

**South Carolina Department of Social Services**  
**Child Welfare Quality Assurance Review: Kershaw County**  
**Summary Report**

---

This summary report describes the results of the South Carolina Department of Social Services (DSS) Kershaw County Quality Assurance Review, conducted June 23 - 27, 2014. The period under review was June 1, 2013 to May 31, 2014.

DSS Child Welfare Quality Assurance Reviews are conducted using the *Onsite Review Instrument* (OSRI) finalized by the federal Administration for Children & Families (ACF) in July 2008. This instrument is used to review foster care and family preservation services cases. Twenty cases were reviewed including 10 foster care and 10 family preservation cases.

The OSRI is divided into three sections: safety, permanency, and child and family well-being. There are two safety outcomes, two permanency outcomes, and three well-being outcomes. Reviewers collect information on a number of *items* related to each of the outcomes through case file review, the use of the Child and Adult Protective Services System (CAPSS), and case related interviews. CAPSS is South Carolina's Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS), which contains all case related information. This information is detailed on the OSRI as support for rating selection.

The ratings for each *item* are combined to determine the rating for the outcome. The *items* are rated as *strength*, *area needing improvement*, or not applicable. Outcomes are rated as being substantially achieved, partially achieved, not achieved, or not applicable. Ratings for each of the outcomes are displayed in Table 1.

**Table 1. Child Welfare QA Onsite Reviews – Ratings by Outcome**

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Substantially Achieved</b>	<b>Partially Achieved</b>	<b>Not Achieved</b>
<b>Safety 1</b> CHILDREN ARE, FIRST AND FOREMOST, PROTECTED FROM ABUSE AND NEGLECT	78% (7)	22% (2)	0% (0)
<b>Safety 2</b> CHILDREN ARE SAFELY MAINTAINED IN THEIR HOMES WHENEVER POSSIBLE AND APPROPRIATE	45% (9)	15% (3)	40% (8)
<b>Permanency 1</b> CHILDREN HAVE PERMANENCY AND STABILITY IN THEIR LIVING SITUATIONS	20% (2)	70% (7)	10% (1)
<b>Permanency 2</b> THE CONTINUITY OF FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS AND CONNECTIONS IS PRESERVED FOR CHILDREN	50% (5)	50% (5)	0% (0)
<b>Well-Being 1</b> FAMILIES HAVE ENHANCED CAPACITY TO PROVIDE FOR THEIR CHILDREN'S NEEDS	25% (5)	40% (8)	35% (7)
<b>Well-Being 2</b> CHILDREN RECEIVE APPROPRIATE SERVICES TO MEET THEIR EDUCATIONAL NEEDS	89% (8)	11% (1)	0% (0)
<b>Well-Being 3</b> CHILDREN RECEIVE ADEQUATE SERVICES TO MEET THEIR PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS	47% (8)	29% (5)	24% (4)

Results for outcomes and *items* are reported by the number of cases and the percentage of total cases given each rating. In addition, the percentage of *strengths* is calculated for each *item*. This percentage is calculated by adding the number of *strengths* and the number of *areas needing improvement*. The number of *strengths* is divided into this total to determine the *percentage of strengths*. Appendix 1 provides more detailed analysis of issues impacting the ANI ratings.

## SECTION I: REVIEW FINDINGS

### ***SAFETY OUTCOME 1: CHILDREN ARE, FIRST AND FOREMOST, PROTECTED FROM ABUSE AND NEGLECT***

Two *items* are included under Safety Outcome 1. Ratings for the two *items* are shown in Table 2.

#### ***Item 1: Timeliness of initiating investigations***

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether responses to all accepted child maltreatment reports received during the period under review were initiated and face-to-face contact with the child made, within the timeframes established by agency policies or State statute.

Table 2.

Rating	Item 1	Item 2
<i>Strength</i>	35% (7)	40% (8)
<i>Area needing improvement</i>	10% (2)	0% (0)
<i>Not Applicable</i>	55% (11)	60% (12)
Total	100% (20)	100% (20)
<i>% Strengths</i>	<b>77.8% (7)</b>	<b>100% (8)</b>

#### ***Item 2: Repeat maltreatment***

Purpose of Assessment: To determine if any child in the family experienced repeat maltreatment within a 6-month period.

### ***SAFETY OUTCOME 2: CHILDREN ARE SAFELY MAINTAINED IN THEIR HOMES WHENEVER POSSIBLE AND APPROPRIATE***

Two *items* are included under Safety Outcome 2. Ratings for the *items* are shown in Table 3.

#### ***Item 3: Services to family***

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, the agency made concerted efforts to provide services to the family to prevent children’s entry into foster care or re-entry after a reunification.

Table 3.

Rating	Item 3	Item 4
<i>Strength</i>	25% (5)	50% (10)
<i>Area needing improvement</i>	40% (8)	50% (10)
<i>Not Applicable</i>	35% (7)	0% (0)
Total	100% (20)	100% (20)
<i>% Strengths</i>	<b>38.5% (5)</b>	<b>50% (10)</b>

#### ***Item 4: Risk assessment and safety management***

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, the agency made concerted efforts to assess and address the risk and safety concerns relating to the child(ren) in their own homes or while in foster care.

### ***PERMANENCY OUTCOME 1: CHILDREN HAVE PERMANENCY AND STABILITY IN THEIR LIVING SITUATIONS***

Six *items* are included under Permanency Outcome 1. Ratings for the *items* are shown in Table 4.

#### ***Item 5: Foster Care reentries***

Purpose of Assessment: To assess whether children who entered foster care during the period under review were re-entering within 12 months of a prior foster care episode.

#### ***Item 6: Stability of foster care placement***

Purpose of Assessment: To determine if the child in foster care is in a stable placement at the time of the onsite review and that any changes in placement that occurred during the period under review were in the best interest of the child and consistent with achieving the child’s permanency goal(s).

**Item 7: Permanency goal for child**

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether appropriate permanency goals were established for the child in a timely manner.

**Item 8: Reunification, guardianship, or permanent placement with relatives**

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether concerted efforts were made, or are being made, during the period under review, to achieve reunification, guardianship, or permanent placement with relatives in a timely manner.

**Item 9: Adoption**

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, concerted efforts were made, or are being made, to achieve a finalized adoption in a timely manner.

**Item 10: Other planned permanent living arrangement (OPPLA)**

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, the agency made concerted efforts to ensure:

- That the child is adequately prepared to make the transition from foster care to independent living (if it is expected that the child will remain in foster care until he or she reaches the age of majority or is emancipated).
- That the child, even though remaining in foster care, is in a “permanent” living arrangement with a foster parent or relative caregiver and that there is a commitment on the part of all parties involved that the child remain in that placement until he or she reaches the age of majority or is emancipated.
- That the child is in a long-term care facility and will remain in that facility until transition to an adult care facility.

Table 4.

Rating	Item 5	Item 6	Item 7	Item 8	Item 9	Item 10
Strength	10% (2)	35% (7)	20% (4)	10% (2)	5% (1)	10% (2)
Area needing improvement	0% (0)	15% (3)	30% (6)	20% (4)	15% (3)	5% (1)
Not Applicable	90% (18)	50% (10)	50% (10)	70% (14)	80% (16)	85% (17)
Total	100% (20)	100% (20)	100% (20)	100% (20)	100% (20)	100% (20)
% Strengths	<b>100% (2)</b>	<b>70% (7)</b>	<b>40% (4)</b>	<b>33.3% (2)</b>	<b>25% (1)</b>	<b>66.7% (2)</b>

**PERMANENCY OUTCOME 2: THE CONTINUITY OF FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS AND CONNECTIONS IS PRESERVED FOR CHILDREN**

Six items are included under Permanency Outcome 2. Ratings for the items are shown in Table 5.

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

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, concerted efforts were made to ensure that the child’s foster care placement was close enough to the parent(s) to facilitate face-to-face contact between the child and the parent(s) while the child was in foster care.

**Item 12: Placement with siblings**

Purpose of Assessment: To determine if, during the period under review, concerted efforts were made to ensure that siblings in foster care are placed together unless a separation was necessary to meet the needs of one of the siblings.

**Item 13: Visiting with parents & siblings in foster care**

Purpose of Assessment: To determine if, during the period under review, concerted efforts were made to ensure that visitation between a child in foster care and his or her mother, father, and siblings is of sufficient frequency and quality to promote continuity in the child’s relationship with these close family members.

**Item 14: Preserving connections**

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, concerted efforts were made to maintain the child’s connections to his or her neighborhood, community, faith, extended family, tribe, school, and friends.

**Item 15: Relative placement**

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, concerted efforts were made to place the child with relatives when appropriate.

**Item 16: Relationship of child in care with parents**

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, concerted efforts were made to promote, support, and/or maintain positive relationships between the child in foster care and his or her mother and father or other primary caregiver(s) from whom the child had been removed through activities other than just arranging for visitation.

Table 5.

Rating	Item 11	Item 12	Item 13	Item 14	Item 15	Item 16
Strength	30% (6)	15% (3)	15% (3)	35% (7)	35% (7)	10% (2)
Area needing improvement	5% (1)	0% (0)	15% (3)	15% (3)	10% (2)	20% (4)
Not Applicable	65% (13)	85% (17)	70% (14)	50% (10)	55% (11)	70% (14)
Total	100% (20)	100% (20)	100% (20)	100% (20)	100% (20)	100% (20)
% Strengths	<b>85.7% (6)</b>	<b>100% (3)</b>	<b>50% (3)</b>	<b>70% (7)</b>	<b>77.8% (7)</b>	<b>33.3% (2)</b>

**WELL-BEING OUTCOME 1: FAMILIES HAVE ENHANCED CAPACITY TO PROVIDE FOR THEIR CHILDREN’S NEEDS**

Four items are included under Well-Being Outcome 1. Ratings for the items are shown in Table 6.

**Item 17: Needs and services of child, parents, & foster parents**

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, the agency made concerted efforts to assess the needs of children, parents, and foster parents (both at the child’s entry into foster care [if the child entered during the period under review] or on an ongoing basis) to identify the services necessary to achieve case goals and adequately address the issues relevant to the agency’s involvement with the family, and provided the appropriate services.

**Item 18: Child & family involvement in case planning**

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, concerted efforts were made (or are being made) to involve parents and children (if developmentally appropriate) in the case planning process on an ongoing basis.

**Item 19: Caseworker visits with the child**

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether the frequency and quality of visits between caseworkers and the child(ren) in the case are sufficient to ensure the safety, permanency, and well-being of the child and promote achievement of case goals.

**Item 20: Caseworker visits with parents**

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, the frequency and quality of visits between caseworkers and the mothers and fathers of the children are sufficient to ensure the safety, permanency, and well-being of the children and promote achievement of case goals.

Table 6.

Rating	Item 17	Item 18	Item 19	Item 20
Strength	30% (6)	30% (6)	60% (12)	10% (2)
Area needing improvement	70% (14)	65% (13)	40% (8)	75% (15)
Not Applicable	0% (0)	5% (1)	0% (0)	15% (3)
Total	100% (20)	100% (20)	100% (20)	100% (20)
% Strengths	<b>30% (6)</b>	<b>31.6% (6)</b>	<b>60% (12)</b>	<b>11.8% (2)</b>

**WELL-BEING OUTCOME 2: CHILDREN RECEIVE APPROPRIATE SERVICES TO MEET THEIR EDUCATIONAL NEEDS**

One item is included under Well-Being Outcome 2. Ratings for the item are shown in Table 7.

**Item 21: Educational needs of child**

Purpose of Assessment: To assess whether, during the period under review, the agency made concerted efforts to assess children’s educational needs at the initial contact with the child (if the case was opened during the period under review) or on an ongoing basis (if the case was opened before the period under review), and whether identified needs were appropriately addressed in case planning and case management activities.

Table 7.

Rating	Item 21
Strength	40% (8)
Area needing improvement	5% (1)
Not Applicable	55% (11)
Total	100% (20)
% Strengths	<b>88.9% (8)</b>

**WELL-BEING OUTCOME 3: CHILDREN RECEIVE ADEQUATE SERVICES TO MEET THEIR PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS**

Two items are included under Well-Being Outcome 3. Ratings for the items are shown in Table 8.

**Item 22: Physical health of child**

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, the agency addressed the physical health needs of the child, including dental health needs.

**Item 23: Mental/behavioral health of child**

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, the agency addressed the mental/behavioral health needs of the child(ren).

**Table 8.**

<b>Rating</b>	<b>Item 22</b>	<b>Item 23</b>
<i>Strength</i>	45% (9)	50% (10)
<i>Area needing improvement</i>	30% (6)	25% (5)
Not Applicable	25% (5)	25% (5)
Total	100% (20)	100% (20)
<i>% Strengths</i>	<b>60% (9)</b>	<b>66.7% (10)</b>

**Table 9. Kershaw County *Percentage of Strengths* on 23 Quality Assurance Items Across Two Reviews**

Item	September 2011 PUR (9-1-2010 – 8-31-2011)	June 2014 PUR (6-1-2013 - 5-31-2014)
1. Timeliness of Initiating Investigations	87.5%	77.8%
2. Reoccurrence of Maltreatment	87.5%	100%
3. Services to Family	66.7%	38.5%
4. Risk Assessment and Safety Management	68.4%	50%
5. Foster Care Re-Entries	100%	100%
6. Stability of Foster Care Placement	60%	70%
7. Permanency Goal for Child	80%	40%
8. Reunification, Guardianship, or Perm. Placement with Relatives	66.7%	33.3%
9. Adoption	50%	25%
10. Other Planned Permanent Living Arrangement	66.7%	66.7%
11. Proximity of Foster Care Placement	87.5%	85.7%
12. Placement with Siblings	25%	100%
13. Visiting with Parents and Siblings in Foster Care	12.5%	50%
14. Preserving Connections	57.1%	70%
15. Relative Placement	44.4%	77.8%
16. Relationship of Child in Care with Parent	0%	33.3%
17. Needs and Services for Child, Parents, and Caregivers	47.4%	30%
18. Child and Family Involvement in Case Planning	44.4%	31.6%
19. Worker Visits with Child	73.7%	60%
20. Worker Visits with Parents	41.2%	11.8%
21. Educational Needs of the Child	100%	88.9%
22. Physical Health of the Child	85.7%	60.0%
23. Mental Health of the Child	87.5%	66.7%

## SECTION II: FOSTER HOME LICENSE REVIEW

As part of the Quality Assurance Review Process in Kershaw County, ten Foster Home Licenses were randomly selected from the list of all licenses issued for the county during the period under review. These licenses are reviewed using the *South Carolina Department of Social Services Quality Assurance Foster Home License Review Instruments*. There is one instrument for issuance of initial licenses and another instrument for the renewal of licenses. Each instrument contains a section of deficiencies, namely agency oversight, data entry, and qualitative issues. Deficiencies noted in this section may not invalidate the license but still require attention and correction by county management. Each instrument includes the appropriate agency, state, and federal requirements.

Initial License review criteria include the following *items*:

- Applications
- Autobiography information
- Financial information
- Child factor's checklists
- Initial home assessment studies
- References
- Information related to firearms and ammunition in the house
- Pet vaccination information
- Background checks
- Convictions
- Required trainings
- Medical reports
- Fire inspections/re-inspections
- DHEC/Lead inspections
- Central registry check on alternative caregiver, if applicable
- A review of any conflicts noted between file documents and CAPSS
- Completion and issuance of the 1513 prior to the license being issued
- Guidelines regarding in-ground swimming pools

Renewal License review criteria include the following *items*:

- Convictions
- Training hours
- Medical reports if a new household member has been added or if there is a change in foster parent's medical status
- Fire inspections Quarterly home visits
- FBI checks, if applicable
- Guidelines regarding in-ground swimming pools
- 1513 completed prior to issuance of the license
- Any amendments to the license, if applicable
- Documentation regarding if there are more than five children in the home
- Annual firearms location update
- Information concerning the alternative caregivers
- Safety checks of alternative caregivers
- A review of child protective service allegations
- Pet vaccination information
- A review of any regulatory infractions
- A review of any conflicts noted between file documents and CAPSS

Possible *deficiencies* found in Initial and Renewal cases include:

- Updated home studies
- Discipline Agreements
- Fire drills
- Quarterly home visits
- Disaster Preparedness Plans
- Information concerning the alternative caregivers
- Alternative caregiver forms
- Applications
- Autobiography information



- Financial information
- Child factor’s checklists
- Initial home assessment studies
- References

Areas noted as having occurred as required on the assessment are rated as *strengths*. Those *items* that were not met are rated as *area needing improvement (ANI)*. If the issue is not applicable, it is rated N/A.

Additionally, the percentage of *strengths* is also calculated for each *item*. This percentage is calculated by adding the number of *strengths* and the number of *ANIs*. The number of *strengths* is divided into this total to determine the percentage of *strengths*. Results of the review are noted in Table 10.

### Foster Home Licensing Findings for Kershaw County

**Initial License Cases.** One foster care issuance for initial/standard license was reviewed. Information for ratings was obtained by reviewers through case file documentation, which includes the use of CAPSS. The case reviewed was rated as *strength* because all of the licensing requirements were met prior to authorization of the license issuance.

**Renewal License Cases.** Nine cases reviewed were rated as *ANI* because all of the licensing requirements were not met prior to authorization of the license renewal. Information for ratings was obtained by reviewers through case file documentation, which includes the use of CAPSS. Issues identified that led to the rating of *ANI* for the nine cases include:

**Table 10. Summary of Ratings for Initial and Renewal Cases.**

Rating	Initial	Renewal
<i>Strength</i>	1 (100%)	0 (0%)
<i>Area needing improvement</i>	0 (0%)	9 (100%)
Total	1 (100%)	9 (100%)
% <i>Strengths</i>	<b>1 (100%)</b>	<b>0 (0%)</b>

**Fire Safety:**

- The case file did not include documentation supporting that all annual fire inspections for the re-licensure period were conducted. (2 cases)

**Background Checks:**

- There was not documentation in the case file to verify that central registry, CPS, SLED, sex offender registry, and/or FBI checks for all applicable individuals were completed in a timely manner, or were completed at all. (9 cases)
- Documentation indicated that fingerprinting for all applicable individuals was not completed in a timely manner. (1 case)

**Medical Records:**

- Medical statement documentation for all family members was not located in the file. (2 cases)

**Firearms:**

- There was not documentation to verify that ammunition was stored separately from the firearms. (2 cases)

**Training:**

- Documentation was not sufficient for the verification of the completion of all training hours. (4 cases)
- All of the required 28 hours of training could not be verified through the documentation in the case file. (5 cases)

**Pet Vaccination Records:**

- Documentation confirming that pet vaccinations were up-to-date was not located in the case file. (5 cases)

**Safety:**

- Documentation did not support that the criminal history of an individual living in the foster home was addressed by the agency during the relicensing period. (1 case)

**Deficiencies found in Renewal Cases.** Deficiencies were noted for nine of the files reviewed. Issues identified by the reviewers include:

**Renewal Case Deficiencies****Alternative Caregivers:**

- Documentation did not include identification of an alternative caregiver/ babysitter. (4 cases)

**Fire Drills:**

- Documentation verifying that fire drills were conducted within 24 hours of a child's placement was not located in the case file. (8 cases)
- Documentation verifying that quarterly fire drills were conducted while children were placed in foster homes was not located in the case file. (7 cases)

**Safety:**

- Documentation did not provide verification that quarterly home visits were either timely or completed at all. (4 cases)
- Some of the Discipline Agreements were not located in the case file or were not signed and/or dated. (2 cases)
- All Disaster Plans were not located in the case file or were not signed and/or dated. (3 cases)

**Documentation:**

- Signatures on a Reassessment Study were not dated. (1 case)
- There was a discrepancy between the documentation in the case file and the documentation in CAPSS regarding the number of children the foster home was licensed to house. (1 case)

### SECTION III: CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICE NO ACTION REPORTS REVIEW

A review of ten no action reports was completed to determine whether agency policy and procedures were followed. The reports were randomly selected from the list of reports on which no action was taken by the county during the period under review. The *South Carolina Department of Social Services Quality Assurance Review No Action Reports Instrument* was used to conduct the review. This instrument includes a description of the allegation and fourteen questions regarding the no action decisions and processes (see Table 11).

**Table 11. Summary of Item Ratings for No Action Reports Review**

	Yes	No	NA	Total
1. Illegal substance use alleged AND reason for safety threatened with harm	0	10	0	10
2. Use of CAPSS and/or other systems for prior involvement	10	0	0	10
3a. Did the intake worker thoroughly complete the Sufficiency tab in CAPSS	10	0	0	10
3b. If question 1 or 2 is answered no, did worker provide explanation	2	0	8	10
4a. Maltreatment tab in CAPSS completed	9	1	0	10
4b. If yes to maltreatment, did worker provide an explanation	2	0	8	10
4c. If yes to maltreatment, did supervisor provide additional information	1	0	9	10
5. Safety factors documented on Intake Assessment not discovered by intake worker	1	9	0	10
6. Assessment made utilizing SCDSS Risk Matrix	6	0	4	10
7a. Risk Matrix results included statements contradictory to allegation	5	1	4	10
7b. Risk Matrix results failed to include all statements that support allegation	3	3	4	10
8. Contact with necessary collaterals prior to screen-out decision	3	2	5	10
9. Another intake referral on same perpetrator and/or child within 12 months	2	8	0	10
10. Intake Supervisor ensured consultation with another supervisory-level authority	0	2	8	10

\*Note: A single case may have more than one issue identified.

The percentage of *strengths* is also calculated for the cases reviewed. This percentage is calculated by adding the number of *strengths* and the number of *ANIs*. The number of *strengths* is divided into this total to determine the percentage of *strengths*. Findings of these reviews are noted in Table 12.

**Table 12. Summary of Ratings for No Action Reports Review**

Rating	Were agency policy and procedures followed?
<i>Strength</i>	3 (30%)
<i>Area needing improvement</i>	7 (70%)
Total	10 (100%)
<i>% Strengths</i>	<b>3 (30%)</b>

In seven of ten cases, pieces of agency policy and procedures were not followed.

Information for ratings was obtained by reviewers through case file documentation, which includes the use of CAPSS. Issues identified that led to the rating of *ANI* include:

- Statements documented in the Risk Matrix were contradictory to the documented allegations. (5 cases)
- The agency did not include, in the Risk Matrix and/or other documentation, statements that supported the documented allegations made by the reporter. (4 cases)
- Documentation did not support that the agency thoroughly completed the Maltreatment Tab in CAPSS. (2 cases)

- All applicable safety factors were not documented/identified at the time of intake as required. (1 case)
- There was no documentation to support that the agency followed up with all appropriate collateral contacts prior to making the decision to take no action on the case. (2 cases)
- There was no documentation to indicate that a supervisor consulted with another supervisory-level individual, as required by policy. (2 cases)
- The agency documented that the allegation did not meet the legal definition of maltreatment. However, documentation in the case file verified that the allegation did meet the legal definition of maltreatment. (1 case)

## SECTION IV: CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES UNFOUNDED REPORTS REVIEW

Five unfounded reports were reviewed to determine whether agency policy and procedures were followed. The five unfounded reports were randomly selected from the list of all reports unfounded by the county during the period under review. The review was conducted using the *South Carolina Department of Social Services Quality Assurance Review Unfounded Report Instrument*. This instrument includes a description of the allegation and items regarding three primary areas (see Table 13):

- Timeliness of initiating investigations of reports of child maltreatment,
- Repeat maltreatment, and
- Risk assessment and safety management.

**Table 13. Summary of Item Ratings for Unfounded Review**

	Yes	No	N/A	Total
1A. Investigation not initiated in accordance with timeframes and requirements	0	5	0	5
1B. Face-to-face contact not made in accordance with timeframes and requirements	4	1	0	5
1C. Delays in investigation initiation or face-to-face contact beyond control of agency	1	3	1	5
2A. At least one substantiated or indicated maltreatment report	0	5	0	5
2B. One substantiated or indicated maltreatment report within six months before or after	0	0	5	5
2C. Repeat maltreatment involving the same or similar circumstances	0	0	5	5
3A. Initial assessment of risk to the children and family in the home	3	2	0	5
3B. Ongoing assessment(s) of risk to the children and family in the home	1	4	0	5
3C. Safety concerns that were not adequately or appropriately addressed by the agency	4	1	0	5

\*Note: A single case may have more than one issue identified.

The percentage of *strengths* is calculated for each decision to unfound. This percentage is calculated by adding the number of *strengths* and the number of *ANIs*. The number of *strengths* is divided into this total to determine the percentage of *strengths*. Findings of these reviews are noted in Table 14.

**Table 14. Summary of Ratings for Unfounded Review**

Rating	Were agency policy and procedures followed?
<i>Strength</i>	1 (20%)
<i>Area needing improvement</i>	4 (80%)
Total	5 (100%)
<i>% Strengths</i>	<b>1 (20%)</b>

Information for ratings was obtained by reviewers through case file documentation, which includes the use of CAPSS. Reasons that four unfounded cases reviewed violated pieces of the agency policy and procedures include:

- Documentation did not provide verification that sufficient initial, ongoing, and final risk and safety assessments were conducted with children and families in their homes. (4 cases)
- There was no documentation in the case file to verify that the agency followed up with the reporter prior to unbounding the case. (2 cases)
- There was no documentation in the case file to verify that the agency facilitated a referral to BabyNet for the younger minor child, per state policy. (1 case)
- There was no documentation to verify that the agency conducted an assessment for risk and safety for the mother's paramour. (2 cases)

- Documentation did not verify that all indicated and appropriate collateral contacts were made. (2 cases)
- There was no documentation in the case file to verify that the agency adequately addressed the safety concerns pertaining to minor children in the family home, per state policy. (2 cases)
- Documentation did not support that the agency conducted a staffing with the supervisor in order to consider necessary actions to locate the child and the family. (1 case)
- There was no documentation to verify the agency assessed or addressed significant mental health issues of a mother during the investigation. (1 case)

**SECTION V: FAMILY STRENGTHENING SERVICES REVIEW**

A review of five allegations was completed to determine whether agency policy and procedures were followed for reports referred to Family Strengthening Services (FSS). The reports were randomly selected from the list of reports referred to a Community-Based Prevention Services Provider by the county during the period under review. The *South Carolina Department of Social Services Quality Assurance Review Community-Based Prevention Services Assessment Instrument* was used to conduct the review. This instrument includes a description of the allegation and sixteen questions regarding the referral to the (FSS) Community-Based Prevention Services Provider and processes (see Table 15).

**Table 15. Summary of Item Ratings for Assessment**

	Yes	No	NA	Total
1. Illegal substance use alleged AND reason for safety threatened with harm	0	5	0	5
2. Use of CAPSS and/or other systems for prior involvement	2	3	0	5
3a. Did the intake worker thoroughly complete the Sufficiency tab in CAPSS	5	0	0	5
3b. If question 1 or 2 is answered no, did worker provide explanation	0	1	4	5
4a. Maltreatment tab in CAPSS completed	5	0	0	5
4b. If yes to maltreatment, did worker provide an explanation	2	0	3	5
4c. If yes to maltreatment, did supervisor provide additional information	0	0	5	5
5. Existing Safety Factors not seen by intake worker or documented	0	5	0	5
6. Assessment made utilizing SCDSS Risk Matrix	5	0	0	5
7a. Results of SCDSS Risk Matrix contradicted allegation made by reporter	4	1	0	5
7b. Did results fail to include statements to support allegations made by reporter	4	1	0	5
8. Agency contacted collaterals for Community-Based Prevention Services	0	2	3	5
9. Additional intake referral made on same perpetrator AND/OR child	1	4	0	5
10. Family received community-based prevention services	0	1	4	5
11. Community-based provider entered an account in CAPSS	4	1	0	5
12. Family accepted services from Community-Based Prevention Services Provider	3	2	0	5

\*Note: A single case may have more than one issue identified.

The percentage of *strengths* is also calculated for the cases reviewed. This percentage is calculated by adding the number of *strengths* and the number of *ANIs*. The number of *strengths* is divided into this total to determine the percentage of *strengths*. Findings of these reviews are noted in Table 16.

**Table 16. Summary of Ratings for FSS Review**

Rating	Were agency policy and procedures followed?
<i>Strength</i>	0 (0%)
<i>Area needing improvement</i>	5 (100%)
Total	5 (100%)
<i>% Strengths</i>	<b>0 (0%)</b>

Information for ratings was obtained by reviewers through case file documentation, which includes the use of CAPSS. In five cases reviewed, there were pieces of agency policy and procedures that were not followed. Issues identified that led to the rating of *ANI* include:

- Documentation did not verify that all indicated and appropriate collateral contacts were made. (1 case)
- Statements documented in the Risk Matrix were contradictory to the documentation of the allegations. (4 cases)
- The Risk Matrix failed to include statements that supported the documentation of the allegations. (3 cases)
- The agency documented statements in the Risk Matrix which were not supported by the documentation of the statements made by the reporter. (2 cases)
- The agency indicated in the records check tab that a family had a previous case, which was unfounded; however, the case was founded. (1 case)
- There was no documentation supporting that the agency documented a case previously opened on a family.
- Documentation in the case file did not support that the intake worker conducted a thorough research of CAPSS. (1 case)
- The Risk Matrix documentation included statements which conflicted with the documented history in CAPSS. (1 case)
- There was no documentation to support an indicated referral was made as required. (1 case)



## SECTION VI: VOLUNTARY CASE MANAGEMENT REVIEW

A review of two allegations was completed to determine whether agency policy and procedures were followed for reports referred to Voluntary Case Management (VCM). The reports were randomly selected from the list of reports referred to a Community-Based Prevention Services Provider by the county during the period under review. The *South Carolina Department of Social Services Quality Assurance Review Community-Based Prevention Services Assessment Instrument* was used to conduct the review. This instrument includes a description of the allegation and sixteen questions regarding the referral to the VCM Community-Based Prevention Services Provider and processes (see Table 17).

**Table 17. Summary of Item Ratings for Assessment**

	Yes	No	NA	Total
1. Illegal substance use alleged AND reason for safety threatened with harm	0	2	0	2
2. Use of CAPSS and/or other systems for prior involvement	2	0	0	2
3a. Did the intake worker thoroughly complete the Sufficiency tab in CAPSS	2	0	0	2
3b. If question 1 or 2 is answered no, did worker provide explanation	0	0	2	2
4a. Maltreatment tab in CAPSS completed	1	1	0	2
4b. If yes to maltreatment, did worker provide an explanation	1	0	1	2
4c. If yes to maltreatment, did supervisor provide additional information	0	0	2	2
5. Existing Safety Factors not seen by intake worker or documented	0	2	0	2
6. Assessment made utilizing SCDSS Risk Matrix	2	0	0	2
7a. Results of SCDSS Risk Matrix contradicted allegation made by reporter	2	0	0	2
7b. Did results fail to include statements to support allegations made by reporter	2	0	0	2
8. Agency contacted collaterals for Community-Based Prevention Services	0	1	1	2
9. Additional intake referral made on same perpetrator AND/OR child	0	2	0	2
10. Family received community-based prevention services	0	0	2	2
11. Community-based provider entered an account in CAPSS	2	0	0	2
12. Family accepted services from Community-Based Prevention Services Provider	0	2	0	2

\*Note: A single case may have more than one issue identified.

The percentage of *strengths* is also calculated for the cases reviewed. This percentage is calculated by adding the number of *strengths* and the number of *ANIs*. The number of *strengths* is divided into this total to determine the percentage of *strengths*. Findings of these reviews are noted in Table 18.

**Table 18. Summary of Ratings for VCM Review**

Rating	Were agency policy and procedures followed?
<i>Strength</i>	0 (0%)
<i>Area needing improvement</i>	2 (100%)
Total	2 (100%)
<i>% Strengths</i>	<b>0 (0%)</b>

Information for ratings was obtained by reviewers through case file documentation, which includes the use of CAPSS. In two cases reviewed, pieces of agency policy and procedures were not followed. Issues identified that led to the rating of *ANI* include:

- Documentation did not verify that all indicated and appropriate collateral contacts were made. (1 case)
- The Maltreatment Tab was not thoroughly and accurately completed by the agency. (1 case)
- Documentation did not verify that the agency followed up with the minor child's primary care physician in order to obtain additional information regarding the minor child's current medical status before referring the case to VCM. (1 case)
- Statements documented in the Risk Matrix were contradictory to the documentation of the allegations made. (2 cases)
- The Risk Matrix documentation did not include statements that supported the documentations of the allegations made. (2 cases)

## **Appendix 1. Summary of Issues Causing an Area Needing Improvement (ANI) Rating for Applicable Cases**

The following is an overview of *strengths* and *area needing improvements* that were found in the cases for Kershaw County conducted June 23-27, 2014. The period under review was June 1, 2013 to May 31, 2014.

### **Positives:**

*Items 2 (Repeat Maltreatment), 5 (Foster Care reentries), and 12 (Placement with siblings)* were identified as *strengths* of the agency; all applicable cases reviewed were rated as *strength* with no *area needing improvement* (ANI).

### **Concerns:**

The following examines the *items* that had the highest ANI ratings.

- *Item 3 (Services to family)* - 8 of 13 (61.5%) applicable cases rated as ANI
  - The agency did not make concerted efforts to provide appropriate services to prevent the child(ren) from entering foster care. (6 cases) The following did not receive services:
    - Child(ren) (3 cases)
    - Mother (2 cases)
    - Paramour (2 cases)
    - Father (1 case)
    - Alternative caregivers (1 case)
  - Ongoing assessments were not conducted with the following: (2 cases)
    - Paramour (1 case)
    - Alternative Caregivers (1 case)
  - There was no documentation to support the agency made face-to-face contact with the family once the child returned home. The lack of monitoring and lack of concerted efforts to engage the family in services during the 30-day trial home visit resulted in the child's re-entry into foster care. (1 case)
  - Diligent searches were not conducted when the whereabouts of a father were unknown. (1 case)
  
- *Item 4 (Risk assessment and safety management)* - 10 of 20 (50%) applicable cases rated as ANI

- Comprehensive assessments were not conducted with the following: (7 cases)
  - Child(ren) (6 cases)
  - Father (2 cases)
  - Grandparents and paternal aunt/uncle (3 cases)
- Ongoing assessments were not comprehensive or thorough with the following: (2 cases)
  - Minor child(ren) (2 cases)
- Background checks were not completed for the following individuals: (2 cases)
  - Maternal relatives (1 case)
  - Paternal great aunt who was serving in the role as alternative caregiver even though not formally recognized as such by the agency (1 case)
  - Paternal grandparents who were serving as relative placement during the time that the agency had custody (1 case)
- There was no evidence, via documentation or case related interviews, that the agency assessed two high management group homes. There was also no evidence of what measures were implemented by the homes to prevent the child's self-harming behaviors and keep him safe. (1 case)
- *Item 7 (Permanency goal for child)* – 6 of 10 (60%) applicable cases rated as ANI
  - The permanency goal was not appropriate for the target child. (5 cases)
  - The agency did not file a TPR in a timely manner. (1 case)
- *Item 8 (Reunification, guardianship, or permanent placement with relatives)* – 4 of 6 (66.7%) applicable cases rated as ANI
  - The permanency goal of reunification was not achieved in a timely manner. (4 cases) A case that provided detail noted the following issue:
    - The agency failed to make concerted efforts to monitor the home during the transitional monitoring period.
- *Item 9 (Adoption)* – 3 of 4 (75%) applicable cases rated as ANI
  - The agency did not make concerted efforts to achieve adoption in a timely manner. (3 cases)
  - The agency did not file a TPR complaint, which made it unlikely that adoption would be achieved in the required 24 month time frame. (1 case)
- *Item 13 (Visiting with parents and siblings in foster care)* – 3 of 6 (50%) applicable cases rated as ANI

- The frequency of the visits with the following family members was insufficient according to agency policy requirements: (2 cases)
    - Mother (2 cases)
    - Father (1 cases)
  - The quality of the visits with the mother was insufficient. (2 cases)
  - The agency failed to make concerted efforts to involve a father who lived out of state. (1 case)
  - Diligent searches were not conducted when the whereabouts of a mother were unknown. (1 case)
- *Item 16 (Relationship of child in care with parents)* – 4 of 6 (66.7%) applicable cases rated as *ANI*
    - The agency did not make concerted efforts to promote, support, and maintain positive relationships between the child and family. (8 cases)  
Specific relationships affected include:
      - Mother (3 cases)
      - Father (1 case)
    - Diligent searches were not conducted when the whereabouts of the following individuals were unknown: (2 cases)
      - Father (1 case)
      - Mother (1 case)
- *Item 17 (Needs and services of child, parents, & foster parents)* – 14 of 20 (70%) applicable cases rated as *ANI*
    - Assessments were not conducted for the following individuals: (10 cases)
      - Father (6 cases)
      - Mother (2 cases)
      - Paramour (2 cases)
      - Children (1 case)
      - Stepfather (1 case)
      - Grandfather and grandmother who were serving in the role of relative placement during the time that the agency had custody (1 case)
    - The agency did not make concerted efforts to adequately provide services. Services were identified and not provided and/or indicated per case file and not identified/provided. (4 cases)
      - The following individuals were impacted:
        - Father (2 cases)
        - Mother (2 cases)

- Family (1 case)
  - Possible services included:
    - Services to address domestic violence (2 cases)
    - Monitoring services during a child’s trial transitional visit to identify further needs for services during that time period (1 case)
    - Family Counseling (1 case)
    - Alcohol and drug assessments (1 case)
    - Anger management classes (1 case)
- *Item 18 (Child & family involvement in case planning)* – 13 of 19 (68.4%) applicable cases rated as *ANI*
  - The agency failed to make concerted efforts to involve the following individuals in the case planning process: (13 cases)
    - Father (9 cases)
    - Mother (6 cases)
    - Children (2 cases)
    - Paramour (2 cases)
    - Stepfather (2 cases)
    - Stepmother (1 case)
    - Grandmother and grandmother who were serving as relative placement during the time that the agency had custody (1 case)
  - Diligent searches were not conducted when the whereabouts of the following individuals were unknown: (5 cases)
    - Father (3 cases)
    - Mother (2 cases)
- *Item 20 (Caseworker visits with parents)* – 15 of 17 (88.2%) applicable cases rated as *ANI*
  - The frequency of the visits with the following family members was insufficient according to agency policy requirements: (15 cases)
    - Mother (12 cases)
    - Father (9 cases)
    - Stepfather (3 cases)
    - Paramour (2 cases)
    - Stepmother (1 case)
    - Grandfather and grandmother who were serving as relative placement during the time that the agency had custody (1 case)

- The quality of visitation between the agency and the following individuals was insufficient: (7 cases)
  - Mother (4 cases)
  - Father (2 cases)
  - Stepfather (2 cases)
  - Paramour (1 case)
  - Grandmother who was serving as relative placement during the time that the agency had custody (1 case)
- Diligent searches were not conducted when the whereabouts of the following individuals were unknown: (3 cases)
  - Mother (2 cases)
  - Father (1 case)