

**Union County DSS
Child Welfare Services Review
September 2006**

During the week of September 11-15, 2006 a team of DSS staff from state office and surrounding counties conducted an onsite review of child welfare services in Union County. A sample of open and closed foster care and treatment cases were reviewed. Also reviewed were screened-out intakes, foster home licensing records, and unfounded investigations. Stakeholders interviewed for this review included foster parents, Union DSS supervisors, representatives from the schools, Foster Care Review Board, Mental Health and Guardian Ad Litem Program

Period included in Case Record Review: March 1, 2006 to August 31, 2006

Period included in Outcome Measures: September 1, 2005 to August 31, 2006

Purpose

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

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

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

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

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

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

Quantitative and Qualitative Data Sources

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

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

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

**Union County DSS
Child Welfare Services Review
September 2006**

Ratings

The standard that must be met for all items reviewed onsite is 90 percent. Each outcome report has its own standard. To be rated a **Strength** an item must meet both the qualitative onsite review standard **and** the quantitative outcome report standard.

Section One

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

Strategic Outcome Report Findings

Measure S1.1: Timeliness of initiating investigations on reports of child maltreatment

Data Time Period: 09/1/05 to 08/31/06

	Number of Reports Accepted	Number of Investigations Initiated Timely	Number of Investigations Objective 100%*	Number of Investigations Above (Below) Objective
State	16,337	15,770	16,335.37	-565.37
Union	142	79	141.99	-62.99

*This standard is based on state law. It is not a federally established objective.

Onsite Review Findings

Safety Item 1: Timeliness of initiating investigations of reports of child maltreatment.

	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	1	100	0	0	9	0
Treatment	4	100	0	0	6	0
Total Cases	5	100	0	0	15	0

Explanation of Item 1

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Union DSS. State law requires that an investigation of all accepted reports of abuse and neglect be initiated within 24 hours. CAPSS data indicates that 79 of Union's 142 (57%) investigations were initiated within the required 24 hours – the largest error rate in the State. The problem is a combination of data entry errors and actual failure to initiate investigations according to policy.

**Union County DSS
Child Welfare Services Review
September 2006**

Strategic Outcome Report Findings

Measure S1.2: Recurrence of Maltreatment – Of all children who were victims of indicated reports of child abuse and/or neglect during the reporting period, the percent having another indicated report within a subsequent six month period.

Indicated Reports Between Mar 1, 2005 and Feb 28, 2006

	Number of Child Victims	Number of Child Victims In Another Founded Rept	Number of Children Objective <= 93.90%	Number of Children Above (Below) Objective
State	10,134	73	9515.83	545.17
Union	129	1	121.13	6.87

Note: This is a federally established objective.

Onsite Review Findings

Safety Item 2: Repeat Maltreatment.

	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	9	90	1	10	0	0
Treatment	10	100	0	0	0	0
Total Cases	19	95	1	5	0	0

Explanation of Item 2

This is a **Strength** for Union DSS. CAPSS data shows that 1 of the 129 incidents of maltreatment was a reoccurrence during the period under review. The outcome report captures subsequent indicated reports. Onsite reviewers looked for recurring maltreatment whether or not that maltreatment resulted in an additional report. From both perspectives Union DSS was effective in preventing repeat maltreatment.

**Union County DSS
Child Welfare Services Review
September 2006**

Section Two

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

Onsite Review Findings Performance Item Ratings

Safety Item 3: Services to family to protect child (ren) in home and prevent removal.

	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	1	50	1	50	8	0
Treatment	6	60	4	40	0	0
Total Cases	7	58	5	42	8	0

Explanation of Item 3

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Union DSS. The assessment of need and service delivery was appropriate for 58 percent of the cases reviewed. Complex cases with family members displaying multiple areas of dysfunction and need showed significant deficiencies in case management and service delivery. In treatment cases children were sometimes placed with relatives whose needs and issues were not assessed.

Several stakeholders commented on the lack of transportation for clients. That lack of transportation often rendered clients unable to comply with treatment plans or access needed services.

**Union County DSS
Child Welfare Services Review
September 2006**

Strategic Outcome Report Findings

Measure S2.2: **Risk of harm to child** – Of all unfounded investigations during the reporting period, the percent receiving subsequent reports within six months of the initial report.

	Number Alleged Child Victims in an Unfounded Rept 3/01/05 to 2/28/06	Number With Another Rept Within 6 Months of Unfounded Determination	Number of Cases Met Objective $\geq 91.50\%$ *	Number of Cases Above (Below) Objective
State	14,996	1,137	13,721.34	137.66
Union	73	2	66.80	4.21

* This is a DSS established objective.

Onsite Review Findings Performance Item Ratings

Safety Item 4: Risk of harm.

	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	9	90	1	10	0	0
Treatment	6	60	4	40	0	0
Total Cases	15	75	5	25	0	0

Explanation of Item 4

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Union DSS. Onsite reviewers found that the risk of harm to children in 75% of the cases was reduced as a result of DSS intervention. The one foster care case rated as needing improvement for this item involved an MTS-managed girl who continually ran away from her placement, placing herself at risk. The treatment cases rated as needing improvement involved parents and other caregivers who did not comply with the treatment recommendations designed to treat their dysfunctional behaviors – usually drug addiction. Yet, the agency failed to either remove the children from those homes or initiate court action against the parents.

**Union County DSS
Child Welfare Services Review
September 2006**

Section Three

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

Strategic Outcome Report Findings

Measure P3.1: **Foster Care Re-entries** – Of all children who entered care during the year under review, the percent that re-entered foster care Within 12 months of a prior foster care episode.

	Number Children Entering Care 09/01/05 to 08/31/06	Number That Were Returned Home Within The Past 12 Months From Previous Fos Care Episode	Number of Children Objective >= 91.40%*	Number of Children Above (Below) Objective
State	3,403	237	3,110.34	55.66
Union	17	2	15.54	-0.54

*This is a federally established objective.

Onsite Review Findings Performance Item Ratings

Permanency Item 5: Foster care re-entries.

	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	1	50	1	50	8	0

Explanation of Item 5

Foster Care Re-entries is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Union DSS. According to CAPSS, two of the 17 children (12%) who entered foster care in Union County during the period under review had been returned home in the prior 12 months. The federal standard is that no more than 8.6% of the children entering foster care can be re-entries. The state average for this item is 7%. It should be noted that, although Union DSS did not meet this standard, it was not missed by much. The one case rated as needing improvement by onsite reviewers involved a 13 month old child who returned to DSS custody after a six week return home.

**Union County DSS
Child Welfare Services Review
September 2006**

Strategic Outcome Report Findings

Measure P3.2: **Stability of Foster Care Placement** – Of all children who have been in foster care less than 12 months from the time of the latest removal from home, the percent that had not more than 2 placement settings.

	Number of Children In Care Less Than 12 Months	Number of Children With No More Than 2 Placements	Number of Children Objective $\geq 86.70\%$ *	Number of Children Above (Below) Objective
State	3,908	2,962	3,388.24	-281.24
Union	20	19	17.34	1.66

Note: This is a federally established objective.

Onsite Review Findings Performance Item Ratings

Permanency Item 6: Stability of foster care placement.

	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	8	80	2	20	0	0

Explanation of Item 6

Stability of foster care placement is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Union DSS. The outcome report shows that 19 of the 20 children in care less than 12 months had less than two foster care placements. Onsite reviewers looked at all children in care, not just those in care less than 12 months. Eighty percent of the cases reviewed were rated as strength. One of the cases rated as needing improvement involved a child who experienced five placement changes in the past year before being placed in a therapeutic foster home.

It should be noted that, due to severe staff shortages, all placement changes may not have been entered into CAPSS. In state fiscal year (SFY) 2000, Union DSS served eight children in its foster care program. In SFY 2003 it served 13. In SFY 2006 it served 28 children. The number of staff and foster homes did not keep pace with the number of children entering care.

**Union County DSS
Child Welfare Services Review
September 2006**

Strategic Outcome Report Findings

Measure P3.5: **Permanency Goal for Child** – Of all children who have been in foster care for 15 of the most recent 22 months, the percent for which a Termination of Parental Rights (TPR) petition has been filed.

	Children in Care At Least 15 of Last 22 Months 09/2005 –08/2006	Number Children With TPR Complaint	Number of Children Objective >= 53.00%*	Number of Children Above (Below) Objective
State	3,617	1,638	1,917	-279
Union	11	0	5.83	-5.83

*This is DSS established objective. The federal agency, Administration for Children and Families, gathers data on this measure, but has not established a numerical objective.

Onsite Review Findings Performance Item Ratings

Permanency Item 7: Permanency goal for children.

	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	8	80	2	20	0	0

Explanation of Item 7

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Union DSS. To meet the criteria established in the CAPSS report 53.00% or more of the children in care 15 of the most recent 22 months must have a TPR petition filed. The outcome report shows that TPR petitions were not filed on any of the children meeting this criterion. Onsite reviewers found that most (80%) permanency plans were appropriate. The two cases rated Area Needing Improvement had a plan of Return Home long after conditions in those families made it clear that it was highly unlikely that those children could ever be safely returned home.

Stakeholder Comment: “There are more legal delays than in other [judicial] circuits.”

Another Stakeholder: “Administrative duties are handled out of York County, and sometimes he doesn’t get attorney appointment requests until a few days or a week before the hearing. He appoints attorneys for defendants; he needs more time to adequately identify attorneys for defendants. He has to find attorneys for Union cases in Spartanburg.”

**Union County DSS
Child Welfare Services Review
September 2006**

Strategic Outcome Report Findings

Measure P3.3: **Length of Time to Achieve Reunification** – Of all children who were reunified with their parents or caregiver, at the time of discharge from foster care, the percent reunified in less than 12 months from the time of the latest removal from home.

	Number of Children Where Fos Care Services Closed. Last Plan Was Return Home 09/01/05–08/31/06	Number of Children In Care Less Than 12 Months	Number Of Children Objective $\geq 76.20\%$ *	Number of Children Above (Below) Objective
State	2,405	1,960	1,832.61	127.39
Union	14	10	10.67	-0.67

* This is a federally established objective.

Onsite Review Findings Performance Item Ratings

Permanency Item 8: Reunification, guardianship, or permanent placement with relatives.

	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	3	60	2	40	5	0

Explanation of Item 8

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Union DSS. To meet this federally establish criteria at least 76.20% of the children returned to their parents from foster care must be returned within 12 months of their removal from home. In Union County the percentage was 17%. Onsite reviewers found that the plan of return home for two of the five children reviewed was unrealistic. The two cases rated as needing improvement has a plan of return home long after conditions in those families made it clear that it was highly unlikely that those children could ever be safely returned home. In both instances, the plans should have been changed to TPR/Adoption.

**Union County DSS
Child Welfare Services Review
September 2006**

Strategic Outcome Report Findings

Measure P3.4: **Length of Time to Achieve Adoption** – Of all children who exited from foster care during the year under review to a finalized adoption, the percent that exited care in less than 24 months from the time of the latest removal from home.

	Number of Children With Finalized Adoption W/in Past 12 Months	Number of Children Where Adoption Was Finalized Within 24 Months of Entering Care	Number of Children Objective $\geq 32.00\%$ *	Number of Children Above (Below) Objective
State	436	69	139.52	-70.52
Union	0	0	0	0

Note: This is a federally established objective.

Onsite Review Findings Performance Item Ratings

Permanency Item 9: Adoption.

	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	1	50	1	50	8	0

Explanation of Item 9

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Union DSS. None of the children entering foster care in Union County have been adopted. Two children reviewed onsite had a plan of adoption. One child had been in care almost three years without a TPR hearing. For the other child, the agency was taking steps that could lead to an adoption within 24 months of the child entering foster care.

**Union County DSS
Child Welfare Services Review
September 2006**

Strategic Outcome Report Findings

Measure P3.6: **Permanency Goal of “Other Planned Living Arrangement”** – Of all children in foster care, the percent with a permanency goal of emancipation (Indep Liv Services) or a planned permanent living arrangement other than adoption, guardianship, or return to family.

	Number of Children In Care at Least One Day 09/01/05 – 08/31/06	Number of Children In Care With Perm Plan “Other Planned Living Arrangement”	Number of Children Objective $\geq 85.00\%$ *	Number of Children Above (Below) Objective
State	8,355	1,475	7,101.75	-221.75
Union	28	0	23.80	4.20

* This is a DSS established objective.

Onsite Review Findings Performance Item Ratings

Permanency Item 10: Permanency goal of other planned permanent living arrangement.

	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	3	100	0	0	7	0

Explanation of Item 10

This is a **Strength** for Union DSS. The standard for this objective is that no more than 15% of the children in foster care should have this plan, Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA). The CAPSS report suggest that none of the children in foster care had the plan of APPLA. However, onsite reviewers found three children with the plan of APPLA. This discrepancy exists because staff did not update CAPSS as plans for children changed.

All three children with the plan of APPLA were receiving appropriate independent living services.

**Union County DSS
Child Welfare Services Review
September 2006**

Section Four

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

Strategic Outcome Report Findings

Measure P4.1: **Proximity of Foster Care Placement** – Of all children in foster care during the reporting period (excluding MTS and Adoptions children), the percent placed within their county of origin.

	Number of Children In Care 09/01/05 – 08/31/06	Number of Children Placed Within County of Origin	Percent of Children Placed Within County of Origin	Number of Children Objective >= 70.00%*	Number of Children Above (Below) Objective
State	6,221	3,886	62.47	4,354.70	-468.70
Union	28	0	0	18.20	-18.20

* This is a DSS established objective.

Explanation of Item 11

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Union DSS. Union County foster children are not placed in Union County because, at the time of the review, there were no foster homes in Union County. Most of the children are placed in adjacent counties.

Onsite Review Findings Performance Item Ratings

Permanency Item 12: Placement with siblings

	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	4	100	0	0	6	0

Explanation of Item 12

This is a **Strength** for Union DSS. All of the sibling groups that should have been placed together were placed together. There was one set of siblings that were not placed together because they were a threat to one another.

**Union County DSS
Child Welfare Services Review
September 2006**

<u>Onsite Review Findings</u> Performance Item Ratings						
Permanency Item 13: Visiting with parents and siblings in foster care						
	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	5	83	1	17	4	0

Explanation

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Union DSS. In most (83%) instances the agency did an excellent job of arranging for visits between children in foster care and their parents and with siblings placed in another setting. However, when one sibling is managed by MTS and the other siblings are managed by the county the coordination needed to arrange visits does not consistently occur.

<u>Site Visit Findings</u> Performance Item Ratings						
Permanency Item 14: Preserving connections						
	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	5	100	0	0	5	0

Explanation

This is a **Stength** for Union DSS. This item addresses the agency's ability to preserve a child in foster care's connection to the people, places and things that are important to him. Even though the children are placed in adjacent counties, this has not been a barrier to the agency helping those children maintain the relationships that are important to them. Many people in Union County work and shop in neighboring York and Spartanburg Counties and travel to neighboring counties for other goods and services.

**Union County DSS
Child Welfare Services Review
September 2006**

Onsite Review Findings Performance Item Ratings						
Permanency Item 15: Relative placement						
	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	4	50	4	50	2	0

Explanation

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Union DSS. This item addresses the agency's effectiveness in identifying and assessing the relatives of children in foster care as possible caregivers. In half of the cases reviewed there was evidence that both maternal and paternal relatives were assessed as placement options for the children in foster care. In the half rated as needing improvement the focus appeared to be on the mother's family, to the exclusion of the father's family.

Onsite Review Findings Performance Item Ratings						
Permanency Item 16: Relationship of child in care with parents						
	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	4	57	3	43	3	0

Explanation

This is an **"Area Needing Improvement"** for Union DSS. This item addresses the agency's effectiveness in promoting or maintaining a strong emotionally supportive relationship between children in care and their parents. Most of the relevant cases showed parental involvement based on the needs of the child rather than merely meeting the minimum visitation requirement. This item was rated as needing improvement because reviewers found instances of fathers contacting the group homes caring for their children in an attempt to maintain their relationship with their child. However, the efforts of those fathers were not supported by the agency.

**Union County DSS
Child Welfare Services Review
September 2006**

Section Five

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

Site Visit Findings Performance Item Ratings

Well Being Item 17: Needs and services of child, parents, foster parents

	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	7	70	3	30	0	0
Treatment	4	40	6	60	0	0
Total Cases	11	55	9	45	0	0

Explanation

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Union DSS. This item asks two questions: 1) Were the needs of the child, parents, and caregivers assessed, and 2) Did the agency take steps to meet the identified needs? Much of the problem affecting this item is systemic, as described by the stakeholder quoted below. Treatment cases were more likely to be rated as needing improvement because many of the children in those cases were removed from their parents and placed with relatives. However, the needs of those relative caregivers were not consistently assessed or attended.

Stakeholder Comments: "Union County has many service gaps – especially transportation, which is a huge issue. In addition, this is a high poverty area, with very high unemployment. People have to commute to Spartanburg and other cities, and gas prices are very high."

**Union County DSS
Child Welfare Services Review
September 2006**

Onsite Review Findings Performance Item Ratings						
Well Being Item 18: Child and family involvement in case planning						
	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	5	63	3	37	2	0
Treatment	2	20	8	80	0	0
Total Cases	7	39	11	61	2	0

Explanation

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Union DSS. At the time of this review there was one treatment worker attempting to provide services to the 55 treatment cases involving 87 children. Assisting her with case management was the one supervisor for human services in the office. One of the effects of that overload was that all cases did not have treatment plans, and treatment plans were done by the case workers, usually without involvement of the clients.

Stakeholder Comments: “The caseworkers have their hands full, and it’s hard to focus on one case. Three people are not enough to deal with all the referrals. The caseworkers are overwhelmed trying to keep up, and there is a lot of paperwork... They do a great job, given the problems with resources and staffing.”

Onsite Review Findings Performance Item Ratings						
Well Being Item 19: Worker visits with child						
	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	9	90	1	10	0	0
Treatment	7	70	3	30	0	0
Total Cases	16	80	4	20	0	0

Explanation

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Union DSS. This rating is based on two questions: 1) Were Union DSS staff visiting children according to policy; and 2) Did the visits focus on issues related to the treatment plan? With one exception, the children in foster care were seen each month. However, only 70% of the children in treatment cases were seen each month. The children in treatment cases were sometimes divided up among different relatives. Some children in treatment cases had not been seen in several consecutive months.

**Union County DSS
Child Welfare Services Review
September 2006**

Onsite Review Findings Performance Item Ratings						
Well Being Item 20: Worker visits with parent(s)						
	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	5	71	2	29	3	0
Treatment	5	50	5	50	0	0
Total Cases	10	59	7	41	3	0

Explanation

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Union DSS. Parents were not seen monthly for the same reason the children were not seen monthly. The conditions described in Items 17 thru 19 above apply equally to this item.

Section Six

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

Onsite Review Findings Performance Item Ratings						
Well Being Item 21: Educational needs of child						
	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	6	100	0	0	4	0
Treatment	4	50	4	50	2	0
Total Cases	10	71	4	29	6	0

Explanation

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Union DSS. This item asks two questions: 1) Did DSS assess the educational needs of the children under their supervision; and 2) Were identified educational needs addressed? The answer to both questions was “Yes” for all of the foster care cases reviewed. Half of the treatment cases reviewed had significant deficiencies in this area. Either the educational needs of the children were not assessed, or there was no follow up on the problems identified.

**Union County DSS
Child Welfare Services Review
September 2006**

Section Seven

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

Onsite Review Findings Performance Item Ratings

Well Being Item 22: Physical health of the child

	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	9	90	1	10	0	0
Treatment	4	40	6	60	0	0
Total Cases	13	65	7	35	0	0

Explanation

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Union DSS. Generally, the medical needs of children in foster care were properly attended to. The medical needs of most of the children in treatment cases were either not assessed, or when assessed, not attended to. Failure to follow up occurred even in cases involving parents who were known to be negligent in attending to their children's medical needs.

Onsite Review Findings Performance Item Ratings

Well Being Item 23: Mental health of the child

	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	8	100	0	0	2	0
Treatment	2	33	4	67	4	0
Total Cases	10	71	4	29	6	0

Explanation

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Union DSS. The mental health needs of children in foster care were properly managed. This was possible because the children are not placed in Union County. However the children in treatment cases are in the county where mental health services are not readily available. Even when staff identified significant mental health needs of children within their cases, those needs sometimes went unattended to.

Mental Health Stakeholder: The mental health counselor can see children if they have Medicaid, or another insurance provider. If they don't they have to go to Spartanburg, or somewhere else. Sometimes DMH can use a sliding scale, but there is a waiting list.

**Union County DSS
Child Welfare Services Review
September 2006**

Section Eight – Foster Home Licenses

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Union DSS. Although there are 18 children in foster care from Union County none of those children are in Union County. Union DSS has no foster homes and has no position allocated to foster home licensing.

Section Nine – Unfounded Investigations

	Yes	No
Investigation initiated timely?	5	0
Was assessment adequate?	1	4
Was decision appropriate?	2	3

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Union DSS. The assessments deemed inadequate failed to obtain critical information from other parties, like law enforcement, schools, and medical care providers. Without that information the decision to unfound was not supported by the evidence in the file. The lack of documentation was likely affected by data entry that occurred months after the action dates.

Determination fact sheets not completed, not in files, not mailed to clients. Clients not notified of agency decision.

**Union County DSS
Child Welfare Services Review
September 2006**

Section Ten – Screened Out Intakes

	Yes	No	Cannot Determine
Was Intake Appropriately Screened Out?	2	0	0
	Yes	No	Not Applicable
Were Necessary Collaterals Contacted?	0	0	2
Were Appropriate Referrals Made?	1	0	1

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Union DSS. CAPSS showed that Union DSS screened out two of 67 intakes during the six month period under review. However, the supervisor stated that not all screened out intakes have been entered. The two that were entered were appropriately screened out. However, the other intake entries are late.

**Union County DSS
Child Welfare Services Review
September 2006**

Onsite Review Rating Summary			
Performance Item or Outcome	Performance Item Ratings		
	Strength	Area Needing Improvement	N/A*
Safety Outcome 1: Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect.			
Item 1: Timeliness of initiating investigations of reports of child maltreatment	5/5 = 100%	0	15
Item 2: Repeat maltreatment	18/19 = 95%	1/19 = 5%	1
Safety Outcome 2: Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate.			
Item 3: Services to family to protect child(ren) in home and prevent removal	7/12 = 58%	5/12 = 42%	8
Item 4: Risk of harm to child(ren)	15/20 = 75%	5/20 = 25%	0
Permanency Outcome 1: Children have permanency and stability in their living situations.			
Item 5: Foster care re-entries	1/2 = 50%	1/2 = 50%	8
Item 6: Stability of foster care placement	8/10 = 80%	2/10 = 20%	0
Item 7: Permanency goal for child	8/10 = 80%	2/10 = 20%	0
Item 8: Reunification, guardianship, or permanent placement with relatives	3/5 = 60%	2/5 = 40%	5
Item 9: Adoption	1/2 = 50%	1/2 = 50%	8
Item 10: Permanency goal of Alternate Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA)	3/3 = 100%		7
Permanency Outcome 2: The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children.			
Item 11: Proximity of foster care placement	7/7 = 100%		3
Item 12: Placement with siblings	4/4 = 100%		6
Item 13: Visiting with parents and siblings in foster care	5/6 = 83%	1/6 = 17%	4
Item 14: Preserving connections	5/5 = 100%		5
Item 15: Relative placement	4/8 = 50%	4/8 = 50%	2
Item 16: Relationship of child in care with parents	4/7 = 57%	3/7 = 43%	3
Well Being Outcome 1: Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs.			
Item 17: Needs and services of child, parents, caregiver	11/20 = 55%	9/20 = 45%	0
Item 18: Child and family involvement in case planning	7/18 = 39%	11/18 = 61%	2
Item 19: Worker visits with child	16/20 = 80%	4/20 = 20%	0
Item 20: Worker visits with parent(s)	10/17 = 59%	7/17 = 41%	3
Well Being Outcome 2: Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs.			
Item 21: Educational needs of the child	10/14 = 71%	4/14 = 29%	6
Well Being Outcome 3: Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs.			
Item 22: Physical health of the child	13/20 = 65%	7/20 = 35%	0
Item 23: Mental health of the child	10/14 = 71%	4/14 = 29%	6