



**QUARTER 7**  
**PIP 2.3.1 (B)**  
**Statewide**

**STATE OF NEVADA**  
**Department of Health and Human Services**  
**Division of Child and Family Services**



**Quality Improvement Targeted Case Review:**  
**Caseworker Visit Evaluation**  
**SFY 2013**

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## Executive Summary

### **Introduction**

In August 2012 reviewers from the Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS) Family Programs Office (FPO) completed a review of case worker visits by evaluating the documentation of caseworker contact within the three child welfare agencies in Nevada. This review is part of the State's compliance with the Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) item 2.3.1 B.

The purpose of this type of targeted review (PIP item 2.3.1B) was to evaluate the impact and usage of the contact standards in accordance with PIP item 2.3.1 and PIP item 2.3.1A. PIP item 2.3.1 was completed in Quarter 2, and required the state to submit a copy of enhanced contact guidelines that would guide caseworker contact with children and parents. PIP item 2.3.1A required the state to provide caseworkers and supervisors training on the contact standards to enhance the level of caseworker engagement. Clark County provided information on this training in Quarter 4, and the Rural Region and Washoe County provided information on their training in Quarter 5. This report is the evaluation of the impact of this training on the quality of case worker contacts with the child, parent(s) and foster parents as required by PIP item 2.3.1B, and is being provided in Quarter 7.

### **Methodology**

The reviews were conducted by three program specialists from the DCFS FPO Quality Assurance/Quality Improvement unit. Each reviewer was assigned 20 to 21 cases to review. These cases were a proportional mixture of cases from each child welfare agency. Specifically, each reviewer was assigned approximately one third of each of the agencies cases. Lastly, each case was debriefed with the reviewers as a collective team to ensure inter-rater reliability. The target reviews only pertained to documentation as it existed in the state's SACWIS system at the time of the review.

The period under review (PUR) was unique to each child welfare agency, and is based on the time the PIP mandated training (2.3.1A) was completed by each agency to present practice.

Statewide a total of 62 cases were pulled for review (14 cases from DCFS Rural Regions, 14 cases from Washoe County Department of Social Services and 34 cases from Clark County Department of Family Services. Case samples were pulled using the same randomized stratified sampling technique used in the Quality Improvement case reviews completed throughout the PIP period. However, only out of home cases were selected for review at this time, and a target child was identified. Cases that had closed prior to the PUR were removed from the sample. In total 53 cases were applicable for review, 30 from CCDFS, 13 from DCFS and 10 from WCDSS.

### **Results**

The table below illustrates the results of the target case review.

Statewide Caseworker Visits with Target Child, Parent(s) & Caregiver / Foster Parent(s) by Agencies								
AGENCY VISIT TYPE	Clark		Rural		Washoe		STATE	
Target/Child	75.75	24.24	69.23	30.77	70.00	30.00	77.36	22.64
Parent1/(Mother)	33.33	66.66	41.66	58.34	33.34	66.66	36.12	63.89
Parent2/(Father)	40.00	60.00	22.22	77.78	42.86	57.15	34.16	65.38
Foster/Provider	74.07	25.93	40.00	60.00	55.55	44.44	63.04	36.96
<b>Total # of Applicable Cases (n)</b>	30		13		10		53	

The cases were rated upon the following matrix:

- 5 = exceptional
- 4 = substantially acceptable
- 3 = minimally acceptable
- 2 = minimally unacceptable
- 1 = substantially unacceptable

It was determined as part of the scoring matrix that a rating of 3 or better was considered an area of strength while a rating of 2 or lower was considered an area needing improvement. The tables in the main body of this document provide a break down of the frequency of each rating by visit type and by agency.

### **Factors influencing results of review**

1. Inconsistent PUR from agency to agency
2. ICPC cases in the case sample
3. Representation (high and low) in the review sample
4. Training was unique to each agency
5. Randomized case selection, irrespective of caseworker: caseload, experience, and unit.
6. Cases were evaluated based upon UNITY documentation only.

### **Summary**

The data contained in this report is best used as base line data, to serve as a point of reference against which future evaluations can be compared. As of this report, the state struggles with the quality of caseworker visits with parents in out of home cases, specifically the father or a non-primary caregiver.

### **Recommendations**

1. Ensure case note documentation clearly identifies that the caseworker met with the child one on one outside the presence of the provider.
2. When making conclusory statements, include direct observations that support the conclusion. For example: if the worker determines that the child is "adjusting well to the new foster home" provide examples of what was observed that led the worker to make that conclusion.
3. It maybe helpful to identify the purpose of the visits in each case note.
4. Focus upon meaningful documentation. While it may be important to note what the child was wearing in some cases, i.e. if the child has not changed clothes in several days, clothing inappropriate for the weather etc. documenting that the child was "dressed in a cute outfit" is not meaningful.
5. Clearly identify that the worker spoke with the foster/provider and that a one on one consultation was provided. In several cases it was difficult to determine if the worker spoke with the foster parent at home visits.

6. Continue to develop systems and processes that serve to enhance the quality of contact/visits between parents and caseworkers of out of home cases.
7. In regards to the training, it maybe helpful to develop an additional training, job aids and or supervisory oversight practices that teach workers the specifics expectations of documentation. It is clear from the review that workers statewide have a good understanding of why case visits, and client engagement is important to their practice. However, it appears that workers struggle to translate their activities and observations on the job into comprehensive and meaningful documentation. Efforts to teach workers how to translate what is accomplished and what is observed in the field into case notes may help to increase the ratings in future reviews.

## Introduction

In accordance with the 2010 Nevada Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) Item 2.3.1B, the Family Programs Office (FPO), Quality Assurance and Quality Improvement team developed and implemented a targeted review protocol to evaluate the quality of case worker visits specifically, between the caseworker, child, parent(s) and foster parents. The Nevada Family Programs Office (FPO), Quality Assurance and Quality Improvement team conducted this review beginning in August through September 2012. This review was inclusive of all three child welfare agencies simultaneously.

This specific review is part of a succession of action steps outlined in Item 2.3.1 in the Performance Improvement Plan. The PIP was negotiated in response to the 2009 Federal Child and Family Services Review which noted improvement needed in the quality of caseworker contacts with children and parents. The next progression in this series to improve performance requires each agency to implement a peer or supervisory review to evaluate quality contacts (PIP item 2.3.1C) which is due in Quarter 8.

The purpose of this type of targeted review (PIP item 2.3.1B) was to measure the effectiveness of recent agency specific trainings for caseworker/supervisors (PIP item 2.3.1A). This review evaluated the impact of this training on the quality of case worker contacts with the child, parent(s) and foster parents statewide.

Clark County training was provided to supervisors assigned to in home cases. This training emphasized elements of engagement to motivate and facilitate change through a parent/case worker alliance. There was specific emphasis in their training provided in May 2012 targeting engagement of fathers as well as review of their out of home permanency policy in which case workers and personnel from all levels were in attendance. The overall quality visit promotes a working relationship between the caseworker and parent, child and foster parent as well as increases the likelihood for favorable child safety, permanency and well-being outcomes.

Washoe County Department of Social Services completed a division wide refresher and review of Nevada's statewide policy (0205) pertaining to case worker visits in February 2012. This division wide meeting was held in February 2012. Emphasis on key points include: caseworker contact with children; caseworker contact with parents; parent's rights to visitation with children; and documentation. WCDSS also ensured that 100% of their staff received training on the new Nevada Initial Assessment (NIA) model which incorporates an array of interpersonal skills with the child and parent(s) that promote the exchange of relevant information and development of applicable present danger plans and emergency services with face to face visits to monitor progress occurring on a weekly basis.

The Division of Child and Family Services – Rural Region conducted four onsite trainings throughout the month of March 2012 in Carson City, Fallon, Elko and Pahrump. Their training included a power point presentation and discussion of case worker contacts and effective documentation. This presentation linked this performance measure to the 2009 CFSR and the subsequent 2010 PIP. The training addressed making purposeful and meaningful visits. The training also covered utilization of collateral contacts in preparation of visits to enhance the case workers ongoing assessment of the case progress in relation to the child's safety, permanency and well-being. Private time with not just the child, but the care provider and parent were also emphasized as being equally important during visits. Essential case note components was addressed and further outlined by contact type (caseworker/parent, court hearings, service providers and visitation of

any type. Additional discussion was also given to documentation of visits completed by courtesy workers out of state (i.e. ICPC).

## **Methodology**

The reviews were conducted by three program specialists from the DCFS FPO Quality Assurance unit. Each reviewer was assigned 20 to 21 cases to review. These cases were a proportional mixture of cases from each child welfare agency. Specifically, each reviewer was assigned approximately one third of each of the agencies cases. Lastly, each case was debriefed with the reviewers as a collective team to ensure inter-rater reliability. The target reviews only pertained to documentation as it existed in the state's SACWIS system at the time of the review.

The period under review (PUR) was unique to each child welfare agency and is based on the time the PIP mandated training (2.3.1A) was completed by each agency to present practice.

Statewide a total of 62 cases were pulled for review (14 cases from DCFS Rural Regions, 14 cases from Washoe County Department of Social Services and 34 cases from Clark County Department of Family Services. Case samples were pulled using the same randomized stratified sampling technique used in the Quality Improvement case reviews completed throughout the PIP period. Only out of home cases were selected for review at this time and a target child was selected in each case. Cases that closed prior to the PUR were struck from the sample, however if a child achieved permanency during the PUR the case was reviewed for the months that were applicable. The reviewers analyzed the case worker's visits with the target child, the target child's foster parent and the target child's biological parent(s). Each type of visit (child, parent, foster parent) was ranked separately according to the applicable scoring matrix. An individual scoring matrix was developed specifically for this targeted review by the DCFS FPO Quality Assurance/Quality Improvement unit for each type of visit (child, parent, foster parent). These matrix scales developed by the FPO QA unit for each visit type is based upon the following ranking:

- 5 = exceptional
- 4 = substantially acceptable
- 3 = minimally acceptable
- 2 = minimally unacceptable
- 1 = substantially unacceptable

Each individual matrix defines the qualities needed to achieve the respective ranking. Reviewers evaluate and score each visit type based upon the predominate pattern of visits. This means the visit/contact is scored by type and provides an overall score for the entire period under review (PUR). Individual visits (i.e. caseworker with parent) are not scored by each visit episode, but by the reviewers' professional assessment of the most typical visit during the PUR as indicative of the assigned numerical score. A score of three or higher is considered to be an area of strength while a score of two or lower is considered an area needing improvement. Individual scoring matrices are attached for additional information.

In addition to scoring each visit type in its entirety, the QA review tool also provided a record of the permanency goal for the target child/youth, the number of: visits completed in the case (a sum of all visit types), attempted contacts (to the child, parent and foster parents) as well as supplemental contacts to the child, parent and foster parents, although only supplemental contacts factored into scoring.



## Results

The following data Tables 1 – 4, is a compilation of all the targeted out-of-home reviews made thus far in 2012 addressing PIP item 2.3.1B. The data collected exemplifies caseworker visit types with the target child, parent(s) / legal guardians and/or caregiver/foster parent(s) that are subdivided by Clark, Rural and Washoe child welfare agencies. The state data is also captured so that comparisons can be made for the entire state.

**Table 1** below cites all **Caseworker Visits with the Target Child** for the different child welfare agencies within the state so that comparisons can be made between counties as well as with respect to the entire state as a whole.

<b>Table 1: Statewide Caseworker Visits with Target Child by Child Welfare Agency</b>				
<b>AGENCY</b>	<b>Clark</b>	<b>Rural</b>	<b>Washoe</b>	<b>STATE</b>
<b>Total # applicable cases</b>	30	13	10	53
<b>Matrix Score</b>	<b>% OF TOTAL</b>			
5	3.03	0.00	0.00	1.89
4	36.36	46.15	40.00	41.51
3	36.36	23.08	30.00	33.96
<b>Strength TOTAL</b>	<b>75.75</b>	<b>69.23</b>	<b>70.00</b>	<b>77.36</b>
2	12.12	23.08	0.00	13.21
1	12.12	7.69	30.00	9.43
<b>ANI TOTAL</b>	<b>24.24</b>	<b>30.77</b>	<b>30.00</b>	<b>22.64</b>

Area of Strength

Area Needing Improvement (ANI)

The state shows an overall rating of **77.36%** or 41 out of the 53 applicable targeted cases is an area of strength with regard to promoting a positive working relationship between the caseworker and child; addressing key case plan and service provision elements and thereby, increasing the likelihood of favorable child safety, permanency and well-being outcomes. More specifically, 1.89% (1 occurrence) of cases obtained an exceptional score, 41.51% (22 occurrences) obtained a substantially acceptable score and 33.96% (18 occurrences) obtained a minimally acceptable score.

Upon further review of Table 1, **22.64%** or 12 out of the 53 applicable targeted cases are considered as an area needing improvement (ANI) since visits occurred less than monthly, typical visits were superficial and were not conducive in addressing child's case plan progress, safety/risk as well as identifying additional needs and/or services.

Furthermore, in comparing the quality of caseworker visits with the target child between child welfare agencies Clark showed the highest strength area for this visit type with **75.75%** of the total targeted case reviews, followed by **70.00%** for Washoe and **69.23%** for the Rural Counties; indicating that the typical caseworker visits with the target child were at least once a month in a variety of settings conducive to making direct observations of child functioning across a wide variety of developmental domains, assessing for safety/risk and case plan progress toward stated goals.

In addition, Clark County showed areas needing improvement (ANI) in **24.24%** of its targeted case reviews, **30.00%** ANI for Washoe County and **30.77%** ANI for the Rural Counties; thus,

signifying that monthly visits by the case worker with the target child were not made consistently and observations were insufficient to address child functioning, case plan progress and the need for additional services and/or child status follow-up.

Table 2 below cites all **Caseworker Visits with Parent 1**, who is designated here as the mother, for the different child welfare agencies so that comparisons can be made between counties as well as with respect to the entire state as a whole.

AGENCY	Clark	Rural	Washoe	STATE	
<b>Total # applicable cases</b>	18	12	6	36	
<b>Matrix Score</b>	<b>% OF TOTAL</b>				
5	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	<b>Area of Strength</b>
4	0.00	8.33	16.67	5.56	
3	33.33	33.33	16.67	30.56	
<b>Strength TOTAL</b>	<b>33.33</b>	<b>41.66</b>	<b>33.34</b>	<b>36.12</b>	
2	22.22	16.67	33.33	22.22	<b>Area Needing Improvement (ANI)</b>
1	44.44	41.67	33.33	41.67	
<b>ANI TOTAL</b>	<b>66.66</b>	<b>58.34</b>	<b>66.66</b>	<b>63.89</b>	

The state shows an overall rating of **36.12%** or 13 out of the 36 applicable targeted cases is an area of strength with regard to promoting a positive working relationship between the caseworker and parent 1; addressing key case plan and service provision elements and thereby, increasing the likelihood of favorable child safety, permanency and well-being outcomes. More specifically, 5.56% obtained a substantially acceptable score and 30.56% obtained a minimally acceptable score.

Upon further review of Table 2, **63.89%** or 23 out of the 36 applicable targeted cases are considered as an area needing improvement (ANI) since visits occurred less than monthly, typical visits were superficial and were not conducive in addressing the case plan progress, parent/family functioning and safety/risk as well as identifying additional needs and/or services. Also, one-on-one time was periodically made and was not favorable in developing the worker-parent alliance. Supplemental contacts were rarely made and as a consequence there was minimal encouragement for case plan and service provision compliance.

Furthermore, in comparing the quality of caseworker visits with Parent 1 between child welfare agencies, the Rural Counties showed the highest strength area for this visit type with **41.66%** of the total targeted case reviews, followed by **33.34%** for Washoe County and **33.33%** for Clark County; indicating that the typical caseworker visits with the Parent 1 were at least once a month in a variety of settings conducive to making direct observations of parent-child functioning and engagement, assessing for safety/risk and enhancing the purpose of the visit.

In addition, both Clark County and Washoe County showed areas needing improvement (ANI) in **66.66%** of its targeted case reviews for this visit type and **58.34%** ANI for the Rural Counties; thus, signifying that monthly visits by the case worker with parent 1 were not made consistently and observations were insufficient to address child & family functioning and the need for

additional services and/or child status follow-up. Supplemental contacts were rare and superficial, thereby not providing adequate support and encouragement for case plan progress.

**Table 3** below cites all **Caseworker Visits with Parent 2**, who is designated here as the father or a non-primary caregiver, for the different child welfare agencies so that comparisons can be made between counties as well as with respect to the entire state as a whole.

AGENCY	Clark	Rural	Washoe	STATE	
<b>Total # applicable cases</b>	10	9	7	26	
<b>Matrix Score</b>	<b>% OF TOTAL</b>				
5	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	<b>Area of Strength</b>
4	0.00	11.11	14.29	7.69	
3	40.00	11.11	28.57	26.92	
<b>Strength TOTAL</b>	<b>40.00</b>	<b>22.22</b>	<b>42.86</b>	<b>34.16</b>	
2	30.00	11.11	14.29	19.23	<b>Area Needing Improvement (ANI)</b>
1	30.00	66.67	42.86	46.15	
<b>ANI TOTAL</b>	<b>60.00</b>	<b>77.78</b>	<b>57.15</b>	<b>65.38</b>	

The state as a whole, shows an overall rating of **34.16%** or 9 out of the 26 applicable targeted cases is an area of strength with regard to promoting a positive working relationship between the caseworker and parent 2; addressing key case plan and service provision elements and thereby, increasing the likelihood of favorable child safety, permanency and well-being outcomes. More specifically, 7.69% obtained a substantially acceptable score and 26.92% obtained a minimally acceptable score.

Upon further review of Table 3, **65.38%** or 17 out of the 26 applicable targeted cases are considered as an area needing improvement (ANI) since visits occurred less than monthly, typical visits were superficial and were not conducive in addressing the case plan progress, parent/family functioning and safety/risk as well as identifying additional needs and/or services. Also, one-on-one time was periodically made and was not favorable in developing the worker-parent alliance. Supplemental contacts were rarely made and as a consequence there was minimal encouragement for case plan and service provision compliance.

Furthermore, in comparing the quality of caseworker visits with parent 2 between agencies, Washoe County showed the highest strength area for this visit type with **42.66%** of the total targeted case reviews, followed by **40.00%** for Clark County and **22.22%** for the Rural Counties; indicating that the typical caseworker visits with the parent 2 were at least once a month in a variety of settings and were favorable to making direct observations of parent-child functioning and engagement, assessing for safety/risk and enhancing the purpose of the visit.

In addition, the Rural Counties cite **77.78%** of its targeted case reviews for this visit type as having an area needing improvement (ANI), **60.00%** ANI for Clark County and **57.15%** ANI for Washoe County; thus, signifying that monthly visits by the case worker with parent 2 were not made consistently and observations were insufficient to address child & family functioning and the need for additional services and/or child status follow-up. Supplemental contacts were rare and superficial, thereby not providing adequate support and encouragement for case plan progress.

**Table 4** below cites all **Caseworker Visits with the Caregiver/Foster Parent(s)**, who is designated here as the foster parent(s), for the different child welfare agencies so that comparisons can be made between child welfare agencies as well as with respect to the entire state as a whole.

<b>Table 4: Statewide Caseworker Visits with Target Caregiver/ Foster Parent(s) by Agency</b>				
<b>AGENCY</b>	<b>Clark</b>	<b>Rural</b>	<b>Washoe</b>	<b>STATE</b>
<b>Total # applicable cases</b>	27	10	9	46
<b>Matrix Score</b>	<b>% OF TOTAL</b>			
5	3.70	0.00	0.00	2.17
4	33.33	30.00	44.44	34.78
3	37.04	10.00	11.11	26.09
<b>Strength TOTAL</b>	<b>74.07</b>	<b>40.00</b>	<b>55.55</b>	<b>63.04</b>
2	7.41	30.00	33.33	17.39
1	18.52	30.00	11.11	19.57
<b>ANI TOTAL</b>	<b>25.93</b>	<b>60.00</b>	<b>44.44</b>	<b>36.96</b>

**Area of Strength**

**Area Needing Improvement (ANI)**

The state shows an overall rating of **63.04%** or 29 out of the 46 applicable targeted cases is an area of strength with regard to promoting a positive working relationship between the caseworker and the caregiver; addressing key case plan and service provision elements and thereby, increasing the likelihood of favorable child safety, permanency and well-being outcomes. More specifically, 2.17% of cases obtained an exceptional score, 34.78% obtained a substantially acceptable score and 26.09% obtained a minimally acceptable score.

Upon further review, **36.96%** or 17 out of the 46 applicable targeted cases are considered as an area needing improvement (ANI) since visits occurred less than monthly, typical visits were superficial and were not conducive in addressing child's case plan progress, safety/risk as well as identifying additional needs and/or services. Specifically, 17.39% of cases obtained a minimally unacceptable score and a 19.57% obtained a substantially unacceptable score.

Furthermore, in comparing the quality of caseworker visits with the caregiver between agencies, Clark County showed the highest strength area for this visit type with **74.07%** of the total targeted case reviews, followed by **55.55%** for Washoe County and **40.00%** for the Rural Counties; indicating that the typical caseworker visits with the caregiver were at least once a month in a variety of settings conducive to making direct observations of child/caregiver functioning across a wide variety of developmental domains, assessing for safety/risk and case plan progress toward stated goals. Also, supplemental contacts were often and consistently made via phone calls, emails, written correspondences and other means similar defined, ensuring an open communication and empowered engagement for the caseworker/caregiver relationship.

In addition, the Rural Counties showed areas needing improvement (ANI) in **60.00%** of its targeted case reviews, **44.44%** for Washoe County and **25.93%** for the Rural Counties; thus, signifying that in varying degrees across child welfare agencies, monthly visits by the case worker with the caregiver were not made consistently and observations were predominantly insufficient to address child & family functioning, case plan progress and the need for additional services and/or child status follow-up. Also, one-on-one interactions were intermittent and visits superficially assessed the caregiver's ability to mitigate safety and risk concerning the target child.

## **Factors Influencing Results**

Analysis of the data produced varying results. While the factors below are not inclusive of all potential influencers, it indicates what the reviewers' determine to be the most significant factors influencing (both positively and negatively) the data results at the time of the review. (The factors below are not listed in any order of importance.)

### **1. Inconsistent PUR by Agency**

- a. The PUR for each agency was established based upon the date the targeted training was completed in each agency. Because each agency designed and implemented training unique to their agencies needs the completion dates are not consistent and should be considered when evaluating the state's results as a whole.
  - i. Therefore one agency may have had a longer PUR and therefore more case visits would be expected would have more opportunity to demonstrate a pattern of case practice than another agency with a shorter PUR duration.
  - ii. When comparing visit types within a single agency the PUR remains constant.

### **2. Training Unique to each Agency**

Each agency developed training unique to their identified needs and targeted goals. The curriculum varied greatly as did the target audience from agency to agency.

### **3. ICPC Cases in Sample**

- a. ICPC cases typically did not rate well within this review due to policies within ICPC agreements. If a case was applicable for a short PUR, for example 2 months, and the receiving state sent the quarterly update the month prior to the start of the PUR; an updated quarterly report would not be required from the receiving state until the month after the PUR. In this example there would be no recorded visits between the target child and the caseworker and therefore would not score well.
- b. In this case sample, while it was evident that Nevada based caseworkers were attempting to make contact with the receiving state, there were few occurrences where the documentation supports the child was seen by the receiving state's caseworker.
- c. WCDSS had a larger portion of their case sample include a target child placed out of state. It is possible that for the aforementioned reasons, the evaluation of caseworker contact with the target child in regards to WCDSS is skewed low.

### **4. Sample Demographics**

#### **a. Over/under Representation in Sample**

- i. The statewide sample included 53 cases total of which Clark County accounted for 30 cases or approximately 57% of the sample. The Rural counties contributed 13 cases (25% of the sample) and Washoe County contributed the remaining 10 cases (18% of the sample). Therefore the results of the review of CCDFS cases have a greater impact upon the combined results of the state as a whole.
- ii. Sample size also influenced outcomes when a particularly small sample is indicated. For example in the case of WCDSS (n=10) a singular case

represents 10% of the sample and therefore a particularly high scoring case (or conversely lower scoring case) would skew the results. Also a very small case sample may not provide a true indication of general case practices across the agency.

**b. Sample only included Out of Home Cases**

This review only included out of home cases. In home cases may have produced drastically different results in regards to visits with parents and visits with children.

**c. Case Duration**

The review did not consider the timeline of the case, or the duration the target child had been in care or in his/her specific placement. While safety must be evaluated at every child contact/visit in some agency's the caseworker is prompted to complete safety evaluation forms regular intervals. In some cases the PUR overlapped when the agency safety check was encouraged and therefore this safety evaluation was factored into the scoring.

**5. Case Sample was Selected Irrespective of Caseworker/Team/Unit etc.**

**a. Supervisory Oversight**

Cases were evaluated regardless of supervisory consultation/oversight. Cases who's workers work in a unit with a higher degree of supervisory support, oversight and tracking may be more likely to have more areas of strength than those cases who's workers work more autonomously and/or with little supervisory consultation/oversight.

**b. Caseworker Case load**

Caseworker caseload was not considered in the scoring. The review tool does not take into account the volume of case visits an individual caseworker is expected to complete each month

**6. Reviewers only reviewed documentation found in UNITY**

The caseworker may have completed additional case visits or have supporting documentation in a "working file" or in the physical case file. Supporting and or clarifying information maybe available through worker interviews, and reviewing the case file.

## **Recommendations**

1. Ensure case note documentation clearly identifies that the caseworker met with the child one on one outside the presence of the provider.
2. When making conclusory statements, include direct observations that support the conclusion. For example: if the worker determines that the child is "adjusting well to the new foster home" provide examples of what was observed that led the worker to make that conclusion.
3. It maybe helpful to identify the purpose of the visits in each case note.
4. Focus upon meaningful documentation. While it may be important to note what the child was wearing in some cases, i.e. if the child has not changed clothes in several days, clothing inappropriate for the weather etc. documenting that the child was "dressed in a cute outfit" is not meaningful.
5. Clearly identify that the worker spoke with the foster/provider and that a one on one consultation was provided. In several cases it was difficult to determine if the worker spoke with the foster parent at home visits.
6. Continue to develop systems and processes that serve to enhance the quality of contact/visits between parents and caseworkers of out of home cases.
7. In regards to the training, it maybe helpful to develop an additional training, job aids and supervisory oversight practices that teach workers the specifics expectations of documentation. It is clear from the review that workers statewide have a good understanding of why case visits, and client engagement is important to their practice. However, it appears that workers struggle to translate their activities and observations on the job into comprehensive and meaningful documentation. Efforts to teach workers how to translate what is accomplished and what is observed in the field into case notes may help to increase the ratings of future reviews.