

Oconee County DSS  
Child Welfare Services Review  
October 2009

During the week of September 28, 2009 to October 2, 2009, a team of DSS staff from state office and surrounding counties conducted an onsite review of child welfare services in Oconee 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, Oconee DSS supervisors and workers, representative from the schools, Foster Care Review Board, Mental Health and Guardian Ad Litem Program.

**Period under Review:** September 1, 2008 to August 31, 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 and Foster Care.

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.

Oconee County DSS  
 Child Welfare Services Review  
 October 2009

**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>Strength</b> |

<b>Agency Data</b>				
<b>Performance Measure 1: Timeliness of initiating investigations on reports of child maltreatment</b> - 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: August 1, 2009 – July 31, 2009				
<b>Objective:</b> 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	17,908	17,547	97.98%	(361)
Oconee	210	209	99.52%	(1)

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

This is an area of **Strength** for Oconee DSS. State law requires that an investigation of all (100%) accepted reports of abuse and neglect be initiated within 24 hours. Oconee DSS initiated 209 of the 210 investigations (99.52%) of alleged abuse and neglect within 24 hours. Reviewers found that risk ratings were assigned appropriately in all cases.

Oconee County DSS  
Child Welfare Services Review  
October 2009

<b>Agency Data</b>				
<b>Performance Measure 3: Treatment Cases With No New Indicated Reports</b> – Of all treatment cases that were closed during the 12 month reporting period, what percentage did NOT have a new founded intake within 12 months of the treatment case being closed? Report Period: August 1, 2008 – July 31, 2009				
<b>Objective:</b> ≥ Agency Average				
	Number of Treatment Cases Closed	Number of Treatment Cases with no founded intake within 12 months	Percent of Treatment Cases that did not have a new founded intake within 12 months	Number of Cases Above (Below) State Average
State	5,962	5,299	86.71%	
Oconee	162	148	91.35%	4.3

**Explanation of Item 2: Repeat Maltreatment**

This is an area of **Strength** for Oconee DSS. This item measures the occurrence of maltreatment among children under agency supervision, or within a year of having their case being closed by the agency. Agency data shows that there were no subsequent founded reports on 91.35% of children in in-home treatment cases. A review of foster care and in-home treatment cases, found that children under agency supervision were not experiencing maltreatment.

**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	4	100%	0	0	6	0
Treatment	6	60%	4	40%	0	0
Total Cases	10	71%	4	29%	6	0

Oconee County DSS  
Child Welfare Services Review  
October 2009

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

This is an **Area needing Improvement** for Oconee DSS. This item assesses whether services were adequate to protect children in their home and prevent their removal and placement into foster care. This was an area of strength in 100% of the foster care cases because assessments were thorough and safety plans were practical and monitored by case workers to ensure compliance. In four of the treatment cases reviewed this was an area needing improvement because the agency failed to put services in place to protect the children and failed to complete alternative caregiver safety checks on all of the adults residing in the home.

<b><u>Onsite Review Findings</u></b>						
<b>Safety Item 4: Risk of Harm</b>						
	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	10	100%	0	0	0	0
Treatment	6	60%	4	40%	0	0
Total Cases	16	80%	4	20%	0	0

**Explanation of Item 4: Risk of Harm**

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Oconee DSS. This item assesses whether the agency's interventions reduced risk of harm to children. This was an area of strength in 100% of the foster care cases reviewed. However, in 40% of the in-home treatment cases improvement was needed because of two issues: 1) failure to address risk factors associated with domestic violence, and 2) failure to assess all of the adults living in the home of alternate caregivers.

**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>Area Needing Improvement</b> |
| 8) Reunification or permanent placement with relatives                        | <b>Area Needing Improvement</b> |
| 9) Adoption   | <b>Area Needing Improvement</b> |
| 10) Permanency goal of Alternate Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA) | <b>Area Needing Improvement</b> |

Oconee County DSS  
Child Welfare Services Review  
October 2009

<b>Onsite Review Findings</b>						
<b>Permanency Item 5: Foster Care Re-entries</b>						
	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	3	100%	0	0	7	0

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

This is area of **Strength** for Oconee DSS. This item measures the frequency of children re-entering foster care within a year of discharge. The federal standard for this measure is that at least 91.30% of children entering foster care not be re-entries within a year of discharge from care. Agency data shows that no children re-entered foster care during the period under review.

**Agency Data**

**Performance Measure 6: Stability of Foster Care Placements** – 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 placement settings.

Report Period: August 1, 2008 – July 31, 2009

**Objective:** >= 86% (federal standard)

	FC 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	3,903	2,918	74.75%	(231.7)
Oconee	50	30	60.00%	(13.0)

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

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Oconee DSS. This item measures the frequency of placement changes for children in foster care, and assesses the reasons for those changes. The standard applied to this item is that at least 86% of children in care experience two or fewer placements. Agency data shows that 60% of the children in foster care experienced two or fewer placements. Reviewers also found that 20% of the foster care cases needed improvement because there was a shortage of foster homes capable of meeting the needs of the children.

Oconee County DSS  
Child Welfare Services Review  
October 2009

<b>Onsite Review Findings</b>						
<b>Permanency Item 7: Permanency Goal for Child</b>						
	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	6	100%	4	40%	0	0

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

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Oconee DSS. This item evaluates the appropriateness of permanency goals for children in foster care and the timeliness of those permanency decisions. In 40% of the cases reviewed improvement was needed because the agency took too long to establish a permanent plan. Also there was a delay with timely merits and permanency planning hearings, which caused a delay in permanency for those children. Caseworkers continue to do sequential, rather than concurrent planning. Three practice issues accounted for this rating.

1. Failure to account for the agency's history with the family.
2. Premature assignment of APPLA as a case plan because of a flawed adoption assessment process.
3. Failure to change the plan from Return Home to TPR/Adoption when it became evident that the parent was not complying with the case plan.

<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: September 1, 2008 - August 31, 2009				
<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	2,460	1,847	75.08%	(2.9)
Oconee	35	21	60.00%	(5.3)

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

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Oconee DSS. This item evaluates the activities and processes necessary to accomplish the goal of reunification with caregivers or placement with relatives. The federal standard is that at least 75.2% of children return home within a year of

Oconee County DSS  
 Child Welfare Services Review  
 October 2009

entering care. Agency data shows that 60% of the children who entered foster care in Oconee County returned home within a year. The improvement needed is in the agency's ability to change from the plan of Return Home when it becomes evident that such a plan is no longer feasible.

<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, what percentage left foster care in less than 24 months from the date of their latest removal from home?				
Report Period: September 1, 2008 – August 31, 2009				
<b>Objective:</b> >= 36.6% (National 75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile)				
	Total Number of Finalized Adoptions	# of Adoptions finalized < 24 months	Percent of Adoptions Finalized < 24 months	Number of Children Above (Below) Objective
State	524	104	19.85%	(87.8)
Oconee	7	2	28.57%	(0.6)

<b>Onsite Review Findings</b>						
<b>Permanency Item 9: Adoption</b>						
	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	2	40%	3	60%	5	0

**Explanation of Item 9: Adoption**

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Oconee DSS. This item evaluates the process within the child welfare system to achieve timely adoptions for children in foster care. The federal standard is that at least 36.6% of adoptions be completed within 24 months of a child entering care. Oconee DSS completed 19 adoptions during the period under review, which was 17% of the total number of children in foster care. Agency data indicates that 15.79% (3 of 19) of those adoptions occurred within 24 months of the child entering care. Reviewers saw a delay in pursuing adoption because the agency took too long to establish the plan of adoption and concurrent planning was not occurring. Also, there is a shortage of court time for cases to be scheduled for hearings, which causes a delay in permanency for children.

Oconee County DSS  
 Child Welfare Services Review  
 October 2009

<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	1	50%	1	50%	0	0

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

This is an **Area Needing Improvement for** Oconee DSS. This item evaluates the appropriateness and effectiveness of services provided to children with the permanency plan of APPLA. Reviewers found two cases with a plan of APPLA, one case was rated strength because the youth was receiving appropriate independent services and was maintaining a relationship with an adult who could support the youth. However, the other case needed improvement because the nine year old child with the plan of APPLA had no chance of achieving permanency. Adoption had inappropriately been ruled out.

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



Oconee County DSS  
 Child Welfare Services Review  
 October 2009

<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:				
<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	6,037	4,108	68.05%	(117.9)
Oconee	110	77	70.00%	0.0

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

This is an area of **Strength** for Oconee 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. Agency data shows that 77 of the 110 children (70%) managed in foster care during the period under review were placed within the county and this met the 70% objective established by the agency.

<b><u>Onsite Review Findings</u></b>						
<b>Permanency Item 12: Placement with Siblings</b>						
	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	5	100%	0	0	5	0

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

This is an area of **Strength** for Oconee DSS. This item evaluates the agency’s efforts to keep siblings together when it is appropriate to do so. In every case sibling groups were kept together when it was appropriate to do so.

Oconee County DSS  
Child Welfare Services Review  
October 2009

<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	5	55%	4	44%	1	0

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

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Oconee DSS. This item evaluates the agency's efforts to ensure that visits occur between children in foster care and their siblings and parents. In most of the cases reviewed, visits were happening with sibling that were placed separately and with the mother. This was an area needing improvement in 44% of the cases reviewed. In those cases, the agency failed to consistently contact the fathers of children to determine whether visits should or should not occur.

<b><u>Onsite Review Findings</u></b>						
<b>Permanency Item 14: Preserving Connections</b>						
	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	8	100%	0	0	2	0

**Explanation of Item 14: Preserving Connections**

This is an area of **Strength** for Oconee DSS. This item evaluates the agency's efforts to preserve children's connections to the people, places and things that are important to them. In 100% of the cases reviewed, the agency supported the efforts to maintain contact with relatives who were identified as important to the children. In six of the cases reviewed children were placed with relatives.

<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

Oconee County DSS  
Child Welfare Services Review  
October 2009

**Explanation of Item 15: Relative Placement**

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Oconee 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 foster care cases, the agency did not identify and assess both maternal and paternal relatives as a potential placement resource.

<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	4	100%	0	0	6	0

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

This is an area of **Strength** for Oconee 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 every applicable case reviewed the agency contact between children in foster care and their mothers was based on the child's emotional and developmental needs. The agency arranged for weekly visits between parents and their pre-school aged children. The agency arranged for parents to accompany their children to various appointments and school activities.

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> |

<b><u>Onsite Review Findings</u></b>						
<b>Well Being Item 17: Needs and Services of Child, Parents, Foster Parents</b>						
	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	8	80%	2	20%	0	0
Treatment	8	80%	2	20%	0	0
Total Cases	16	80%	4	20%	0	0

Oconee County DSS  
Child Welfare Services Review  
October 2009

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

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Oconee 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? In 20% of the foster care and treatment cases reviewed there was no evidence that needs and services for fathers were being assessed.

<b><u>Onsite Review Findings</u></b>						
<b>Well Being Item 18: Child and Family Involvement in Case Planning</b>						
	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	2	22%	7	78%	1	0
Treatment	2	20%	8	80%	0	0
Total Cases	4	21%	15	79%	1	0

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

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Oconee DSS. This item evaluates the agency's efforts to involve parents and children in the case planning process. Reviewers found that in 79% of the foster care cases and treatment cases needed improvement because fathers were not included in case planning. The agency did not have a process of documenting its efforts to look for, engage and offer services to the fathers of children in care.

<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: September 1, 2009 – August 31, 2009				
<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	105	92	87.62%	(13)
Treatment	628	471	75.00%	(55.1)

Oconee County DSS  
Child Welfare Services Review  
October 2009

<b><u>Onsite Review Findings</u></b>						
<b>Well Being Item 19: Worker Visits with Children</b>						
	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 19: Worker Visits with Child**

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Oconee DSS. This item measures the frequency of caseworker visits with children under agency supervision, and evaluates the quality of those visits. Agency data indicates that 13 of 105 foster children were not visited each month and in 157 of 628 children in treatment cases were not visited each month. Reviewers found that in 10% of the foster care cases and in 40% of the treatment cases visits were conducted as required, but the content of those visits did not address safety, permanency and child well being issues.

<b><u>Onsite Review Findings</u></b>						
<b>Well Being Item 20: Worker Visits with Parents</b>						
	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	6	75%	2	25%	2	0
Treatment	5	50%	5	50%	0	0
Total Cases	11	61%	7	39%	2	0

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

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Oconee DSS. This item measures the frequency of caseworker visits with parents, and evaluates the quality of those visits. Reviewers found that 50% of the treatment cases and 25% of the foster care cases needed improvement because there was no evidence that the agency offered the fathers of the children the opportunity to visit. Fathers were not included in the visitation plans.

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**

Oconee County DSS  
Child Welfare Services Review  
October 2009

<b><u>Onsite Review Findings</u></b>						
<b>Well Being Item 21: Educational Needs of Child</b>						
	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	6	100%	0	0	4	0
Treatment	4	80%	1	20%	5	0
Total Cases	10	90%	1	10%	9	0

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

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Oconee DSS. This item evaluates the agency's ability to assess and address the educational needs of children under agency supervision. With a 90% "Strength" rating, this is a generally well-managed area of casework for Oconee DSS. The office fell short of the 95% compliance standard because of a failure to follow up on identified educational needs.

**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	5	50%	5	50%	0	0
Treatment	9	90%	1	10%	0	0
Total Cases	14	70%	6	30%	0	0

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

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Oconee DSS. This item evaluates the agency's ability to assess and meet the physical and dental health needs of children under agency supervision. In-home treatment cases had well documented physical health assessments, and the health of children was monitored throughout the review period. In 50% of the foster care cases there was no evidence of the required physical and dental examinations of the children.

Oconee County DSS  
Child Welfare Services Review  
October 2009

<b>Onsite Review Findings</b>						
<b>Well Being Item 23: Mental Health of the Child</b>						
	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	5	100%	0	0	5	0
Treatment	5	71%	2	29%	3	0
Total Cases	10	83%	2	17%	8	0

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

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Oconee 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 71% of the treatment cases the agency managed the mental health needs of clients appropriately. The agency has been resourceful in helping children receive mental health services, but the lack of local, low-cost mental health services for children caused 29% of the cases to need improvement.

**Stakeholder Comments:** There is only one mental health adolescent counselor in this county. In most cases, the children have to go to adjacent counties for mental health services.

<b>Unfounded Investigations</b>
---------------------------------

	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Was the investigation initiated timely?	5	0
Was the assessment adequate?	4	1
Was the decision appropriate?	4	1

**Explanation of Item 24: Unfounded Investigations**

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Oconee DSS. This item evaluates the agency's investigative process and determines if decisions were supported by the facts of the cases. All five of the investigations were initiated timely. Four of the five assessments reviewed were thorough. The decision to unfound one of the cases was not appropriate because the children were exposed to domestic violence in the home. There was no mental assessment of the children to determine how this incident affected them.

Oconee County DSS  
Child Welfare Services Review  
October 2009

Screened Out Intakes

	Yes	No	Cannot Determine
Was the Intake Appropriately Screened Out?	9	0	0
			<b>Not Applicable</b>
Were Necessary Collaterals Contacted?	1	0	9
Were Appropriate Referrals Made?	1	0	9

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

This is an area of **Strength** for Oconee DSS. This item evaluates the process by which the agency screens out reports of abuse or neglect to determine if the intakes were appropriately screened out. All of the intakes reviewed were appropriately screened out. Whenever the situation called for it, staff contacted appropriate collaterals for clarifying information, and made referrals to other service providers.

Foster Home Licenses

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

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Oconee DSS. This item evaluates the process by which the agency insures that all foster homes comply with the licensing requirements. Twenty percent of the foster home licenses reviewed had invalid licenses because required safety checks were not completed on household members.



Oconee County DSS  
Child Welfare Services Review  
October 2009

<b>Oconee 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	7/7 = 100%	0	13
Item 2:	<b>Str</b> Repeat maltreatment	20/20 = 100%	0	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	9/13 = 69%	4/13 = 31%	7
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	3/3 = 100%	0	7
Item 6:	<b>ANI</b> Stability of foster care placement	8/10 = 80%	2/10 = 20%	0
Item 7:	<b>ANI</b> Permanency goal for child	7/10 = 70%	3/10 = 30%	0
Item 8:	<b>ANI</b> Reunification, guardianship, or permanent placement with relatives	2/3 = 67%	1/3 = 33%	7
Item 9:	<b>ANI</b> Adoption	2/5 = 40%	3/5 = 60%	5
Item 10:	<b>ANI</b> Permanency goal of Alternate Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA)	1/2 = 50%	1/2 = 50%	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	10/10 = 100%	0	0
Item 12:	<b>Str</b> Placement with siblings	5/5 = 100%	0	5
Item 13:	<b>ANI</b> Visiting with parents and siblings in foster care	7/9 = 78%	2/9 = 22%	1
Item 14:	<b>Str</b> Preserving connections	8/8 = 100%	0	2
Item 15:	<b>ANI</b> Relative placement	6/10 = 60%	4/10 = 40%	0
Item 16:	<b>Str</b> Relationship of child in care with parents	4/4 = 100%	0	6
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	16/20 = 80%	4/20 = 20%	0
Item 18:	<b>ANI</b> Child and family involvement in case planning	8/19 = 42%	11/19 = 58%	1
Item 19:	<b>*ANI</b> Worker visits with child	16/20 = 80%	4/20 = 20%	0
Item 20:	<b>ANI</b> Worker visits with parent(s)	12/18 = 67%	6/18 = 33%	2
Well Being Outcome 2: Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs				
Item 21:	<b>ANI</b> Educational needs of the child	9/10 = 90%	1/10 = 10%	9
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	16/20 = 80%	4/20 = 20%	0
Item 23:	<b>ANI</b> Mental health of the child	10/12 = 83%	2/12 = 17%	8

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