

**Lancaster County DSS
Child Welfare Services Review
December 2006**

During the week of December 4 - 8, 2006 a team of DSS staff from state office and surrounding counties conducted an onsite review of child welfare services in Lancaster 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, Lancaster DSS supervisors, representatives from the schools, Foster Care Review Board, Mental Health and Guardian Ad Litem Program

Period included in Case Record Review: June 1, 2006 to November 30, 2006

Period included in Outcome Measures: December 1, 2005 to November 30, 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.

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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 an area of **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: 12/1/05 to 11/30/06
***Objective: 100% in <= 24 hours**

	Number of Reports Accepted	Number of Investigations Initiated Timely	Percent of Investigations Initiated Timely	Number of Investigations Above (Below) Objective
State	16,279	15,843	97.3%	-436
Lancaster	476	470	98.7%	-6

*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 Lancaster DSS. State law requires that an investigation of all accepted reports of abuse and neglect be initiated within 24 hours. Although this generally, is a strong area for Lancaster; the outcome measure report shows that the county only initiated 470 of the 476 investigations within the mandated 24 hours. As a result, the county missed this measure by six cases. Consequently, timeliness of initiating investigations is an area needing improvement.

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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

***Objective: <=6.1%**

	Number of Child Victims in Founded Report	Number of Children Victims In Another Founded Report	Percent of Children in Another Founded Report	Number of Children Above (Below) Objective
State	10,072	68	0.68%	546.39
Lancaster	223	2	0.90%	11.60

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	9	90	1	10	0	0
Total Cases	18	90	2	10	0	0

Explanation of Item 2

This is an area of **Strength** for Lancaster DSS. Outcome measure data shows that two of the 223 incidents of maltreatment were 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. Overall, both the outcome report and onsite review show a very low incidence of repeat maltreatment.

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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	0	0	0	0	10	0
Treatment	10	100	0	0	0	0
Total Cases	10	100	0	0	0	0

Explanation of Item 3

This is an area of **Strength** for Lancaster DSS. The review found that in 100% of the treatment cases reviewed services to families to protect children were adequate. All 10 of the foster care cases reviewed were not applicable.

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.

***Objective: <=8.5%**

	Number of Alleged Victims after Unfounded Report 6/01/05 to 5/31/06	Number of Alleged Victims within 6 Months of Unfounded Determination	Percent of Alleged Victims within 6 months of the Unfounded Determination	Number of children Above (Below) Objective
State	14,525	1,133	7.80%	101.6
Lancaster	421	34	8.08	1.8

*This is a DSS established objective.

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Onsite Review Findings Performance Item Ratings						
Safety Item 4: Risk of harm.						
	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

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Lancaster DSS. According to the Outcome Measure Report, Lancaster County met the agency established objective for this outcome. The report indicates that Lancaster had 421 unfounded reports from June 1, 2005 thru May 31, 2006. Out of those reports, only 34 had another report within six months of the unfounded determinations. The onsite reviewers found that in four of the 10 treatment cases reviewed, services in the home to protect the children were not adequate. Therefore, risk of harm in the home had not been adequately reduced. Risk of harm to the children had been adequately reduced in 100% of the foster care cases reviewed. For example, in one foster care case the parents refused to cooperate with the agency during an open treatment case. As a result the children were taken into foster care via Exparte Order. In treatment cases parents with poor prognoses for improvement either retained custody of their children or had ready access to those children when the children were placed with relatives. Even when workers clearly documented ongoing risks to children in treatment cases there was often no adequate intervention to reduce those risks.

Stakeholder Comment: “DSS does remove kids if they are at risk. Most of the time, risk factors are identified well and risk of harm is lessened.”

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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.

***Objective: >=86.7%**

	Number of Children Entering Care <10/01/05 to 11/30/06	Number Entering Care After Returning Home w/in The Past 12 Months From Previous Foster Care Episode	Percent Entering Care After Returning Home within 12 months from previous FC Episode.	Number of Children Above (Below) Objective
State	3,462	272	7.86%	25.7
Lancaster	51	8	15.69%	-3.6

*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	2	100	0	0	8	0

Explanation of Item 5

Foster Care Re-entries is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Lancaster DSS. The two cases that entered foster care during the period under review had no prior foster care episodes.

However, the outcome report shows that eight of the 51 (17%) children entering care during the period under review had been returned home in the prior 12 months. Consequently, Item 5 is an area needing improvement for Lancaster DSS.

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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.

***Objective: >=86.7%**

	Number of Children In Care Less Than 12 Months	Number of Children With No More Than 2 Placements	Percent of Children with No More than Two Placements	Number of Children Above (Below) Objective
State	3,930	3,166	80.56%	-241.3
Lancaster	33	25	75.76%	-3.6

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

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Lancaster DSS. The outcome report shows that 25 of the 33 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 an area of strength. There were two foster care cases rated an area needing improvement. In those cases, the children who moved had multiple placement changes six months prior to the period under review. In one case, the child disrupted placement several times because of his defiant behaviors. In the other case, the child was placed in several temporary placements due to the agency's inability to secure a long term placement.

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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.

***Objective: >=53%**

	Children in Care At Least 15 of the Last 22 Months 12/2005 –11/2006	Number of Children With TPR Complaint	Percent of Children With TPR Compliant	Number of Children Above (Below) Objective
State	3,610	1,676	46.4%	-237.3
Lancaster	49	26	53.1%	0.0

*This is a 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	10	100	0	0	0	0

Explanation of Item 7

This is an area of **Strength** for Lancaster DSS. To meet the criteria established in the CAPSS report 53% 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 filed timely on 26 of the 49 children (53%) in foster care.

Reviewers found that Lancaster DSS did a good job in determining the most appropriate permanency plan for the children in their care. All 10 of the foster care cases reviewed were rated an area of strength.

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Strategic Outcome Report Findings

Measure P3.3: **Length of Time to Achieve Reunification** – Of all the 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.

***Objective: >=76.2%**

	Number of Children Returned Home 12/01/05–11/30/06	Number of Children Returned Home after in Care Less Than 12 Months	Percent of Children Returned Home after in Care Less Than 12 Months	Number of Children Above (Below) Objective
State	2,144	1,740	81.16%	106.3
Lancaster	15	7	46.67%	-4.4

*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	100	0	0	7	0

Explanation of Item 8

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Lancaster 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 Lancaster County the percentage was 47%. Onsite reviewers found that the plan of return home for three of the foster care cases reviewed were appropriate. The other seven cases reviewed had other permanency plans.

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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.

***Objective: >=32%**

	Number of Children Whose Adoption Was Finalized during 12/1/05-11/30/06	Number of Children Whose Adoption Was Finalized in <12 Months	Percent of Children Whose Adoption was Finalized in< 12 Months	Number of Children Above (Below) Objective
State	403	62	15.4%	-67.0
Lancaster	3	2	66.7%	1.0

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	4	67	2	33	4	0

Explanation of Item 9

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Lancaster DSS. The outcome report shows three adoptions were completed in the past 12 months. Two of those adoptions were done within 24 months of the child entering care – which is 66%, compared to the federal standard of 32%. Onsite review findings were consistent with that data. Six foster care cases reviewed had the plan of adoption. The plan of adoption in four of those six cases was on track to be finalized within 24 months. In those cases, the children had been in foster care less than 15 months. Two cases were rated an area needing improvement because the adoption was not finalized within 24 months of the children entering care. One case is case managed by the MTS office. One case is managed by the Adoption unit. In the MTS record, the child had been in care since 2000. Trauma from her history of sexual abuse has made finding an appropriate adoptive family difficult. In the Adoption record, the child has been in care since September, 2004. In November, 2005, an adoptive resource was identified but the potential adoptive resource declined placement in January, 2006. The agency then began the process of identifying another adoptive family for that child.

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Strategic Outcome Report Findings

Measure P3.6: **Permanency Goal of “Other Planned Living Arrangement”** – Of all the 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.

***Objective: <=15%**

	Number of Children in Care at Least One Day 12/01/05 – 11/30/06	Number of Children in Care with Perm Plan “Other Planned Living Arrangement”	Percent of Children with Permanency Plan of Other Planned Living Arrangement	Number of Children Above (Below) Objective
State	8,436	1,513	17.9%	0
Lancaster	51	4	7.8%	3.7

* 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	1	100	0	0	9	0

Explanation of Item 10

This is an area of **Strength** for Lancaster 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 outcome data shows four of the 51 children in Lancaster custody had this plan. The county’s performance for this measure is above the agency standard by seven percentage points. One foster care case reviewed onsite had APPLA as a permanency plan. In that case, the plan was appropriate for the 17 year old child. Case documentation supports that Independent Living services were being provided to the child as required by policy.

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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 12/01/05 – 11/30/06	Number of Children Placed Within County of Origin	Percent of Children Placed Within County of Origin	Number of Children Above (Below) Objective
State	6,350	3,967	62.5%	-478.0
Lancaster	53	29	54.7%	-8.1

*This is a DSS established objective.

Onsite Review Findings Performance Item Ratings

Permanency Item 11: Proximity of Foster Care Placement

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

Explanation of Item 11

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Lancaster DSS. According to the outcome report 29 of 53 (54.7%) foster children were placed within the county. To meet the standard for this item at least 70% must be placed within the county. As a result, Item 11 is a weak area for Lancaster DSS.

Onsite reviewers found that in three of the foster care cases reviewed, where the children were placed outside of the county; it was due to their need for therapeutic placement. In one case the child was placed in an adjacent county.

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Onsite Review Findings Performance Item Ratings						
Permanency Item 12: Placement with siblings						
	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	5	100	0	0	5	0

Explanation of Item 12

This is an area of **Strength** for Lancaster DSS. Onsite reviewers determined that Lancaster DSS does a very good job in placing siblings together. All five of the foster care cases reviewed were rated an area of strength.

Stakeholder Comment: “The workers do a great job keeping siblings together in care, unless it is not in the best interest of the sibling group.”

Onsite Review Findings Performance Item Ratings						
Permanency Item 13: Visiting with parents and siblings in foster care						
	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	5	71	2	29	3	0

Explanation

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Lancaster DSS. In most (71%) 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, there were two cases rated an area needing improvement for Item 13. One case was case managed by the Adoptions unit. One was case managed by the MTS office. In those cases, reviewers determined that visits with the parents and the other siblings in foster care were not occurring. It appears that the agency’s efforts were not adequate in sending correspondence to parents regarding visitation with their children. There was inadequate documentation supporting the agency’s efforts in arranging visitation between the child and the other siblings in care.

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Site Visit Findings Performance Item Ratings						
Permanency Item 14: Preserving connections						
	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	9	100	0	0	1	0

Explanation

This is an area of **Strength** for Lancaster 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. All nine of the applicable foster care cases were rated an area of strength for Item 14. In those cases, documentation supports that Lancaster does a very good job of preserving the relationships that are important to children in foster care. Reviewers saw many examples of relatives and parental involvement in their children's lives beyond the minimum required visitation.

Onsite Review Findings Performance Item Ratings						
Permanency Item 15: Relative placement						
	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	6	67	3	33	1	0

Explanation

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Lancaster DSS. This item addresses the agency's effectiveness in identifying and assessing the relatives of children in foster care as possible caregivers. In 67% 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 33% of the foster care cases reviewed, there was no indication that paternal or maternal relatives were assessed as placement resources.

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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	80	1	20	5	0

Explanation

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Lancaster 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 an area needing improvement because reviewers found that in the MTS record, the agency's efforts in promoting the relationship between child and mom was limited. Case documentation to support the agency's efforts in sending correspondence to the mother regarding the child's counseling and other appointments beyond the required twice a month visits were not consistent.

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	10	100	0	0	0	0
Treatment	7	70	3	30	0	0
Total Cases	17	85	3	15	0	0

Explanation

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Lancaster DSS. This item asks two questions: 1) Were the needs of the child, parents, and foster parents assessed, and 2) Did the agency take steps to meet the identified needs? This measure was rated an area of strength in 70% of the treatment cases and in 100% of the foster care cases reviewed. The practice most identified as needing improvement was the need for more thorough assessments of all the appropriate family members. In the three treatment cases rated an area needing improvement; documentation did not support that the parents' needs were assessed and appropriate services were implemented.

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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	7	78	2	22	1	0
Treatment	7	70	3	30	0	0
Total Cases	13	68	6	32	1	0

Explanation

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Lancaster DSS. Onsite reviewers determined that in both treatment and foster care, workers did not consistently involve the children and parents in the case planning process. The reviewers found that in 22% of the foster care cases reviewed, the record lacked supporting documentation of involving the child and the mother in the case planning process. In 30% of the treatment cases reviewed, the record contained no supporting documentation of involving the fathers and other appropriate family members in the case planning process.

Onsite Review Findings Performance Item Ratings						
Well Being Item 19: Worker visits with child						
	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	10	100	0	0	0	0
Treatment	9	90	1	10	0	0
Total Cases	19	95	1	5	0	0

Explanation

This is an area of **Strength** for Lancaster DSS. This rating is based on two questions: 1) Were Lancaster 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 treatment were seen each month. However, in 100% of the foster care cases reviewed, the children were seen monthly as required by policy.

Stakeholder Comments: “The agency does a good job with visitation. Visits to foster children are timely.”

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Onsite Review Findings Performance Item Ratings						
Well Being Item 20: Worker visits with parent(s)						
	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	4	80	1	20	5	0
Treatment	6	60	4	40	0	0
Total Cases	10	67	5	33	0	0

Explanation

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Lancaster DSS. In Item 20, the reviewers found that in 67% of the treatment cases and in 80% of the foster care cases, monthly contacts were made with the parents during the period under review.

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	7	100	0	0	3	0
Treatment	8	100	0	0	2	0
Total Cases	15	100	0	0	5	0

Explanation

This is an area of **Strength** for Lancaster 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 and treatment cases reviewed. The review found that educational needs were adequately assessed in both treatment and foster care cases. Copies of school attendance records and progress reports were in both the foster and treatment case records.

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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	10	100	0	0	0	0
Treatment	9	90	1	10	0	0
Total Cases	19	95	1	5	0	0

Explanation

This is an area of **Strength** for Lancaster DSS. All treatment and foster care cases were rated an area of strength with the exception of one deficiency in a treatment case. In that case the agency failed to follow through on the special medical services for the twin children.

Onsite Review Findings Performance Item Ratings

Well Being Item 23: Mental health of the child

	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	7	100	0	0	3	0
Treatment	8	100	0	0	2	0
Total Cases	15	100	0	0	5	0

Explanation

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Lancaster DSS. Mental health services were sought in 100% of the foster care and treatment cases when indications were that the services were needed or a more thorough mental health assessment was warranted.

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Section Eight – Foster Home Licenses

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Lancaster DSS. The outcome report shows that of the 52 children with a foster care episode in the past 12 months, 27 were placed within the county (51.9%), which is below the standard of 70% placed within the county. The reviewers found that five out of the 10 licensing records showed that documentation both in the files and in CAPSS was generally very good. All of the licensing records were well organized. The three problems most often cited were 1) inconsistencies between the CAPSS record and the hard copy files, 2) foster parents who may be waiting until the last minute to complete training hours, and 3) background information and other deficiencies not consistently documented in CAPSS.

Section Nine – Unfounded Investigations

	Yes	No
Investigation initiated timely?	5	0
Was assessment adequate?	5	0
Was decision appropriate?	5	0

This is an area of **Strength** for Lancaster DSS. All five of the assessments were adequate. The decision to unfind the case in all five of the investigations was supported by the available evidence.

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Section Ten – Screened Out Intakes

	Yes	No	Cannot Determine
Was Intake Appropriately Screened Out?	10		
	Yes	No	Not Applicable
Were Necessary Collaterals Contacted?	4		6
Were Appropriate Referrals Made?	1		9

This is an area of **Strength** for Lancaster DSS. All 10 of the Intakes reviewed were appropriately screened out. The reviewers found that Lancaster County does a good job in documenting the justification for screening out reports and inputting the documentations into CAPSS.

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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	18/20 = 90%	2/20 = 10%	
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	10/10 = 100%	0	10
Item 4: 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: Foster care re-entries	2/2 = 100%	0	8
Item 6: Stability of foster care placement	8/10 = 80%	2/10 = 20%	0
Item 7: Permanency goal for child	10/10 = 100%	0	0
Item 8: Reunification, guardianship, or permanent placement with relatives	3/3 = 100%	0	7
Item 9: Adoption	4/6 = 67%	2/6 = 33%	4
Item 10: Permanency goal of Alternate Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA)	1/1 = 100%	0	9
Permanency Outcome 2: The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children.			
Item 11: Proximity of foster care placement	7/7 = 100%	0	3
Item 12: Placement with siblings	5/5 = 100%	0	5
Item 13: Visiting with parents and siblings in foster care	5/7 = 71%	2/7 = 29%	3
Item 14: Preserving connections	9/9 = 100%	0	1
Item 15: Relative placement	6/9 = 67%	3/9 = 33%	1
Item 16: Relationship of child in care with parents	4/5 = 80%	1/5 = 20%	5
Well Being Outcome 1: Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs.			
Item 17: Needs and services of child, parents, caregiver	17/20 = 85%	3/20 = 15%	0
Item 18: Child and family involvement in case planning	14/19 = 74%	5/19 = 26%	1
Item 19: Worker visits with child	18/20 = 90%	2/20 = 10%	0
Item 20: Worker visits with parent(s)	10/15 = 67%	5/15 = 33%	4
Well Being Outcome 2: Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs.			
Item 21: Educational needs of the child	15/15 = 100%	0	5
Well Being Outcome 3: Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs.			
Item 22: Physical health of the child	19/20 = 95%	1/20 = 5%	0
Item 23: Mental health of the child	15/15 = 100%	0	5