

**February 25-27, 2008 Mini CFSR Report
Afton/Jackson/Pinedale Department of Family Services (DFS) – D10R2**

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Three strongest review areas:

- Safety 1 (S1) - 100%;
- Permanency 1 (P1) - 100%;
- Permanency 2 (P2) - 100%;
- Well Being 2 (WB2) - 100%, and
- Well Being 3 (WB3) - 100%.

Greatest strengths from stakeholder interviews:

- “Physical change in DFS office is a great improvement for caseworkers and clients of DFS;”
- “county attorney solicits and values the opinion of the DFS caseworkers,” and
- “child welfare workers have a very good collaborative approach to cases.”

Review challenge area:

- Well Being 1 (WB1) - 40%:
 - Pinedale = staffing issues; visits etc., and
 - Afton/Jackson = focus on family approach to the case.
- Safety 2 (S2) - 66.1%:
 - Risk and safety assessments:
 - Pinedale = staffing issues, and
 - Afton/Jackson = include others in the family in the assessment.

Issues for DFS administrative level consideration:

- “WYCAPS coding for custody cases when children are not removed from the home;”
- “policy reimbursement across the state and may not be using Medicaid as it should be; when TPR comes it could show that DFS has not made the concerted efforts they should have; additionally not a consistent amount; in the same office juvenile services and child protective services have paid different amounts;”
- “WYCAPS is difficult to query information in; too cumbersome for child protective services. A placement cannot be changed until the last placement is updated as paid in the system, forcing a delay in recording changes in placement in the system.”
- “WYCAPS tracking of next court hearings is an issue; cannot reset the clock when a hearing is held which caused staff to enter non factual information.”
- “When child is in DFS custody, but remains in the home is hard to capture in WYCAPS.”
- “DFS manager has a very large, cumbersome and rugged area to supervise;”
- “there appears to be a shortage of DFS staff in such a large area,” and
- “policy regarding the understanding and use of APPLA and/or OPLA is needed.”

Issues requiring local DFS office attention:

- “Implementation of family centered practice extending to step parents, absent parents and siblings;” and
- “involvement of staff in Mini CFSR debriefing and Mini PIP creation.”

Case Ratings:

#D10477 (Jackson) - Two areas needing improvement: Item 18 - Child and family involvement in case planning and Item 19 - Worker visits with child. (**Parents feel like they got the services they needed; they are now functioning and the kids are safe**)

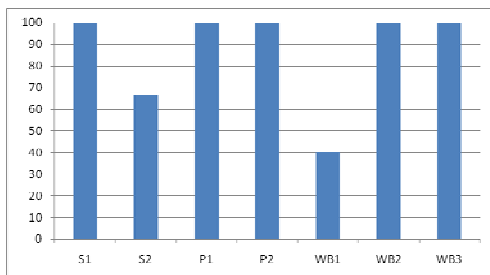
#D10479 (Jackson) - Four areas needing improvement: Item 7 - Permanency goal for child; Item 17 - Needs and services of child, parents, foster parents (overall rating)¹; Item 18 - Child and family involvement in case planning and Item 20 - worker visits with parent(s). (**Good caseworker involvement to think creatively to keep the child in the community and connected**)

#D10481 (Afton) - Five areas needing improvement: Item 4 - Risk of harm to child(ren); Item 17 - Needs and services of child, parents, foster parents (overall rating)²; Item 18 - Child and family involvement in case planning; Item 19 - Worker visits with child; Item 20 - Worker visits with parents and Item 22 - Physical health of the child. (**DFS is approachable according to the parents; mother daughter counseling has been beneficial; assessment and engagement of family members in this case would have improved this case**)

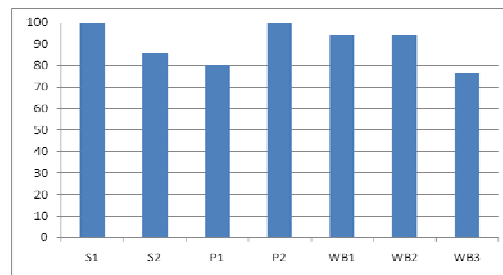
#D10482 (Pinedale) - Five areas needing improvement: Item 4 - Risk of harm to child(ren); Item 17 - Needs and services of child, parents, foster parents (overall rating)³; Item 18 - Child and family involvement in case planning; Item 19 - Worker visits with child and Item 20 - Worker visits with parent(s). (**Lack of DFS resources in the form of caseworker(s) at the time of this case in Pinedale greatly affected the outcomes of this case**)

#R2478 (Jackson) - Perfect scoring case. (**Family involvement and support along with the right treatment at the right time made the case successful; the relationship the caseworker had with the family and the continual efforts by the caseworker to engage the father was excellent**)

#R2480 (Afton) - Perfect scoring case. (**Overall good case to meet the child's needs in the community in a volatile setting**)



The graph above shows the percentage composite scores of this Mini CFSR review (round IV).



The graph above shows the percentage composite scores for the first three rounds of Mini CFSRs.

¹ 17a failed: Rating for the child(ren); assessments of needs and service provision

² 17a failed; Rating for the child(ren); assessments of needs and service provision and 17b rating for the child(ren); assessments of needs and service provision.

³ Rating for the child(ren); assessments of needs and service provision

Strengths:

- Education:
 - “Classes at the alternative school were beneficial while also attending main stream education/credit recovery;”
 - “child does well in school and continued to during the case,” and
 - “Cathedral Home was able to get the child’s grades up and the child will now graduate at sixteen (16).”
- Effective case planning and work:
 - “Caseworker was very creative finding support people on each side of the family to facilitate the transfer of the child in a case with a no contact order;”
 - “caseworker did a great job of facilitating problem solving;”
 - “caseworker recognized the schedule of the parents and worked around the parent’s schedule;”
 - “good in home services to address risk and safety concerns for parents substance abuse in order to keep children safely in the home;”
 - “informal safety and risk assessments were done in a MDT;”
 - “good visiting with mother for child;”
 - “DFS was very creative to keep the child in the community and connected;”
 - “child and mother were involved in case planning;”
 - “case worker was always available through many different avenues;”
 - “mother had issues with other officials in the case and caseworker helped mediate that and advocate for the mother;”
 - “case file was in good, chronological order;”
 - “the best interests of the child to stay in the community, and in a group home, were recognized by DFS, but would not be supported by the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA);”
 - “good relative search by the caseworker;”
 - “DFS helps mother with transportation for 300 mile round trip counseling trip, weekly;”
 - “child was only in one placement;”
 - “connections were preserved through extended family visits during holidays;”
 - “caseworker offered closer placements, but family chose Cathedral Home in Laramie; family and child were involved in picking the treatment facility;”
 - “while explored, relative placement was not an option in the case;”
 - “case worker did good assessments in the case;”
 - “good case worker visits; case worker would take child out to lunch and visit with her;”
 - “all agencies work well together in Jackson,” and
 - “good immediate response and assessment by caseworker.”
- Effective use of service array:
 - “Good service array; Rainbows program for kids of divorcing parents;”
 - “many services available in Jackson for financial counseling and parenting;”
 - “informal OPLA; mother has legal custody but child lives at a group home because mother and child cannot get along well;”
 - “good individual counseling for child and individual counseling for mother in the case;”
 - “medication monitoring through appropriate resources;”
 - “group home insured that medical and dental needs were met;”
 - “good psycho sexual evaluation;”
 - “child was able to stay in his home with his mother in a small community yet still able to receive the needed treatment out of state;”
 - “good medical and mental health services provided in the case;”
 - “multiple assessments;”
 - “sexual, substance, family and individual counseling;”

- “good mental, dental and medical care, including medication management, provided by Cathedral Home,” and
- “Cathedral Home did good assessments in the case.”
- Family Involvement and Support:
 - “Family advocate from the Hirschfeld Center was a great benefit;”
 - “all agencies involved in the case collaborated very well for the benefit of the family,” and
 - “mother followed through with dental and medical needs for the child once they were identified.”
- Legal System:
 - “Guardian Ad Litem(s) (GAL) are very effective and active in their cases in this area;”
 - “district court is very committed to helping families and can be creative in that process to see that the best services possible are provided;”
 - “mother appreciated the fact that the court ordered that the dental needs be taken care of as dad was not willing to do anything without the court order,” and
 - “drug court, with weekly meetings with the court is a good resource in the community; it creates accountability for families and children.”

Opportunities for improvement:

- Case planning and work:
 - “Lacking visits between caseworker and other child in the home in an in home services case;”
 - “7 ½ year old child was not involved in the case planning process;”
 - “caseworker could not think of any risk or safety assessments that were done in the case;”
 - “no compelling reason for Termination of Parental Rights (TPR) in the case file even though it was discussed;”
 - “no concerted efforts to involve the biological father in the case;”
 - “no attempts to involve biological father in an in home services case;”
 - “stepfather’s needs were not fully evaluated or addressed;”
 - “there was no case plan in the case; shortage of staff is the attributing factor; the family did feel that their needs were met;”
 - “assessment of all family members in a juvenile services case;”
 - “all children in the family in an in home services case needed to have risk and safety assessed;”
 - “father in the case was not contacted or engaged by the caseworker;”
 - “no home visits for the children; any visit that took place occurred at the school,” and
 - “school counselor and caseworker made a judgment that a child’s nose had not been broken and no medical evaluation or treatment was sought for the child.”
- Family involvement and support:
 - “There may have been domestic violence issues that were not identified or dealt with in the home.”
- Mental Health:
 - “While difficult to do; child needs some motivation for the future.”

Systemic Barriers:

- Education System:
 - “School was not cooperative and tended not to work with DFS and the family, even to the point of ostracizing the young child in an in home services case.”
- Regional Issues:
 - “Mother, who was originally not of a certain religion, was ostracized and victimized by the community; her child could not even attend the local Boy Scouts; she has since joined that church and is now enjoying greater acceptance in the community;”
 - “at one time in Pinedale, caseworker had 65 cases and was working both child protective services cases and juvenile services cases (2006); new county attorney also filed about 15 new

cases at one time. After some turmoil and hard work by the office manager and lead worker performing triage, two workers are now in Pinedale (25 juvenile services cases and 18 child protective services cases) and a youth officer with the Sublette County Sheriff's Office along with good Judges are helping the situation get better; good county attorney, meet once a week;" community is growing, services need to catch up;" good child protective team; Curran Seeley has moved into the community; FAW moved over to assist;"

- "13 year old child was in detention center in Casper and the mother could not talk to her child for an entire month;"
- "not a lot of Medicaid providers in the area," and
- "no parenting or anger management classes or counseling were available in Afton;"
- **Legal System:**
 - "Charged in circuit court for domestic violence, then abuse case in district court; had father admitted in district court it would have caused an admission in circuit court;"
 - "everyone in the case had a concern with the sheriff's department not responding to the allegations of the sexual misconduct; jurisdictional issues with regards to who should investigate what was confusing in the case," and
 - "court often places children in DFS custody as the court thinks that is the only way that services can be paid for; this is not necessarily the case."

Additional contributing factors:

- "Most of the needs were substance abuse by the parents; good services for the parents to help them overcome their issues," and
- "father was sabotaging efforts for his child in the case."

Review process dynamics and considerations:

- Citizen reviewers consisted of:
 - Eastern Shoshone ICWA Representative;
 - High School Principal;
 - Eastern Shoshone social services investigator;
 - Special education administrator;
 - Eastern Shoshone foster care coordinator and independent living coordinator;
 - Eastern Shoshone social services worker, and
 - tribal services legal representative.

Promising Trends:

- Physical change in DFS office is great improvement for caseworkers and clients of DFS;
- district court appreciates and respects DFS for their hard work;
- good working relationship between DFS and law enforcement;
- DFS does a good job in a rugged, three (3) county call out area for CPS investigations;
- SAGE Initiative now serving 5-6 families;
- county attorney feels DFS does a good job assessing risk through fact to face contacts;
- family treatment court is a real benefit and working well;
- no foster families in Teton county: Few CPS removals; workers are innovative at keeping children safely in the home; emphasis on relative search and placement;
- law enforcement places an emphasis on removing the offender rather than the child;
- Pinedale to soon get their own district court judge;
- few “turf” battles between child welfare agencies and organizations in this area;
- Mental health, parenting, counseling and school resources are reported to be plentiful and good resources in Teton County; C-V, Red Top, CLIMB, Curran Seeley, Copper Hills and numerous other non profits;
- concept of “graduated consequences” by the county attorney for delinquency cases;
- pre court diversion program by Teton Youth and Family Services;
- county attorney provides training for others on interviewing and reporting techniques;
- the opinion of DFS caseworkers is solicited and valued by the county attorney.
- Tara Ackerman is recognized by the court for tremendous work in the court improvement program;
- safety is paramount and well addressed by all in this area, and
- six (6) and twelve (12) month reviews occurring systematically.

Concerning Trends:

- Dental services who will accept Medicaid is a problem;
- new case plan is felt to be redundant and cumbersome; does not work well;
- WYCAPS is difficult to query information in; too cumbersome for CPS. A placement cannot be changed until the last placement is updated as paid in the system, forcing a delay in recording changes in placement in the system.
- WYCAPS tracking of next court hearings is an issue; cannot reset the clock when a hearing is held which caused staff to enter non factual information.
- Stat Pak and Mini CFSR results not uniformly shared with staff;
- forensic interview training and investigative training would be helpful for workers;
- greater independent living services and resources are needed;
- tremendous costs of living in this area of the state resulting in both parties of a home having to work; for others who have the financial wherewithal to live in this area, it is easier to donate money to cause than to be a foster home;
- increasing abuse of over the counter medications, and
- understanding and use of APPLA or OPLA is an issue that needs clarified.



Office determined strengths:

1. None determined; only office manager present at exit meeting.

Office determined needs and concerns:

1. Guidance in implementing family centered practice expectations on engaging the entire family.

Office determined Program Improvement Plan for the upcoming year (PIP):

1. Address how to be more inclusive of all family members.