

**Barnwell County DSS
Child Welfare Services Review
April 2005**

During the week of April 11-15, 2005 a team of DSS staff from state office and surrounding counties conducted an on-site review of child welfare services in Barnwell 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, Barnwell DSS supervisor, and representatives from the schools, Foster Care Review Board, Mental Health, Guardian Ad Litem.

Period included in Case Record Review: October 1, 2004 to March 31, 2005

Period included in Outcome Measures: Apr 1, 2004 to Mar 31, 2005

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 (sec 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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Section One

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

Summary of Findings

Overall Finding: Not Achieved

-Safety Item 1: Timeliness of initiating investigations. **Finding: Area Needing Improvement**
 -Safety Item 2: Repeat maltreatment. **Finding: Area Needing Improvement**

Analysis of Safety Item 1 Findings

<u>Strategic Outcome Report Findings</u>				
Measure S1.1: Timeliness of initiating investigations on reports of child maltreatment Data Time Period: 04/1/04 to 3/31/05				
	Number of Reports Accepted	Number of Investigations Initiated Timely	Number of Investigations Objective >= 99.99%*	Number of Investigations Above (Below) Objective
State	16,676	15,626	16,674	(1,048.33)
Barnwell	106	100	105.99	(5.99)

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

<u>Site Visit Findings</u> Performance Item Ratings						
Safety Item 1 : Timeliness of initiating investigations of reports of child maltreatment.						
	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	4	100	0	0	6	0
Treatment	4	100	0	0	6	0
Total Cases	8	100	0	0	12	0

Explanation of Item 1

This is an “Area Needing Improvement” for Barnwell DSS. State law requires that an investigation of all accepted reports of abuse and neglect be initiated within 24 hours. Even though all 8 of the applicable cases reviewed onsite were rated “Strength”, the outcome report indicates that, for the 12-month period under review, Barnwell DSS failed to initiate investigations of alleged abuse and neglect within 24-hours in 6 of its 106 (5.6%) investigations.

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Analysis of Safety Item 2 Findings

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 6 month period.

Indicated Report Between Oct 1, 2003 and Sept 30, 2004

	Number of Child Victims	Number of Child Victims In Another Founded Rept	Number of Children Objective <= 93.90%	Number of Children Above (Below) Objective
State	8,757	55	8,222.82	479.18
Barnwell	64	1	60.10	2.90

Note: This is a federally established objective.

Site Visit Findings Performance Item Ratings

Safety Item 2 : Repeat Maltreatment.

	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	8	80	2	20	0	0
Treatment	9	90	1	10	0	0
Total Cases	17	85	3	15	0	0

Explanation of Item 2

This is an “Area Needing Improvement” for Barnwell DSS. According to CAPSS data 1 of the 64 cases indicated for abuse or neglect during the period under review was a victim in a previously founded report. Three of the 17 applicable cases reviewed onsite was a case of repeat maltreatment. In 2 of the 3 cases, DSS had a long history with the families with several intakes, investigations and indicated reports. The 3 cases of repeat maltreatment identified by reviewers, but not captured by CAPSS can be attributed to the type of incidents Barnwell DSS enters in CAPSS as a “new report”.

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Section Two

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

Summary of Findings

Overall Finding: Partially Achieved

-Safety Item 3: Services to prevent removal. **Finding: Strength**

-Safety Item 4: Risk of harm to child (ren). **Finding: Area Needing Improvement**

Analysis of Safety Item 3 Findings

<u>Site Visit Findings</u> 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	4	100	0	0	6	0
Treatment	6	86	1	14	3	0
Total Cases	10	91	1	9	9	0

Item 3

This is a “Strength” for Barnwell DSS. This item assesses the appropriateness of the services selected to prevent the removal of children from their family. Reviewers rated 10 of the applicable 11 cases “strength” for this item. In the cases reviewed, when DSS decided to removed children from their home, that decision was supported by the facts of the case. When DSS decided to leave children in their home after finding that abuse or neglect had occurred, the services selected to protect those children were appropriate. That did not always mean that risks were reduced.

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Analysis of Safety Item 4 Findings

Site Visit Findings Performance Item Ratings						
Safety Item 4: Risk of harm.						
	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	8	89	1	11	1	0
Treatment	7	70	3	30	0	0
Total Cases	15	79	4	21	1	0

Strategic Outcome Report Findings				
Measure S2.2: Risk of harm to child – Of all unfounded investigations during the reporting period, the percent receiving subsequent reports within six months of the initial report.				
	Number Alleged Child Victims in an Unfounded Rept 10/01/03 to 09/30/04	Number With Another Rept Within 6 Months of Unfounded Determination	Number of Cases Met Objective >= 91.50%*	Number of Cases Above (Below) Objective
State	14,142	1,167	13,939.93	35.07
Barnwell	81	11	74.12	(4.12)

* This is a DSS established objective.

Explanation of “Risk of Harm” measure

This is an “Area Needing Improvement” for Barnwell DSS. The standard for the outcome report in CAPSS is that no more than 8.5% of alleged child victims have another report within 6 months of the initial report. According to CAPSS 11 of the 81 (14%) child victims were reported again to DSS within 6 months of an unfounded determination. It must be understood that “Subsequent reports of abuse” is a proxy measure for “Risk of harm” because additional, unsubstantiated reports of abuse do not always mean that a child remains at risk.

Onsite reviewers are able to assess what CAPSS cannot. Onsite reviewers determine how effective the county DSS office is at managing the risks of harm that necessitate continued involvement by DSS. By this criterion, 15 of the applicable 19 cases reviewed were rated Strength. Four cases were rated “Area Needing Improvement”. Three of the four cases rated “Area Needing Improvement” were treatment cases in which the risk of harm to the children was not reduced. Two of those treatment cases were closed, even though the risks in those homes remained. In the treatment cases and the one foster care

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case DSS did not do a good job of assessing relatives with whom children were placed. Stakeholders assessed Barnwell DSS as “Not Effective” in assessing safety and risk factors in parent and relative homes.

Section Three

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

Summary of Findings

Overall Finding:

- Item 5: Foster care re-entries
- Item 6: Stability of foster care placemt.
- Item 7: Permanency goal for child
- Item 8: Reunification, plmt w/ relatives
- Item 9: Adoption
- Item 10: Perm goal of other planned arrangmt

Partially Achieved

- Finding: Area Needing Improvement**
- Finding: Strength**
- Finding: Area Needing Improvement**
- Findings: Area Needing Improvement**
- Findings: Area Needing Improvement**
- Findings: Strength**

Analysis of Safety Permanency Item 5 Findings

<u>Site Visit Findings</u> Performance Item Ratings						
Permanency Item 5: Foster care re-entries.						
	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	3	75	1	25	6	0

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Strategic Outcome Report Findings

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

	Number Children Entering Care 04/01/04 to 03/31/05	Number That Were Returned Home Within The Past 12 Months From Previous Foster Care Episode	Number of Children Objective $\geq 91.40\%$ *	Number of Children Above (Below) Objective
State	3,307	249	3,022.60	35.40
Barnwell	21	4	19.19	(2.19)

* This is a federally established objective.

Explanation

Foster Care Re-entries is an “Area Needing Improvement for Barnwell DSS.

According to CAPSS, 1 in 5 children who entered foster care in Barnwell County during the period under review had been returned home in the prior 12 months. One of the applicable 4 cases reviewed onsite involved a child re-entering foster care.

Children re-entered foster care in Barnwell County because they were returned to parents who had not resolved the problems in their lives that caused their children to be removed originally. Or, the foster children were placed with relatives who were not adequately assessed to determine if the relative was capable of protecting and caring for the child.

Analysis of Safety Permanency Item 6 Findings

<u>Site Visit Findings</u> Performance Item Ratings						
Permanency Item 6: Stability of foster care placement.						
	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	9	90	1	10	0	0

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<u>Strategic Outcome Report Findings</u>				
Measure P3.2: Stability of Foster Care Placement – Of all children who have been in foster care less than 12 months from the time of the latest removal from home, the percent that had not more than 2 placement settings.				
	Number of Children In Care Less Than 12 Months	Number of Children With No More Than 2 Placements	Number of Children Objective $\geq 86.70\%*$	Number of Children Above (Below) Objective
State	3,778	3,081	3,275.53	(194.53)
Barnwell	28	22	24.28	(2.28)

Note: This is a federally established objective.

Explanation

Stability of foster care placement is an “Area Needing Improvement”. The outcome report shows that 22 of the 28 children (79%) in care less than 12 months had no more than 2 foster care placements. This falls short of the standard of 86.7%. In the sample of 10 foster care cases reviewed onsite, only one involved a child who had moved more than twice within the past 12 months. The other 5 children with multiple moves were not captured in the sample.

Analysis of Safety Permanency Item 7 Findings

<u>Strategic Outcome Report Findings</u>				
Measure P3.5: Permanency Goal for Child – Of all children who have been in foster care for 15 of the most recent 22 months, the percent for which a Termination of Parental Rights (TPR) petition has been filed.				
	Children in Care At Least 15 of Last 22 Months 04/04 –03/05	Number Children With TPR Complaint	Number of Children Objective $\geq 53.00%*$	Number of Children Above (Below) Objective
State	3,565	1,656	1,889.45	(233.45)
Barnwell	23	4	12.19	(8.19)

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

<u>Site Visit Findings</u> Performance Item Ratings						
Permanency Item 7: Permanency goal for children.						
	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	7	70	3	30	0	0

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Explanation of Item 7

This is an “Area Needing Improvement” for Barnwell DSS. To meet the criteria established in the CAPSS report 53.00% or more of the children in care 15 of the most recent 22 months must have a TPR petition filed. In Barnwell DSS 17% (4/23) of the children in care 15 of the most recent 22 months had a TPR petition filed. If DSS does not pursue TPR for a child in foster care for 15 of the past 22 months, there should be compelling reason for not doing so. That compelling reason often does not exist for the children awaiting permanency in Barnwell County.

Onsite reviewers rated this item based on two criteria: 1) Is the permanency goal appropriately matched to the child’s need? and 2) Is the agency acting to cause the goal to be achieved timely? Seven of the ten cases reviewed onsite were rated “Strength” for this item. Two of the 3 cases rated “Area Needing Improvement” had no identified plan. The other case rated “Area Needing Improvement” had a plan that was inappropriate and unsafe for the child.

Stakeholders who work with Barnwell DSS stated that the agency was not effective in determining appropriate permanency goals for children in a timely manner.

Analysis of Safety Permanency Item 8 Findings

<u>Strategic Outcome Report Findings</u>				
Measure P3.3: Length of Time to Achieve Reunification – Of all children who were reunified with their parents or caregiver, at the time of discharge from foster care, the percent reunified in less than 12 months from the time of the latest removal from home.				
	Number of Children Where Fos Care Services Closed. Last Plan Was Return Home 04/01/04–03/31/05	Number of Children In Care Less Than 12 Months	Number Of Children Objective >= 76.20%*	Number of Children Above (Below) Objective
State	2,072	1,697	1,578.86	118.14
Barnwell	10	9	7.62	1.38

* This is a federally established objective.

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Site Visit Findings Performance Item Ratings						
Permanency Item 8: Reunification, guardianship, or permanent placement with relatives.						
	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	5	63	3	37	2	0

Explanation

This is an “Area Needing Improvement” for Barnwell 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 Barnwell County 90% of the children returned home within a year of removal. Were this the only standard applied to this item, Barnwell DSS would have met the standard. However, 3 of the applicable 8 cases reviewed onsite were rated “Area Needing Improvement” because they had the wrong permanency plan. That value of returning children home quickly is negated if some of the children should not be returned home.

Analysis of Permanency Item 9 Findings

<u>Strategic Outcome Report Findings</u>				
Measure P3.4: Length of Time to Achieve Adoption – Of all children who exited from foster care during the year under review to a finalized adoption, the percent that exited care in less than 24 months from the time of the latest removal from home.				
	Number of Children With Finalized Adoption W/in Past 12 Months	Number of Children Where Adoption Was Finalized Within 24 Months of Entering Care	Number of Children Objective $\geq 32.00\%^*$	Number of Children Above (Below) Objective
State	361	70	115.52	(45.52)
Barnwell	1	0	0.32	(0.32)

Note: This is a federally established objective.

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<u>Site Visit Findings</u> Performance Item Ratings						
Permanency Item 9: Adoption.						
	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	1	50	1	50	8	0

Explanation

This is a “Area Needing Improvement”. The outcome report shows that one of the children in foster care was adopted during the 12 month period under review. It took more than 24 months for that child to be adopted. Of greater importance is that Barnwell DSS should have completed more than 1 adoption in a year. Adoptions are not occurring as often as they should because 1) it’s taking DSS too long to determine that Adoption is the appropriate plan, and 2) documentation to support a TPR petition is not being supplied to the DSS attorney within timeframes defined within agency policy. Onsite reviewers found dictation entered 6 or more months after the action date.

Stakeholders were unanimous in saying that DSS was not effective in pursuing and accomplishing adoptions for children in foster care.

Analysis of Permanency Item 10 Findings

<u>Strategic Outcome Report Findings</u>				
Measure P3.6: Permanency Goal of “Other Planned Living Arrangement” – Of all children in foster care, the percent with a permanency goal of emancipation (Indep Liv Services) or a planned permanent living arrangement other than adoption, guardianship, or return to family.				
	Number of Children In Care at Least One Day 04/01/04 – 03/31/05	Number of Children In Care With Perm Plan “Other Planned Living Arrangement”	Number of Children Objective >= 85.00%*	Number of Children Above (Below) Objective
State	8,129	1,075	6,909.65	144.35
Barnwell	45	4	38.25	2.75

* This is a DSS established objective.

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<u>Site Visit Findings</u> 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

This is a “Strength” for Barnwell DSS. The standard for this objective is that no more than 15% of the children in foster care should have this plan. Approximately 9% of the children in Barnwell DSS custody have this plan. Only one of the cases evaluated by onsite reviewers had the plan of Alternate Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA). The plan was appropriate for the child and the child was receiving appropriate independent living services.

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Section Four

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

Summary of Findings

Overall Finding:

- Item 11: Proximity of placement
- Item 12: Placement with siblings.
- Item 13: Visiting w/ parents & siblings
- Item 14: Preserving connections
- Item 15: Relative placement
- Item 16: Relationship of child w/ parents

Partially Achieved

- Finding: Area Needing Improvement**
- Finding: Strength**
- Finding: Strength**
- Findings: Strength**
- Findings: Area Needing Improvement**
- Findings: Area Needing Improvement**

Analysis of Permanency Item 11 Findings

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 04/01/04 – 03/31/05	Number of Children Placed Within County of Origin	Percent of Children Placed Within County of Origin	Number of Children Objective >= 70.00%*	Number of Children Above (Below) Objective
State	6,062	3,985	65.74	4,243.40	(258.40)
Barnwell	46	17	36.96	32.20	(15.20)

* This is a DSS established objective.

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Site Visit Findings Performance Item Ratings						
Permanency Item 11: Proximity of foster care placement.						
	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	5	63	3	37	2	0

Explanation

This is an “Area Needing Improvement” for Barnwell DSS. To meet this objective 70%, or more, of the children in care must be placed in Barnwell County. The outcome report indicates that 37% (17/46) of the children in care are placed in the county. Most of Barnwell’s foster children are placed in Bamberg County. This is because Barnwell does not maintain an adequate pool of foster parents to care for its children.

Site Visit Findings Performance Item Ratings						
Permanency Item 12: Placement with siblings						
	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	7	100	0	0	3	0

Explanation

This is a “Strength”. It was apparent that the agency attempted to place siblings together when resources and circumstances made that possible. When siblings were not placed together, it was not in their best interest to be placed together.

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Site Visit Findings Performance Item Ratings						
Permanency Item 13: Visiting with parents and siblings in foster care						
	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	8	89	1	11	1	0

Explanation

This is a “Strength”. This is not a great challenge for Barnwell DSS because most siblings in foster care are placed together. The few who are not placed together are placed in an adjacent county – Bamberg. When foster children are not placed together Barnwell DSS staff make provisions for those children to see each other at least monthly.

Site Visit Findings Performance Item Ratings						
Permanency Item 14: Preserving connections						
	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	7	86	1	14	2	0

Explanation

This is a “Strength”. This item addresses the agency’s ability to preserve a child in foster care’s connection to his/her community, family, and faith. Seven of the applicable 8 cases reviewed were rated “Strength” for this item. Although most of the children in foster care were placed outside of their communities and outside of Barnwell County, caseworkers and the foster parents caring for the children helped them maintain contact with the important people in their lives.

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<u>Site Visit Findings</u> Performance Item Ratings						
Permanency Item 15: Relative placement						
	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	7	70	3	30	0	0

Explanation

This is an “Area Needing Improvement”. This item addresses the agency’s effectiveness in identifying and assessing the relatives of children in foster care as possible caregivers. In 7 of the 10 cases, both maternal and paternal relatives were assessed as placement options. In the 3 cases rated “Area Needing Improvement” there was no evidence that paternal relatives were assessed. Paternal relatives were not assessed in those cases because DSS was not working with the children’s fathers.

<u>Site Visit Findings</u> Performance Item Ratings						
Permanency Item 16: Relationship of child in care with parents						
	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	5	71	2	29	3	0

Explanation

This is an “Area Needing Improvement”. This item addresses the agency’s effectiveness in promoting or maintaining a strong emotionally supportive relationship between children in care and their parents. Five of the applicable 7 cases were rated “Strength” because in those cases provisions were made for parents to be involved in their children’s lives beyond the minimum visitation required by policy. In the two cases rated “Area Needing Improvement” no provision was made for the fathers of the children to be involved in the child’s life after the child entered foster care. This occurred even when DSS knew that the father had been involved with the children prior to their entering foster care. The agency’s focus was on the mothers.

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Section Five

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

Summary of Findings

Overall Finding:

- Item 17: Needs & services
- Item 18: Involvement in case planning
- Item 19: Worker visits with child
- Item 20: Worker visits with parent(s)

Partially Achieved

- Finding: Area Needing Improvement**
- Finding: Area Needing Improvement**
- Finding: Strength**
- Findings: Area Needing Improvement**

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	8	80	2	20	0	0
Treatment	5	50	5	50	0	0
Total Cases	13	65	7	35	0	0

Explanation

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 is an **“Area Needing Improvement”** for Barnwell DSS.

Although needs assessments were consistently done, assessments of significant persons were often not done. This occurred most often in treatment cases. For example, DSS would assess the children's mother and father and develop a treatment plan with them, but would not assess the needs of the grandparent or aunt who was caring for the children. This was the case even when it was apparent that the parents were not complying with their treatment plan and it was likely that the children would remain with the alternate caregiver (grandparent, aunt, etc.). When DSS moved children with medical and emotional problems into the homes of alternate caregivers without assessing or providing for the needs of those caregivers, the risk of disruption was high.

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Site Visit Findings Performance Item Ratings						
Well Being Item 18: Child and family involvement in case planning						
	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	5	56	4	44	1	0
Treatment	3	30	7	30	0	0
Total Cases	8	42	11	58	1	0

Explanation

This is an “**Area Needing Improvement**”. There was little evidence that the parents of children in treatment cases were involved in case planning. The general practice in treatment cases was for the plan to be written by the caseworker, approved by the supervisor and presented to the parents to be signed.

Site Visit 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 a “**Strength**”. This rating is based on two questions: 1) are Barnwell DSS staff visiting children according to policy, and 2) do the visits focus on issues related to the treatment plan? The answer to both questions is “Yes” for both treatment and foster care cases.

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<u>Site Visit Findings</u> Performance Item Ratings						
Well Being Item 20: Worker visits with parent(s)						
	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	6	86	1	14	3	0
Treatment	6	60	4	40	0	0
Total Cases	12	80	5	20	3	0

Explanation

This is an “**Area Needing Improvement**” for Barnwell DSS. The treatment cases caused the overall rating for this item to fall below the 90% threshold. Four of the 10 CPS treatment cases were rated “Area Needing Improvement”. Caseworkers are visiting with parents, but not with both parents monthly, as required by policy. In the cases rated “Area Needing Improvement” gaps of one month up to six months were noted where parents were not seen by the caseworker.

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Section Six

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

Summary of Findings

Overall Finding:

Substantially Achieved

Site Visit Findings Performance Item Ratings

Well Being Item 21: Educational needs of child

	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	8	100	0	0	2	0
Treatment	6	86	1	14	3	0
Total Cases	14	93	1	7	5	0

Explanation

This is a “**Strength**” for Barnwell 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” in 93% of the cases reviewed. Workers did not rely on statements from parents to assess the children’s school performance. They communicated directly with the schools. School records were in the case files.

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Section Seven

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

Summary of Findings

Overall Finding:

- Item 22: Physical health of the child
- Item 23: Mental health of the child

Substantially Achieved

Finding: Strength

Finding: Strength

Site Visit 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	8	80	2	20	0	0
Total Cases	18	90	2	10	0	0

Explanation

This is a **“Strength” for Barnwell DSS**. The physical health needs of children in foster care and in treatment cases were consistently assessed. Documentation in the case records showed that DSS followed up on medical issues to determine when needs were met.

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<u>Site Visit Findings</u> Performance Item Ratings						
Well Being Item 23: Mental health of the child						
	Strength		Area Needing Improvement		Not Applicable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Foster Care	8	100	0	0	2	0
Treatment	6	75	2	25	2	0
Total Cases	14	87	2	13	4	0

Explanation

This is a **“Strength” for Barnwell DSS**. The mental health needs of children in foster care and in treatment cases were consistently assessed. Documentation in the case records showed that DSS followed up on mental health issues to determine when appropriate mental health services were being delivered.

Section Eight – Foster Home Licenses

This is an area needing improvement. Barnwell DSS had 10 licensed foster homes to serve its 36 children. Twenty-three of the 36 children in care are placed out-of-county. Mandated quarterly visits with foster parents did not consistently occur before the period under review. From October 2004 - March 2005 the Bamberg DSS licensing worker was assigned to conduct Barnwell’s quarterly visits to ensure that licensing requirements were being met. Documentation of foster parent training was poor. The Barnwell licensing worker did not know how many training hours could be obtained from videos.

Two of the foster home case records mentioned adult men in the home who were not included in the assessment of the home (background checks, f:f visits, etc.).

Foster parents who were interviewed complained that they had not seen their Barnwell County DSS Licensing Worker for quarterly visits and complained of DSS services in general.

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Section Nine – Unfounded Investigations

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Investigation initiated timely?	5	0
Was assessment adequate?	5	0
Was decision appropriate?	5	0

Analysis: This is a Strength for Barnwell DSS. Reviewers found that the assessment tool was completed thoroughly in all cases reviewed. The documentation supported the case decisions. Collaterals were contacted as appropriate.

Section Ten – Screened Out Intakes

Explanation

Not all calls made to DSS meet the legal definition of child abuse or neglect. Each DSS office must have an intake process that accurately determines which calls should be accepted for investigation and which should be screened out. Ten screened out intakes were reviewed.

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Cannot Determine</u>
Appropriately Screened Out?	8		2
	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>N/A</u>
Necessary Collaterals Contacted?	6	1	3
Appropriate Referrals Made?	3	1	6

Analysis: This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for Barnwell DSS. It should first be noted that 8 of the 10 intakes reviewed were appropriately screened out. The other two intakes reviewed may or may not have been appropriately screened out, but that could not be determined from the information recorded in CAPSS. To be screened out appropriately, one allegation needed information from law enforcement or a sex offender registry check. Neither was documented. In both instances, the reviewer could not determine if the necessary action did not occur, or occurred but was not documented.

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Case Rating Summary

The performance and outcome ratings below show the number of cases receiving that rating, followed by the percent of the total that number represents. Not Applicable (N/A) cases do not factor in the percentage.

Performance Item or Outcome	Perf. Item Ratings			Outcome Ratings			
	Strength	Area Needing Improvement	N/A*	Substantially Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved	N/A*
Outcome S1: Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect.				17 (85%)	1 (5%)	2 (10%)	0
Item 1: Timeliness of initiating investigations of reports of child maltreatment	8 (100%)	0	12				
Item 2: Repeat maltreatment	17 (85%)	3 (15%)	0				
Outcome S2: Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate.				16 (80%)	3 (15%)	1 (5%)	0
Item 3: Services to family to protect child (ren) in home and prevent removal	10 (91%)	1 (9%)	9				
Item 4: Risk of harm to child (ren)	15 (79%)	4 (21%)	0				
Outcome P1: Children have permanency and stability in their living situations.				6 (60%)	4 (40%)	0	0
Item 5: Foster care re-entries	3 (75%)	1 (25%)	6				
Item 6: Stability of foster care placement	9 (90%)	1 (10%)	0				
Item 7: Permanency goal for child	7 (70%)	3 (30%)	0				
Item 8: Reunification, guardianship, or permanent placement with relatives	5 (63%)	3 (37%)	2				
Item 9: Adoption	1 (50%)	1 (50%)	8				
Item 10: Permanency goal of other planned permanent living arrangement	1 (100%)	0	9				
Outcome P2: The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children.				9 (90%)	1 (10%)	0	0
Item 11: Proximity of foster care placement	5 (63%)	3 (37%)	2				
Item 12: Placement with siblings	7 (100%)	0	3				
Item 13: Visiting with parents and siblings in foster care	8 (89%)	1 (11%)	1				
Item 14: Preserving connections	7 (86%)	1 (14%)	2				
Item 15: Relative placement	7 (70%)	3 (30%)	0				
Item 16: Relationship of child in care with parents	5 (71%)	2 (29%)	3				
Outcome WB1: Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs.				13 (65%)	6 (30%)	1 (5%)	0
Item 17: Needs and services of child, parents, foster parents	13 (65%)	7 (35%)	0				
Item 18: Child and family involvement in case planning	8 (42%)	11 (58%)	1				
Item 19: Worker visits with child	19 (95%)	1 (5%)	0				
Item 20: Worker visits with parent(s)	12 (71%)	5 (29%)	3				
Outcome WB2: Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs.				14 (93%)	0	1 (7%)	5
Item 21: Educational needs of the child	14 (93%)	1 (7%)	5				
Outcome WB3: Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs.				17 (85%)	2 (10%)	1 (5%)	0
Item 22: Physical health of the child	18 (90%)	2 (10%)	0				
Item 23: Mental health of the child	14 (86%)	2 (14%)	4				