of foster care?	Of children who enter care in a 12-month period, total number of days these children were in care as of the end of the 12-month period	Of children in the denominator, total number of placement moves during the 12-month period	• Children in care < 8 days • Children who enter care at age 18 or more • Any time in care and placement changes that occur after the 18th birthday is not counted • The initial removal from home (and into care) is not counted as a placement move	• Placement stability is expressed as a rate per 1,000 days in care

Maltreatment in Foster Care	Of all children in foster care during a 12-month period, what is the rate of victimization, per day of care?	Of children in care during a 12-month period, total number of days these children were in care as of the end of the 12-month period	Of children in the denominator, total number of substantiated or indicated reports of maltreatment (by any perpetrator) during a foster care episode within the 12-month period	• Complete foster care episodes lasting < 8 days • Youth in foster care at 18 or older • For youth who start out as 17 years of age and turn 18 during the period, any time in care and victimizations that occur after the 18th birthday is not counted • Records with an incident date occurring outside of the removal episode, even if report dates fall within the episode (used when incident date exists) • Maltreatment reports that occur within the first 7 days of removal • Victims age 18 or older • Records with disposition or report dates falling outside of the 12-month period • Subsequent reports that occur within 1 day of the initial report	• Maltreatment in foster care is expressed as a rate per 100,000 days in care

CFSR Measure	Description	Denominator	Numerator	Exclusions	Notes
Recurrence of Maltreatment	Of all children who were victims of a substantiated or indicated maltreatment report during a 12-month period, what percent were victims of another substantiated or indicated maltreatment report within 12 months?	Number of children with at least one substantiated or indicated maltreatment report in a 12-month period	Number of children in the denominator that had another substantiated or indicated maltreatment report within 12-months of their initial report	• Subsequent reports that occur within 14 days of the initial report • Subsequent reports in which the incident date shows that the subsequent report refers to the same incident as the initial report • If report date is prior to the first 12 months • Victims age 18 or older	• Relies primarily on the report date to determine whether the maltreatment occurred in the first 12 month period; therefore, if a case does not reach disposition until the following 12 month period but has a report date in the first, we include it

Map of Service Locations



OCS PROTECTIVE SERVICES STAFF DEVELOPMENT PLAN

office of CHILDREN'S SERVICES
safe children | strong families

This process should begin immediately upon employment and continue through the first year.
This document needs to be completed and turned in with six month and 1 year evaluation.

ONBOARDING	Estimated Time Required	Completion Date Supervisor Initials	Responsible Party
Office tour and introductions; Read OCS Practice Model document and discuss mission, vision and guiding principles ; Read/Review Discuss NASW Code of Ethics; Discussion regarding general expectations to include: SDP plan, computer access, phone and computer skills, work dress code and hours, questions and answers; Review Policy and Procedures applicable to their job; discuss/debrief content with supervisor. Online HIPPA training http://hsstraining.alaska.gov/course/view.php?id=107	Ongoing		Supevisor
PreSKILS 131/133			
Shadow PS Specialist during contact with children and parents either in IA, FS or both, if generalist	2-5 days		BLC
Attend court hearings to meet and understand roles of the parties	Ongoing		BLC
Review two completed IA cases; one FS Case, using case review tool discuss/debrief with supervisor	2 hrs		BLC
Prepare for SKILS training by meeting with your supervisor the Friday prior to attendance at SKILS	1 hr		BLC
Meet with Licensing supervisor in your region to discuss licensing, emergency placements, etc.	1 hr		BLC
Meet with Team Decision Making Facilitator & attend TDM, if applicable	1 hr		BLC
Review two completed PSRs with supervisor	1 hr		BLC
Other tasks at supervisor's discretion			Supervisor
ONLINE MODULES			
Complete online module - Introduction to OCS and Practice Model and discuss http://akcwatraining.org/	1 hr		BLC
Complete online Mandatory Reporting Course - http://dhss.alaska.gov/ocs/Pages/childrensjustice/mandatoryreporting.aspx	1 hr		BLC
Complete online module Cultural Humility and discuss with supervisor http://akcwatraining.org/	1/2 hour		BLC
Complete online module Introduction to ICWA http://akcwatraining.org/	1/2 hour		BLC
Listen to recording: MEPA - July 2013	1 hr		BLC
Online - Interviewing Basics http://akcwatraining.org	1 hr		BLC
Online - Child Interviewing Course http://akcwatraining.org	2 hrs		BLC

Online - Adult Interviewing Course http://akcwatraining.org	1 hr		BLC
Online - Adult Functioning & Assessment Course http://akcwatraining.org	1 hr		BLC
Online - Permanency http://akcwatraining.org	1 hr		BLC
Online - cpi™ Course (by e-mail invitation)	4 hrs		BLC
Online substance use/abuse training http://www.ncsacw.samhsa.gov/tutorials/tutorialDesc.aspx?id=2	4 hrs		BLC
Online - Human Trafficking https://hsstraining.alaska.gov/course/view.php?id=1171	1 hr		BLC
ORCA PRE-SKILS 131/133 https://extranet.dhss.alaska.gov/sites/ocs/default.aspx To be decided by Supervisor. Completed no later than six weeks post SKILS.			
Instruction on documentation including: □ Activity Notes □ Case Closure □ Case Detail □ Caseworker Visit Activity Notes □ Collaterals Tab □ Family Case Plan □ Family Case Plan Evaluation □ Family Contact Plan □ Home Study Referral □ ICWA Tab □ Initial Assessment □ Medical Profile □ Notice of Intent to Change Placement □ Notice of Right to Request Placement □ Notifications Search □ Out of Home Placement □ Person Management □ PFD Application □ Prober Reports □ Relatives □ Report Manager □ Request for Funds □ Request for Placement and Department Decision □ Safety and Protective Action Plans □ Search	5 hrs		Supervisor
SKILS 131			
Intake, Initial Assessment, ORCA and Legal. For more information see: https://www.uaa.alaska.edu/academics/college-of-health/departments/school-of-social-work/child-welfare-academy/curriculum/skils.cshtml	10 days		Child Welfare Academy
SKILS 133/Generalist			
Introduction to Intake and Initial Assessment, Family Services, ORCA and Legal. For more information see: https://www.uaa.alaska.edu/academics/college-of-health/departments/school-of-social-work/child-welfare-academy/curriculum/skils.cshtml	15 days		Child Welfare Academy
POST-SKILS 131/133			
Each week for the month following SKILS, workers will attend a teleconference to transfer the learning from the classroom to practice in the field.	4-8 hrs		Child Welfare Academy
Attend Case Transfer Meetings	1hr		Supervisor
Meet with local Tribal partners; meet with Regional ICWA Specialist; Discuss *"Yuuyaraq: The Way of the Human Being"* - **ICWA I**	4 hrs		ICWA Specialist
Conversation with supervisor regarding SSA's and Admin Support roles and responsibilities	1 hr		Supervisor
Participate in Child Functioning webinar	1 hr		Supervisor

Other tasks at supervisor's discretion			Supervisor

Within 1st Year			
Car Seat Training	2 hrs		OCS Staff
FASD 101 http://fasdcenter.samhsa.gov/educationTraining/courses/FASDTheCourse/index.aspx	3 hrs		Certificate to Supervisor
ChildFirst Alaska - Forensic Interviewing for Sex Abuse cases http://childfirstalaska.org/ (at the discretion of Supervisor)	5 days		ACA/CAC Staff
ICWA II (Formally known as Advanced ICWA). For more information see: https://www.uaa.alaska.edu/academics/college-of-health/departments/school-of-social-work/child-welfare-academy/curriculum/icwa.cshtml	2 days		CWA
Knowing Who You Are (KWYA) Training. For more information see: https://www.uaa.alaska.edu/academics/college-of-health/departments/school-of-social-work/child-welfare-academy/curriculum/kwya.cshtml	2 days		Supervisor
CFSR and Title IVE Overview / Basics: https://hsstraining.alaska.gov/course/view.php?id=1104	1 hr		State Office
Watch Normalcy and Prudent Parent Standards webinar: https://www.uaa.alaska.edu/academics/college-of-health/departments/school-of-social-work/child-welfare-academy/Webinars/past-session-calls.cshtml	1 hr		Supervisor
PS Specialist self-evaluation	1 hr		Supervisor

Course 131, SKILS for Initial Assessment					
Training Activity	**Course Learning Objectives**	**Duration**	**Provider**	**Audience**	**Cost Allocation**
Pre-Service Training Standards, Knowledge & Insights Leading to Success (SKILS), Pre-Service Training for Protective Services Workers - **131, SKILS for Initial Assessment**	**DAY 1** 1. Learners will have a beginning understanding of general issues related to child protection. 2. Learners will be able to describe three decisions that must be made in Initial Assessment 3. Learners will be able to identify the four categories of child maltreatment. 4. Learners will be able to explain the function of prioritizing the response time for the Protective Service Report. 5. Learners will be able to conduct and document a child interview. TITLE IV-E ACTIVITIES Referral to Services Preparation for and participation in judicial determinations Placement of the child Development of the Case Plan Family Centered Assessment Communication skills required to work with children and families Activities designed to preserve, strengthen and reunify Assessments for Removal Social Work Practice Child Development Family Centered Practice Orientation to Child Welfare in Alaska	Short Term 7 hours	Child Welfare Academy, University of Alaska Anchorage	All New Protective Services Specialists and Managers (areas of practice: Initial Assessment)	100% Curriculum IV-E Ratio x Eligibility Ratio x 75% FFP
Pre-Service Training Standards, Knowledge & Insights Leading to Success (SKILS), Pre-Service Training for Protective Services Workers - **131, SKILS for Initial Assessment**	**DAY 2** 1. Learners will be able to describe Safe, Unsafe, and High Risk. 2. Learners will be able to assess for Present Danger. 3. Learners will understand the importance of initial contact and practice making an initial contact with families. 4. Learners will understand the importance of a Protective Action Plan and practice writing a Protective Action Plan. 5. Learners will be able to describe the purpose of the Guide to Information Collection and Analysis and the Protocol for Information Gathering. 6. Learners will know what an effective interview is and what it accomplishes. 7. Learners will be able to list and describe five types of questions used during successful casework interviewing. TITLE IV-E ACTIVITIES Referral for Services Preparation for and participation in judicial determinations Placement of the child Development of the Case Plan Cultural competency related to children and families Family Centered Assessment Permanency planning including using kinship care Substance abuse, domestic violence, and mental health issues - not for treatment Separation, grief and loss, child development and visitation Communication skills required to work with children and families Activities designed to preserve, strengthen and reunify Assessments for Removal Social Work Practice Child Development Family Centered Practice Orientation to Child Welfare in Alaska	Short Term 7 hours	Child Welfare Academy, University of Alaska Anchorage	All New Protective Services Specialists and Managers (areas of practice: Initial Assessment)	100% Curriculum IV-E Ratio x Eligibility Ratio x 75% FFP
Pre-Service Training Standards, Knowledge & Insights Leading to Success (SKILS), Pre-Service Training for Protective Services Workers - **131, SKILS for Initial Assessment**	**DAY 3** 1. Learners will understand how to and practice interviewing a parent. 2. Learners will understand the importance of documentation and will practice documenting an interview. 3. Learners will understand the importance of documenting the Initial Assessment and will practice completing an Initial Assessment Summary. 4. Learners will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the Five Protective Factors.	Short Term 7 hours	Child Welfare Academy, University of Alaska Anchorage	All New Protective Services Specialists and Managers (areas of practice: Initial Assessment)	100% Curriculum IV-E Ratio x Eligibility Ratio x 75% FFP

	TITLE IV-E ACTIVITIES Referral for Services Preparation for and participation in judicial determinations Placement of the child Development of the Case Plan Cultural competency related to children and families Family Centered Assessment Substance abuse, domestic violence, and mental health issues - not for treatment Separation, grief and loss, child development and visitation Communication skills required to work with children and families Activities designed to preserve, strengthen and reunify Assessments for Removal Social Work Practice Child Development Family Centered Practice				
Pre-Service Training Standards, Knowledge & Insights Leading to Success (SKILS), Pre-Service Training for Protective Services Workers - **131, SKILS for Initial Assessment**	**DAY 4** 1. Learners will understand the importance of how Safety Threats manifest within a family. 2. Learners will understand how to assess future risk and will understand what the FRAN is and why it is used. 3. Learners will understand what the Impending Danger Assessment and Analysis is and how to complete it. 4. Learners will understand the difference between "assessing" and "analyzing". 5. Learners will understand and be able to describe the difference between safety and risk. 6. Learners will be able to identify when to use an in-home vs. an out of home Safety Plan. 7. Learners will understand when to open a case when there is high risk. TITLE IV-E ACTIVITIES Referral for Services Preparation for and participation in judicial determinations Placement of the child Development of the Case Plan Cultural competency related to children and families Family Centered Assessment Permanency planning including using kinship care Substance abuse, domestic violence, and mental health issues - not for treatment Separation, grief and loss, child development and visitation Communication skills required to work with children and families Activities designed to preserve, strengthen and reunify Assessments for Removal Social Work Practice Family Centered Practice Orientation to Child Welfare in Alaska	Short Term 7 hours	Child Welfare Academy, University of Alaska Anchorage	All New Protective Services Specialists and Managers (areas of practice: Initial Assessment)	100% Curriculum IV-E Ratio x Eligibility Ratio x 75% FFP
Pre-Service Training Standards, Knowledge & Insights Leading to Success (SKILS), Pre-Service Training for Protective Services Workers - **131, SKILS for Initial Assessment**	**DAY 5** 1. Learners will understand what the differences are between the Protective Action Plan, the Safety Plan and the Case Plan. 2. Learners will understand how to use the Maltreatment Assessment Protocol in substantiation or not. 3. Learners will understand what is and how to document a Safety Plan. TITLE IV-E ACTIVITES Referral for Services Preparation for and participation in judicial determinations Placement of the child Development of the Case Plan Cultural competency related to children and families Family Centered Assessment Permanency Planning including using kinship care Substance abuse, domestic violence, and mental health issues - not for treatment Separation, grief and loss, child development and visitation Communication skills required to work with children and families Activities designed to preserve, strengthen and reunify Assessment for Removal Social Work Practice Family Centered Practice	Short Term 7 hours	Child Welfare Academy, University of Alaska Anchorage	All New Protective Services Specialists and Managers (areas of practice: Initial Assessment)	100% Curriculum IV-E Ratio x Eligibility Ratio x 75% FFP

	Orientation to Child Welfare in Alaska				
Pre-Service Training Standards, Knowledge & Insights Leading to Success (SKILS), Pre-Service Training for Protective Services Workers - **131, SKILS for Initial Assessment**	**DAY 6** 1. Learners will establish a beginning understanding of the five Protective Factors that help parents be safe caregivers. 2. Learners will know what information must be shared at Case Transfer and will practice and complete a mock Case Transfer. 3. Learners will know who participates in the Case Transfer staffing. 4. Learners will be able to explain how healthy family contact leads to permanency. 5. Learners will gain an understanding on how to develop a family contact plan and will develop a mock Family Contact Plan. <u>TITLE IV-E ACTIVITIES</u> Referral for Services Preparation for and participation in judicial determinations Placement of the child Development of the Case Plan Cultural competency related to children and families Family Centered Assessment Permanency planning including using kinship care Substance abuse, domestic violence, and mental health issues - not for treatment Separation, grief and loss, child development and visitation Communication skills required to work with children and families Activities designed to preserve, strengthen and reunify Assessments for Removal Independent Living / APPLA Social Work Practice Child Development Family Centered Practice Orientation to Child Welfare in Alaska	Short Term 3.5 hours	Child Welfare Academy, University of Alaska Anchorage	All New Protective Services Specialists and Managers (areas of practice: Initial Assessment)	100% Curriculum IV-E Ratio x Eligibility Ratio x 75% FFP
Pre-Service Training Standards, Knowledge & Insights Leading to Success (SKILS), Pre-Service Training for Protective Services Workers - **131, SKILS for Initial Assessment**	**DAY 6** 1. Learners will be able to identify how trauma impacts families and why it is important to child welfare. 2. Learners will understand how trauma impacts brain development and how the brain responds to trauma. 3. Learners will be able to apply trauma informed care to their work with families. 4. Learners will learn about the Adverse Childhood Experiences Study (ACES) and be able to describe the long term impact of trauma on children and adults. 5. Learners will begin to reframe their thinking about families through trauma lenses. <u>TITLE IV-E ACTIVITIES</u> Referral for Services Placement of the child Development of the Case Plan Cultural competency related to children and families Family Centered Assessment Permanency planning including using kinship care Substance abuse, domestic violence, and mental health issues - not for treatment Separation, grief and loss, child development and visitation Communication skills required to work with children and families Activities designed to preserve, strengthen and reunify Independent Living / APPLA Social Work Practice Child Development Family Centered Practice Orientation to Child Welfare in Alaska	Short Term 3.5 hours	Child Welfare Academy, University of Alaska Anchorage	All New Protective Services Specialists and Managers (areas of practice: Initial Assessment)	100% Curriculum IV-E Ratio x Eligibility Ratio x 75% FFP
Pre-Service Training Standards, Knowledge & Insights Leading to Success (SKILS), Pre-Service Training for Protective Services Workers - **131, SKILS for Initial Assessment**	**DAY 7** 1. Learners will understand the legal process for children and families from the initial CINA petition through permanency to case closure. 2. Learners will understand the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) and how it impacts work with children's families and tribes. 3. Learners will understand how the OCS Practice Model and legal intervention co-exist and work together. 4. Learners will be able to participate in court processes. <u>TITLE IV-E ACTIVITIES</u>	Short Term 3.5 hours	Child Welfare Academy, University of Alaska Anchorage	All New Protective Services Specialists and Managers (areas of practice: Initial Assessment)	100% Curriculum IV-E Ratio x Eligibility Ratio x 75% FFP

	Preparation for and participation in judicial determinations Placement of the child Development of the Case Plan Case Plan Evaluation Cultural competency related to children and families Family Centered Assessment Permanency planning including using kinship care Substance abuse, domestic violence, and mental health issues - not for treatment Separation, grief and loss, child development and visitation Activities designed to preserve, strengthen and reunify Assessments for Removal Social Work Practice Family Centered Practice Orientation to Child Welfare in Alaska Trauma Informed Care				
Pre-Service Training Standards, Knowledge & Insights Leading to Success (SKILS), Pre-Service Training for Protective Services Workers - **131, SKILS for Initial Assessment**	**DAY 7** 1. Learners will be able to define terms related to Compassion Fatigue 2. Learners will recognize and discuss the realities of the Compassion Fatigue and how it may affect them. 3. Learners will be able to identify 3 tools to maintain their resiliency in their child welfare work. 4. Learners will understand the power of gratitude and positive psychology to provide them with Self-Care techniques. <u>TITLE IV-E ACTIVITIES</u> Communication skills required to work with children and families Social Work Practice Family Centered Practice Orientation to Child Welfare in Alaska	Short Term 3.5 hours	Child Welfare Academy, University of Alaska Anchorage	All New Protective Services Specialists and Managers (areas of practice: Initial Assessment)	100% Curriculum IV-E Ratio x Eligibility Ratio x 75% FFP
Pre-Service Training Standards, Knowledge & Insights Leading to Success (SKILS), Pre-Service Training for Protective Services Workers - **131, SKILS for Initial Assessment**	**DAY 8** 1. Learners will understand strategies to stay safe while in the field. 2. Learners will understand environmental awareness including planning before and observing their surroundings while in the field. 3. Learners will understand how to protect themselves from dangerous animals and wilderness safety. 4. Learners will understand what to do when there is an active shooter. 5. Learners will gain skills in talking with defensive or angry caregivers. <u>TITLE IV-E ACTIVITIES</u> Cultural competency related to children and families Family Centered Assessment Substance abuse, domestic violence, and mental health issues - not for treatment Communication skills required to work with children and families Social Work Practice Family Centered Practice Orientation to Child Welfare in Alaska	Short Term 3.5 hours	Child Welfare Academy, University of Alaska Anchorage	All New Protective Services Specialists and Managers (areas of practice: Initial Assessment)	100% Curriculum IV-E Ratio x Eligibility Ratio x 50% FFP
Pre-Service Training Standards, Knowledge & Insights Leading to Success (SKILS), Pre-Service Training for Protective Services Workers - **131, SKILS for Initial Assessment**	**DAY 8** 1. Learners will identify the behavior levels that contribute to the development of a crisis and choose an appropriate staff intervention for each level. 2. Learners will identify useful nonverbal techniques which can help to prevent acting-out behavior. 3. Learners will learn to use verbal techniques to de-escalate behavior. 4. Learners will demonstrate cpi™ Principals of Safety to avoid injury if behavior escalates to a physical level. 5. Learners will learn how to provide for the Care, Welfare, Safety, and Security℠ of all those who are involved in a crisis situation. 6. Learners will understand and develop team intervention strategies and techniques. 7. Learners will recognize the importance of staff attitudes and professionalism in responding effectively to those in their charge. 8. Learners will be able to find ways to use the time after a crisis (post-intervention) as a step toward preventing future crisis. <u>TITLE IV-E ACTIVITIES</u>	Short Term 7 hours	Child Welfare Academy, University of Alaska Anchorage	All New Protective Services Specialists and Managers (areas of practice: Initial Assessment)	100% Curriculum IV-E Ratio x Eligibility Ratio x 50% FFP

	Cultural competency related to children and families Family Centered Assessment Substance abuse, domestic violence, and mental health issues - not for treatment Communication skills required to work with children and families Assessments for Removal Social Work Practice Family Centered Practice Orientation to Child Welfare in Alaska				
Pre-Service Training Standards, Knowledge & Insights Leading to Success (SKILS), Pre-Service Training for Protective Services Workers - **131, SKILS for Initial Assessment**	**DAY 9** 1. Learners will gain an understanding of how to make Placement Decisions and to use Team Decision Making Meetings (TDMs) 2. Learners will be able to discuss the differences between MEPA and ICWA with regards to placement of children in out of home care and for permanency. 3. Learners will learn how and when to use Licensing and Emergency Licensure to include background checks and what might constitute a barrier to placement. 4. Learners will be able to identify when it is necessary to use an Out-of-Town Placement (OTR & ICPC). 5. Learners will be introduced to the importance of the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA). <u>TITLE IV-E ACTIVITIES</u> Placement of the child Cultural competency related to children and families Permanency planning including using kinship care Substance abuse, domestic violence, and mental health issues - not for treatment Separation, grief and loss, child development and visitation Communication skills required to work with children and families Independent Living / APPLA Social Work Practice Family Centered Practice Orientation to Child Welfare in Alaska	Short Term 3.5 hours	Child Welfare Academy, University of Alaska Anchorage	All New Protective Services Specialists and Managers (areas of practice: Initial Assessment)	100% Curriculum IV-E Ratio x Eligibility Ratio x 75% FFP
Pre-Service Training Standards, Knowledge & Insights Leading to Success (SKILS), Pre-Service Training for Protective Services Workers - **131, SKILS for Initial Assessment**	**DAY 9** 1. Learners will learn about separation and loss for children in the child welfare system and how to help them deal with separation and loss. 2. Learners will help Resource Families understand child trauma and how to cope with children experiencing loss. 3. Learners will be able discuss the importance of Placement preparation for children and families. 4. Learners will be able to identify the questions children have around being in out of home placement and their need for permanency: i. Who am I? ii. What happened to me? iii. Where am I going? iv. How will I get there? v. How will I know I belong? 5. Learners will be able to write a child's case plan. 6. Learners will be able to describe at least three perspectives from youth who have been in the foster care system that will assist in their jobs. <u>TITLE IV-E ACTIVITIES</u> Placement of the child Development of the Case Plan Cultural competency related to children and families Permanency planning including using kinship care Separation, grief and loss, child development and visitation Communication skills required to work with children and families Activities designed to preserve, strengthen and reunify Assessment for Removal Independent Living / APPLA Social Work Practice Child Development Family Centered Practice Orientation to Child Welfare in Alaska	Short Term 3.5 hours	Child Welfare Academy, University of Alaska Anchorage	All New Protective Services Specialists and Managers (areas of practice: Initial Assessment)	100% Curriculum IV-E Ratio x Eligibility Ratio x 75% FFP
Pre-Service Training	**DAY 10**	Short Term 7	Child Welfare	All New	100% Curriculum

Standards, Knowledge & Insights Leading to Success (SKILS), Pre-Service Training for Protective Services Workers - **131, SKILS for Initial Assessment**	1. Learners will gain a basic understanding of where to locate training modules and what each of the interactive trainings entail (i.e. how to complete the work in ORCA each module address). 2. Learners will be able to navigate ORCA Outliner and Search functions. 3. Learners will create casework items associated with Initial Assessment. 4. Learners will gain an introductory understanding of the workflow process in ORCA as it relates to the workflow in the field. 5. Learners will understand how to navigate the How-Do-I Guides and how to access Help or additional training materials. 6. Learners will understand where to locate reports, ORCA in-site and OCS SharePoint. 7. Learners will gain an advanced understanding of ORCA functions and reports. TITLE IV-E ACTIVITES SACWIS System	hours	Academy, University of Alaska Anchorage	Protective Services Specialists and Managers (areas of practice: Initial Assessment)	IV-E Ratio x Eligibility Ratio x 75% FFP
	Courses 133, SKILS for Family Services and Generalists				
Training Activity	**Course Learning Objectives**	**Duration**	**Provider**	**Audience**	**Cost Allocation**
In Service Training: Standards, Knowledge & Insights Leading to Success (SKILS), Service Training for Protective Services Workers - **133, SKILS for Family Services and Generalists**	**DAY 1** 1. Learners will have a beginning understanding of general issues related to child protection. 2. Learners will be able to describe three decisions that must be made in Initial Assessment 3. Learners will be able to identify the four categories of child maltreatment. 4. Learners will be able to explain the function of prioritizing the response time for the Protective Service Report. 5. Learners will be able to conduct and document a child interview. TITLE IV-E ACTIVITIES Referral to Services Preparation for and participation in judicial determinations Placement of the child Development of the Case Plan Family Centered Assessment Communication skills required to work with children and families Activities designed to preserve, strengthen and reunify Assessments for Removal Social Work Practice Child Development Family Centered Practice Orientation to Child Welfare in Alaska Child abuse and Neglect Issues - not treatment	Short Term 7 hours	Child Welfare Academy, University of Alaska Anchorage	All New Protective Services Specialists and Managers (areas of practice: Family Services and Generalists)	100% Curriculum IV-E Ratio x Eligibility Ratio x 75% FFP
In Service Training: Standards, Knowledge & Insights Leading to Success (SKILS), Service Training for Protective Services Workers - **133, SKILS for Family Services and Generalists**	**DAY 2** 1. Learners will be able to describe Safe, Unsafe, and High Risk. 2. Learners will be able to assess for Present Danger. 3. Learners will understand the importance of initial contact and practice making an initial contact with families. 4. Learners will understand the importance of a Protective Action Plan and practice writing a Protective Action Plan. 5. Learners will be able to describe the purpose of the Guide to Information Collection and Analysis and the Protocol for Information Gathering. 6. Learners will know what an effective interview is and what it accomplishes. 7. Learners will be able to list and describe five types of questions used during successful casework interviewing. TITLE IV-E ACTIVITIES Referral for Services Preparation for and participation in judicial determinations Placement of the child Development of the Case Plan Cultural competency related to children and families Family Centered Assessment Permanency planning including using kinship care Substance abuse, domestic violence, and mental health issues - not for treatment Separation, grief and loss, child development and visitation	Short Term 7 hours	Child Welfare Academy, University of Alaska Anchorage	All New Protective Services Specialists and Managers (areas of practice: Family Services and Generalists)	100% Curriculum IV-E Ratio x Eligibility Ratio x 75% FFP

	Communication skills required to work with children and families Activities designed to preserve, strengthen and reunify Assessments for Removal Social Work Practice Child Development Family Centered Practice Orientation to Child Welfare in Alaska				
In Service Training: Standards, Knowledge & Insights Leading to Success (SKILS), Service Training for Protective Services Workers - **133, SKILS for Family Services and Generalists**	**DAY 3** 1. Learners will understand how to and practice interviewing a parent. 2. Learners will understand the importance of documentation and will practice documenting an interview. 3. Learners will understand the importance of documenting the Initial Assessment and will practice completing an Initial Assessment Summary. 4. Learners will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the Five Protective Factors. <u>TITLE IV-E ACTIVITIES</u> Referral for Services Preparation for and participation in judicial determinations Placement of the child Development of the Case Plan Cultural competency related to children and families Family Centered Assessment Substance abuse, domestic violence, and mental health issues - not for treatment Separation, grief and loss, child development and visitation Communication skills required to work with children and families Activities designed to preserve, strengthen and reunify Assessments for Removal Social Work Practice Child Development Family Centered Practice	Short Term 7 hours	Child Welfare Academy, University of Alaska Anchorage	All New Protective Services Specialists and Managers (areas of practice: Family Services and Generalists)	100% Curriculum IV-E Ratio x Eligibility Ratio x 75% FFP
In Service Training: Standards, Knowledge & Insights Leading to Success (SKILS), Service Training for Protective Services Workers - **133, SKILS for Family Services and Generalists**	**DAY 4** 1. Learners will understand the importance of how Safety Threats manifest within a family. 2. Learners will understand how to assess future risk and will understand what the FRAN is and why it is used. 3. Learners will understand what the Impending Danger Assessment and Analysis is and how to complete it. 4. Learners will understand the difference between "assessing" and "analyzing". 5. Learners will understand and be able to describe the difference between safety and risk. 6. Learners will be able to identify when to use an in-home vs. an out of home Safety Plan. 7. Learners will understand when to open a case when there is high risk. <u>TITLE IV-E ACTIVITIES</u> Referral for Services Preparation for and participation in judicial determinations Placement of the child Development of the Case Plan Cultural competency related to children and families Family Centered Assessment Permanency planning including using kinship care Substance abuse, domestic violence, and mental health issues - not for treatment Separation, grief and loss, child development and visitation Communication skills required to work with children and families Activities designed to preserve, strengthen and reunify Assessments for Removal Social Work Practice Family Centered Practice Orientation to Child Welfare in Alaska	Short Term 7 hours	Child Welfare Academy, University of Alaska Anchorage	All New Protective Services Specialists and Managers (areas of practice: Family Services and Generalists)	100% Curriculum IV-E Ratio x Eligibility Ratio x 75% FFP
In Service Training: Standards, Knowledge & Insights Leading to Success (SKILS), Service Training for Protective	**DAY 5** 1. Learners will understand what the differences are between the Protective Action Plan, the Safety Plan and the Case Plan. 2. Learners will understand how to use the Maltreatment Assessment Protocol in substantiation or not.	Short Term 7 hours	Child Welfare Academy, University of Alaska Anchorage	All New Protective Services Specialists and Managers	100% Curriculum IV-E Ratio x Eligibility Ratio x 75% FFP

Services Workers - **133, SKILS Family Services and Generalists**	3. Learners will understand what is and how to document a Safety Plan. <u>TITLE IV-E ACTIVITES</u> Referral for Services Preparation for and participation in judicial determinations Placement of the child Development of the Case Plan Cultural competency related to children and families Family Centered Assessment Permanency Planning including using kinship care Substance abuse, domestic violence, and mental health issues - not for treatment Separation, grief and loss, child development and visitation Communication skills required to work with children and families Activities designed to preserve, strengthen and reunify Assessment for Removal Social Work Practice Family Centered Practice Orientation to Child Welfare in Alaska			(areas of practice: Family Services and Generalists)	
Pre-Service Training Standards, Knowledge & Insights Leading to Success (SKILS), Pre-Service Training for Protective Services Workers - **133, SKILS for Family Services and Generalists**	**DAY 6** 1. Learners will establish a beginning understanding of the Five Protective Factors that help parents be safe caregivers. 2. Learners will know what information must be shared at Case Transfer and will practice and complete a mock Case Transfer. 3. Learners will know who participates in the Case Transfer staffing. 4. Learners will be able to explain how healthy family contact leads to permanency. 5. Learners will gain an understanding on how to develop a family contact plan and will develop a mock Family Contact Plan. <u>TITLE IV-E ACTIVITIES</u> Referral for Services Preparation for and participation in judicial determinations Placement of the child Development of the Case Plan Cultural competency related to children and families Family Centered Assessment Permanency planning including using kinship care Substance abuse, domestic violence, and mental health issues - not for treatment Separation, grief and loss, child development and visitation Communication skills required to work with children and families Activities designed to preserve, strengthen and reunify Assessments for Removal Independent Living / APPLA Social Work Practice Child Development Family Centered Practice Orientation to Child Welfare in Alaska	Short Term 3.5 hours	Child Welfare Academy, University of Alaska Anchorage	All New Protective Services Specialists and Managers (areas of practice: Family Services and Generalists)	100% Curriculum IV-E Ratio x Eligibility Ratio x 75% FFP
In Service Training: Standards, Knowledge & Insights Leading to Success (SKILS), Service Training for Protective Services Workers - **133, SKILS for Family Services and Generalists**	**DAY 6** 1. Learners will be able to identify how trauma impacts families and why it is important to child welfare. 2. Learners will understand how trauma impacts brain development and how the brain responds to trauma. 3. Learners will be able to apply trauma informed care to their work with families. 4. Learners will learn about the Adverse Childhood Experiences Study (ACES) and be able to describe the long term impact of trauma on children and adults. 5. Learners will begin to reframe their thinking about families through trauma lenses. <u>TITLE IV-E ACTIVITIES</u> Referral for Services Placement of the child Development of the Case Plan Cultural competency related to children and families Family Centered Assessment Permanency planning including using kinship care Substance abuse, domestic violence, and mental health issues - not for treatment Separation, grief and loss, child development and visitation Communication skills required to work with children and families Activities designed to preserve, strengthen and reunify Independent Living / APPLA	Short Term 3.5 hours	Child Welfare Academy, University of Alaska Anchorage	All New Protective Services Specialists and Managers (areas of practice: Family Services and Generalists)	100% Curriculum IV-E Ratio x Eligibility Ratio x 75% FFP

	Social Work Practice Child Development Family Centered Practice Orientation to Child Welfare in Alaska				
In Service Training: Standards, Knowledge & Insights Leading to Success (SKILS), Service Training for Protective Services Workers - **133, SKILS for Family Services and Generalists**	**DAY 7** 1. Learners will understand the legal process for children and families from the initial CINA petition through permanency to case closure. 2. Learners will understand the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) and how it impacts work with children's families and tribes. 3. Learners will understand how the OCS Practice Model and legal intervention co-exist and work together. 4. Learners will be able to participate in court processes. <u>TITLE IV-E ACTIVITIES</u> Preparation for and participation in judicial determinations Placement of the child Development of the Case Plan Case Plan Evaluation Cultural competency related to children and families Family Centered Assessment Permanency planning including using kinship care Substance abuse, domestic violence, and mental health issues - not for treatment Separation, grief and loss, child development and visitation Activities designed to preserve, strengthen and reunify Assessments for Removal Social Work Practice Family Centered Practice Orientation to Child Welfare in Alaska	Short Term 3.5 hours	Child Welfare Academy, University of Alaska Anchorage	All New Protective Services Specialists and Managers (areas of practice: Family Services and Generalists)	100% Curriculum IV-E Ratio x Eligibility Ratio x 75% FFP
Pre-Service Training Standards, Knowledge & Insights Leading to Success (SKILS), Pre-Service Training for Protective Services Workers - **133, SKILS for Family Services and Generalists**	**DAY 7** 1. Learners will be able to define terms related to Compassion Fatigue. 2. Learners will recognize and discuss the realities of the Compassion Fatigue and how it may affect them. 3. Learners will be able to identify 3 tools to maintain their resiliency in their child welfare work. 4. Learners will understand the power of gratitude and positive psychology to provide them with Self-Care techniques. <u>TITLE IV-E ACTIVITIES</u> Communication skills required to work with children and families Social Work Practice Family Centered Practice Orientation to Child Welfare in Alaska	Short Term 3.5 hours	Child Welfare Academy, University of Alaska Anchorage	All New Protective Services Specialists and Managers (areas of practice: Family Service and Generalists)	100% Curriculum IV-E Ratio x Eligibility Ratio x 75% FFP
Pre-Service Training Standards, Knowledge & Insights Leading to Success (SKILS), Pre-Service Training for Protective Services Workers - **133, SKILS for Family Services and Generalists**	**DAY 8** 1. Learners will understand strategies to stay safe while in the field. 2. Learners will understand environmental awareness including planning before and observing their surroundings while in the field. 3. Learners will understand how to protect themselves from dangerous animals and wilderness safety. 4. Learners will understand what to do when there is an active shooter. 5. Learners will gain skills in talking with defensive or angry caregivers. <u>TITLE IV-E ACTIVITIES</u> Cultural competency related to children and families Family Centered Assessment Substance abuse, domestic violence, and mental health issues - not for treatment Communication skills required to work with children and families Social Work Practice Family Centered Practice Orientation to Child Welfare in Alaska	Short Term 3.5 hours	Child Welfare Academy, University of Alaska Anchorage	All New Protective Services Specialists and Managers (areas of practice: Family Services and Generalists)	100% Curriculum IV-E Ratio x Eligibility Ratio x 50% FFP
Pre-Service Training Standards, Knowledge & Insights Leading to Success (SKILS), Pre-	**DAY 8** 1. Learners will identify the behavior levels that contribute to the development of a crisis and choose an appropriate staff intervention for each level.	Short Term 7 hours	Child Welfare Academy, University of Alaska	All New Protective Services Specialists and	100% Curriculum IV-E Ratio x Eligibility Ratio x 50% FFP

Service Training for Protective Services Workers - **133, SKILS for Family Services and Generalists**	2. Learners will identify useful nonverbal techniques which can help to prevent acting-out behavior. 3. Learners will learn to use verbal techniques to de-escalate behavior. 4. Learners will demonstrate cpi™ Principals of Safety to avoid injury if behavior escalates to a physical level. 5. Learners will learn how to provide for the Care, Welfare, Safety, and Security℠ of all those who are involved in a crisis situation. 6. Learners will understand and develop team intervention strategies and techniques. 7. Learners will recognize the importance of staff attitudes and professionalism in responding effectively to those in their charge. 8. Learners will be able to find ways to use the time after a crisis (post-intervention) as a step toward preventing future crisis. <u>TITLE IV-E ACTIVITIES</u> Cultural competency related to children and families Family Centered Assessment Substance abuse, domestic violence, and mental health issues - not for treatment Communication skills required to work with children and families Assessments for Removal Social Work Practice Family Centered Practice Orientation to Child Welfare in Alaska		Anchorage	Managers (areas of practice: Family Services and Generalists)	
Pre-Service Training Standards, Knowledge & Insights Leading to Success (SKILS), Pre-Service Training for Protective Services Workers - **133, SKILS for Family Services and Generalists**	**DAY 9** 1. Learners will gain an understanding of how to make Placement Decisions and to use Team Decision Making Meetings (TDMs) 2. Learners will be able to discuss the differences between MEPA and ICWA with regards to placement of children in out of home care and for permanency. 3. Learners will learn how and when to use Licensing and Emergency Licensure to include background checks and what might constitute a barrier to placement. 4. Learners will be able to identify when it is necessary to use an Out-of-Town Placement (OTR & ICPC). 5. Learners will be introduced to the importance of the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA). <u>TITLE IV-E ACTIVITIES</u> Placement of the child Cultural competency related to children and families Permanency planning including using kinship care Substance abuse, domestic violence, and mental health issues - not for treatment Separation, grief and loss, child development and visitation Communication skills required to work with children and families Independent Living / APPLA Social Work Practice Family Centered Practice Orientation to Child Welfare in Alaska	Short Term 3.5 hours	Child Welfare Academy, University of Alaska Anchorage	All New Protective Services Specialists and Managers (areas of practice: Family Services and Generalists)	100% Curriculum IV-E Ratio x Eligibility Ratio x 75% FFP
Pre-Service Training Standards, Knowledge & Insights Leading to Success (SKILS), Pre-Service Training for Protective Services Workers - **133, SKILS for Family Services and Generalists**	**DAY 9** 1. Learners will learn about separation and loss for children in the child welfare system and how to help them deal with separation and loss. 2. Learners will help Resource Families understand child trauma and how to cope with children experiencing loss. 3. Learners will be able discuss the importance of Placement preparation for children and families. 4. Learners will be able to identify the questions children have around being in out of home placement and their need for permanency: i. Who am I? ii. What happened to me? iii. Where am I going? iv. How will I get there? v. How will I know I belong? 5. Learners will be able to write a child's case plan. 6. Learners will be able to describe at least three perspectives from youth who have been in the foster care system that will assist in their jobs. <u>TITLE IV-E ACTIVITIES</u> Placement of the child	Short Term 3.5 hours	Child Welfare Academy, University of Alaska Anchorage	All New Protective Services Specialists and Managers (areas of practice: Family Services and Generalists)	100% Curriculum IV-E Ratio x Eligibility Ratio x 75% FFP

	Development of the Case Plan Cultural competency related to children and families Permanency planning including using kinship care Separation, grief and loss, child development and visitation Communication skills required to work with children and families Activities designed to preserve, strengthen and reunify Assessment for Removal Independent Living / APPLA Social Work Practice Child Development Family Centered Practice Orientation to Child Welfare in Alaska				
Pre-Service Training Standards, Knowledge & Insights Leading to Success (SKILS), Pre-Service Training for Protective Services Workers - **133, SKILS for Family Services and Generalists**	**DAY 10** 1. Learners will gain a basic understanding of where to locate training modules and what each of the interactive trainings entail (i.e. how to complete the work in ORCA each module address). 2. Learners will be able to navigate ORCA Outliner and Search functions. 3. Learners will create casework items associated with his or her specific area(s) of practice (IA, FS, or Generalist). 4. Learners will gain an introductory understanding of the workflow process in ORCA as it relates to the workflow in the field. 5. Learners will understand how to navigate the How-Do-I Guides and how to access Help or additional training materials. 6. Learners will understand where to locate reports, ORCA in-site and OCS SharePoint. 7. Learners will gain an advanced understanding of ORCA functions and reports. <u>TITLE IV-E ACTIVITES</u> SACWIS System	Short Term 7 hours	Child Welfare Academy, University of Alaska Anchorage	All New Protective Services Specialists and Managers (areas of practice: Family Services and Generalists)	100% Curriculum IV-E Ratio x Eligibility Ratio x 75% FFP
In Service Training: Standards, Knowledge & Insights Leading to Success (SKILS), Service Training for Protective Services Workers - **133, SKILS for Family Services and Generalists**	**DAY 11** 1. Learners will understand and reflect on the elements of culture. 2. Learners will become familiar with effective family engagement values. 3. Learners will be able to identify solutions to common barriers to achieve family engagement. 4. Learners will understand the importance of and practice a transition interview. 5. Learners will understand the importance of alternate planning and be able to develop an alternate plan. 6. Learners will learn to identify, highlight, and affirm parent(s) strengths. <u>TITLE IV-E ACTIVITIES</u> Cultural competency related to children and families Permanency planning including using kinship care Communication skills required to work with children and families Activities designed to preserve, strengthen and reunify Social Work Practice Family Centered Practice Orientation to Child Welfare in Alaska	Short Term 7 hours	Child Welfare Academy, University of Alaska Anchorage	All New Protective Services Specialists and Managers (areas of practice: Family Services and Generalists)	100% Curriculum IV-E Ratio x Eligibility Ratio x 75% FFP
In Service Training: Standards, Knowledge & Insights Leading to Success (SKILS), Service Training for Protective Services Workers - **133, SKILS for Family Services and Generalists**	**DAY 12** 1. Learners will understand the legal process for children and families through permanency to case closure. 2. Learners will understand the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) and how it impacts work with children's families and tribes. 3. Learners will understand how the OCS Practice Model and legal intervention co-exist and work together. 4. Learners will be able to participate in court processes. <u>TITLE IV-E ACTIVITIES</u> Preparation for and participation in judicial determinations Placement of the child Development of the Case Plan Case Plan Evaluation Cultural competency related to children and families Family Centered Assessment Permanency planning including using kinship care	Short Term 3.5 hours	Child Welfare Academy, University of Alaska Anchorage	All New Protective Services Specialists and Managers (areas of practice: Family Services and Generalists)	100% Curriculum IV-E Ratio x Eligibility Ratio x 75% FFP

	Substance abuse, domestic violence, and mental health issues - not for treatment Separation, grief and loss, child development and visitation Activities designed to preserve, strengthen and reunify Assessments for Removal Social Work Practice Family Centered Practice Orientation to Child Welfare in Alaska				
In Service Training: Standards, Knowledge & Insights Leading to Success (SKILS), Service Training for Protective Services Workers - **133, SKILS for Family Services and Generalists**	**DAY 12** 1. Learners will understand and practice open-ended questions, affirmations, and reflective listening techniques. 2. Learners will understand and describe how to use a summary during an interview. 3. Learners will be able to recognize ambivalence and reflect back the discrepancy between a parent's thinking and his or her behaviors. 4. Learners will be able to describe how a person changing a behavior moves through the stages of change. <u>TITLE IV-E ACTIVITIES</u> Development of the Case Plan Communication skills required to work with children and families Social Work Practice	Short Term 3.5 hours	Child Welfare Academy, University of Alaska Anchorage	All New Protective Services Specialists and Managers (areas of practice: Family Services and Generalists)	100% Curriculum IV-E Ratio x Eligibility Ratio x 75% FFP
In Service Training: Standards, Knowledge & Insights Leading to Success (SKILS), Service Training for Protective Services Workers - **133, SKILS for Family Services and Generalists**	**DAY 13** 1. Learners will understand and review all components of a Case Plan. 2. Learners will understand and be able to identify safety threats. 3. Learners will understand and be able to assess protective factors. 4. Learners will understand and be able to write case plan goals and be able to complete a Case Plan. <u>TITLE IV-E ACTIVITIES</u> Referral to Services Development of the Case Plan Activities designed to preserve, strengthen and reunify Social Work Practice	Short Term 7 hours	Child Welfare Academy, University of Alaska Anchorage	All New Protective Services Specialists and Managers (areas of practice: Family Services and Generalists)	100% Curriculum IV-E Ratio x Eligibility Ratio x 75% FFP
In Service Training: Standards, Knowledge & Insights Leading to Success (SKILS), Service Training for Protective Services Workers - **133, SKILS for Family Services and Generalists**	**DAY 14** 1. Learners will understand how to and practice conducting a case plan interview with a parent. 2. Learners will understand how to and will practice assessing a parent's strengths and deficiencies around the 5 Protective Factors. 3. Learners will write a Case Plan using a mock family scenario. <u>TITLE IV-E ACTIVITIES</u> Referral to Services Development of the Case Plan Activities designed to preserve, strengthen and reunify Social Work Practice	Short Term 7 hours	Child Welfare Academy, University of Alaska Anchorage	All New Protective Services Specialists and Managers (areas of practice: Family Services and Generalists)	100% Curriculum IV-E Ratio x Eligibility Ratio x 75% FFP
In Service Training: Standards, Knowledge & Insights Leading to Success (SKILS), Service Training for Protective Services Workers - **133, SKILS Family Services and Generalists**	**Day 15** 1. Learners will understand the importance of and practice writing a children's Case Plan. 2. Learners will understand and reflect on brokering services. 3. Learners will practice teaming. 4. Learners will understand and reflect on quality case worker visits. 5. Learners will practice conducting quality case worker interviews. 6. Learners will learn how to document a quality case worker interview. 7. Learners will know and practice completing a case plan evaluation. <u>TITLE IV-E ACTIVITIES</u> Referral to Services Development of the Case Plan Case Plan Evaluation Communication skills required to work with children and families Activities designed to preserve, strengthen and reunify Social Work Practice Family Centered Practice	Short Term 7 hours	Child Welfare Academy, University of Alaska Anchorage	All New Protective Services Specialists and Managers (areas of practice: Family Services and Generalists)	100% Curriculum IV-E Ratio x Eligibility Ratio x 75% FFP

Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) Training II					
Training Activity	**Course Learning Objectives**	**Duration**	**Provider**	**Audience**	**Cost Allocation**
In Service Courses: **Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) Training II**	The Indian Child Welfare Act: Information & Implications for Practice 1. Know the history of ICWA. 2. ICWA definitions by federal standards. 3. Understand the effects of multi-generational trauma for Alaska Native and American Indian families. 4. Understand the legal issues and implications of ICWA. 5. Understand ICWA and Child Welfare Practice in Alaska. TITLE IV-E ACTIVITIES Social Work Practice Cultural Competency related to Children and Families Permanency Planning including Kinship Care Referral to Services Preparation for and participation in judicial determinations Activities designed to Preserve, Strengthen and Reunify Assessments for Removal Placement of the child	Short Term 14 hours	Child Welfare Academy, University of Alaska Anchorage	All New Protective Services Specialists and Managers, and SSA's (Mandatory) ICWA Partners	100% Curriculum IV-E Ratio x Blended Eligibility Ratio x 75% FFP

Knowing Who You Are (KWYA)					
Training Activity	**Course Learning Objectives**	**Duration**	**Provider**	**Audience**	**Cost Allocation**
In Service Courses: **Knowing Who You Are (KWYA) Training**	1. Identify & address assumptions and biases. 2. Engage in Courageous Conversations. 3. Practice strategies for in TITLE IV-E ACTIVITIES Social Work Practice Cultural Competency related to Children and Families Referral to Services Communication skills to work with children and families Activities designed to Preserve, Strengthen and Reunify Family Centered Practice Placement of the child Orientation to Child Welfare in Alaska	Short Term 14 hours	Child Welfare Academy, University of Alaska Anchorage	All New Protective Services Specialists and Managers, and SSA's	100% Curriculum IV-E Ratio x Blended Eligibility Ratio x 75% FFP

Forensic Interview Training (ChildFirst Alaska)					
Training Activity	**Course Learning Objectives**	**Duration**	**Provider**	**Audience**	**Cost Allocation**
In Service Courses: **Forensic Interviewing for Protection Services Workers**	Advanced Forensic Interviewing of child abuse, specifically child sexual abuse 1. Learners will gain an understanding of the dynamics of child sexual abuse and other forms of child maltreatment. 2. Learners will understand child development, developmental linguistics and types of memory to ensure questions used are appropriate to the age and development of children. 3. Learners will learn the nationally recognized protocol for interviewing children who are alleged victims of child sexual abuse. 4. Learners will gain an understanding of the legal system in regards to corroboration, use of interview aids, and documentation for the interview process. 5. Learners will demonstrate skills in interviewing an actor playing a victim of child sexual abuse in a legally defensible manner that places the needs of the child first. TITLE IV-E ACTIVITIES Preparation for and participation in judicial determinations Cultural competency related to children and families Family Centered Assessment Communication skills required to work with children and families Assessments for removal Social Work Practice Child Development	Short Term 35 hours	Child Welfare Academy, University of Alaska Anchorage and ChildFirst Alaska	All New Caseworkers and Supervisors (Mandatory) Law Enforcement and MDT and CAC partners (Invited)	100% CAPTA or GF

Supervisory Training					
Training Activity	**Course Learning Objectives**	**Duration**	**Provider**	**Audience**	**Cost Allocation**

In Service Courses: **Supervisory Course**	Agency Mission, Vision, Guidelines and Outcomes 1. Describes agency's mission, values and vision. 2. Understands how the mission, values, and vision drive agency and unit practice for work with children and families. Supervisory Styles 1. Knows common management/organizational theories. 2. Know supervisory styles. 3. Applies this knowledge to develop a personal management style/theory. Supervisory Roles 1. Understands the various roles a supervisor utilizes and when and how to apply those roles. Stages of Worker Development 1. Understands how a worker progresses from "new" to "seasoned" and the needs of the worker at various stages of development. 2. Assesses supervisees to determine "stage" of development. 3. Understands the cycle of positive change, and how to utilize the theory in supervision. 4. Knows the importance of new worker orientation, and the various ways to orient new workers in child protection. 5. Develops supervision strategies for supervisees. Adult Learner 1. Understands the variety of ways people learn. 2. Knows personal learning style. 3. Develops skill in ways to work with differing learning styles. 4. Understands adult learning principles and applies to supervisees. Transfer of Learning 1. Understands the concept of transfer of learning and the supervisors' role and responsibility for supervisees' learning. 2. Develops strategies for transfer of learning of supervisees in SKILS. Cultural Values and the Role of the Supervisor 1. Understand ways culture, race and ethnicity impact CPS work. 2. Discusses disproportionality issues within OCS. Constructive Feedback 1. Understands the difference between and among constructive feedback, praise, and criticism. 2. Develops a plan for constructive feedback for supervisees. 3. Demonstrates constructive feedback to supervisees. Grief and Loss/Secondary Trauma and Burnout Issues in Child Protection Work 1. Knows the concept of Secondary Trauma and its potential effects for child protection workers. 2. Knows self-care strategies to address secondary trauma. 3. Knows Alaska's EAP information and how to access it. 4. Differentiates between burnout and secondary trauma. 5. Knows the concept of resiliency. 6. Develops a plan to encourage resiliency in self and workers. Change Model 1. Identifies the role and effects of change within an organization. 2. Describes a recent change within OCS and applies the change process to the workplace. 3. Describes ways to involve staff in the change process and minimize resistance to change. Supportive Supervision 1. Knows the concept of supportive supervision. 2. Knows factors related to worker retention. 3. Develops a plan to motivate and reward workers in their unit.	Short Term 42 hours	Child Welfare Academy, University of Alaska Anchorage	All Protective Services Supervisors (Mandatory)	100% Curriculum IV-E Ratio x Eligibility Ratio x 50% FFP

	TITLE IV-E Activities Case Management and Supervision Social Work Practice Cultural Competency related to children and families Adapted From: Brittain, C. (2005). Supervisory Training: Putting the Pieces Together. Denver, CO: Butler Institute for Families, Graduate School of Social Work, University of Denver.				

Coaching Supervisors to Best Practice (CSBP)					
Training Activity	**Course Learning Objectives**	**Duration**	**Provider**	**Audience**	**Cost Allocation**
In Service Courses: **Coaching Supervisors to Best Practice (CSBP)**	1. Learners will become experts and learn coaching skills to enable their workers to assess for Safe, Unsafe and High Risk. 2. Learners will become experts and learn coaching skills to enable their workers to assess for Present and Impending Danger. 3. Learners will become experts and learn coaching skills to enable their workers to understand the purpose to the Guide to Information Collection and Analysis and the Protocol for Information Gathering. 4. Learners will become experts and learn coaching skills to enable their workers to understand and use the Protective Action Plan. 5. Learners will become experts and learn coaching skills to enable their workers to understand, use and monitor Safety Plans. <u>TITLE IV-E ACTIVITIES</u> Referral to Services Placement of the child Cultural Competency related to children and families Family Centered Assessment Permanency Planning including using kinship care Substance abuse, domestic violence, and mental health issues - not for treatment Separation, grief and loss, child development and visitation Communication skills required to work with children and families Activities designed to preserve, strengthen and reunify Assessments for removal	Short Term 72 hours	Child Welfare Academy, University of Alaska Anchorage	Protective Services Specialist Supervisors (Invited)	100% Curriculum IV-E Ratio x Eligibility Ratio x 75% FFP

Family Services Assessment, Part 1					
Training Activity	**Course Learning Objectives**	**Duration**	**Provider**	**Audience**	**Cost Allocation**
In Service Courses: **Family Services Training for Protection Services Workers**	1. The worker will understand, practice, and document all aspects of the case transfer process to include; a. The Initial Assessment Summary b. Impending Danger Analysis and Assessment c. The In-Home Safety Plan Decision d. Safety Planning e. Safety Plan management f. The Case Transfer Meeting 2. The worker will understand, practice, and document all aspects of preparing for family services work with a family. 3. The worker will understand, practice, and document all aspects of introducing family services work with a family. 4. The worker will understand, practice, and document all aspects of the exploring family services work with a family. 5. The worker will understand and be able to practice interviewing and interpersonal skills associated with all of the above objectives. 6. The worker will understand motivational interviewing. 7. The worker will understand reflective listening. 8. The worker will understand negotiation techniques. 9. The worker will understand interview practice and feedback. 10. The worker will recognize the importance of trauma-informed practices in achieving safety, permanency, and well-being for children and families in the child welfare system. 11. The worker will be able to define the *Essential Elements of a Trauma-Informed Child Welfare System*. 12. The worker will understand the term *child traumatic stress* and know what types of experiences constitute childhood trauma. 13. The worker will understand the relationship between a child's lifetime trauma history and his or her behaviors or responses.	Short Term 35 hours	Child Welfare Academy, University of Alaska Anchorage	All Protective Services Specialists and Managers (areas of practice: Family Services and Generalists)	100% Curriculum IV-E Ratio x Eligibility Ratio x 75% FFP

	14. The worker will understand how traumatic experiences affect brain development and memory. 15. The worker will understand how cultural factors influence how children may identify, interpret, and respond to traumatic events. 16. The worker will be able to define psychological safety and understand its importance. 17. The worker will be able to recognize how child traumatic stress is exacerbated by ongoing stressors in a child's environment and within the child welfare system (including separation from/loss of caregivers, out-of-home placement). TITLE IV-E ACTIVITIES Referral to services Placement of the child Development of the Case Plan Case Plan Evaluation Cultural competency related to children and families Family Centered Assessment Permanency planning including using kinship care Substance abuse, domestic violence, and mental health issues - not for treatment Separation, grief and loss, child development and visitation Communication skills for working with children and families Activities designed to preserve, strengthen and reunify Assessments for removal Social Work Practice Child Development Family Centered Practice Trauma Screening and Assessment				

Family Services Assessment, Part 2					
Training Activity	**Course Learning Objectives**	**Duration**	**Provider**	**Audience**	**Cost Allocation**
In Service Courses: **Family Services Training for Protection Services Workers**	1. The learner understands and practices techniques associated with interviews in case planning. 2. The worker understands and practices techniques associated with family engagement in case planning. 3. The worker understands and practices how to document a case plan. 4. The worker understands and practices techniques associated with interviews in case plan evaluation. 5. The worker understands and practices techniques associated with family engagement in case plan evaluation. 6. The worker understands and practices how to document a case plan evaluation. 7. The worker will be able to identify coping responses, strengths, and protective factors that promote resilience among children who have been impacted by trauma. 8. The worker will be able to distinguish between general mental health practitioners and those who specialize in treating trauma, in order to facilitate effective referrals. 9. The worker will be able to describe the core components of evidence-based trauma treatment. 10. The worker will recognize the effects of birth parent trauma on the child and the family and how they respond to services. 11. The worker will understand the importance of supporting resource parents (e.g., foster parents, relatives, legal guardians, and adoptive parent(s) in caring for children who have experienced trauma. 12. The worker will understand the impact of secondary traumatic stress on child welfare workers. 13. The worker will be able to identify techniques for self-care. 14. The worker will be able to identify barriers to partnering with youth and families. 15. The worker will be able to list the benefits of partnering with other agencies and systems that interact with children and families. TITLE IV-E ACTIVITIES Referral to services Placement of the child Development of the Case Plan Case Plan Evaluation Cultural competency related to children and families Family Centered Assessment Permanency planning including using kinship care Substance abuse, domestic violence, and mental health issues - not for treatment Separation, grief and loss, child development and visitation	Short Term 35 hours	Child Welfare Academy, University of Alaska Anchorage	All Protective Services Specialists and Managers (areas of practice: Family Services and Generalists)	100% Curriculum IV-E Ratio x Eligibility Ratio x 75% FFP

	Communication skills for working with children and families Activities designed to preserve, strengthen and reunify Assessments for removal Social Work Practice Child Development Family Centered Practice Trauma Screening and Assessment				
Social Service Associates Training					
Training Activity	**Course Learning Objectives**	**Duration**	**Provider**	**Audience**	**Cost Allocation**
In Service Courses: **Social Service Associate Training**	**Day 1** 1. Learners will understand the role of the SSA in the context of the OCS Mission. 2. Learners will understand the role of the SSA in the context of mandatory reporting and the obligations. 3. Learners will understand the role of the SSA in the context of Initial Assessments. 4. Learners will understand the role of the SSA in the context of Family Services. 5. Learners will understand the role of the SSA in the context of alternate planning. <u>TITLE IV-E ACTIVITIES</u> Family Centered Assessment Permanency planning including using kinship care Family Centered Practice Orientation to Child Welfare in Alaska	Short Term 7 hours	Child Welfare Academy, University of Alaska Anchorage	Social Service Associates	100% Curriculum IV-E Ratio x Eligibility Ratio x 75% FFP
In Service Courses: **Social Service Associate Training**	**Day 2** 1. Learners will understand and reflect on culture and culture competence. 2. Learners will understand trauma informed care and learn how to apply it to their work with families. 3. Learners will gain an understanding of parent(s) perspective and story. 4. Learners will become familiar with effective family engagement values. 5. Learners will learn to identify, highlight, and affirm parent strengths. <u>TITLE IV-E ACTIVITIES</u> Cultural competency related to children and families Communication skills for working with children and families Activities designed to preserve, strengthen and reunify Family Centered Practice	Short Term 7 hours	Child Welfare Academy, University of Alaska Anchorage	Social Service Associates	100% Curriculum IV-E Ratio x Eligibility Ratio x 75% FFP
In Service Courses: **Social Service Associate Training**	**Day 3** 1. Learners will understand and practice determining levels of supervision during family contact. 2. Learners review child development materials, learn how to apply it in their work, and resources to continue developing expertise on child development. 3. Learners gain an understanding from a foster parent(s) perspective. 4. Learners practice providing support and feedback to parents in the context of a family contact. 5. Learner will connect and integrate safety, permanency, and well-being to new practice. 6. Learners are aware of examples of effective documentation. <u>TITLE IV-E ACTIVITIES</u> Placement of the child Separation, grief and loss, child development and visitation Communication skills for working with children and families Activities designed to preserve, strengthen and reunify Child Development	Short Term 7 hours	Child Welfare Academy, University of Alaska Anchorage	Social Service Associates	100% Curriculum IV-E Ratio x Eligibility Ratio x 75% FFP
Crisis Prevention Intervention					
Training Activity	**Course Learning Objectives**	**Duration**	**Provider**	**Audience**	**Cost Allocation**
In Service Courses: **Crisis Prevention Intervention**	1. Learners will identify the behavior levels that contribute to the development of a crisis and choose an appropriate staff intervention for each level. 2. Learners will identify useful nonverbal techniques which can help to prevent acting-out behavior.	Short Term 7 hours	Child Welfare Academy, University of Alaska Anchorage	All Staff	100% Curriculum IV-E Ratio x Eligibility Ratio x 50% FFP

	3. Learners will learn to use verbal techniques to de-escalate behavior. 4. Learners will demonstrate cpi™ Principals of Safety to avoid injury if behavior escalates to a physical level. 5. Learners will learn how to provide for the Care, Welfare, Safety, and Security℠ of all those who are involved in a crisis situation. 6. Learners will understand and develop team intervention strategies and techniques. 7. Learners will recognize the importance of staff attitudes and professionalism in responding effectively to those in their charge. 8. Learners will be able to find ways to use the time after a crisis (post-intervention) as a step toward preventing future crisis. TITLE IV-E ACTIVITIES Cultural competency related to children and families Family Centered Assessment Substance abuse, domestic violence, and mental health issues - not for treatment Communication skills required to work with children and families Assessments for Removal Social Work Practice Family Centered Practice Orientation to Child Welfare in Alaska				

Environmental Awareness					
Training Activity	**Course Learning Objectives**	**Duration**	**Provider**	**Audience**	**Cost Allocation**
In Service Courses: **Environmental Awareness**	1. Learners will understand strategies to stay safe while in the field. 2. Learners will understand environmental awareness including planning before and observing their surroundings while in the field. 3. Learners will understand how to protect themselves from dangerous animals and wilderness safety. 4. Learners will understand what to do when there is an active shooter. 5. Learners will gain skills in talking with defensive or angry caregivers. TITLE IV-E ACTIVITIES Cultural competency related to children and families Family Centered Assessment Substance abuse, domestic violence, and mental health issues - not for treatment Communication skills required to work with children and families Social Work Practice Family Centered Practice Orientation to Child Welfare in Alaska	Short Term 3.5 hours	Child Welfare Academy, University of Alaska Anchorage	All Staff	100% Curriculum IV-E Ratio x Eligibility Ratio x 50% FFP

Emotional Intelligence for Leaders					
Training Activity	**Course Learning Objectives**	**Duration**	**Provider**	**Audience**	**Cost Allocation**
In Service Courses: **Emotional Intelligence for Leaders**	1. Learners will learn the Model for emotional intelligence and assess where they are in each quadrant of the model. 2. Learners will understand the importance of emotional intelligence in the work of leadership and the parallel process for working with families. 3. Learners will identify individual and team strengths for those they supervise and lead. 4. Learners will examine their own values and the values of the child welfare organization. They will be able to identify how values may create biases and how to work with those they supervise to help them understand this concept. 5. Learners will understand the power of vulnerability in allowing them to connect with those they work with, which is a key factor of emotional intelligence and leadership. TITLE IV-E ACTIVITIES Referral to Services Placement of the child Development of the Case Plan Cultural competency related to children and families Family Centered Assessment Permanency planning including using kinship care Substance abuse, domestic violence, and mental health issues - not for treatment Separation, grief and loss, child development and visitation	Short Term 7 hours	Child Welfare Academy, University of Alaska Anchorage	Protective Services Supervisors	100% Curriculum IV-E Ratio x Eligibility Ratio x 75% FFP

	Communication skills required to work with children and families Social Work Practice Family Centered Practice				

Training Activity	Course	Duration	Provider	Audience	Cost Allocation
	Introduction to OCS and the Practice Model				
Pre-Service Training for Child Welfare Workers	1. The worker will understand the Vision of OCS. 2. The worker will understand the Mission of OCS. 3. The worker will understand the value of working collaboratively with partners. 4. The worker will understand how to define Safe and Unsafe. 5. The worker will know why a determination to child safety is crucial to intake, initial assessment and family services. TITLE IV-E ACTIVITIES Cultural competency related to children and families Development of the Case Plan Family Centered Assessment Orientation to Child Welfare in Alaska Family Engagement Placement of the child Substance abuse, Domestic Violence, and mental health issues - not for treatment Social Work Practice	Short Term 2 hours	Child Welfare Academy, University of Alaska Anchorage	All New Caseworkers and Supervisors (areas of practice: IA, FS and Generalists)	100% Curriculum IV-E Ratio x Eligibility Ratio x 75% FFP

	Cultural Humility				
Pre-Service Training for Child Welfare Workers	1. The worker will understand core value differences between Western and Alaska Native cultures. 2. The worker will learn how U.S. government policy and practice produced trauma in Alaska Native/Native American cultures. 3. The worker will understand how historical events continue to affect people today. 4. The worker will understand how trauma continues today. 5. The worker will understand the complexity of interpersonal/intercultural communication. 6. The worker will learn techniques for improving interpersonal/intercultural communication. 7. The worker will understand the importance of engaging with clients in order to gather information, develop a helping relationship, develop safety and case plans. 8. The worker will become familiar with the basic techniques of engaging with clients. 9. Trainees will understand the basics of strength based practice with families. TITLE IV-E ACTIVITIES Orientation to Child Welfare in Alaska Cultural competency related to children and families Social Work Practice Family Engagement Family Centered Assessment Separation, grief and loss, child development and visitation Communication skills required to work with children and families	Short Term	Child Welfare Academy, University of Alaska Anchorage	All New Caseworkers and Supervisors (areas of practice: IA, FS and Generalists)	100% Curriculum IV-E Ratio x Eligibility Ratio x 75% FFP

	Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA)				
Pre-Service Training for Child Welfare Workers	1. The worker will understand core value differences between Western and Alaska Native cultures. 2. The worker will learn how U.S. government policy and practice produced trauma in Alaska Native/Native American cultures. 3. The worker will understand how historical events continue to affect people today. 4. The worker will understand how trauma continues today. 5. The worker will understand Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) and how it impacts work with children, families and tribes. TITLE IV-E ACTIVITIES Cultural competency related to children and families Social Work Practice Orientation to Child Welfare in Alaska Family Engagement	Short Term	Child Welfare Academy, University of Alaska Anchorage	All New Caseworkers and Supervisors (areas of practice: IA, FS and Generalists)	100% Curriculum IV-E Ratio x Eligibility Ratio x 75% FFP

Training Activity	Course	Duration	Provider	Audience	Cost Allocation
	Child Development				
Pre-Service Training for Child Welfare Workers	1. The worker will be able to assess child development, child functioning and attachment. TITLE IV-E ACTIVITIES Child Development	Short Term 1 hour	Child Welfare Academy, University of Alaska Anchorage	All New Caseworkers and Supervisors (areas of practice: IA, FS and Generalists)	100% Curriculum IV-E Ratio x Eligibility Ratio x 75% FFP
	Basic Interviewing				
Pre-Service Training for Child Welfare Workers	1. The worker will learn strategies to conduct effective casework interviews. This includes communicating the purpose of the interview; controlling the process and direction of the interview while encouraging family members to participate; using a variety of interview methods including open and close-ended questions, clarification, support, summarization and confrontation; and helping families communicate feelings, as well as, facts. 2. The worker will be aware of the nature and importance of the worker/client relationship in child protection cases. 3. The worker will have an introductory ability to practice interviewing a "client" while utilizing positive engagement strategies and basic interviewing techniques. TITLE IV-E ACTIVITES Communication skills required to work with children and families Social Work Practice Family Engagement	Short Term 2 hours	Child Welfare Academy, University of Alaska Anchorage	All New Caseworkers and Supervisors (areas of practice: IA, FS and Generalists)	100% Curriculum IV-E Ratio x Eligibility Ratio x 75% FFP
	Child Interviewing				
Pre-Service Training for Child Welfare Workers	1. The worker will understand interviewing strategies. 2. Rapport Building 3. Family Engagement 4. Information Gathering 5. Empathy TITLE IV-E ACTIVITIES Social Work Practice Assessments for removal Communication skills required to work with children and families Cultural competency related to children and families Child Development Family Centered Assessment Orientation to Child Welfare in Alaska Family Engagement Preparation for and participation in judicial determinations	Short Term 4 hours	Child Welfare Academy, University of Alaska Anchorage	All New Caseworkers and Supervisors (areas of practice: IA, FS and Generalists)	100% Curriculum IV-E Ratio x Eligibility Ratio x 75% FFP
	Adult Functioning				
Pre-Service Training for Child Welfare Workers	1. The worker will understand what comprises the character of an adult. 2. The worker will understand the characteristics of a parent. 3. The worker will understand how adult characteristics impact parenting skills. 4. The worker will understand the difference between punishment and discipline. TITLE IV-E ACTIVITIES Development of the Case Plan Case Plan Evaluation Communication skills required to work with children and families Cultural competency related to children and families Social Work Practice Family Centered Assessment Preparation for and participation in judicial determinations Placement of the child Family Engagement	Short Term 2 hours	Child Welfare Academy, University of Alaska Anchorage	All New Caseworkers and Supervisors (areas of practice: IA, FS and Generalists)	100% Curriculum IV-E Ratio x Eligibility Ratio x 75% FFP
	Adult Interviewing				
Pre-Service Training for Child Welfare Workers	1. The worker will understand that the adult interview results in 2 outcomes: * Gathering of information	Short Term 2 hours	Child Welfare Academy, University of Alaska Anchorage	All New Caseworkers and Supervisors	100% Curriculum IV-E Ratio x Eligibility Ratio x 75% FFP

Training Activity	Course	Duration	Provider	Audience	Cost Allocation
	* Developing the professional relationship TITLE IV-E ACTIVITIES Development of the Case Plan Case Plan Evaluation Cultural competency related to children and families Family Centered Assessment Communication skills required to work with children and families Social Work Practice Family Engagement			(areas of practice: IA, FS and Generalists)	

	Permanency				
Pre-Service Training for Child Welfare Workers	1. The worker will have a beginning understanding of the role of the Office of Children's Services in facilitating permanency for children in their custody and has familiarity with the state and federal laws and regulations regarding permanency. TITLE IV-E ACTIVITIES Preparation for and participation in judicial determinations Permanency planning including using kinship care Placement of the child	Short Term 2 hours	Child Welfare Academy, University of Alaska Anchorage	All New Caseworkers and Supervisors (areas of practice: IA, FS and Generalists)	100% Curriculum IV-E Ratio x Eligibility Ratio x 75% FFP

Resource Family Training					
Training Activity	**Courses**		**Provider**	**Audience**	**Cost Allocation**
Resource Family Orientation	Resource Family Orientation 1) The role of the Office of Children's Services 2) The role of resource families 3) Steps to becoming a licensed foster family 4) Frequently Asked Questions 5) Adopting through OCS	2 hours	Office of Children's Services licensing staffs and the Alaska Center for Resource Families	All prospective and new resource families	Eligibility Ratio x 75% FFP (1)
CORE Training: Pre Service Training Courses	Resource Family CORE Training 1) Understanding the Office of Children's Services (OCS) 2) Foster parenting 3) Adoption and Legal Guardianship 4) Impacts of Child Abuse and Neglect 5) Positive Parenting 6) Cultural Considerations 7) Birth Parenting, Relative Care, and Keeping Connections 8) Adolescents and Independent Living Skills 9) Training and Foster Parent Resources 10) Prudent Parent Standard & Normalcy	17 hours	Alaska Center for Resource Families	All new and returning resource families	Eligibility Ratio x 75% FFP (1)
Specialized Trainings	Specialized Trainings: Currently there are 120 courses available to resource families through on-site, self-study and web-based course formats. courses range from discipline techniques, behavioral strategies, cultural considerations andn the Indian Child Welfare Act, reunification and permanency for children, to name a few. A complete listing of all offered trainings is attached to the CFSP in the appendix	Courses vary in duration and credit hours	Alaska Center for Resource Families	All continuing resource families. Licensed foster families are required to have 10-15 hours or annual training	Eligibility Ratio x 75% FFP (1)
Alternative trainings	The Office of Children's Services accepts trainings that resource families may receive from other Tribal and community based resources. Examples include: Tribal parenting courses, teacher in-service trainings, first aid and CPR trainings, trainings specifically tied to the child's case plan such as IEP trainings, or mental health trainings. Resource families are required to present a certificate of course completion as well as documentation of the number of hours completed for these trainings to be considered.	Courses vary in duration and credit hours	Tribal and Commity providers, Alaska Center for Resource Families records the hours in the database	All continuing resource families. Licensed foster families are required to have 10-15 hours or annual training	Eligibility Ratio x 75% FFP (1)

(1) FOOTNOTE: EFFECTIVE 04/01/11 TITLE IV-E GUARDIANSHIP PROGRAM WAS IMPLEMENTED AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH FOSTERING CONNECTIONS LEGISLATION TRAINING EXP FOR RELATIVE GUARDIANS ARE CLAIMED USING A TRANSITIONAL FFP OF 65% FFY2011; 70% FFY2012; 75% FFY2013 FORWARD

OCS Social Work Education Program

Social Work Education Program					
Training Activity	**Courses**	**Duration**	**Provider**	**Audience**	**Cost Allocation**
The purpose of the Social Work Education Program is to increase professionalism of OCS Staff /Tribal Staff, and to expand the pool of qualified child welfare workers					
Cost to Educate	UAA/UAF BSW or MSW Courses	Varies by OCS/Tribal employee	University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA) or University of Alaska, Fairbanks (UAF)	OCS Staff and Tribal Staff with IV-E maintenance agreements currently enrolled or interested in enrolling in BSW/MSW courses or program at an University of Alaska campus	Eligibility Ratio x 75% FFP
Bachelor in Social Work (BSW) stipend program	UAA/UAF BSW Courses				Eligibility Ratio x 75% FFP
Master in Social Work (MSW) stipend program	UAA/UAF MSW Courses				Eligibility Ratio x 75% FFP

OCS Title IV-E Eligibility Training

Title IV-E Eligibility Training					
Training Activity	**Courses**	**Duration**	**Provider**	**Audience**	**Cost Allocation**
Title IV-E Eligibility Training, Sex Trafficking Training	Sex Trafficking and Title IV-E Eligibility Requirements and process for Foster Care; Adoption Assistance; and Guardianship Assistance. IV-E Audit Training	On-going	State IV-E Program or Eligibility Staff	OCS Staff & Tribal IV-E Partners	Direct x 75% FFP

OCS AND CONTRACT TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

OCS and Contract Training Opportunities					
Training Activity	**Courses**	**Duration**	**Provider**	**Audience**	**Cost Allocation**
Conferences; contract training; and other similar opportunities supporting Child Welfare and Protection best practices					
Staff development opportunities examples including : Child Welfare Summits;	Examples may include: Social Work Methods including interviewing and assessments; Child Abuse and Neglect Issues; Family Centered Practice issues and Permanency planning; Child in Need of Aid Court Training;	Varies by training	Varies by Opportunity includes State of Alaska; OCS; Alaska Center for Resource Families	OCS Caseworkers, Supervisors, and	Agency RMS Activity Ratio x Title IV-E
				Tribal Staff	Agency RMS Activity Ratio x Title IV-E Eligibility Ratio x 50% FFP
Staff Development Opportunities	Examples may include: Loving the Child Who Bites You; Being a Parent Advocate; FASD Training; Making Transitions Work-			OCS Caseworkers, Supervisors, and Support Staff	Eligibility Ratio x 75% FFP
				Tribal Staff	Eligibility Ratio X 50% FFP

SHORT-TERM TRAINING FOR CHILD WELFARE AGENCIES, RELATIVE GUARDIANS, AND COURT PERSONNEL

ST TRNG CWA; CP; RG					
Training Activity	**Courses**	**Duration**	**Provider**	**Audience**	**Cost Allocation**
P.L. 110-351 amends section 474(a)(3)(B) of the Act to provide for additional categories of trainees as eligible to receive Title IV-E short-term Training. These categories include relative guardians (1); State-licensed or State-approved child welfare agencies providing services to children receiving title IV-E assistance; child abuse and neglect court personnel; agency, child or parent attorneys; guardians ad litem; and court appointed special advocates.					
Allowable subject matter as identified in ACF CW PM section 8.1.H.#8	To be determined by category and agency	Varies by Training	To be determined by category and agency	Staff of State-licensed/approved Child Welfare Agency providing services to children receiving Title IV-E Assistance State abuse/neglect court personnel; agency, child or parent attorneys; guardians ad litem and court appointed special advocates	**As appropriate:** Agency RMS Activity Ratio x Title IV-E Eligibility Ratio x FFP % by FFY defined in ACYF-CB-PI-10-07 **OR** Title IV-E Eligibility Ratio x FFP % by FFY defined in ACYF-CB-PI-10-07
Resource Family Orientation	Resource Family Orientation 1) The role of the Office of Children's Services 2) The role of resource families 3) Steps to becoming a licensed foster family 4) Frequently Asked Questions 5) Adopting through OCS	2 hours	Office of Children's Services licensing staffs and the Alaska Center for Resource Families	All New Relative Guardians (1)	Title IV-E Eligibility Ratio x FFP % by FFY defined in ACYF-CB-PI-10-07

SHORT-TERM TRAINING FOR CHILD WELFARE AGENCIES, RELATIVE GUARDIANS, AND COURT PERSONNEL

CORE Training: Pre Service Training Courses	Resource Family CORE Training 1) Understanding the Office of Children's Services (OCS) 2) Foster parenting 3) Adoption and Legal Guardianship 4) Impacts of Child Abuse and Neglect 5) Positive Parenting 6) Cultural Considerations 7) Birth Parenting, Relative Care, and Keeping Connections 8) Adolescents and Independent Living Skills 9) Training and Foster Parent Resources	8 session training. Each course is 2 hours in length. Total credit hours available is 16 hours	Alaska Center for Resource Families	All New Relative Guardians (1)	Title IV-E Eligibility Ratio x FFP % by FFY defined in ACYF-CB-PI-10-07
Specialized Trainings	Specialized Trainings: Currently there are 120 courses available to resource families through on-site, self-study and web-based course formats. courses range from discipline techniques, behavioral strategies, cultural considerations andn the Indian Child Welfare Act, reunification and permanency for children, to name a few. A complete listing of all offered trainings is attached to the CFSP in the appendix	Courses vary in duration and credit hours	Alaska Center for Resource Families	All New Relative Guardians (1)	Title IV-E Eligibility Ratio x FFP % by FFY defined in ACYF-CB-PI-10-07
Alternative trainings	The Office of Children's Services accepts trainings that resource families may receive from other Tribal and community based resources. Examples include: Tribal parenting courses, teacher in-service trainings, first aid and CPR trainings, trainings specifically tied to the child's case plan such as IEP trainings, or mental health trainings. Resource families are required to present a certificate of course completion as well as documentation of the number of hours completed for these trainings to be considered.	Courses vary in duration and credit hours	Tribal and Commity providers, Alaska Center for Resource Families records the hours in the database	All New Relative Guardians (1)	Title IV-E Eligibility Ratio x FFP % by FFY defined in ACYF-CB-PI-10-07

(1) FOOTNOTE: EFFECTIVE 04/01/11 TITLE IV-E GUARDIANSHIP PROGRAM WAS IMPLEMENTED AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH FOSTERING CONNECTIONS LEGISLATION TRAINING EXP FOR RELATIVE GUARDIANS ARE CLAIMED USING A TRANSITIONAL FFP OF 65% FFY2011; 70% FFY2012; 75% FFY2013 FORWARD

TRAINING FOR CHILD WELFARE AGENCIES AND RESOURCE FAMILIES					
P.L. 113-183 Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act					
PL 113-183 amended Title IV-E State Plan required training for foster parents that included skills relating to the reasonable and prudent parent standard					
Training Activity	**Courses**	**Duration**	**Provider**	**Audience**	**Cost Allocation**
Sex Trafficking, Prudent Parent, APPLA and Older Youth	Webinar training provided to OCS staff and Tribal partners. Training was recorded and continues to be available for new staff. Frontline Article provided written guidance for OCS staff and Tribal partners. Training educated the workers on the the changes from PL 113-183. Providing knowledge of the requirements for APPLA Youth, Prudent Parent Standard and Sex Trafficking victims.	1 hour	ACRF, OCS, FFCA	All OCS staff and Tribal partners	
Prudent Parent Standard & Normalcy for OCS Licensing Staff	Webinar training was provided to all licensing staff at OCS. Community Care Licensing manual and resource family handbook updates have occurred and been sent to staff. Training included education to staff on how to educate and work with foster parents in providing the reasonable and prudent parent standard to children and youth in foster care.	1 hour	ACRF and OCS	All OCS Community Care Licensing Specialist Staff	
Prudent Parent Standard & Normalcy for Resource Families	Added to the CORE Training curriculum. One credit class developed and OCS sent to all licensed and unlicensed foster parents. Training Tracks article written and foster parents able to get training credits if complete course. Facebook page posted information and provided link to the Training Tracks article. Information included skills on how to identify age and developmentally appropriate activities for children and youth in foster care. How to work with the case worker and youth in identifying these activities.	1 hour	ACRF	All new and returning resource families	

SFY 17 Statewide Recruitment and Retention of Resource Families

ACTIVITY		Start	Finish	Percent Complete	Staff Responsible	Comments/Notes
1	**Support to the Regional and Field Offices**					
a	Draft FY 17 Regional Recruitment and Retention plans will be reviewed and finalized prior to submission to CCLS III's.	6/1/2016	7/1/2016	100%	CCLS II	CCLS II's submitted final FY 17 regional recruitment and retention plans and budgets June 1, 2016.
b	Regional Recruitment and Retention plan and budgets will be received, reviewed, and requested through State Office for final approval.	7/1/2016	8/1/2016	100%	CCLS III's and SSPO	FY 17 plans and budgets were reviewed by CCLS III and SSPO on August 1, 2016, and approved by State Office on August 19, 2016. Approval memo was emailed to all CCLS II staff to be forwarded to Regional Permanency Planning Specialists, PSM II's and Admin. Officers.
c	Track regional goal progress on quarterly basis w/ established baselines.	1/1/2017	6/30/2017	25%	CCLS II's and Regional Recruitment and Retention Teams.	Regional Recruitment and Retention Teams will establish baselines for each of the goals listed in their plans to better assist with tracking the overall effectiveness of the goals. Plans will be reviewed on a quarterly basis and updated copies of regional plans will be forwarded to the CCLS III's and SSPO.
2	**Statewide Efforts for R&R**					
a	Inventory/distribute R&R tangible items to all regional offices for upcoming fiscal year recruitment and retention events.	7/1/2016	6/30/2017	90%	CCLS II and CCLS III	All regional offices inventoried their supply of tangibles in the fall of 2016, and State Office sent a resupply to field and regional offices. A final inventory of remaining tangibles will need to be completed prior to the end of FY 17 to determine if new tangibles will need to be ordered for FY 18.
b	Develop postcard to target families intererested in becoming licensed to care for foster children with complex medical needs.	7/1/2016	6/30/2017	50%	CCLS III	A workgroup was formed with CCLS III, ACRF, SOA Publication Staff and NRO Regional Psych. Nurse to develop a post card to recruit resource families to care for children with complex medical needs. Goal for distribution is February 2017. Distribtuion will include ACRF training tracks/website, newsletters, recruitment events and postal mail outs.

ACTIVITY		Start	Finish	Percent Complete	Staff Responsible	Comments/Notes
c	License two new foster homes in each region capable of caring for children with complex medical needs through collaboration with AK medical facilities.	7/1/2016	6/30/2017	25%	CCLS I/II	FY 17 Baseline of Resource Families Licensed to care for children with complex medical needs as of June 1, 2016: SCRO-10, SCRO Rural-0, WRO -1, SERO- 2, NRO- 2, ARO-8 *** Note- The number of licensed foster homes listed above includes providers who are capable of providing care for foster children with mild/complex medical needs. Some of the children in care are on waivers and others are not but were placed in the foster homes due to the experience level of the foster parent such as nurses, medical background, rehab. training, etc.
d	Work with regional staff to explore identification of homes who can serve larger sibling groups and license two new foster home in each region capable of providing care for 3 or more foster children.	7/1/2016	6/30/2017	0%	CCLS I,CCLS II and ACRF staff	FY 17 Baseline of Resource Families Licensed to care for 3 or more children as of 12/16/2016: SCRO-82 , WRO -31, SERO-21 , NRO-34 , ARO- 219
e	Recruit for Native Alaskan homes through collaboration with AK tribal organizations and corporations	7/1/2016	6/30/2017	25%	CCLS II & CCLS III	Baseline count of OCS-Licensed ICWA non-Child-specific Foster and Foster Group Homes by OCS Region, June 2016: ARO-34, NRO-32, Southcentral-45, SERO-39, WRO 43- Total 195
f	Emergency Shelter Foster Home (ESH) recruitment in each regional hub and maintain/license two ESH in ARO, SCRO, NRO and WRO.	7/1/2015	6/30/2016	75%	CCLS II & CCLS III	FY 17 Baseline of Emergency Shelter Care Homes in: ARO 2, SCRO-1, NRO 1, WRO-3 *** Note -SERO Management has agreed that a ESH is not needed in their region during FY 17.

ACTIVITY		Start	Finish	Percent Complete	Staff Responsible	Comments/Notes
g	Assist staff in inclusion of adoption staff for R&R efforts	May and June 2016	6/30/2016	100%	CCLS II & CCLS III, Regional Permanency Planning Specialist, PSM II and Adoption SSPC	Regional Recruitment and Retention Teams met during May 2016 to develop R/R plans and budgets. Permanency Planning Specialists participated in the planning and budgetary process. PSM II's and the Adoption SSPC reviewed regional adoption events/funding in June 2016 and were provided approved copies of the budgets in August 2016.
h	Identify new and innovative recruitment strategies.	7/1/2015	6/30/2016	75%	CCLS II & CCLS III	The "One Child" television advertisement was run this Fiscal Year featuring families in WRO and narratation by the DHSS Commissioner. During FY 17 foster parenting recruitment was highlighted in a variety of venues including; Alaska Tribal Health Leaders gathering in Anchorage, Alaska Parent Magazine, movie theaters in the Western Region and a radio show (KINY) in Juneau. In addition, in January 2017 a resource family recruitment advertisement will be explored with the Alaska Nurses Magazine which reaches over 9,000 nurses (RN's, LPN's and APRN's) in Alaska. As noted above in goal/activity 2(b), a workgroup was formed with CCLS III, ACRF, SOA Publication Staff and NRO Regional Psych. Nurse to develop a post card to recruit resource families to care for children with complex medical needs. Goal for distribution is February 2017. Distribtuion will include ACRF training tracks/website, newsletters, recruitment events and postal mail outs.
3	**Foster Wear Program**					
a	Recognize current vendors	7/1/2016	6/30/2017	100%	CCLS II & CCLS III	Holiday thank you cards were mailed out to all current vendors January 2017.
b	Recruit two new FosterWear vendors this fiscal year	7/1/2015	6/30/2016	75%	CCLS II &CCLS III	There are 18 FosterWear Vendors in the State of Alaska. An update of the FosterWear Program was provided to Legislative Aide, Laura Chartier from Representative Les Gara's Office including collaboration efforts to secure Fred Meyer stores throughout Alaska as potential FoserWear vendor

ACTIVITY		Start	Finish	Percent Complete	Staff Responsible	Comments/Notes
c	Inform families, staff, and partners of the program	7/1/2015	6/30/2016	75%	CCLS I, CCLS II, CCLS III, ACRF and Resource Family Advisory Board	The State of Alaska, Office of Children's Services and the Alaska Center for Resource Families Website links for the FosterWear Program were updated to reflect changes in the overview of the FosterWear Program, as well as contact information for OCS staff and vendors. FosterWear cards were ordered (2,500) in the fall of 2016. FosterWear cards are distributed to both licensed and unlicensed resource families. NRO Licensing Supervisor, Carmen Brooks provided an overview of the FosterWear Program during an All Staff Meeting in February 2016.
4	**Resource Family Advisory Board**					
a	Plan annual face to face meeting	7/1/2016	6/30/2017	50%	CCLS III/ACRF	Face to face RFAB meeting was held in Anchorage October 7-8 2016. The second face to face meeting will be held in Juneau March 2017.

Alaska's Title IV-B Health Care Oversight & Coordination Plan

April 2017

Alaska's goal is to ensure a coordinated strategy to identify and respond to the health care needs of children in foster care placements, including mental health and dental health needs. The following represents how Alaska addresses the requirements of the Title IV-B Health Care Oversight and Coordination Plan. The Social Security Act Section 422 (b)(15)(A) requires that states develop a plan in coordination with the state title XIX (Medicaid) agency, and in consultation with pediatricians and other experts in health care, and experts in and recipients of child welfare services.

Submitted by:

The Department of Health and Social Services
(Through partnership by the Office of Children's Services and Health Care Services)

HCO Committee Co-Chairs:

Office of Children's Services: Gennifer Moreau-Johnson (Social Services Program Officer)
Office of Children's Services: KariLee Pietz (Social Services Program Administrator)
Health Care Services: Carrie Silver (EPSDT Coordinator)
Health Care Services: P.K. Wilson (Medical Assistance Administrator)

A Schedule For Initial And Follow-Up Health Screenings That Meet Reasonable Standards Of Medical Practice

Alaska Administrative Codes aligns the EPSDT screening schedule with the recommended schedule of comprehensive medical screening recommended by *Bright Futures / American Academy of Pediatrics Recommendations for Preventative Pediatric Health Care.* Required by Medicaid rules, Medical Assistance programs provide information to parents and caretakers of children regarding screening and treatment allowed through the Medicaid EPSDT provision.

It is OCS' policy that after a child has been taken into custody and placed in out-of-home care; the worker will provide the out-of-home care provider with the Early and Periodic Screening Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) Guidelines and Periodicity Schedule. All children who come into OCS care are required to have an EPSDT (well child check) within 30 days of coming into care. All Medicaid recipients under 21 years of age are eligible for EPSDT. OCS provides this information to the out-of-home care provider as part of the red placement packet, which is provided at the time of placement or within five business days of placement.

Children should receive quality health care beginning at birth and continuing throughout childhood and adolescence including the identification, diagnosis, and treatment of medical conditions as early as possible. Children are to receive well-child visits at regular intervals throughout childhood and adolescence, according to the Bright Futures/American Academy of Pediatrics Recommendations for Preventive Pediatric Health Care. Screening during the well-child visits includes health, developmental, and behavioral concerns. Services should include health history, developmental and behavioral screening and assessment, physical exam, immunizations, lab tests, and screenings for dental, vision, and hearing. Children shall receive treatment for health, developmental or social-emotional problems identified during well-child visits. If the well-child visits identify further testing needs, children shall receive the recommended services.

In nearly all cases, children in OCS custody are eligible for Medicaid. OCS policy states that when the department takes custody of a child, the worker will complete the Medicaid application. The out-of-home care provider will arrange for completion the EPSDT screening within thirty days of the placement. At the time of the screening, the out-of-home care provider will provide the Medicaid enrolled provider with an EPSDT Guidelines and Periodicity Schedule. OCS monitors the compliance of initial EPSTD screenings for children entering foster care.

In December 2013 OCS policy was implemented requiring workers to complete trauma screening for each child who is subject to a Family Services case as a result of an initial assessment. The trauma screening tool is a standardized tool developed by OCS, called the Trauma Screening Checklist.

How Health Needs Identified Through Screenings Will Be Monitored And Treated, Including Emotional Trauma Associated With A Child's Maltreatment And Removal From Home.

It is the OCS's policy that after any necessary exams the medical provider will give the exam results and recommendations to the out-of-home care providers and the out of home care provider will ensure that the assigned worker receives a copy of the results and recommendations. It is the worker's responsibility to follow up on recommendations for treatment and further assessment (CPS Manual 6.3.1). In accordance with the provision under EPSDT in Title XIX, follow-up may include arranging for medically necessary treatment identified by the screening or whether there is coverage

for the treatment in the Medicaid state plan. Per 1905(r)(5) in Title XIX: "Such other necessary health care, diagnostic services, treatment, and other measures described in section 1905(a) to correct or ameliorate defects and physical and mental illnesses and conditions discovered by the screening services, whether or not such services are covered under the State plan."

In March 2013, OCS implemented a policy that requires the quarterly review of health records by the regional OCS psychiatric nurse when a child is taking a psychotropic medication. While the primary intent of this additional oversight is to monitor the mental health needs of the child, with review of the entire medical record, this cohort of children in foster care will have additional monitoring of all of their health needs (CPS manual 6.3.2).

In support of appropriate utilization and access to health care, both OCS workers and psychiatric nurses may request case management services provided by the Alaska Medicaid Coordinated Care Initiative (AMCCI) for Medicaid eligible OCS children. These services are provided by MedExpert, under contract with the Division of Health Care Services. MedExpert can assist OCS staff to develop or update a plan of care (especially for children with complex health care needs or multiple comorbidities); assist with identifying health care best practices; assist in finding appropriate specialist care; assist in navigating the AK Medicaid and health care system in Alaska and out of state; and other Medicaid case management services. MedExpert can also provide continuity of care to youth and their families as they transition out of OCS care.

If the child is receiving mental health services, the worker can do the screening update in consultation with the mental health provider. When a child's history is positive for trauma exposure, and concerns are present in one or more trauma areas, the worker will refer the child for a comprehensive mental health assessment to help understand child functioning and needs (CPS manual 2.9.4). Protective Services Specialists will review the case plan to assure that it provides the support and resources for the youth's safety and well-being. Because youth in custody may engage in high-risk behaviors, including risky sexual decision making at a higher rate than other adolescent populations, the plan should be helpful for youth to make informed decisions regarding sexual activity (CPS manual 3.14.1).

OCS Supervisors discuss the physical and mental health needs and services during case staffing with the worker. Additionally, the OCS Quality Assurance Reviews include a case record review to ensure appropriate assessment and treatment of health needs.

How Medical Information For Children In Care Will Be Updated And Appropriately Shared, Which May Include The Development And Implementation Of An Electronic Health Record.

It is OCS' policy that the worker will provide the out of home care provider with the most recent information available regarding the child's medical and mental health history upon placement. Since February 2011, the documentation in the placement packet includes the updated Medical Summary template from ORCA. Workers provide the placement packet to out-of-home care providers within five business days of the placement. (CPS Manual 3.5).

The worker is required to update the medical information in ORCA before each administrative review and each placement change. At minimum, the worker will ensure they enter the following information on the child's Medical profile page in ORCA:

- Documentation of the type, service date, and provider of EPSDT or any other medical, dental,

hearing, or vision evaluation/screening;

- Summary of ongoing conditions identified in screenings/evaluations under "Health Problems";
- Summary of recommendations in the Details/ Recommendations field;
- Documentation of ongoing treatment sessions as a single entry on the Medical History tab using an end date in the future. Include ongoing treatment in the child's case plan; and
- Effective March 2013, documentation of any medications prescribed to the child.

In 2012-2013, OCS worked closely with officials in the Alaska Division of Behavioral Health and Division of Health Care Services to devise an electronic system for OCS to obtain information through Medicaid records for any child in foster care who is being administered a psychotropic medication. Additionally, as described above, the OCS Mental Health Care/Administration and Oversight of Psychotropic Medication policy requires regional OCS psychiatric nurses to request and review medical records on a quarterly basis from medical providers for children taking psychotropic medications.

OCS complies with the HIPAA confidentiality requirements. All OCS staff is required to complete an online HIPAA course, and the policy manual provides additional guidance (CPS manual 6.1.2).

Steps To Ensure Continuity Of Health Care Services, Which May Include The Establishment Of A Medical Home For Every Child In Care.

Since 2011, OCS' medical care policy has required that every effort will be made to ensure that health care services for children in out-of-home care continue to be provided by the same medical providers as before the child's removal from home (CPS manual 6.3.1).

To support appropriate utilization and access to health care, both OCS workers and psychiatric nurses may request case management services provided by the Alaska Medicaid Coordinated Care Initiative (AMCCI) for Medicaid eligible OCS children. MedExpert provides these services. Page 3 of this document provides additional details.

The Division of Public Health Women's Children's and Family Health Unit has a five-year plan (2015-2019) that includes increasing the number of children with special health care needs who have a medical home. The five-year plan includes access to cross-systems care coordination using a Shared Plan of Care. With the advent of Primary Care Case Management and Integrated Behavioral Health and Primary Care through the use of "Health Homes", as mandated in Alaska Senate Bill 74, Alaska is establishing continuity of care across the state.

The Oversight Of Prescription Medicines, Including Protocols For The Appropriate Use And Monitoring Of Psychotropic Medications.

OCS' policy regarding administration of psychotropic medication includes informed consent requirements and close oversight by the OCS Regional Psychiatric Nurse (CPS manual 6.3.2). Detailed procedures for informed consent have been in place since 2009, and implementation of updated policy on oversight and monitoring occurred in March 2013.

OCS medical coverage policy is divided into two areas, one section addressing medical, dental, and vision care, and the other focusing on mental health care. The 2013 revisions to the mental health policy include policy and procedures for monitoring psychotropic medications for children in OCS custody. When prescribing a psychotropic medication, the policy requires providing information to the caregiver regarding side effects of the medication. The following policy and procedures apply to informed consent:

- When a medical provider recommends the administration of psychotropic medication to a child in custody:
  - If age appropriate, education provided to the child on the recommended treatment, including the medications;
  - Except in emergencies, the requirement of parental consent unless parental rights are terminated;
  - If parental rights have not been terminated, and the parents are unwilling or unavailable to consent, the worker will consult with the Assistant Attorney General about obtaining a court order to consent to treatment;
  - If parental rights have been terminated or a court order has been issued, the worker will:
    - Obtain information about the recommended medication from the provider; and
    - Consult with their supervisor and the OCS Regional Psychiatric Nurse to determine whether the medication should be authorized or declined; and
    - If a decision is made to authorize the medication, notify the medical provider of the decision by providing a signed authorization form.
    - A change in dosage of a medication that already has been authorized also requires the worker to consult with their supervisor and the OCS Regional Psychiatric Nurse before authorizing the change.

OCS' policy for psychotropic medication monitoring is based on policy developed and adopted by the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services regarding the use of these medications for all children receiving Department services:

- The worker shall notify and consult with the OCS psychiatric nurse when a child is on psychotropic medication, or such medication is recommended;
- OCS psychiatric nurses review all prescriptions of psychotropic medication, with a special emphasis on children age five or younger and children of any age who are receiving four or more psychotropic medications and consulting with the Department's physician consultant;
- OCS psychiatric nurses request and review the medical records for children in custody with a prescription of at least one psychotropic medication on a quarterly basis;
- Medical providers prescribing atypical antipsychotics to OCS children are required to follow biometric and laboratory measures to monitor for side effects;
- When psychotropic medication is prescribed for a child in out-of-home care, the worker or the OCS psychiatric nurse providing information about the medication and side effects to the caregiver; and

- Information about medication, dosage, results of reviews, and consent are entered into ORCA. ORCA/SACWIS enhancements implemented in 2012 allow for the electronic tracking of psychotropic medications documented in the child's OCS medical profile.

A plan for training regarding psychotropic medication and implications for children in foster care has been developed and is available for resource families. Foster parents receive the OCS psychotropic medication brochure in the Core Training information and each year, and OCS nurse presents information on psychotropic medications. Foster parents also have access to various self-studies addressing psychotropic medication in the context of mental health needs of children, and there is a simple one credit course available. OCS child welfare staff will receive information through consultation with the nurses and by reviewing the OCS policy and brochure.

How The State Actively Consults With And Involves Physicians Or Other Appropriate Medical Or Non-Medical Professionals In Assessing The Health And Well-Being Of Children In Foster Care And In Determining Appropriate Medical Treatment For The Children.

The OCS Child Protection Health Care Oversight Committee invites physicians, a physician's assistant, a child psychiatrist, the director of the Alaska Trauma Treatment Center, representatives from OCS (including an OCS psychiatric nurse, OCS Social Services Administrator, and Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Program Officer), Division of Public Heath, Division of Health Care Services, Office of Public Advocacy, Alaska Center for Resource Families, and Indian Health Service. The Committee participated in the drafting and implementation of the Mental Health Care policy implemented in March 2013 and the accompanying informational brochure. The committee will meet annually or more often as needed.

Several initiatives are in the process of implementation to improve the coordination of medical and non-medical involvement to support the care of children in foster care. The Alaska Medicaid Coordinated Care Initiative contracts with consulting agencies to review records and make recommendations based on best practices and medical expertise. The Help Me Grow initiative offers resources and referrals through care coordination with expertise in early childhood in addition to performing outreach to providers and families to analyze and improve community services for family wellness and healthy child development.

The implementation of the policy addressing the oversight and monitoring of children in state's custody on psychotropic medications is a priority of the Office of Children's Services Psychiatric Nursing staff. After gathering information about the children, the prescriptions they are receiving, requesting and reviewing the child's medical records the nurses then identify if the child's prescribing history meets the threshold that requires a third party review. A third party physician review is critical to providing appropriate oversight for children on psychotropic medications and protocols incorporated into the policy involve the consultation with a third party psychiatrist for children who meet certain criteria (e.g. are receiving four or more psychotropic medications). In March 2014, Seattle Children's Hospital was awarded the contract and third party oversight was implemented and systemized in April 2014.

Effective May 1, 2013, OCS implemented a procedure that requires case workers to notify the AAG if a foster care youth is admitted into an acute residential psychiatric facility. The AAG then notifies the court and requests a review hearing. With the opportunity for all legal parties to have the opportunity to participate in the hearing, this process allows for greater oversight and transparency on the

placement of youth in acute residential facilities.

Steps To Ensure That The Components Of The Transition Plan Development Process Required Under Section 475(5)(H) That Relate To The Health Care Needs Of Children Aging Out Of Foster Care, Including The Requirements To Include Options For Health Insurance, Information About A Health Care Power Of Attorney, Health Care Proxy, Or Other Similar Document Recognized Under State Law, And To Provide The Child With The Option To Execute Such A Document, Are Met.

It is OCS' policy that workers will develop transition plans for youth starting at age 14 and that the transition plan will be updated at least every six months and during the 90 day period immediately before when the youth's case closes. 90 days before case closure, the transition plan must address the options for health insurance, and the importance of having a health care power of attorney or a proxy and how to execute such documents. OCS coordinates with the Medicaid agency regarding the youth's Medicaid benefits (CPS manual 3.14.1).

State of Alaska Medicaid policy, in compliance with the Affordable Care Act, covers Former Foster Care Children; individuals under the age of 26, not otherwise mandatorily eligible, who were on Medicaid and in foster care in Alaska when they turned 18 or aged out of foster care. Any transition plan for individuals aging out of foster care will include determining eligibility for Medicaid under the appropriate mandatory eligibility category.

Alaska's Title IV-B Health Care Oversight & Coordination Plan

GOAL: OCS Caseworkers and resource families will receive the information, support, and tools they need in order for Alaska's Health Care Oversight and Coordination Plan to be fully implemented.			
Objectives	**Measure of progress and timeline**	**Training, technical assistance, and other supports needed**	**Projected outcomes**
Children in OCS custody will have needed medical screenings.	OCS will establish base line initial EPSTD completion rates and demonstrate improvement, with a goal of 100% by July 1, 2019.	OCS will assess the data interface used to receive the EPSTD completion data. Training for foster families and OCS staff will be developed.	Improve the documentation of initial EPSTD completion rates for children in OCS custody. Historical ORCA RR00291 data is as follows: FFY 16=21.5%, FFY 15 = 38.7%, FFY 14 = 60.3%, FFY 13 = 61.7%
Children's legal custodian will receive the EPSDT newsletter annually.	HCS and OCS will develop a system to ensure newsletter is received by 12/31/17.	None	Important health care information will be provided to caregivers.
Foster parents will have access to information needed to meet the needs of foster child's health care at the time of placement, during the placement and at the conclusion of the placement.	Information will be provided to all foster parents annually.	Training information provided annually to foster parents. Regional OCS Nurses present in rural teleconference annually. Courses are available through ACRF to gain additional information.	Children will have their health care needs appropriately assessed and addressed.
Identify or develop a standardized trauma screening tool for medical providers to use when meeting with children in the custody of OCS.	Explore available tools and options for discussion with committee no later than July 2018	The OCS HOC will review available options, discuss distribution options, and identify additional steps as needed.	Children will have a standardized trauma assessment completed by primary care providers.

STATE OF ALASKA
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

OFFICE OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS PLAN

April 2017

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APPROVALS

This Continuity of Operations plan (COOP) was prepared by the Office of Children's Services (OCS) to develop, implement and maintain a viable capability to continue operations during a major disruption. This COOP complies with applicable internal agency policies, state and local regulations and supports recommendations provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. This COOP plan has been distributed internally with the OCS and external agencies that may be affected by its implementation.

Approved: _____ Date 4/21/17
Title: DIRECTOR

Approved: _____ Date 4/21/2017
Title: DEPUTY DIRECTOR

Approved: _____ Date 4/21/2017
Title: DIVISION OPERATIONS MANAGER

Approved: _____ Date 4/21/2017
Title: ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATIONS MANAGER II

Approved: _____ Date 4/26/2017
Title: ORCA PROJECT MANAGER

STATE OF ALASKA

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES
OFFICE OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES
CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS PLAN (COOP)

PROMULGATION STATEMENT

The Office of Children's Services (OCS) works in partnership with families and communities to support the well-being of Alaska's children and youth. Services enhance families' capacity to give their children a healthy start, to provide them with safe and permanent homes, to maintain cultural connections and to help them realize their potential. To accomplish this mission, OCS must insure its operations are performed efficiently with minimum disruption, especially in an emergency. This document provides planning and program guidance for implementing the OCS Continuity Plan and programs to ensure the organization is capable of conducting its essential missions and functions under all threats and conditions.

RECORD OF CHANGES

Change Number	Section	Date of Change	Individual Making Change	Description of Change
1	D.	5/3/16	Yvonne Hill	Changes to responsibilities of Resource Family and Service Array Program Officers
2	Appendix IV	5/3/16	D. Bunti Reed	Update of Delegations
3	Appendix X	5/3/16	D. Bunti Reed	Addition: Emergency Status Report
4	Throughout	5/3/16	D. Bunti Reed	Update of position titles
5	Appendix IV	4/17/17	D. Bunti Reed	Update of contact information on Delegation chart.
6	Appendix XI	4/17/17	D. Bunti Reed	Update of after action/ debrief plan.

RECORD OF DISTRIBUTION

Date of Delivery	Number of Copies	Method of Delivery	Name, Title, and Organization of Receiver

I. INTRODUCTION

OCS has essential functions that must be performed, or rapidly and efficiently resumed, in an emergency. While the impact of an emergency cannot be predicted, planning for operations under such conditions can mitigate the impact of the emergency on our staff our facilities and our mission. To that end, OCS has prepared a Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP).

OCS is the lead child protection and family support agency responsible for protecting children, strengthening families and providing services to families and children throughout the State of Alaska.

The OCS COOP assures the OCS' ability to continue essential functions and related activities, in the event of a natural or manmade emergency, and to facilitate an orderly recovery from the event. This COOP establishes policy and guidance to ensure the execution of the essential functions for OCS in the event that an emergency threatens or incapacitates operations, and/or requires the relocation of selected personnel and functions.

The agency operates from a state office, five regional offices and twenty-six field offices.

II. AUTHORITIES AND REFERENCES

The COOP has been developed with the full endorsement under the Commissioner of the Department of Health and Social Service's Section of Emergency Programs, and complies with Alaska Statute 26.20, which directs the State of Alaska Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management to develop a statewide emergency response plan, provide assistance and respond to the needs of individual state agencies, communities, and partner agencies.

The Alaska Statutes AS 47.10.005-990 and 47.17.010-290 defines the authority of the Department of Health and Social Services, Office of Children's Services:

> In order to protect children whose health and well-being may be adversely affected through the infliction, by other than accidental means, of harm through physical injury or neglect, mental injury, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, or maltreatment, the legislature requires the reporting of these cases by practitioners of the healing arts and others to the department. It is not the intent of the legislature that persons required to report suspected child abuse or neglect

under this chapter investigate the suspected child abuse or neglect before they make the required report to the department. Reports must be made when there is a reasonable cause to suspect child abuse or neglect in order to make state investigative and social services available in a wider range of cases at an earlier point in time, to make sure that investigations regarding child abuse and neglect are conducted by trained investigators, and to avoid subjecting a child to multiple interviews about the abuse or neglect. It is the intent of the legislature that, as a result of these reports, protective services will be made available in an effort to:

1. prevent further harm to the child;

2. safeguard and enhance the general well-being of children in this state; and

3. preserve family life unless that effort is likely to result in physical or emotional damage to the child.

References used to develop this template include:

• Continuity of Operations (COOP) Planning Workshop Train-the-Trainer Student Manual, Federal Emergency Management Agency; published February 2008

• Continuity of Operations (COOP) Template, Federal Emergency Management Agency

• Continuity of Operations (COOP) Template Instructions, Federal Emergency Management Agency

• DHSS Continuity of Operations (DHSS-COOP) Template

III. SECURITY AND PRIVACY STATEMENT

Disclosure of all or part of this plan could compromise the security of essential equipment, services and systems of the OCS or otherwise impair its ability to carry out essential functions. Distribution of the COOP in whole or in part is limited to those personnel who need to know the information in order to successfully implement this plan.

IV. THREATS TO CONTINUED OPERATION AND TRIGGERS

The following three threat scenarios have been identified by the State as the most likely to **trigger** COOP plan activation:

- **Class 1 Scenario: Single Building/Agency**: In this scenario, a portion or all of the agency's operations are disrupted at one location, with limited displacement of operations to alternate facilities. There is limited impact on interdependencies between the agency and other operations including customers, vendors and suppliers, and the event is most likely of a short to medium-term duration. The most likely causes of such a disruption are;

    - fire; system/mechanical failure; loss of utilities such as electricity, telephone, water, or steam; or explosion (regardless of cause) that produces no significant damage to any other facilities or systems used by the agency.

    - threats of violence towards OCS employees that can cause an office to close to protect the safety of its employees and visitors.

- **Class 2 Scenario: Catastrophic Event**: This scenario assumes that an incident affects a geographic region with a cluster of State operations. This scenario also assumes the disruption of operations to a number of agencies, leading to a massive and widespread displacement of the workforce and a disruption to multiple interdependencies between and among agencies, as well as those with customers and critical suppliers. Disruption of normal business operations is assumed to be for an extended period of time.

- **Class 3 Scenario: Pandemic:** This scenario assumes that there is a pandemic-related disruption of the workforce that is indiscriminate as far as impact, and that infrastructure is affected only to the extent that systems require maintenance and/or operation by a severely depleted workforce. Operations from an alternate (continuity) location will probably not be required. A pandemic event will most likely last for 12-18 months with as many as three waves of new infections lasting 4-6 weeks each. Continuous essential function evaluation may be required. For instance, a function that may not be critical the first 3 months will become critical the 4th month.

V. PURPOSE

The capability to prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies affecting the OCS' operations is dependent upon the proficiency and well being of its employees and the clarity of its leadership. To ensure the capability to support employees and contractors, system users, emergency responders, local and regional emergency management agencies, and the general public during emergencies, the OCS has adopted this COOP plan.

This COOP plan describes how the OCS will sustain the capability to perform essential functions during and after a disruption in operations. This COOP plan ensures that OCS:

- has the capability to implement the COOP plan both with and without warning;
- is able to perform essential functions no later than 12 hours after activation of the COOP plan;
- is able to maintain essential functions for up to 30 days (90 days in a pandemic scenario);
- conducts regularly scheduled testing, training and exercising of agency personnel, equipment, systems, processes and procedures used to support the agency during a COOP event;
- plans the location of alternate facilities in areas where the ability to initiate, maintain and terminate continuity operations is maximized;
- develops standard operating procedures which enable the performance of essential functions; and
- promotes the development, maintenance and annual review of agency COOP capabilities.

VI. TIERS OF RESPONSIBILITY

The Office of Children Services adheres to the national "emergency response tiers of responsibility" philosophy, and therefore jurisdictions. Those tiers are, in order of increasing responsibility for preparation of, and response to, an emergency:

Individual
Family
Local community (villages, towns, cities, boroughs)
State
Federal

VII. READINESS AND PREPAREDNESS

This COOP plan supports the performance of essential functions from alternate (continuity) locations (due to the primary facility becoming unusable for long or short periods of time) and also provides for continuity of management and decision-making, in the event that senior management or technical personnel are unavailable, inaccessible, or lost to the organization. This COOP identifies mission critical systems, vital files, records and databases.

A. MISSION ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

1. The Child and Family Services Improvement Act of 2006 (PL 109-288) federally mandates that all child welfare agencies have a disaster plan in place that addresses five Mission Essential Functions (MEF) below:

a. Identify, locate and continue availability of services for children being served by OCS who are displaced or adversely affected by a disaster.

b. Respond to new reports of child abuse and neglect in areas affected by a disaster and provide services as appropriate.

c. Remain in communication with case workers and other essential child welfare personnel who are displaced because of a disaster.

d. Preserve Records

e. Coordinate Services for displaced families.

f. State Office Functions

B. SUPPORTING ACTIVITIES

Supporting Activities include specific activities that OCS must complete to perform its Mission Essential Functions. For example, in order to continue to provide services to children in care and under OCS supervision, we must first locate and assess the safety of each child.

Mission Essential Functions	Priority	Supportive Activities
Identify, locate, and continue services to children served by OCS who are displaced or adversely affected by the disaster.	1	Locate and assess safety of children in custody and under supervision
	1	Reunify families
	5	Provide permanency to children through guardianship and adoption
	4	Provide family support services to maintain existing case plan
	5	Ensure continuation of legal processes and notifications
Respond to new reports of abuse Neglect.	1	Continue to receive protective services reports
	1	Conduct initial assessments with present danger
	1	develop safety plans to ensure child safety
	1	Remove children from unsafe homes when safety plans cannot be put into place
	1	Place children in temporary out-of-home placements when needed
	2	Conduct initial assessments with impending danger/high risk
	2	Monitor safety plan to ensure child safety
	2	Engage emergency custody process with the courts and notification of appropriate parties.
Remain in communication with caseworkers, tribes, partner agencies	1	Utilize the OCS Emergency Response Team / Relocation Team
	5	Maintain current contact information for stakeholders
Preserve Records	1	Ensure continuous , timely and accurate information is documented in ORCA
Coordinate Services	1	Identify and license resource families
	4	Ensure the continuity of on-going coordination of services with tribes, community partners, leaders and state government partner agencies
	5	Develop a case plan to address issues that caused children to be unsafe
	5	Train and monitor resource families
State Office Function	1	Ensure the availability of OCS information is provided to workers, (ORCA, PROBER, vital records, licensing, APSIN) Maintain Fiscal continuity (providers payments, purchase authorizations, payroll, eligibility

C. ALTERNATE FACILITY OPERATIONS

The state, regional and field offices have identified alternate facilities in the event the primary office buildings are damaged, or are threatened. These plans will be included in the Continuity of Operation Plans for each office.

D. DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY

The OCS Director's Executive Team (DET) and other state office personnel are responsible to ensure the continuation of the essential functions of the agency. OCS State Office will manage the activation of the COOP Plan at the state level and oversee, legal, financial and personnel state office functions. An organizational chart of current positions and employees is included in the appendices.

The Director:

- Collaborates with DHSS Divisions to coordinate response actions.
- Liaison with the Commissioner and Governor's Office.
- Assigns an Employee to the DHSS Emergency Operations Center.
- Provides for public information announcements.

The Deputy Director:

- Performs assessment of the agency's overall infrastructure.
- Develops alternate policies during emergency event.
- Acting Director when Director is unavailable.
- Directs OCS reconstitution of services.

Division Operations Manager:

- Tracks staff re-assignments and relocations.
- Identifies available staff for relocations
- Assigns asset/equipment allocations based on priority levels
- Gathers information for daily and event situational reports and reports to the Deputy Director.
- Provides technical assistance to PSM I/II on deployment of any emergency policy and procedure changes.

The Administrative Operations Manager II:

- Activates the emergency financial systems to cover payroll, foster care payments and emergency funding for travel, equipment and supplies.
- Deploy fiscal accountability measures and streamline reconstitution of equipment and supplies

The ORCA Project Manager:

- Maintains continuity of ORCA Operations and technical support.
- Technical advisor for alternate data systems and collection.
- Facilitates system sustainment and data real-time reporting

Community Relations Manager:

- Tracking calls for assistance and complaints.
- Communicates with Division Operations Manager to resolve complaints quickly
- OCS Liaison for Information Sharing with Legislative Offices and coordinates FOIA requests.

Social Services Program Officer/ Resource Family Unit:

- Coordinate contact with foster homes to ensure families and children are safe and location is known.
- Ensures a process continues to license foster homes on an emergency basis.
- Ensures the timely completion of background checks
- Identify community partner resources and determine temporary licensing for Receiving Homes in the affected area(s) for displaced children.
- Coordinates with Division Operations Manager regarding needed supports identified by the field

Social Services Program Officer / Service Array Unit:

- Assesses the condition and availability of Child Advocacy Center and theirservices
- Assures continued operations for finalizing adoptions
- Determines which courts remain available for finalizing guardianships and adoptions.
- Ensures Continuity of Services to Youth receiving Independent Living Services
- Coordinates with grantees to provide services to displaced children

and families.

- Coordinates with Division Operations Manager regarding needed supports identified by the field.

Emergency Response Coordinator:

- Acts as the OCS Liaison with the Department of Health and Social Services' Emergency Operations Center.
- Provides technical assistance to State, Regional and Field personnel before, during and after emergency responses.

E. ORDER OF LEADERSHIP SUCCESSION

The order of succession is utilized when leadership staff becomes unavailable to maintain agency operations. For OCS leadership succession is as follows;

Director

⇩

Deputy Director

⇩

Division Operations Manager

F. MISSION CRITICAL SYSTEMS

The Online Resources for Children of Alaska (ORCA) database is the OCS official system of record. The system is internet based and can be accessed from any OCS office and several other Health and Social Services divisions. If the main data center is destroyed or power to the system is unavailable, back-up files are available. For security reasons, the actual location cannot be published in this document.

G. Vital Files, Records, and Databases

The OCS has identified vital records, equipment and systems that must be available to support performance of essential functions. These are the records, equipment and systems that will be prioritized for restoration and recovery by the State Information Technology Services.

Vital File, Record, or Database	Form of Record (e.g., hardcopy, electronic)	Pre-positioned at Alternate Facility	Hand Carried to Alternate Facility	Backed up at Third Location
Internal and external e-mail and e-mail archives	Electronic	Accessible via state network / or internet accessible facility	Full backup every night	
Personnel Records	Hardcopy and Electronic	DOA/Personnel	As required	DOA/Personnel
Local area network	Electronic	IT server	Full backup every night at local office	Full backup every night in Anchorage
Supporting information systems and data	Hardcopy & Electronic	Accessible via state network / or hardcopy via COOP plan		
Vital File, Record, or Database	Form of Record (e.g., hardcopy, electronic)		Hand Carried to Alternate Facility	
ORCA (Online Resources for Children of Alaska) OCS case management/service/legal database	Electronic	Secure Location		Back-up secured at an alternate location

VIII. ACTIVATION AND RELOCATION

A. ACTIVATION

1. Triggers for implementation of the OCS COOP include:
   a. Office building becomes unavailable due to an event or threat of violence.
   b. Catastrophic event resulting in the need for emergency shelters or community evacuation.
   c. Pandemic resulting in 30 to 40% of available staff.

2. Staff Safety:

   a. In the event one of the "triggers" has occurred and If an ALERT to stay away from the office has not been issued, personnel are expected to report to work as long as; they can travel safely, to the office; have taken care of home/family safety first.

   b. When an area wide disaster ALERT has been issued Personnel will comply with public safety instructions: e.g. to either "shelter in place" or evacuate. "Shelter in place" means to take immediate shelter where you are – at home, work, school, or in between. It may also mean "seal the room; in other words, take steps to prevent outside air from coming in when chemical or radiological contaminants are released into the environment.

   c. When the COOP is activated by one of the identified triggers or other emergency, personnel will contact their immediate supervisor and report their situation and their location by phone, email and text.

<u>OCS has instituted a notification CODE and system for emergencies</u>.

(Appendix: IX)

RED – Person with weapon in the building
ORANGE – Active threat towards OCS or building
YELLOW – Disruptive Person in the building
BLUE – Environmental/Natural Disaster

3. Pandemic

   a. Personnel will stay home when ill to mitigate (quarantine) the spread of exposure. Personnel will contact their immediate supervisor via phone, email and or text.

   b. For employees who are at work and discover they have a contagious disease should notify their supervisor and go home or seek immediate medical care. The supervisor will notify management (incident report notification).

   c. Supervisors and management may allow employees to work from home by utilizing teleconferencing for mandated meetings, such as court hearings and case reviews.

B. SOA OFFICE CLOSURE NOTIFICATION SYSTEMS

A statewide notification system has been developed to provide staff with office closure notifications due to weather related problems, national disasters, etc. Notices will be posted on the State of Alaska main webpage.

Office closures will be posted on following website; http://doa.alaska.gov/officeclosures/index.html. Staff can use the website to sign up to receive notices via email, text and FACEBOOK.

Notification methods may vary depending on circumstances. GovDelivery is the standard which text notifications and emails are delivered to notify DHSS OCS employees.

Once OCS Leadership receives notice from the field of any dangerous conditions or storms, the notice will be forwarded to the SOA, Dept. of Administration (DOA) which will make the final determination as to when an office can be closed and/ or staggered dismissal can be initiated. DOA will utilize information gathered from the Alaska State Troopers, local law enforcement and local government personnel.

C. RELOCATION AND STAFF SAFETY

It is expected that, in many cases, the OCS will receive a warning of at least a few hours to an event. Notification to all affected staff and foster parents and unlicensed relatives will be made by email, phone and/or texting. The Office of Children's Services staffs are encouraged to report to work after they have made provisions for the health and safety of their families.
When there is no prior notice of an event, staff affected by the event will notify their immediate supervisor, who will then notify the PSM I/II, who will notify the Director of Operations. Notifications to appropriate staff and foster parents and unlicensed relatives will occur by email, texting, cell phone and / or radio announcements. If phone, or e-mail and texting methods of communications are not operable, staff and foster parents should stay at home and monitor the emergency broadcast system and local radio stations. If the local authorities call for an evacuation of the community, staff and foster parents must immediately comply.

In either event, OCS and DHSS public announcements that will provide phone emergency contact information for staff and foster parents to call to receive instructions. Instructions for staff can include, stay at home, "shelter in place," evacuate, relocate to alternate facility, or report to work when employee's family are stable and safe. "Shelter in Place" means to stay where you are. Instructions for foster families and unlicensed relatives can include a request to report location and wellbeing of the family, report any immediate, financial, medical, emotional, shelter or food and water needs.

State and Regional offices will establish Emergency Relocation Teams. This team will coordinate with the Division Operations Manager to track all staff movements, agency collaborations, and supply needs. This team will facilitate the relocation of staff to alternate facilities, provides for equipment, supplies, transportation and payroll.

Emergency Response and Relocation Team: ***(Example: State Office)***		
Name/Position	**Phone Number**	**Role / Task**
Director		**Liaison with DHSS Commissioner's office and other divisions, and provides for public information announcements.**
Deputy Director		**Performs situational assessment of agency infrastructure and facilitates agreements for the use of alternate work sites.**
Administrative Operations Manager II		**Activates emergency financial systems to cover payroll, foster care payments and emergency funding for travel, equipment and supplies.**
Division Operations Manager		**Tracks employee re-assignments and relocations. Identifies available staff for relocations.**

D. RELOCATION TO ALTERNATE FACILITY

When it becomes apparent that an office is no longer safe and operations need to be relocated to an alternate site, a regional manager or supervisor will

1. Instruct all staff to assemble documents and equipment required. It is recommended that each office have a "Go Bag" prepared in the event of a building evacuation. This bag should contain personal safety and emergency supplies as well as phone listings for employees, foster parents, etc. and copy of the office continuity of operations plan. A list of recommended Go Bag contents is in the appendix.

2. Notify the alternate facility manager of impending relocation.
3. Notify affected local, regional and state agencies.
4. Notify foster families and unlicensed relatives.

In the event of a pandemic or other health concerns workers can work from

home. To the extent possible, workers who are ill should stay home and focus on getting well. Only emergent matters should be handled by workers when ill and cannot be handed off to a supervisor or another worker. Note: alternative worksites for disasters are listed in individual field office /regional office COOP plans.

Workers with cellular phones are encouraged to use "texting" as a primary source of communication whenever possible. If cellular phones are unavailable or inoperable, workers can request assistance from local government and law enforcement agencies and other DHSS employees, such as the rural Public Health clinics who have satellite phones.

Supplies can be ordered through the regional or state office.

E. REASSIGNMENT OF STAFF

Regional Manager's may reassign staff within and between their field offices as needed to assure the continuation of essential functions and activities. Pay will be adjusted per State of Alaska policies.

Alternative work arrangements means working from an alternative worksite, alternate state office, or other specified site, based on availability of accessible areas.

Regional Managers will coordinate plans for staff re-assignments and relocations to the Director of Operations.

Personal leave may be cancelled if; OCS field and regional staff and resources are exhausted and or 30% to 40% of essential personnel are absent; upon notification of imminent or impending disaster.

IX. CONTINUITY OPERATIONS / ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

Continuity Operations are efforts to continue to meet the agency's mission and complete all of the essential functions during an emergency or disaster. Regional prioritization of the agency's mission is based on allocated resources and immediate child safety.

A. LOCATE AND ASSESS THE SAFETY OF ALL EMPLOYEES

Within the first 24 hours of an emergency each Protective Services Manager or designee will attempt to contact each employee by phone, text or email. Each Attempt must be documented. Once an employee has established safety for themselves and their family the employee will contact their supervisor by phone, email or text.

B. LOCATE AND ASSESS THE SAFETY OF RESOURCE FAMILIES AND

CHILDREN IN CUSTODY OR UNDER STATE SUPERVISION.

Within the first 24 hours of an emergency each Licensing Supervisor or designee will attempt to contact each licensed Resource Family by phone, text or email. Once a licensed resource family has established safety for themselves and their family the family will contact OCS by phone, email or text. Each contact must be documented.

Within the first 24 hours of an emergency each PSM I or designee will attempt to contact each family under supervision and un-licensed resource families and parents receiving in-home services, by phone, text or email. Once an un-licensed resource family or parent has established safety for themselves and their family the family will contact OCS by phone, email or text. Each contact must be documented.

C. RESPOND TO NEW CASES

1. Receive and care for children left unaccompanied as a result of the emergency and by request of local law enforcement.
2. Continue to receive protective service reports.
3. Conduct initial assessments for present and impending danger of abuse or neglect.
4. Develop and monitor safety plans to ensure child safety.
5. Remove children from unsafe homes when they are at risk of impending danger of abuse or neglect and safety plans cannot be put into place.
6. Emergency custody process with the courts and notification of appropriate parties.
7. Place children in temporary out-of-home placement, when needed.

D. MAINTAIN SERVICES TO EXISTING FAMILIES PER THEIR CASE PLAN AND ANY ADDED NEEDS AS A RESULT OF THE EMERGENCY OR DISASTER.

1. Monitor Safety Plans
2. Assist families and children in accessing emergency services to deal with trauma, etc.

E. ENSURE THE CONTINUITY OF ONGOING COORDINATION OF SERVICES THROUGH:

1. Community partners
2. Tribes
3. Other state government partner agencies
4. Courts
5. Law Enforcement
6. Grantees
7. NGO's

F. ENSURE CONTINUATION OF LEGAL PROCESS AND NOTIFICATIONS

G. ASSIST LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN REUNIFY FAMILIES SEPARATED BY THE EMERGENCY EVENT

H. CONTINUE TO IDENTIFY AND LICENSE RESOURCE FAMILIES

I. KEEP THE PUBLIC INFORMED OF THE OCS' EFFORTS TO PROTECT CHILDREN DURING THE INCIDENT

1. OCS Director or designee will update the DHSS Commissioner's office.
2. The DHSS Commissioner's office will provide updates to the public.

J. PROTECT AND MAINTAIN VITAL RECORDS AND ACCESS TO ORCA

1. Ensure continuous, timely, and accurate information is documented in ORCA.
2. Continue development of redundant electronic document alternative and backup.

K. MAINTAIN FINANCIAL CONTINUITY

1. Financial Team
   a. Administrative Operations Manager II
   b. Administrative Officer II
   c. Social Services Program Officer

2. Financial Functions
   a. Staff Paychecks
   b. Provider Payments
   c. Purchase Supplies
   d. IV-E Eligibility

X. RECONSTITUTION

A. Management/supervisors will, along with local emergency response personnel, visit original office site and clear, prepare, plan for occupancy.

B. Supplies and staff moved to normal office site with the least disruption of services.

C. All staff and critical partners notified of resumption of normal duties and site.

D. OCS Management will appoint a team including one staff member from each regional office, to perform an after action review assessing all phases and elements of alternate operations and to prepare a remedial action plan to correct any areas of concern.

XI. COOP MAINTENANCE

A. THE OCS COOP WILL BE UPDATED ANNUALLY AS NEW INFORMATION AND PLAN EXPANSION CONTINUES INCLUDING:

1. Review of entire plan
2. Confirm information on rosters
3. Check all systems and supplies
4. Conduct internal exercises
5. Conduct joint exercises with other partners
6. Incorporate lessons learned and changes in policy

B. PERSONNEL, ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR OCS COOP PLANS.

Responsibility	Position
Update COOP plan annually or as needed	OCS Emergency Response Program Coordinator
Update OCS telephone rosters monthly	Administrative Officers in field offices & State office
Review status of vital files, records, and databases	ORCA Information Technology Unit
Conduct alert and notification tests	Division of Operations Manager
Develop and lead COOP training	OCS Emergency Response Program Coordinator in collaboration with DHSS Section of Emergency Programs
Plan COOP exercises	DHSS Section of Emergency Programs in collaboration with OCS Emergency Response Program Coordinator

XII. TEST, TRAINING, AND EXERCISES

The OCS will, in collaboration with the Department of Health and Social Services, Section of Emergency Programs, conduct trainings and exercises for employees to test the OCS COOP plan and the responsibilities and roles set forth.

Exercises will include: Table Top Exercises with the Director's Executive Committee, community partners and other state agencies.

Training and Test		Monthly	Quarterly	Annually	Responsible Person
Train all new employees on the Continuity of Operations Plan.				x	
Provide focused training for Emergency Response and Relocation Teams.			x		
Test alert and activation procedures and ability to contact all employees.			x		
Perform a continuity plan tabletop exercise or drill.				x	
Review contact information included in all Go Bags and Appendices (For information on Go Bags see Appendix___and the Activation and Relocation Section)		x			

APPENDIX I: OPERATIONAL CHECKLISTS

Item	Task	Task Assigned To	Date and Time Completed
Activation and Relocation			
1	Notification of emergency		
2	If necessary, conduct evacuation		
3	Account for all staff		
4	Contact Emergency Responders (Fire, Police, EMS)		
5	Ensure that safety measures are put into effect		
6	Contact Building Maintenance for shutting down utilities to limit further damage		
7	Direct and assist emergency personnel as required		
8	Notify Division and activate COOP Plan as necessary		
9	If necessary, invoke Orders of Succession		
10	Initiate notification of all staff		
11	Convene Division/Departmental meeting at assembly area or other pre-determined site.		
12	Assemble supporting elements required for re-establishing and performing essential functions at continuity facility location: ■ Vital files, records and databases ■ Critical equipment		
13	Assemble remaining documents required for performance of all other essential functions to be performed at the alternate facility location		

Item	Task	Task Assigned To	Date and Time Completed
14	Notify all support agencies and critical contacts of COOP activation.		
15	Prepare designated communications and other equipment for relocation		
16	Take appropriate preventive measures to protect other communications and equipment that will not be relocated		
17	Make computer connectivity and phone line transfers to designated alternate facility		
18	Ensure go-bags are complete and ready for transfer		
19	Begin movement to continuity facility		
20	Evaluate the safety of the selected continuity facility prior to deployment		
21	Develop and deliver status report		
22	Notify remaining staff and appropriate agencies of movement to continuity location		
Continuity Operations			
23	Notify other State and Federal agencies, and surrounding jurisdictions as appropriate that operations have shifted to a continuity facility.		
24	Organize staff and account for non-continuity personnel		
25	Develop shift rotations as required		
26	Determine which mission essential functions have been affected		
27	Develop and deliver status report		
28	Prioritize remaining essential functions for restoration		
29	Track status and restoration efforts		

Item	Task	Task Assigned To	Date and Time Completed
	of all essential functions		
30	Administrative actions to assemble: ■ Onsite telephone ■ E-mail and telephone directory ■ Workforce office plan		
31	Occupy workspace: ■ Stow gear and equipment ■ Vital files, records and databases ■ Test telephone, fax, e-mail, radio and other communications ■ Establish communications with essential support and office elements		
32	Ensure all vital records, systems and equipment are available at alternate facility location		
33	Coordinate procurement of additional equipment, as required		
Reconstitution			
34	Appoint reconstitution team		
35	Survey condition of original facility and determine feasibility of salvaging, restoring or returning to original facility when emergency subsides or is terminated		
36	Develop long term reconstitution and recovery plans should original facility cannot be re-occupied.		
37	Inventory and salvage useable equipment, materials, records and supplies from damaged facility, if possible		
38	Evaluate original or new facility to assure that all critical services and support is available and operational.		
39	Conduct transition of mission essential functions, personnel and equipment from continuity facility		

Item	Task	Task Assigned To	Date and Time Completed
	back to designated facility		
40	Conduct transition of remaining essential function, personnel and equipment from continuity facility back to designated facility		
41	Schedule and conduct initial debrief with staff		

APPENDIX:II_____RISK ANAYLSIS & VULNERABILITY ANAYLSIS

The chart below represents hazards and vulnerabilities of the_____.

Below are risks and vulnerabilities that can impact offices statewide. However, each field and regional office COOP has listed their individual risks and vulnerabilities, based on their geographic locations within Alaska, within their individual COOPs.

Hazard	Frequency	Impacts on Operation	Impact on Facility/ Infrastructure	Total Points
Fire				
Technological Attacks				
Illness				
ISP outage				
Power outage				
Storms				
Major Earthquake				
Bomb Threats				
Breach of Confidentiality				
Avalanche				
Landslide				
High winds				
Work-related Violence				
Breaking Water Dam				
Floods				
Hazardous Materials				
Loss of Transportation				
Nuclear Facilities				
Loss of Communication				
Tsunami				
Volcano				
Severe Weather				

Key:
Not applicable = 0 Minor Impact= 1 Significant Impact=2 Major or Catastrophic Impact =3

Total points identify level of threat to mission.

APPENDIX III: SEVERE WEATHER QUESTIONNAIRE FOR CAREGIVERS

Caregiver(s):_____Phone Number(s):_____

Date:_____Time:_____Message left: _____

Hi, my name is_____and I work for the Office of Children's services and I'm calling you today because of the severe weather warning in your area. Can you please confirm that you have the following child(ren) in your home:

Child(ren) being cared for: _____ Age:_____
Child(ren) being cared for: _____ Age:_____
Child(ren) being cared for: _____ Age:_____
Child(ren) being cared for: _____ Age: _____

I want to be supportive and talk to you about your emergency plan in case it's needed. Do you have:

One flashlight & batteries _____

One battery-operated radio & batteries _____
Enough water for 3 days _____
Enough nonperishable food for 3 days _____

Enough blankets, warm bedding for each child in your home to stay warm for 3 days in case you do not have heat _____

Are the children in your home on medication? _____

How many days of medication do you have on hand? _____

Are the children in your home in need of ongoing medical attention? _____
What is your current plan to verify that this is met? _____
Do you need assistance? _____

In the event that you need to evacuate your home where will you go?

If you temporarily relocate we need you to call_____and report where you are.

INFORMATION TO BE PROVIDED TO CAREGIVER:

Emergency phone number for law enforcement: 911
Emergency phone number for OCS: _____
FEMA 800-621-3362
Your Community may have a designated SHELTER, bring food, medications, clothes and blankets with you

Caller:_____Printed Name:_____

APPENDIX V: RELOCATION GROUP PLANNING GUIDES

RELOCATION GO BAG CHECKLIST

SUSTAINMENT OPERATIONS

- Cell/Satellite Phone(S) & 2 Way Radios
- Tablets, Netbooks, & Laptops
- Printer
- Paper copy of Delegation Charts with Phone numbers

INFORMATION & PHYSICAL SECURITY

- Vital Records Safety
- Computer Equipment Safety
- Continuity Facility Form
- Necessary keys or access codes
- Copy of Continuity Plan

EMERGENCY SUPPLIES

- First Aid Kit
- Flashlight
- Batteries

APPENDIX VI: DESIGNATION OF CONTINUITY FACILITY FORM

Continuity Facility	
Name:	
Address:	
Contact Person:	
No. Personnel facility can Accommodate and location in the building:	
Directions to the facility:	

Security or Access Requirements:

Special Instructions: (computers, phones, supplies)

Map

APPENDIX VII: EMPLOYEE SAFETY - 1/15/14 PROGRAM INSTRUCTION

STATE OF ALASKA

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES
OFFICE OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Program Instruction: 14-01

Issue Date: **January 15, 2014**

Effective Date: **February 1, 2014**

From: **Christy Lawton, Director**

Subject: **Employee Safety**

Employee safety is a top priority for the Office of Children's Services (OCS). It is the responsibility of the OCS to ensure the safety of employees in both office and field settings. Employees should also be able to practice in environments free from physical, verbal, and psychological violence and/or threats of violence. During the course of work with families, it is expected for family members to experience a wide range of emotions including confusion, frustration, and anger. It is part of the normal duties of OCS employees to continue working with clients in a supportive way while they experience these emotions or when they are resistant to OCS intervention. It is not, however, part of the normal duties to absorb verbal or physical abuse from clients. The Office of Children's Services has adopted a "Zero Tolerance" policy on violence and threats of violence toward an employee by anyone during the course of their duties. As a method to ensure the safety of employees and to adopt the "Zero Tolerance" policy, the following procedures are to be implemented immediately.

A. OFFICE SAFETY

Each office will adopt the following safety protocol which includes a code system and mass messaging delivery system:

1. Each Regional Manager and State Office designee will ensure that an account is established on GovDelivery with the information of each office staff. Training/Information on GovDelivery can be provided by Greg Wilkinson at Gregory.wilkinson@alaska.gov or 269.7285.

2. Each State ID will be accompanied by a laminated, ID sized Safety Code Information Card. This will be required to be worn with the State ID at all times.

3. Training will be provided by office leadership to ensure the code definitions and actions taken are understood by everyone (see attached coding system). This information must be provided to every new employee as a part of the orientation

process. For offices with collocated community partners, partners must also participate in the training and orientation process for safety.

4. Code drills are to take place at least quarterly in every office. Drills will include:
   - Code distribution via GovDelivery and action taken
   - Supervisory knowledge of location of every employee
   - Debrief of drill

B. FIELD VISIT SAFETY

In order to ensure employees' safety, it is vital that the agency knows the whereabouts of employees when on field visits or when in the office working outside of normal business hours. Therefore the following protocols will be adhered to:

1. Each OCS employee must maintain a current Outlook calendar which will accurately reflect the day's appointments.

2. For every home visit or client contact, the address and contact information of the location of the visit will be included in the body of the appointment information in outlook.

3. All Outlook calendars will be shared for full view with employees' direct supervisors.

4. Each supervisor will know the location of their assigned staff at all times during business hours.

5. Each OCS staff must carry a cell phone, or satellite phone if traveling to areas without coverage, and it must be kept on at all times during working hours.

6. Because appointments occur outside of normal business hours, all offices will maintain an on call supervisor schedule.

7. Each office will develop a local protocol to include a process to clear the field when employees work outside of normal business hours. The on call supervisor will also be available to staff crises.

C. CLIENT VIOLENCE ASSESSMENT

Any employee who has client contact will always assess the clients' propensity for violence with their supervisor prior to engaging with the client. If the assessment reveals that a threat exists, precautions will be taken. The following minimum precautions will be made:

1. If any of the following conditions exist, an employee will be accompanied by law enforcement (local police, Alaska State Troopers, Village Public Safety Officers, Village Police) for an initial contact with the client:

- APSIN red flag officer safety alert, or emails from the APSIN unit indicating safety concerns.
- Any household member to be visited has had violent encounters with police, schools, or other social service agencies.
- There is information that there are firearms/weapons in the home along with the belief that they will be used in aggressive behavior towards others (i.e., criminal charge with assault with weapons).
- Criminal convictions of assaultive history and or sexual assaults of any nature.
- History of hostility toward law enforcement.

2. If the following conditions exist, two employees will respond together when meeting with the client. For one person offices, the employee will be accompanied by law enforcement (local police, Alaska State Troopers, Village Public Safety Officers, Village Police) or if applicable, the Indian Child Welfare Act specialist.

    - Any household member exhibits behaviors that indicate mental illness in which the person is delusional, experiencing hallucinations, and/or thought disturbances.
    - Any household member belongs to or identifies with a gang, hate group, or other organization that advocates violence.
    - Any household member has a history of violence either reported or unreported to law enforcement.
    - Any household member is actively using illegal drugs or drinking alcohol in excess and is likely to be under the influence. NOTE: If upon contact a caregiver or household member appears to be intoxicated, high, incoherent, or passed out, ensure the safety and supervision of the children. Once that has been accomplished, it is appropriate to reschedule the appointment.
    - Removals of children will never be conducted alone.
    - Unsafe neighborhoods or villages.

D. RESPONSE TO THREATS

In spite of precautions, threats and other incidents may occur. If an employee is involved in an incident regarding their safety, supervisors will perform the following:

1. Assess immediate safety. If a current threat to safety exists, take immediate remedial action to neutralize or control the threat. Depending on the circumstances, this may include such things as ending meeting, contacting law enforcement or obtaining a restraining order. The response should be measured and commensurate to the level of threat.

2. Assess future risk. Evaluate the client's potential for violence and level of agitation, anger and impulsivity. If there is a moderate or high risk of future violence, develop a

plan with the employee to ensure their safety in future interactions. Depending on the circumstances, this may include such things as establishing a behavioral contract with the client with acceptable interpersonal interactions, establishing parameters for client contacts by having them occur only in the office or other controlled setting, conducting home visits only when accompanied by law enforcement or partner, or assigning the case to another specialist. The plan developed will be monitored closely and reviewed for effectiveness in individual supervisions. The supervisor and employee will modify the plan as needed to ensure employee safety.

3. Report to Law Enforcement. Every incidence of violence or threat of violence against an OCS employee must be reported to law enforcement. The supervisor of the employee will work with the affected employee to file the report and when meeting with law enforcement officials.

4. The supervisor will assist the employee in debriefing the incident and in seeking additional support. Employees can be referred to natural supports of their choosing (e.g. pastoral care) as well as to the employer sponsored Employee Assistance Program. Supportive supervision will be provided following the incident.

5. The statewide Committee for Employee Safety will also meet and review each incident. The affected employee will be invited to attend a debriefing with the committee. Attendance is at the employee's discretion. The employee's supervisor and managers will attend the debriefing. The debriefing will be held to conduct an evaluation of policies and procedures to identify strengths and deficiencies. If deficiencies are identified, corrective action will be taken. The outcome of each safety committee meeting will be communicated to all agency employees.

E. DOCUMENTING A THREAT TO EMPLOYEE SAFETY

Every incident in which an employees' safety has been threatened or compromised is to be reported and documented using the following method:

1. Immediately following the incident, the employee involved will notify their immediate supervisor who will then provide further notification through the chain of supervision. Initial notification of all incidents may be made by telephone or e-mail.
2. Within 24 hours following the incident, the employee involved will complete the attached Incident Report and a) provide a copy to their supervisor who will then forward through the chain of supervision, and b)for case-specific incidents, will copy and paste the incident report into ORCA.

APPENDIX VIII: INCIDENT REPORT

INCIDENT REPORT

Once completed you must Copy and Past into an Incident Report Activity Note in ORCA

Type of Incident: Click here to select value.

Staff Name: Click here to enter text.

Date of Incident: Click here to enter a date. Time: Click here to enter text.

Client Name: Click here to enter text. ORCA number: Click here to enter text.

Address or location of the incident *(include detailed information such as: inside or outside, room where incident occurred, where you were standing or sitting, and any other information regarding where you were when incident occurred)*:: Click here to enter text.

Detailed Description of Incident (in chronological order): Click here to enter text.

Others Involved: *(This may include other staff, client's family members, clients, law enforcement, etc.)* Click here to enter text.

Safety Issue(s): *(Define what you believe to be the issue that jeopardized or could have jeopardized your safety or the safety of others).* Click here to enter text.

What action(s) did you take in resolving the incident? Click here to enter text.

Was the assistance of others, such as the police, parent, or fellow employee, needed to resolve the incident? Explain: Click here to enter text.

Were there any injuries because of this incident? Click here to enter text.

What immediate follow-up was performed due to this incident *(APD notification, change in location where future visit occurs, protective order, etc)* Explain: Click here to enter text.

Future actions needed to ensure worker and client safety: Click here to enter text.

APPENDIX IX: EMERGENCY CODE SYSTEM

Code	Definition	Role	Action
Red	Person with weapon in the building	Point of Contact	Get safe, call 911, call security (or office lead if no security)
		PSM II	- Initiate lock down, notify Director or designee -If evacuated by 1st responders, go to secondary location -Clear code when able
		PSM I	-Lock down, gather location information of assigned supervisors -If evacuated by 1st responders, go to secondary location -Go to secondary location when code cleared
		Supervisors	-Lock down, gather location of assigned staff -If evacuated by 1st responders, go to secondary location -Go to secondary location when code cleared
		Staff	-Lock down, notify supervisor of your location -Provide direction for your visitors in building -If evacuated by 1st responders, go to secondary location -Go to secondary location when code cleared
Orange	Active threat towards OCS staff or OCS building	Point of Contact	Call security (or office lead if no security) , call 911
		PSM II	-Initiate exterior lockdown, notify Director or designee -If evacuated by 1st responders, go to secondary location -Clear code when able
		PSM I	-Exterior lockdown, gather location of assigned supervisors -If evacuated by 1st responders, go to secondary location
			-When code cleared, resume to normal duty
		Supervisors	-Exterior lockdown, gather location of direct staff -If evacuated by 1st responders, go to secondary location -When code cleared, resume to normal duty
		Staff	-Exterior lockdown -If evacuated by 1st responders or if in field, go to secondary location -When code cleared, resume to normal duty
Yellow	Disruptive person in the building	Point of Contact	Call security (or office lead if no security)
		PSM II	-Initiate code with designated area, clear code when able

		PSM I	-If in the building, stay away from designated area until code cleared -Gather location of assigned supervisors
		Supervisors	-If in the building, stay away from designated area until code cleared -Gather location of assigned staff
		Staff	-If in the building, stay away from designated area and provide direction for your visitors in building -If out of the building, do not return until code cleared -Notify supervisor of your location
Blue	Environmental/ Natural Disaster	Point of Contact	-Call security (or office lead if no security)
		PSM II	-Initiate code with designated area and problem, clear code when able - Notify Director or designee
		PSM I	-If in the building, stay away from designated area until code cleared or further instruction. -Gather location of assigned supervisors

		Supervisors	-If in the building, stay away from designated area until code cleared or further instruction. -If out of the building, do not return until code cleared or instructed to do so. -Gather location of assigned staff
		Staff	-If in the building, stay away from designated area and provide direction for your visitors in building -If out of the building, do not return until code cleared or instructed to do so. -Notify supervisor of your location

APPENDIX X: EMERGENCY STATUS REPORT

To be filled out by PSM II within 24 hours of event

Date/Time of event:____ _____

Date/Time of report:___ _____

Event/Situation

Natural	Technological
☐ Avalanche	☐ Dam Failure
☐ Earthquake	☐ Hazardous Material-Fixed Facility
☐ Flood	☐ Hazardous Material-Transportation
☐ Landslide	☐ Power Failure
☐ Subsidence: to sink to a low or lower level	☐ Radiological-Fixed Facility
☐ Tsunami	☐ Radiological-Transportation
☐ Volcano	☐ Structural Fires
☐ Wildfire	☐ Transportation Accident (Air, Rail, Highway, Water)
☐ Winter Storm	☐ Airport
☐ Erosion	☐ Other:
☐ Other:	

Current Status:

1. Is the OCS Office Operational? Is there damage to the office? Please explain:
2. Are all OCS involved children accounted for in the area? Please explain actions taken::
3. What is the status of the OCS Staff:
4. What support is being provided to the affected individuals?
5. Other Information:

PSM II Name:	Date:

Return form to Emergency Response Coordinator: Bunti.Reed@alaska.gov

APPENDIX XI: AFTER ACTION/DEBRIEF REPORT

State Of Alaska Office of Children's Services Debrief/Improvement Plan

Section 1: Overview

Region: Incident: Begin Date: End date:	Point of Contact Name: Title: Phone Number:

Section 2: Response

1. What actually happened?

2 What went right?

3. What went wrong?

4. Are changes needed?

Changes needed:

Target Date:

Responsibility for changes:

Debrief plan completed by:

Date:

APPENDIX XII: CONTINUITY PLAN TEST OR EXERCISE REVIEW DOCUMENT

TEST or EXERCISE:	
DATE:	**LOCATION:**
Purpose of the Test or Exercise:	
Participants:	
Summary of the Test or Exercise:	
What was learned? **Is a corrective action plan needed?**	
Signature:	**Position Title:**

Attachment F

Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA)
Grant to States for Child Abuse or Neglect Prevention and Treatment Programs

State Plan Assurances added by P.L. 114-22,
the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act of 2015

(These amendments to CAPTA are effective May 29, 2017)

***Governor's* Assurance Statement for**
The Child Abuse and Neglect State Plan

As Governor of the State of Alaska, I certify that the State has in effect and is enforcing a State law, or has in effect and is operating a statewide program, relating to child abuse and neglect that includes:

1. Provisions and procedures requiring identification and assessment of all reports involving children known or suspected to be victims of sex trafficking (as defined in section 103(10) of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (TVPA) (22 U.S.C. 7102)); (section 106(b)(2)(B)(xxiv) of CAPTA)

2. Provisions and procedures for training CPS workers about identifying, assessing, and providing comprehensive services to children who are sex trafficking victims, including efforts to coordinate with State law enforcement, juvenile justice, and social service agencies such as runaway and homeless youth shelters to serve this population; (section 106(b)(2)(B)(xxv) of CAPTA).

Signature of Governor: Bill Walker

Date: 5/23/17

Reviewed by: _____

(CB Regional Child Welfare Program Manager)

Dated: _____

Attachment G

Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA)
Grant to States for Child Abuse or Neglect Prevention and Treatment Programs
State Plan Assurances amended by Public Law 114-198, the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act of 2016

(These amendments to CAPTA were effective July 22, 2016)

Governor's Assurance Statement for
The Child Abuse and Neglect State Plan

As Governor of the State of Alaska, I certify that the State has in effect and is enforcing a State law, or has in effect and is operating a statewide program, relating to child abuse and neglect that includes:

(ii) policies and procedures (including appropriate referrals to child protection service systems and for other appropriate services) to address the needs of infants born with and identified as being affected by substance abuse or withdrawal symptoms resulting from prenatal drug exposure, or a Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, including a requirement that health care providers involved in the delivery or care of such infants notify the child protective services system of the occurrence of such condition of such infants, except that such notification shall not be construed to –

(I) establish a definition under Federal law of what constitutes child abuse or neglect; or

(II) require prosecution for any illegal action;

(iii) the development of a plan of safe care for the infant born and identified as being affected by substance abuse or withdrawal symptoms, or a Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder to ensure the safety and well-being of such infant following release from the care of healthcare providers, including through –

(I) addressing the health and substance use disorder treatment needs of the infant and affected family or caregiver; and

(II) the development and implementation by the State of monitoring systems regarding the implementation of such plans to determine whether and in what manner local entities are providing, in accordance with State requirements, referrals to and delivery of appropriate services for the infant and affected family or caregiver.

Signature of Governor: Bill Walker

Date: 5/23/17

Reviewed by: _____ Date: _____

(CB Regional Child Welfare Program Manager)

Attachment E

Annual Reporting of Education and Training Vouchers Awarded

Name of State: Alaska

	Total ETVs Awarded	Number of New ETVs
Final Number: **2015-2016 School Year** (July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016)	41	18
2016-2017 School Year* (July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017)	46	13

Comments:

*in some cases this might be an estimated number since the APSR is due on June 30, the last day of the school year.

Transforming Child Welfare Outcomes for Alaska Native Children Strategic Plan Progress Report: Year One

Introduction

In May 2016, the strategic plan Transforming Child Welfare Outcomes for Alaska Native Children 2016-2020 was finalized. Shortly thereafter, priority work groups were formed and work plans were developed. In October of 2016, a steering committee was established to prioritize and oversee the plan's implementation. The committee convened in January 2017 for a two day work session to ensure implementation fidelity. Work group leads shared successess and challenges in each priority area. Members felt if priorities were identified, it would help focus the work. The following goals were selected for 2017:

1. **Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation**
2. **Tribal Self Governance**
3. **Tribal Consultation**
4. **Branding: Messaging / Education**

After the goals were identified, a review of the 132 objectives/tactics outlined in the plan was conducted to determine how and/or if it supports one of the four goals listed above. The work group plans will be modified to streamline the focus areas and remove any duplicate efforts.

Progress to Date

Since the implementation of the plan, the following are highlights of our progress.

Truth, Racial Healing, and Transformation: Although this is a strategic plan goal it applies to the entire state as demonstrated by the passing of Resolution 29 during the Alaska Federation of Natives conference. DHSS put forth the idea of making this a "State of Alaska" effort which was favorably received by other departments. Liz Medicine Crow stated that First Alaskans Institute is willing to help make this a priority.

Tribal Self Governance: The state obtained permission for a sole source contract to hire a negotiator funded by both the Tribes and state to explore service delivery to children and families. The first joint negotiation meeting was held on April 19th with monthly meetings continuing through September. The goal is to report significant progress on this very important topic at the October 2017 Alaska Federal of Natives conference.

Tribal Consultation: A draft policy for DHSS is under review. The SOA Tribal Liaison group will also review the policy and draft an executive order as that group is also looking at institutionalizing Tribal consultation and recognition. Consultation is planned for November 2-3, 2017.

Branding/Messaging and Education: Development and implementation of communication strategies are underway. In October, copies of the strategic plan were sent to 229 Tribes and 15 Tribal Corporations. There have been numerous *Front Line* articles (OCS's newsletter), along with presentations at the BIA Providers Conference, Tanana Chiefs Conference Summit, and most recently at the National Indian Child Welfare Conference. Additionally, some Tribal partners are writing articles for their Tribal newsletters.

Tribal State Collaboration Goals

- Reduce Disproportionality
- Enhance Tribal State Relationships
  - Information Sharing
  - New Initiatives
  - Training
  - Authentic Partnerships
- Increase ICWA Preference Placements
- Increase Number of ICWA Foster Homes
- Increase Reunification Rates/Decrease Re-Entry Rates
- Increase Placement Stability
- Decrease Repeat Maltreatment
- Increase Culturally Appropriate Service Delivery (In-Home and Out-of-Home)

Culturally Appropriate Services and Supports: While this priority was not selected as a "goal" for 2017, steady progress continues to develop a resource guide that will better equip OCS case workers with knowledge, information, and understanding about culturally specific services and supports to help our Alaska Native families stay connected to who they are. It is anticipated that this guide will be in final draft by June 30, 2017.

In addition to the objectives and tactics identified in the plan, OCS has developed new processes and implemented practice changes to address recommendations outlined in the report: "Ending Violence So Children Can Thrive". The following efforts were designed to increase Tribal/State partnerships, support Tribes to provide services to their citizens in closest proximity to their community**,** increase ICWA Preference Placements (children placed with relatives or Tribal members) and ICWA foster homes, and decrease disproportionality:

- Two Tribal Title IV-E Maintenance Agreements are in the early stages of implementation. These agreements provide Tribes access to funds for cost associated with foster care, adoption and guardianship services, as well as recognizing the Tribes' inherent sovereignty to provide for their children and families.

- Out-of-preference-placement review meetings are conducted early and regularly. During these meetings, the ICWA specialist and team conduct an in depth review of diligent search efforts for children to ensure that all preference placement options have been considered.

- A statewide process is in place for Tribes/Tribal Entities to request immediate permanent placement on behalf of extended family; and/or family friends and relatives may request immediate permanent placement at any time during an open case.

- As of January 1, 2017, OCS foster care licensing workers are actively assisting applicants who have been denied a foster care license, due to a barrier crime or condition, with applying for a variance if needed to achieve licensure.

- Tribal licensing agents are able to access child protection background checks for Tribal licensed foster homes. Currently there are over 100 Tribal licensed foster homes. It is OCS' intent to develop a system that allows the state to place and pay for children in state custody in Tribal licensed foster homes. Payment regulations are in draft.

- Training is currently underway on a newly established process to better partner with ICWA workers to conduct safety evaluations of prospective foster homes and/or unlicensed relative homes to expedite placement of children.

- In order to keep children with their relatives, an emergency relief support program was designed for the Southeast region to provide time-limited financial support to relatives providing unlicensed foster care to children in OCS. Relatives participating in the ERS receive a monthly support payment in the amount of $500.00 per child, per placement, for up to 3 months, while they pursue licensure or TANF programs. Payments will support families until they are able to complete their foster care licensing process or find another option to support the children in care. This program is now available in Western and Northern regions with hopes to extend to Southcentral and Anchorage in the coming year.

- ORCA design modifications, on-line web reports, and on demand reports were revised per Tribal input to:
  - Increase the accuracy of placement preference data
  - Accurately capture ICWA foster homes
  - Establish and maintain a process for Tribes/Tribal Entities to receive out of home placement reports on a monthly basis

Current Unresolved Items

Waiver of Sovereign Immunity: Although there has been a work group evaluating alternatives to the requirement that all Tribes must sign a waiver of sovereign immunity to receive state funds, to date resolution has been elusive. Additional information pertaining to the waiver requirement specific to the Tribal Title IV-E Administration and Short Term Training contracts has been submitted for review and consideration.

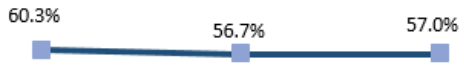
Information Sharing on Foster Homes Licensed by both the Tribe and State: Progress has been made in sharing information between the Tribes and State during the initial licensing process. The collaborative efforts have resulted in an increase of both Tribal and state licensed ICWA homes. It has been noted that applicants desiring both Tribal/state licensure have expressed frustration in the need to complete two separate licensing packets. Statutory changes are likely needed to further simplify the licensing process and for the Tribe to have access to privileged information.

Progress Towards Improving Outcomes

Members of the steering committee reviewed the Tribal/State Data Indicators through the lens of the *Ending Violence So Children Can Thrive* report. The following highlights progress towards select goals of the Tribal State Collaboration Group and the disparities related to Alaska Native children involved in the child welfare system. Over the last three years, disproportionality decreased by 2.7%, placement with kin increased 6%, while children placed in out of preference placement decreased by 6%.

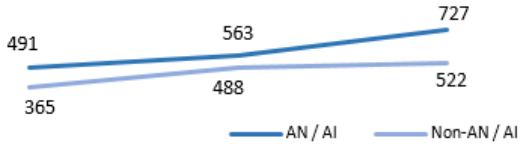
DISPROPORTIONALITY

Racial Disproportionality		2014	2015	2016
AN / AI	#	1952	2105	2351
	%	60.3%	56.7%	57.0%

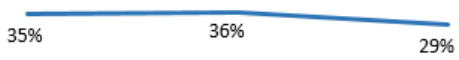


PLACEMENT

Kinship Placements		2014	2015	2016
AN / AI	#	491	563	727
	%	42%	42%	48%
Non-AN / AI	#	365	488	522
	%	45%	47%	48%

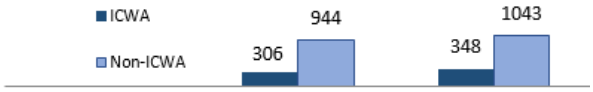


Out of Preference Placements		2014	2015	2016
AN / AI	#	412	474	440
	%	35%	36%	29%



Although there has been an increase of ICWA foster homes, if efforts to implement a process to place DHSS custody children in Tribal foster homes becomes a reality, an additional 70 fully licensed ICWA homes could become available. Currently there are over 100 Tribal foster homes, 30 of these homes are also state licensed. Planning efforts are underway for an October 2017 licensing summit with the goal of providing Tribes the tools to license foster homes in accordance with federal requirements.

ICWA Foster Homes		2014	2015	2016
ICWA	#	n/a	306	348
Non-ICWA	#	n/a	944	1043



CFS-101, Part I: Annual Budget Request for Title IV-B, Subpart 1 & 2 Funds, CAPTA, CFCIP, and ETV

For Fiscal Year 2018: October 1, 2017 through September 30, 2018

1. State or Indian Tribal Organization (ITO): Alaska	2. EIN: 92-6001185
3. Address: AK Department of Health and Social Services Office of Children's Services PO Box 110630, Juneau, Alaska 99811-0630	4. Submission Type: ☑ NEW ☐ REVISION
5. Total estimated title IV-B Subpart 1, Child Welfare Services (CWS) funds	$107,236
a) Total administrative costs (not to exceed 10% of title IV-B Subpart 1 estimated allotment)	$0
6. Total estimated title IV-B Subpart 2, Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) funds This line contains a formula to display the sum of lines 6a - 6f.	$538,442
a) Total Family Preservation Services	$107,689
b) Total Family Support Services	$26,923
c) Total Time-Limited Family Reunification Services	$349,986
d) Total Adoption Promotion and Support Services	$53,844
e) Total Other Service Related Activities (e.g. planning)	
f) Total administrative costs (FOR STATES ONLY: not to exceed 10% of title IV-B subpart 2 estimated allotment)	
7. Total estimated Monthly Caseworker Visit (MCV) funds (FOR STATES ONLY)	$33,930
a) Total administrative costs (FOR STATES ONLY: not to exceed 10% of estimated MCV allotment)	
8. Re-allotment of title IV-B subparts 1 & 2 funds for States and Indian Tribal Organizations:	
a) Indicate the amount of the State's/Tribe's allotment that will not be required to carry out the following programs: CWS $____ PSSF $____ MCV (States only) ____	
b) If additional funds become available to States and ITOs, specify the amount of additional funds the States or Tribes requesting: CWS $____ PSSF $____ MCV (States only) $____	
9. Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) State Grant (FOR STATES ONLY) Estimated amount plus additional allocation, as available.	$106,075
10. Estimated Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP) funds	$806,180
a) Indicate the amount of State's or Tribe's allotment to be spent on room and board for eligible youth (not to exceed 30% of CFCIP allotment).	$25,000
11. Estimated Education and Training Voucher (ETV) funds	$263,317
12. Re-allotment of CFCIP and ETV Program funds:	
a) Indicate the amount of the State's or Tribe's allotment that will not be required to carry out the CFCIP Program.	$
b) Indicate the amount of the State's or Tribe's allotment that will not be required to carry out the ETV Program.	$
c) If additional funds become available to States or Tribes, specify the amount of additional funds the State or Tribe is requesting for the CFCIP Program.	$
d) If additional funds become available to States or Tribes, specify the amount of additional funds the State or Tribe is requesting for the ETV Program.	$100,000

13. Certification by State Agency and/or Indian Tribal Organization:

The State agency or Indian Tribal Organization submits the above estimates and request for funds under title IV-B, subpart 1 and/or 2, of the Social Security Act, CAPTA State Grant, CFCIP and ETV programs, and agrees that expenditures will be made in accordance with the Child and Family Services Plan, which has been jointly developed with, and approved by, the Children's Bureau.

Signature of State/Tribal Agency Official	*Signature of Central Office Official*
Christy Lawton	Tracy Spartz Campbell
Title: Director, Office of Children's Services	*Title* Deputy Director, Office of Children's Services
Date 8/29/17	*Date* 8/31/2017

CFS-101 Part II: Annual Estimated Expenditure Summary of Child and Family Services

State or Indian Tribal Organization (ITO): Alaska

For FY 2018: OCTOBER 1, 2017 TO SEPTEMBER 30, 2018

SERVICES/ACTIVITIES	(A) IV-B Subpart I-CWS	(B) IV-B Subpart II-PSSF	(C) IV-B Subpart II-MCV *	(D) CAPTA*	(E) CFCIP	(F) ETV	(G) TITLE IV-E	(H) STATE, LOCAL & DONATED FUNDS	(I) Number Individuals To Be Served	(J) Number Families To Be Served	(K) Population To Be Served	(L) Geog. Area To Be Served
1.) PROTECTIVE SERVICES	$ -						$ -	$ 39,011,069	30742	0	Families & Children receiving	Statewide
2.) CRISIS INTERVENTION (FAMILY PRESERVATION)	$ -	$ 107,689		$ -			$ -	$ 113,304	354	122	CPS families children in home	Statewide
3.) PREVENTION & SUPPORT SERVICES (FAMILY SUPPORT)	$ -	$ 26,923		$ 106,075			$ -	$ 210,672	629	215	Low Risk families & children	Statewide
4.) TIME-LIMITED FAMILY REUNIFICATION SERVICES	$ 107,236	$ 349,986		$ -			$ -	$ 824,559	1220	475	All eligible families & children	Statewide
5.) ADOPTION PROMOTION AND SUPPORT SERVICES	$ -	$ 53,844					$ -	$ 36,739	3685		All eligible children	Statewide
6.) OTHER SERVICE RELATED ACTIVITIES (e.g. planning)	$ -	$ -					$ -	$ -			All eligible children	Statewide
7.) FOSTER CARE MAINTENANCE: (a) FOSTER FAMILY & RELATIVE FOSTER CARE	$ -						$ 6,540,000	$ 17,893,800	2572		All eligible children	Statewide
(b) GROUP/INST CARE	$ -						$ -	$ -			All eligible children	Statewide
8.) ADOPTION SUBSIDY PYMTS.	$ -						$ 13,000,000	$ 21,500,000	3500		All eligible children	Statewide
9.) GUARDIANSHIP ASSISTANCE PAYMENTS	$ -						$ 400,000	$ 752,215	150		All eligible children	Statewide
10.) INDEPENDENT LIVING SERVICES	$ -	$ -			$ 806,180		$ -	$ 188,171	350		Current/Prior foster youth ages 16-25	Statewide
11.) EDUCATION AND TRAINING VOUCHERS	$ -				$ -	$ 263,317	$ -	$ 56,195	50		Current/Prior foster youth ages 16-25	Statewide
12.) ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS	$ -	$ -	$ -				$ 24,411,858	$ 12,205,929				
13.) FOSTER PARENT RECRUITMENT & TRAINING	$ -	$ -		$ -			$ 575,793	$ 143,948				
14.) ADOPTIVE PARENT RECRUITMENT & TRAINING	$ -	$ -		$ -			$ 453,428	$ 113,357				
15.) CHILD CARE RELATED TO EMPLOYMENT/TRAINING	$ -						$ -	$ -			All eligible children	Statewide
16.) STAFF & EXTERNAL PARTNERS TRAINING	$ -	$ -		$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 33,233	$ 24,925				
17.) CASEWORKER RETENTION, RECRUITMENT & TRAINING	$ -		$ 33,930				$ -	$ 11,571				
18.) TOTAL	$ 107,236	$ 538,442	$ 33,930	$ 106,075	$ 806,180	$ 263,317	$ 45,414,312	$ 93,086,454	43252	812	0	
19.) TOTALS FROM PART I	$107,236	$538,442	$33,930	$106,075	$806,180	$263,317						
20.) Difference (Part I - Part II)	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0						

21.) Population data are included in the APSR/CFSP narrative, not above in columns I - L. ☑YES ☐NO

* These columns are for States only; Indian Tribes are not required to include information on these programs.
** Only states or tribes operating an approved title IV-E waiver demonstration may enter information for rows 1-6 in column (g), indicating planned use of title IV-E funds for these purposes.

Attachment B
OMB Approval #0970-0426
Approved through September 30,2017

CFS-101, PART III: Annual Expenditures for Title IV-B, Subparts 1 and 2, Chafee Foster Care Independence (CFCIP) and Education And Training Voucher (ETV):
Reporting For Fiscal Year 2015 Grants: October 1, 2014 through September 30, 2016

1. State or Indian Tribal Organization (ITO): Alaska	2. EIN: 92-6001185	3. Address: PO Box 110630 Juneau, Alaska 99811-0630				
4. Submission Type: ☑NEW ☐REVISION						
Description of Funds	*Estimated Expenditures for FY 15 Grants*	*Actual Expenditures for FY 15 Grants*	*Number Individuals served*	*Number Families served*	*Population served*	*Geographic area served*
5. Total title IV-B, subpart 1 funds	$ 97,646	$ 97,646	47	31	All eligible children	Statewide
a) Administrative Costs (not to exceed 10% of title IV-B, subpart 1 total allotment)						
6. Total title IV-B, subpart 2 funds (This line contains a formula that will display the sum of lines a-f.)	$ 554,003	$ 554,003	87	59	All eligible children	Statewide
a) Family Preservation Services	$ 138,501	$ 138,501				
b) Family Support Services	$ -	$ -				
c) Time-Limited Family Reunification Services	$ 304,702	$ 304,702				
d) Adoption Promotion and Support Services	$ 110,800	$ 110,800				
e) Other Service Related Activities (e.g. planning)	$ -	$ -				
f) Administrative Costs (FOR STATES: not to exceed 10% of total title IV-B, subpart 2 allotment)	$ -	$ -				
7. Total Monthly Caseworker Visit funds (STATES ONLY)	$ 34,862	$ 34,862				
a) Administrative Costs (not to exceed 10% of MCV allotment)	$ -	$ -				
8. Total Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP) funds	$ 649,840	$ 649,840				
a) Indicate the amount of allotment spent on room and board for eligible youth (not to exceed 30% of CFCIP allotment)	$ 39,000	$ 38,177	31		All eligible children	Statewide
9. Total Education and Training Voucher (ETV) funds	$ 209,983	$ 209,983	141		children	Statewide

10. Certification by State Agency or Indian Tribal Organization: The State agency or Indian Tribal Organization agrees that expenditures were made in accordance with the Child and Family Services Plan, which was jointly developed with, and approved by, the Children's Bureau.

Signature of State/Tribal Agency Official	*Date*	*Signature of Central Office Official:*	*Tracy Spartz Campbell*	*Date*
C. Lawton	8/29/17		Tracy Spartz Campbell	8/31/2017
Title: Christy Lawton- Director Office of Children's Services		*Title: OCS Deputy Director*		

CFS-101 Part II: Annual Estimated Expenditure Summary of Child and Family Services

State or Indian Tribal Organization (ITO): 0 **For FY 2018: OCTOBER 1, 2017 TO SEPTEMBER 30, 2018**

SERVICES/ACTIVITIES	(A) IV-B Subpart I-CWS	(B) IV-B Subpart II-PSSF	(C) IV-B Subpart II-MCV *	(D) CAPTA*	(E) CFCIP	(F) ETV	(G) TITLE IV-E	(H) STATE, LOCAL & DONATED FUNDS	(I) Number Individuals To Be Served	(J) Number Families To Be Served	(K) Population To Be Served	(L) Geog. Area To Be Served
1.) PROTECTIVE SERVICES	$ -						$ -	$ 39,011,069	30742	0	Families & Children receiving	Statewide
2.) CRISIS INTERVENTION (FAMILY PRESERVATION)	$ -	$ 137,774		$ -			$ -	$ 113,304	354	122	CPS families children in home	Statewide
3.) PREVENTION & SUPPORT SERVICES (FAMILY SUPPORT)	$ -	$ -		$ 106,719			$ -	$ 210,672	629	215	Low Risk families & children	Statewide
4.) TIME-LIMITED FAMILY REUNIFICATION SERVICES	$ 148,577	$ 303,099		$ -			$ -	$ 824,559	1220	475	All eligible families & children	Statewide
5.) ADOPTION PROMOTION AND SUPPORT SERVICES	$ -	$ 110,218					$ -	$ 36,739	3685		All eligible children	Statewide
6.) OTHER SERVICE RELATED ACTIVITIES (e.g. planning)	$ -	$ -					$ -	$ -			All eligible children	Statewide
7.) FOSTER CARE MAINTENANCE: (a) FOSTER FAMILY & RELATIVE FOSTER CARE	$ -						$ 6,540,000	$ 17,893,800	2572		All eligible children	Statewide
(b) GROUP/INST CARE	$ -						$ -	$ -			All eligible children	Statewide
8.) ADOPTION SUBSIDY PYMTS.	$ -						$ 13,000,000	$ 21,500,000	3500		All eligible children	Statewide
9.) GUARDIANSHIP ASSISTANCE PAYMENTS	$ -						$ 400,000	$ 752,215	150		All eligible children	Statewide
10.) INDEPENDENT LIVING SERVICES	$ -	$ -			$ 692,685		$ -	$ 188,171	350		Current/Prior foster youth ages 16-25	Statewide
11.) EDUCATION AND TRAINING VOUCHERS	$ -				$ -	$ 224,778	$ -	$ 56,195	50		Current/Prior foster youth ages 16-25	Statewide
12.) ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS	$ -	$ -	$ -				$ 24,411,858	$ 12,205,929				
13.) FOSTER PARENT RECRUITMENT & TRAINING	$ -	$ -		$ -			$ 575,793	$ 143,948				
14.) ADOPTIVE PARENT RECRUITMENT & TRAINING	$ -	$ -		$ -			$ 453,428	$ 113,357				
15.) CHILD CARE RELATED TO EMPLOYMENT/TRAINING	$ -						$ -	$ -			All eligible children	Statewide
16.) STAFF & EXTERNAL PARTNERS TRAINING	$ -	$ -		$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 33,233	$ 24,925				
17.) CASEWORKER RETENTION, RECRUITMENT & TRAINING	$ -		$ 34,713				$ -	$ 11,571				
18.) TOTAL	$ 148,577	$ 551,091	$ 34,713	$ 106,719	$ 692,685	$ 224,778	$ 45,414,312	$ 93,086,454	43252	812	0	
19.) TOTALS FROM PART I	$148,577	$551,091	$34,713	$106,719	$692,685	$224,778						
20.) Difference (Part I - Part II)	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0						

21.) Population data are included in the APSR/CFSP narrative, not above in columns I - L . ☐YES ☐NO

*** These columns are for States only; Indian Tribes are not required to include information on these programs.**
**** Only states or tribes operating an approved title IV-E waiver demonstration may enter information for rows 1-6 in column (g), indicating planned use of title IV-E funds for these purposes.**

Acronym List for 2018 Annual Progress and Service Report

AAG	Assistant Attorney General
ACRF	Alaska Center for Resource Families
AFCARS	Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System
AHFC	Alaska Housing Finance Corporation
ALGI	Adoption and Legal Guardianship Incentive
AN/AI	Alaska Native / American Indian
APPLA	Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement
APSR	Annual Progress and Services Report
ARO	Anchorage Regional Office
BCP	Background Check Program
CAPTA	Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act
CASA	Court Appointed Special Advocate
CB	Children's Bureau
CBCAP	Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention
CCLS	Community Care Licensing Specialist
CFCIP	Chafee Foster Care Independence Program
CFSP	Child and Family Services Plan
CFSR	Child and Family Services Review
CIP	Court Improvement Project
CJATF	Children's Justice Act Task Force
CQI	Continuous Quality Improvement
CPS	Child Protection Services
CRP	Citizen Review Panel
CWA	Child Welfare Academy
DBH	Division of Behavioral Health
DET	Director's Executive Team
DHSS	Department of Health and Social Services
DJJ	Division of Juvenile Justice
DOL	Department of Law
DOP	Division of Personnel
DPA	Division of Public Assistance
DPH	Division of Public Health
DSDS	Division of Senior and Disabilities Services
DVR	Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
ESC	Executive Steering Committee
ETV	Education and Training Vouchers
FFCA	Facing Foster Care in Alaska
FSS	Family Support Services
GAL	Guardian Ad Litem
HCS	Health Care Services
ICWA	Indian Child Welfare Act
IL	Independent Living
IT	Information Technology
MCWVF	Monthly Caseworker Visit Formula
NCANDS	National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System
NRO	Northern Regional Office
NYTD	National Youth in Transition Database
OCS	Office of Children's Services
OPA	Office of Public Advocacy
ORCA	Online Resource for the Children of Alaska
PSM	Protective Services Manager
PSS	Protective Services Specialist
QA	Quality Assurance
RFAB	Resource Family Advisory Board
SCRO	Southcentral Regional Office
SERO	Southeast Regional Office
SLC	Supervisory Leadership Council
SWA	Statewide Assessment
TANF	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
TLFR	Time-Limited Family Reunification
TSAT	Tribal State Advisory Team
TSCG	Tribal State Collaboration Group
WRO	Western Regional Office

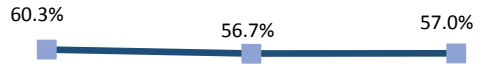
Tribal State Collaboration Group - Statewide Data Indicators

Hope | Leadership | New Opportunities

DISPROPORTIONALITY

Racial Disproportionality

		2014	2015	2016
AN / AI	#	1952	2105	2351
	%	60.3%	56.7%	57.0%



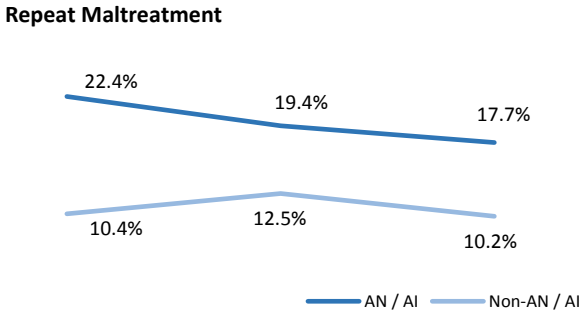
SAFETY

Maltreatment

		2014	2015	2016
AN / AI	#	1544	1647	1932
	rate / 1,000	30.33	32.24	n/a
Non-AN / AI	#	663	905	817
	rate / 1,000	3.99	5.44	n/a

Repeat Maltreatment

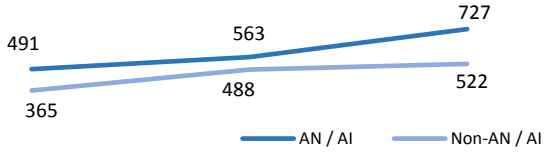
		2014	2015	2016
AN / AI	#	346	320	342
	%	22.4%	19.4%	17.7%
Non-AN / AI	#	69	113	83
	%	10.4%	12.5%	10.2%



PLACEMENT

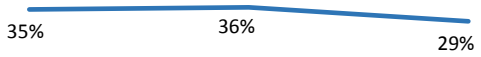
Kinship Placements

		2014	2015	2016
AN / AI	#	491	563	727
	%	42%	42%	48%
Non-AN / AI	#	365	488	522
	%	45%	47%	48%



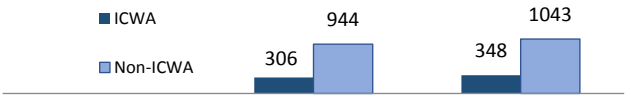
Out of Preference Placements

		2014	2015	2016
AN / AI	#	412	474	440
	%	35%	36%	29%



ICWA Foster Homes

		2014	2015	2016
ICWA	#	n/a	306	348
Non-ICWA	#	n/a	944	1043



Transferred Tribal Jurisdiction

		2014	2015	2016
AN / AI	#	42	80	47

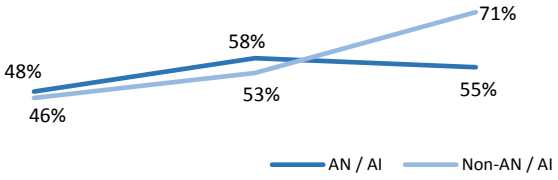
Tribal Interventions

		2014	2015	2016
AN / AI	#	735	901	1121
	%	38%	43%	48%

PERMANENCY

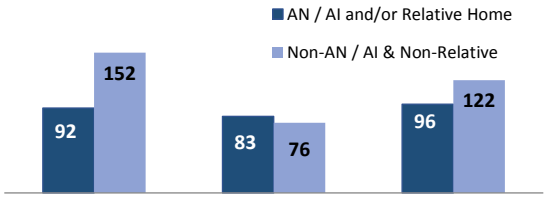
Reunification

		2014	2015	2016
AN / AI	#	290	338	352
	%	48%	58%	55%
Non-AN / AI	#	155	165	362
	%	46%	53%	71%



Adoption or Guardianship (# of AN / IA Children Exiting)

	2014	2015	2016
AN / AI and/or Relative Home	92	83	96
Non-AN / AI & Non-Relative	152	76	122
All Guardianships	20	13	21
All Adoptions	224	146	197



NOTES:

Disproportionality data represents all children who came into care or were in care for the calendar year.

Placement data is point time December 31 of the year.

Repeat Maltreatment: Repeat victims are those with a previous substantiated allegation within the prior 12 months. % Of Race Repeat is the percent of total victims of the same race with repeat.

Tribal Intervention: Represents the number of children who had an intervention during the reporting year. If intervention occurred after the reporting period it is not included in this number.

Reunification: Totals are based on number of children discharged with an end reason of reunification and children on a trial home visit over 180 days or expired. 2016 totals will likely change due to data latency entry.

Maltreatment: Counts of children with substantiated maltreatment in Investigations completed during the reporting period.

Re-Entry12: Children removed from home during the reporting period who have a discharge within the 12 months prior to their most recent reporting period removal date. The definition of Reentry used in this report is not consistent with the federal definition, which looks forward from the reporting period rather than backward.

Children Exiting to Adoption or Guardianship: 2016 totals will likely increase due to data latency entry.

March 2017