

Marlboro County DSS  
Child Welfare Services Review  
May 2009

During the week of May 18 - 22, 2009, a team of DSS staff from state office and surrounding counties conducted an onsite review of child welfare services in Marlboro 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, foster child, Marlboro DSS supervisors and workers, representatives from the schools, Foster Care Review Board, Mental Health and Guardian Ad Litem Program.

**Period under Review: May 1, 2008 to April 30, 2009**

### **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.

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**Ratings**

The standard that must be met for all items reviewed onsite is 95%. Each outcome report has its own standard. To be rated an area of **Strength** most items must meet both the qualitative onsite review standard **and** the quantitative outcome report standard.

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

The county's performance on this outcome is based on the rating of two items:

- |  |                                 |
|--|---------------------------------|
| 1) Timeliness of initiating investigations | <b>Strength</b>                 |
| 2) Repeat Maltreatment                     | <b>Area Needing Improvement</b> |

**Agency Data**

**Performance Measure 1: Timeliness of Initiating Investigations on Reports of Child Maltreatment-** Of all reports of child maltreatment that were accepted for investigation during the reporting period, what percentage had a dictation type contact of initial contact where the action date is within 24 hours of accepting the report?

Report Period: 05/ 1/ 2008 to 04/ 30/ 2009

**Objective:** 100% in <= 24 hours (state law)

	Number of Determinations	Number of Investigations Initiated Timely	Percent of Investigations Initiated Timely	Numbers of Investigations Above (Below) Objective
State	17,141	16,793	97.97%	-348
Marlboro	133	131	98.50%	-2

**Explanation of Item 1: Timeliness of Initiating Investigations**

This is an area of **Strength** for Marlboro DSS. State law requires that an investigation of all (100%) accepted reports of abuse and neglect be initiated within 24 hours. Agency data indicates that for the 12 month period under review, Marlboro initiated 131 of its 133 investigations (98.50%) of alleged abuse and neglect within 24 hours. Reviewers determined that the county initiated all investigations within the 24 hour timeframe; however, two investigations appeared untimely due to data entry problems. Reviewers found that risk ratings were assigned appropriately in all cases.

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<b><u>Onsite Review Findings</u></b>						
<b>Safety Item 2: Repeat Maltreatment</b>						
	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	9	90	1	10	0	0
Treatment	9	90	1	10	0	0
Total Cases	18	90	2	10	0	0

**Explanation of Item 2: Repeat Maltreatment**

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Marlboro DSS. This item measures the occurrence of maltreatment among children under agency supervision, or within a year of having their case closed by the agency. Agency data shows that 94.44% of the treatment cases closed were not involved in a subsequent indicated incident of maltreatment. Reviewers determined that an equal number of children in foster care and treatment cases experienced additional or ongoing maltreatment because of the agency's failure to resolve risk of harm issues. Reviewers also found that not all subsequent incidents of maltreatment resulted in a new report. Consequently, those incidents were not captured by the agency's child welfare database CAPSS.

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

The county's performance on this outcome is based on the rating of two items:

- 3) Services to family to protect children and prevent removal     **Area Needing Improvement**
- 4) Risk of Harm     **Area Needing Improvement**

<b><u>Onsite Review Findings</u></b>						
<b>Safety Item 3: Services to Family to Protect Child(ren) in Home and Prevent Removal</b>						
	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	3	75	1	25	6	0
Treatment	10	100	0	0	0	0
Total Cases	13	93	1	7	6	0

**Explanation of Item 3: Services to Family to Protect Children and Prevent Removal**

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Marlboro DSS. This item assesses whether services were adequate to protect children in their home and prevent their removal and placement into foster care. In 100% of the treatment cases reviewed, appropriate services were being offered to

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safely maintain the children in their home. In 75% of the foster care cases, reviewers determined that the decision to remove the children from their homes and place them in foster care was appropriate. One case needed improvement because it was an active treatment case and the services provided by the agency did not prevent entry into foster care.

<b>Onsite Review Findings</b>						
<b>Safety Item 4: Risk of Harm</b>						
	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 of Item 4: Risk of Harm**

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Marlboro DSS. This item assesses whether the agency's intervention reduced risk of harm to children. In 90% of the foster care cases reviewed, risk of harm was adequately managed. Reviewers rated 30% of the treatment cases as needing improvement because risk of harm to children in the home was not properly managed. In those cases, the agency failed to complete criminal background checks and assessments on alternate caregivers or on other adults in the home who had an active role in the children's lives. There was also a lack of diligent follow up by the agency to continuously assess the family's needs to ensure that the children remained safe.

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

The county's performance on this outcome is based on the rating of six items:

- |  |                                 |
|--|---------------------------------|
| 5) Foster care re-entries  | <b>Strength</b>                 |
| 6) Stability of foster care placement  | <b>Area Needing Improvement</b> |
| 7) Permanency goal for child   | <b>Strength</b>                 |
| 8) Reunification or permanent placement with relatives                           | <b>Strength</b>                 |
| 9) Adoption  | <b>Strength</b>                 |
| 10) Permanency goal of Alternate Planned<br>Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA) | <b>Strength</b>                 |

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<b>Agency Data</b>				
<b>Performance Measure 7: Foster Children Who do Not Re-Enter Care</b> - Of all children discharged from foster care to reunification in the 12 month period prior to reporting period, what percentage did Not re-enter foster care within 12 months of the date of their discharge from the prior foster care episode. Report Period: 05/01/08 to 04/30/09				
<b>Objective:</b> 90.1% (Federal Standard)				
	Number of Foster Children Reunified during Reporting Period	Number of Children Who Did Not Re-enter Foster Care Within 12 Months	Percent of Children Who Did Not Re-Enter Foster Care Within 12 Months	Number of Children Above (Below) Objective
State	2948	2712	91.99%	55.9
Marlboro	25	23	92.00%	0.5

**Explanation of Item 5: Foster Care Re-entries**

This is area of **Strength** for Marlboro DSS. This item measures the frequency of children re-entering foster care within a year of discharge. To meet the minimum requirement for this item, 90.1% of children must not re-enter foster care within a year of discharge. Agency data shows that 92.00% of the children did not re-enter foster care within 12 months of the date of their discharge from the previous foster care episode.

<b>Agency Data</b>				
<b>Performance Measure 6: Stability of Foster Care Placements</b> - Of all children who had been in foster care at least 8 days but less than 12 months from the time of latest removal from home, the percentage that had no more than two placements settings. Report Period: 05/01/08 to 04/30/09				
<b>Objective:</b> >=86% (Federal Standard)				
	Foster Care Services Open > 7 days and < 12 months	Number with No More than 2 Placements	Percent with No More than 2 Placements	Number Above (Below) Objective
State	3889	2929	75.31%	-209.4
Marlboro	41	31	75.61%	-4.3

**Explanation of Item 6: Stability of Foster Care Placement**

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Marlboro DSS. This item measures the frequency of placement changes for children in foster care, and assesses the reasons for those changes. The objective for this item is that at least 86% of the children in care have two or fewer placements

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within 12 months. Agency data shows that 75.61% of Marlboro children had two or fewer placements. Onsite reviewers saw some planned placement changes (example: children moved into pre-adoptive placements or with siblings) that were rated “Strength” because the moves were in the child’s best interest. This area needs improvement because some of the placement changes resulted from children being placed in homes and facilities that could not meet their behavioral or emotional needs.

<b>Onsite Review Findings</b>						
<b>Permanency Item 7: Permanency Goal for Child</b>						
	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	10	100	0	0	0	0

**Explanation of Item 7: Permanency Goal for Children**

This is an area of **Strength** for Marlboro DSS. This item evaluates the appropriateness of permanency goals for children in foster care and the timeliness of those permanency decisions. Reviewers found that in 100% of the cases, the agency identified the appropriate permanency plan timely.

<b>Agency Data</b>				
<b>Performance Measure 8: Time to Achieve Reunification</b> – Of all children who were reunified with their parents or caretakers at the time of discharge from foster care and had been in care for 8 days or more, what percentage were reunified in less than 12 months from the date of their latest removal from home?				
Report Period: 05/01/08 to 04/30/09				
<b>Objective:</b> >= 75.2% (federal standard)				
	Number of Children Returned to Parents/Caretakers	Number of Children Returned to Parents/Caretakers after in Care <12 months	Percent of Children Returned to Parents/Caretakers after in Care < 12 months	Number of Children Above (Below) Objective
State	2523	1891	74.95%	-6.3
Marlboro	27	21	77.78%	0.7

**Explanation of Item 8: Reunification or Permanent Placement with Relatives**

This is an area of **Strength** for Marlboro DSS. This item evaluates the activities and processes necessary to accomplish the goal of reunification with caregivers or placement with relatives. Agency data shows that 77.78% of the children who entered foster care in Marlboro County returned home within a year. This performance surpassed the federal standard of 75.2%.

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<b>Agency Data</b>				
<b>Performance Measure 9: Time to Finalize Adoption</b> – Of all children who left foster care due to finalized adoption during the reporting year, what percentage left foster care in less than 24 months from the date of their latest removal from home? Report Period: 03/01/08 to 02/28/09				
<b>Objective:</b> >= 36.6% (National 75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile)				
	Total Number of Finalized Adoptions	Number of Adoptions finalized < 24 months	Percent of Adoptions Finalized < 24 months	Number of Children Above (Below) Objective
State	515	114	22.14%	-74.5
Marlboro	6	2	33.33%	-0.2

<b><u>Onsite Review Findings</u></b>						
<b>Permanency Item 9: Adoption</b>						
	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	7	100	0	0	3	0

**Explanation of Item 9: Adoption**

This is an area of **Strength** for Marlboro DSS. This item evaluates the process within the child welfare system to achieve timely adoptions for children in foster care. Agency data shows that Marlboro DSS completed six adoptions during the period under review. Of those, two were finalized within 24 months of the child entering care. Even though the percentage completed within 24 months (33.33%) falls short of the standard (36.6%), this is an area of strength because the onsite review revealed that for the seven children reviewed with the plan of adoption, appropriate steps were being taken so that each child could achieve adoption within 24 months of the child's entry into foster care.

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<b><u>Onsite Review Findings</u></b>						
<b>Permanency Item 10: Permanency Goal of Alternate Planned Permanent Living Arrangement</b>						
	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	2	100	0	0	8	0

**Explanation of Item 10: Permanency Goal of APPLA**

This is an area of **Strength** for Marlboro DSS. This item evaluates the appropriateness and effectiveness of services provided to children with the permanency plan of APPLA. Reviewers also rate whether the agency attempted to locate and reassess relatives or non-relatives that were willing to commit to the youth's long-term care every six months. Reviewers found that all of the youth with the plan of APPLA received appropriate Independent Living services and had an identified resource to assist them in obtaining this goal.

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

The county's performance on this outcome is based on the rating of six items:

- |   |                                 |
|---|---------------------------------|
| 11) Proximity of foster care placement                | <b>Strength</b>                 |
| 12) Placement with siblings in foster care            | <b>Area Needing Improvement</b> |
| 13) Visiting with parents and siblings in foster care | <b>Area Needing Improvement</b> |
| 14) Preserving connections                            | <b>Area Needing Improvement</b> |
| 15) Relative placement                                | <b>Area Needing Improvement</b> |
| 16) Relationship of child in care with parents        | <b>Area Needing Improvement</b> |



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<b>Agency Data</b>				
<b>Performance Measure 13: Foster Children Placed in County of Origin</b> – Of all children in foster care during the reporting period (excluding MTS and Adoptions children), what percentage are placed within the county of origin? Report Period: 05/01/08 to 04/30/09				
<b>Objective:</b> >= 70% (Agency established objective)				
	Total Number of Children <18 and in care during report period	Number of Children Placed in County of Origin	Percent of Children Placed in County of Origin	Number of Children Above (Below) Objective
State	6198	4208	67.89%	-130.6
Marlboro	61	45	73.77%	2.3

**Explanation of Item 11: Proximity of Foster Care Placement**

This is an area of **Strength** for Marlboro County DSS. This item evaluates the agency’s efforts to keep children close enough to their families so that essential relationships can be maintained. One measure used to evaluate this item is the percentage of children who are placed within the county. The objective is that at least 70% of the children in care be placed within the county. Agency data shows that 71.19% of Marlboro DSS children were placed within the county. Reviewers found children were placed either within the county or in therapeutic placements in other counties.

<b><u>Onsite Review Findings</u></b>						
<b>Permanency Item 12: Placement with Siblings</b>						
	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	4	67	2	33	4	0

**Explanation of Item 12: Placement with Siblings in Foster Care**

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Marlboro DSS. This item evaluates the agency’s efforts to keep siblings together when it is appropriate to do so. In 67% of the cases reviewed, sibling groups were kept together when appropriate. Two cases needed improvement because there was no placement available to take all of the siblings.

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<b><u>Onsite Review Findings</u></b>						
<b>Permanency Item 13: Visiting with Parents and Siblings in Foster Care</b>						
	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	7	88	1	12	2	0

**Explanation of Item 13: Visiting with Siblings in Foster Care and with Parents**

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Marlboro DSS. This item evaluates the agency's efforts to ensure that visits occur between children in foster care and their siblings and parents. In 88% of the cases reviewed, visits between children in foster care and their parents were not occurring as required by policy. One case needed improvement because the agency failed to complete a diligent search on the father. Consequently, the agency failed to assess the appropriateness of supporting the relationship between the child and his father.

<b><u>Onsite Review Findings</u></b>						
<b>Permanency Item 14: Preserving Connections</b>						
	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	7	88	1	12	2	0

**Explanation of Item 14: Preserving Connections**

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Marlboro DSS. Whereas, Item 13 addressed parents and siblings, this item evaluates the agency's efforts to preserve children's connections to the people, places and things that are important to them. In 88% of the cases reviewed, this was an area of strength because the agency worked to keep children within their same communities, and to help children maintain their relationships with family and friends. One case needed improvement because the agency did not make diligent efforts to preserve the children's relationship with their grandparents and aunts with whom they were close to.

<b><u>Onsite Review Findings</u></b>						
<b>Permanency Item 15: Relative Placement</b>						
	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	5	50	5	50	0	0

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**Explanation of Item 15: Relative Placement**

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Marlboro DSS. This item evaluates the agency's efforts to identify and assess relatives as potential placement resources for children in foster care. In 50% of the cases reviewed, reviewers found that the agency did not consistently assess maternal and paternal relatives as placement options.

<b><u>Onsite Review Findings</u></b>						
<b>Permanency Item 16: Relationship of Child in Care with Parents</b>						
	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	0	0	2	100	8	0

**Explanation of Item 16: Relationship of Child in Care with Parents**

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Marlboro DSS. This item evaluates the agency's efforts to promote a supportive relationship between children in care and their parents, beyond the twice minimum visitation requirement. In 100% of the cases reviewed, reviewers found no evidence of the agency's efforts in supporting the parent-child relationships beyond the minimum required twice a month visitation, especially with the fathers. Agency policy encourages this especially when infants and preschool aged children are involved and when the children are transitioning back into their home.

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

The county's performance on this outcome is based on the rating of four items.

- |   |                                 |
|---|---------------------------------|
| 17) Needs and services of child, parents and caregivers | <b>Area Needing Improvement</b> |
| 18) Child and family involvement in case planning       | <b>Area Needing Improvement</b> |
| 19) Worker visits with child                            | <b>Area Needing Improvement</b> |
| 20) Worker visits with parents                          | <b>Area Needing Improvement</b> |

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**Onsite Review Findings**

**Well Being Item 17: Needs and Services of Child, Parents, Foster Parents**

	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	6	60	4	40	0	0
Treatment	8	80	2	20	0	0
Total Cases	14	70	6	30	0	0

**Explanation of Item 17: Needs and Services of Child, Parents and Caregivers**

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Marlboro 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? This is a weak area for both foster care and treatment cases. In 40% of the foster care cases and 20% of the treatment cases reviewed, needs and services of the parents, caretakers, and foster parents were not adequately assessed. The absence of quality assessments limited the agency's ability to address the needs of the child, parents and foster parents.

**Onsite Review Findings**

**Well Being Item 18: Child and Family Involvement in Case Planning**

	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	2	25	6	75	2	0
Treatment	3	30	7	70	0	0
Total Cases	5	28	13	72	2	0

**Explanation of Item 18: Child and Family Involvement in Case Planning**

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Marlboro DSS. This item evaluates the agency's efforts to involve parents and children in the case planning process. Onsite reviewers found that in 75% of the foster care cases and 70% of the treatment cases, parents, caregivers and the age appropriate children were not involved in the case planning process. Parents, especially the fathers were not actively engaged even if the agency had knowledge of their whereabouts. In some of the cases, the treatment plans were neither completed nor current as required by policy and not discussed with the parents.

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<b>Agency Data</b>				
<b>Performance Measure 14: Face-to-Face Visits with Children (&lt;18 years of age)</b> Of all children in foster care and treatment for at least one full calendar month during the reporting period, what percentage of children had a documented face-to-face visit every full calendar month during the reporting period? Report Period: 05/1/08 to 04/30/09				
<b>Objective:</b> >= 100% (Agency established objective)				
	Number of Children Under Agency Supervision at least One complete Calendar Month	Number of Children visited Every Month	Percent of Children Visited Every Month	Number of Children Above (Below) Objective
Foster Care	48	48	100.00%	103.0
Treatment	283	244	86.22%	63.7

<b><u>Onsite Review Findings</u></b>						
<b>Well Being Item 19: Worker Visits with Child(ren)</b>						
	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	7	70	3	30	0	0
Treatment	5	50	5	50	0	0
Total Cases	12	60	8	40	0	0

**Explanation of Item 19: Worker Visits with Child**

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Marlboro DSS. This item measures the frequency of caseworker visits with children under agency supervision, and evaluates the quality of those visits. State law and agency policy requires that children under agency supervision be seen each month. Agency data shows that 100% of the children in foster care and 86.22% of the children in treatment were visited monthly. However, these cases needed improvement because in 30% of the foster care cases and in 50% of the treatment cases, the visit were conducted as required but the content of those visits did not always address safety, permanency and child well being issues.

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**Onsite Review Findings**

**Well Being Item 20: Worker Visits with Parent(s)**

	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	2	29	5	71	3	0
Treatment	5	50	5	50	0	0
Total Cases	12	41	10	59	3	0

**Explanation of Item 20: Worker Visits with Parents**

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Marlboro DSS. This item measures the frequency of caseworker visits with parents, and evaluates the quality of those visits. Reviewers found that 71% of the foster care and 50% of the treatment cases needed improvement due to the agency's failure to visit both parents during the period under review; especially when the plan is to return the child home to their parents. Reviewers identified some cases as needing improvement because the caseworker did not use their visit with the parent to assess issues relevant to the agency's involvement with the family. There was also a lack of the agency actively engaging absent parents.

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

The county's performance on this outcome is based on the rating of one item:

- 21) Educational needs of the child **Area Needing Improvement**

**Onsite Review Findings**

**Well Being Item 21: Educational Needs of Child**

	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	10	100	0	0	0	0
Treatment	7	87	1	13	2	0
Total Cases	17	94	1	6	2	0

**Explanation of Item 21: Educational Needs of the Child**

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Marlboro DSS. This item evaluates the agency's ability to assess and address the educational needs of children under agency supervision. This was an area of strength for all of the foster care cases reviewed. Reviewers found that, in most

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cases, workers made direct contact with the school and there were also copies of grade reports and attendance records in both foster care and treatment cases. This area fell short of the 95% compliance standard because of an in-home treatment case in which the agency identified significant educational needs but failed to document whether or not the identified needs were assessed and met.

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

The county's performance on this outcome is based on the rating of two items:

- |                                  |                                 |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 22) Physical health of the child | <b>Area Needing Improvement</b> |
| 23) Mental health of the child   | <b>Area Needing Improvement</b> |

<b><u>Onsite Review Findings</u></b>						
<b>Well Being Item 22: Physical Health of the Child</b>						
	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	8	80	2	20	0	0
Treatment	7	70	3	30	0	0
<b>Total Cases</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

**Explanation of Item 22: Physical Health of the Child**

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Marlboro DSS. This item evaluates the agency's ability to assess and meet the medical needs of children under agency supervision. In 80% of the foster care and in 70% of the treatment cases reviewed, reviewers determined that the medical and dental needs of the children were assessed and the identified medical needs were met. Copies of medical, dental and immunizations records were also in the case files. This area needed improvement because the agency failed to make direct contact with medical providers to determine if identified medical needs of children were being met.

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**Onsite Review Findings**

**Well Being Item 23: Mental Health of the Child**

	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	10	100	0	0	0	0
Treatment	5	63	3	37	2	0
Total Cases	15	83	3	17	2	0

**Explanation of Item 23: Mental Health of the Child**

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Marlboro DSS. This item evaluates the agency's ability to assess and meet the mental health needs of children under agency supervision. In 100% of the foster care cases and 83% of the treatment cases, the children's mental health needs were assessed and addressed. Reviewers determined that the treatment cases needed improvement because the agency failed to request mental health assessments when it had evidence that the children were exposed to domestic violence or for those children experiencing behavioral problems.

**Unfounded Investigations**

	Yes	No
Was the investigation initiated timely?	5	0
Was the assessment adequate?	5	0
Was the decision adequate?	5	0

**Explanation of Item 24: Unfounded Investigations**

This is an area of **Strength** for Marlboro DSS. This item evaluates the agency's investigative process and determines if decisions were supported by the facts of the cases. All five investigations were initiated timely. The assessment was adequate in all five cases reviewed and supported the case decision to unfound.



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Screened Out Intakes
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	Yes	No	Cannot Determine
Was Intake Appropriately Screened Out?	9	0	1
Were necessary Collaterals Contacted?	3	2	5
Were Appropriate Referrals made?	1	0	9

**Explanation of Item 25: Screened Out Intakes**

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Marlboro DSS. This item evaluates the process by which the agency screens out reports of abuse and/or neglect to determine if the intakes were appropriately screened out. Reviewers could not determine whether or not one report was screened appropriately due to insufficient documentation for screening the referral and the lack of documentation to support that the proper information was obtained from the school.

Foster Home Licenses
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<b>Agency Data</b>				
<b>Performance Measure 4: Foster Homes/Facilities with Current Licenses</b>				
<b>Objective: &gt;= 100% (Agency Policy)</b>				
	Number of Open Homes & Facilities	Homes with Current License	Percent of Homes with Current License	Above or (Below) Standard
State	3526	3503	99.3%	
Marlboro	19	19	100%	0.1

**Explanation of Item 26: Foster Home Licenses**

This is an area of **Strength** for Marlboro DSS. This item evaluates the process by which the agency ensures that all foster homes comply with licensing requirements. Agency data and the onsite review indicate that Marlboro County foster homes are at a 100% compliance level with licensing requirements.

Marlboro County DSS  
Child Welfare Services Review  
May 2009

<b>Marlboro County DSS Summary Sheet</b>				
<b>Performance Item or Outcome</b>		<b>Performance Item Ratings</b>		
		<b>Strength</b>	<b>Area Needing Improvement</b>	<b>N/A*</b>
Safety Outcome 1: Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect.				
Item 1: <b>Str</b>	Timeliness of initiating investigations of reports of child maltreatment	10/10=100%	0	10
Item 2: <b>ANI</b>	Repeat maltreatment	18/20=90%	2/20=10%	0
Safety Outcome 2: Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate.				
Item 3: <b>ANI</b>	Services to family to protect child(ren) in home and prevent removal	13/14=93%	1/14=7%	6
Item 4: <b>ANI</b>	Risk of harm to child(ren)	16//20=80%	4/20=20%	0
Permanency Outcome 1: Children have permanency and stability in their living situations.				
Item 5: <b>*Str</b>	Foster care re-entries	4/5=80%	1/5=20%	5
Item 6: <b>ANI</b>	Stability of foster care placement	10/10=100%	0	0
Item 7: <b>Str</b>	Permanency goal for child	10/10=100%	0	0
Item 8: <b>*Str</b>	Reunification, guardianship, or permanent placement with relatives	1/1 = 100%	0	9
Item 9: <b>Str</b>	Adoption	7/7=100%	0	3
Item 10: <b>Str</b>	Permanency goal of <b>Alternate Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA)</b>	2/2=100%	0	8
Permanency Outcome 2: The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children.				
Item 11: <b>*Str</b>	Proximity of foster care placement	9/9= 100%	0	1
Item 12: <b>ANI</b>	Placement with siblings	4/6=67%	2/6=33%	4
Item 13: <b>ANI</b>	Visiting with parents and siblings in foster care	7/8=88%	1/8=12%	2
Item 14: <b>ANI</b>	Preserving connections	7/8=88%	1/8=12%	2
Item 15: <b>ANI</b>	Relative placement	5/10= 50%	5/10=50%	0
Item 16: <b>ANI</b>	Relationship of child in care with parents	0	2/2=100%	8
Well Being Outcome 1: Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs.				
Item 17: <b>ANI</b>	Needs and services of child, parents, caregiver	14/20=70%	6/20=30%	0
Item 18: <b>ANI</b>	Child and family involvement in case planning	5/18=28%	13/18=72%	2
Item 19: <b>ANI</b>	Worker visits with child	12/20=60%	8/20=40%	0
Item 20: <b>ANI</b>	Worker visits with parent(s)	7//17=41%	10/17=59%	3
Well Being Outcome 2: Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs.				
Item 21: <b>ANI</b>	Educational needs of the child	17/18=94%	1/18=6%	2
Well Being Outcome 3: Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs.				
Item 22: <b>ANI</b>	Physical health of the child	15/20=75%	5/20=25%	0
Item 23: <b>ANI</b>	Mental health of the child	15/18=83%	3/18=17%	2

The objective is that 95% of cases be rated "Strength".

Str = Strength

ANI = Area Needing Improvement

\* = Rating based on agency data, not onsite review findings