CONTRACT OVERSIGHT DESK REVIEW

Children's Network of Southwest Florida

As required by section 402.7305 F.S., The Department of Children and Families performed a Desk Review for Children's Network of Southwest Florida.

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Executive Summary

Contract Oversight performed a Desk Review for Children's Network of Southwest Florida, Contract HJ300. Children's Network of Southwest Florida (CNSWFL) provides child welfare services for Circuit 20, which encompasses Charlotte, Lee, Hendry, Collier and Glades counties in the Suncoast Region of Florida and has done so since 2003. The scope of CNSWFL's desk review was determined by Department of Children and Families (DCF) Executive Leadership, with the intent of informing the development of a plan to address ongoing performance issues.

As of April 2017, CNSWFL serves approximately 1550 children in out of home care and 900 children through services in their home. While the entire state has seen a 38.8% increase in the number of children in out-of-home care over the last four years, CNSWFL has far exceeded that with a 75.9% increase. They have also seen a 23.4% increase in children served in-home during this same period, compared to the state which has seen a 4% decrease in children served in home. This significant increase in the number of children served is likely influenced by many factors but undoubtedly causes a strain on the child welfare system in Circuit 20.

Number of Children in Out of Home Care as of June 2014	Statewide	CNSWFL
	17,304	881
Number of Children in Out of Home Care as of April 2017	Statewide	CNSWFL
	24,026	1,550
Percentage Increase	Statewide	CNSWFL
	38.8%	75.9%

Over the past three years, CNSWFL has seen an increase in children who experience repeat maltreatment within 6 months of services and a recent increase in the percent of children re-entering out of home care within 12 months of achieving timely permanency, which is currently higher than the statewide and national average.

Children's Network of SW Florida		
Licensed & Group Care Placements	CBC	Statewide
Number of Children in Licensed Care	570	7,183
% of Children in Licensed Care	36.31%	29.54%
Number of Children in Group Care	94	2,166
% of Children in Group Care	5.99%	8.91%

Source: Department of Children & Families - Children in Out of Home Care by Lead Agency Report (updated 6/11/17)

For children in out of home care, CNSWFL has approximately 53% placed in kinship care and 41.5% placed in licensed care with the remaining children in other settings such as residential treatment centers, hospitals or reported as runaways. This represents less children in kinship care than the statewide average. Of the children in licensed care, approximately 36% are in licensed foster homes and 6% are in group care.

CNSWFL has not met several of the scorecard performance measures for the year and in quarter 4 of fiscal year 2016-2017, they did not meet seven of the 12 performance measures, four of which were significantly off target. As for quality reviews, in eight areas they are performing better than the average statewide performance, however, the following measures need improvement:

- Ensuring children are first and foremost protected from abuse and/or neglect (CQI/CFSR Safety Outcome1);
- Safety plans sufficiently protecting children (RSF 4.1)
- background checks being completed and used to inform assessment (RSF 3.1 and 3.2), and
- frequency of contacts with fathers (RSF 2.6)

National Snapshot

The charts and graphs on the following page are provided by Casey Family Programs. Casey Family Programs works in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and two territories and with more than a dozen tribal nations. They actively work with Florida child welfare professionals to improve practice through use of evidence based programs and data analytics. The information is based on two reporting periods in the federal fiscal year known as "a" and "b".
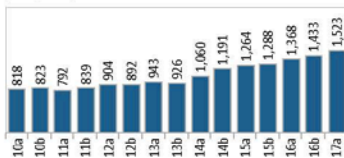
Data Basics

Childrens Network of Southwest Florida

NOTE: Due to data source and timeframe presented, numbers may vary slightly from those presented in reports produced by FL DCFS.
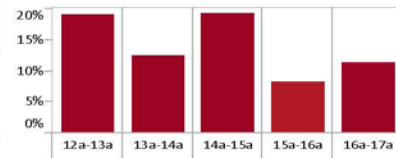
Legend: CBC | state | national

# of children in care (< age 18)

818, 823, 792, 839, 904, 892, 943, 926, 1,060, 1,191, 1,264, 1,288, 1,368, 1,433, 1,523
(10a, 10b, 11a, 11b, 12a, 12b, 13a, 13b, 14a, 14b, 15a, 15b, 16a, 16b, 17a)

year over year change in the # in care
20%, 15%, 10%, 5%, 0%
(12a-13a, 13a-14a, 14a-15a, 15a-16a, 16a-17a)

rate in care (per 1,000, < age 18)
6.0, 4.0, 2.0, 0.0
(2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017)
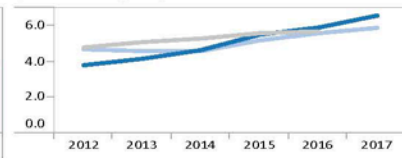
Safety

% children who experience repeat maltreatment within 6 months
8%, 6%, 4%, 2%
(2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016)
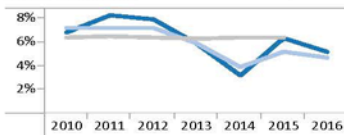
% children who experience repeat maltreatment within 12 months
40%, 20%, 0%
(2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013)
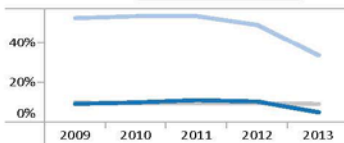
Entries

# of children entering & exiting
Entries / Exits
600, 400, 200, 0
(11a, 11b, 12a, 12b, 13a, 13b, 14a, 14b, 15a, 15b, 16a, 16b, 17a)
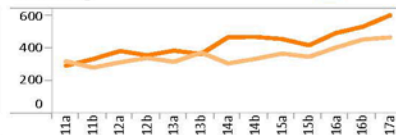
rate of children entering care (per 1,000)
4.0, 2.0, 0.0
(2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016)
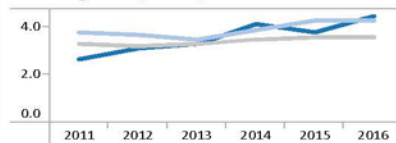
Placement

placement settings for children in care, by age (for all children in care on 3/31/2017)

Legend: Runaway, Congregate care, Foster care, Pre-adoptive home, Kinship care

- <1: Foster care 59%, Kinship care 37%
- 1-5: Foster care 50%, Kinship care 46%
- 6-12: Foster care 45%, Kinship care 48%
- 13-17: Congregate care 28%, Foster care 45%, Kinship care 20%
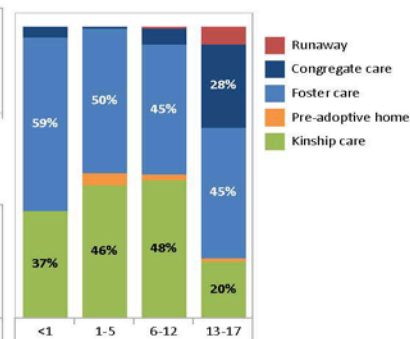
Timely & Stable Permanency

% permanency within 30 days of entering care
10%, 5%, 0%
(11a, 11b, 12a, 12b, 13a, 13b, 14a, 14b, 15a, 15b, 16a, 16b)
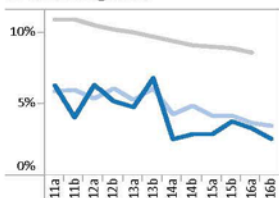
% permanency within 3-12 months of entering care
40%, 20%, 0%
(11a, 11b, 12a, 12b, 13a, 13b, 14a, 14b, 15a, 15b, 16a)
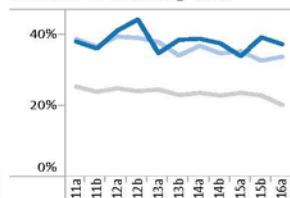
% permanency w/in 12 months for children in care 12-23 months
60%, 40%, 20%, 0%
(2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016)
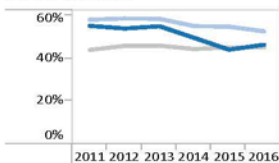
% re-entering care w/in 12 months of timely permanency
10%, 5%, 0%
(2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015)
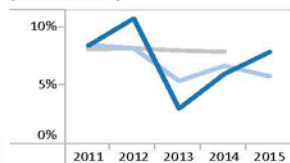
Children In Care 2+ Years (3/31/2017)

in care 2 + years

#	229
%	15%
state	16%
Nat'l (2016)	25%

% in care 2+ years at start of the year who achieve permanency w/in 12 months
40%, 20%, 0%
(2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016)
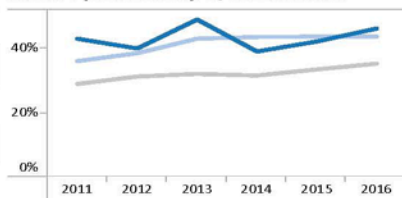
profile of current caseload in care 2+ years
(for groups that represent at least 2% of the total; by age, placement type and case plan goal)

	ages 2-12			ages 13-17			
	Reunif	Adopt	NA	Reunif	Adopt	APPLA	Guard
Congregate care					6%		
Foster care	5%	31%	3%	2%	13%	3%	3%
Kinship care	4%	12%					
Pre-adoptive home		3%					

Child Fatalities

Circuit 20 has experienced an overall downward trend in child fatality investigations over the past eight years but has had an increase in the past two years. In 2009 and 2010, several of the child fatality investigations had active oversight by CNSWFL however, in the past several years it has consistently held that one fatality investigation a year has been involving a family actively receiving services provided by CNSWFL.
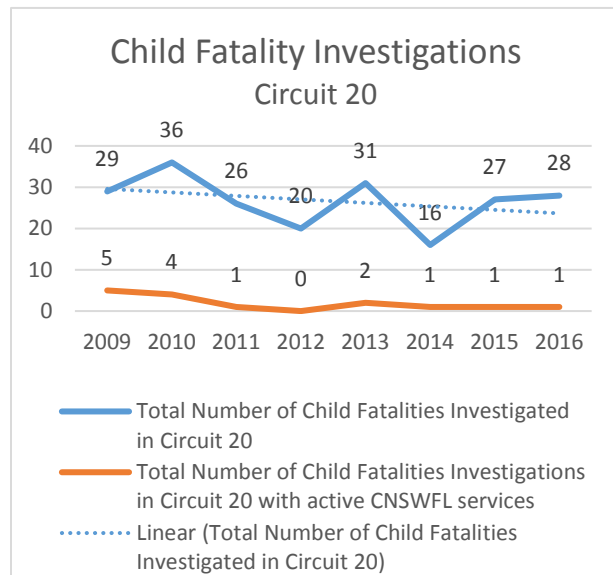
Since 2015, there have been three Critical Incident Rapid Response Teams deployed due to fatalities in families where CNSWFL was the primary CBC and one CIRRT involving a family that CNSWFL was not the primary CBC, but was providing courtesy supervision. Some of the primary issues identified in these CIRRTs were:

- Ineffective communication between the CBC, investigations and Children's Legal Services
- Failure by parties involved to escalate decisions to the next level of supervision when there are disagreements about case activities

Child Fatality Investigations
Circuit 20

Legend:
— Total Number of Child Fatalities Investigated in Circuit 20
— Total Number of Child Fatalities Investigations in Circuit 20 with active CNSWFL services
······· Linear (Total Number of Child Fatalities Investigated in Circuit 20)

CBC Performance and Quality Measures

This area assesses whether CNSWFL is meeting contract measures and evaluates their functioning related to performance and quality measures.

Performance Measures

A review of CNSWFL's performance shows both strengths and areas where opportunities for improvement exist. In five of the scorecard measures, CNSWFL performed at or above the established performance standards.

CNSWFL's performance consistently (last six quarters) meets scorecard measures in the following areas:
- M02: % of children who are not abused/neglected during in-home services
- M04: % of children under supervision who are seen every 30 days
- M06: % of children exiting to a permanent home w/in 12 months for those in care 12 to 23 months
- M11: % of young adults exiting foster care at age 18 completed/are enrolled in secondary education, vocational education or adult education

CNSWFL overall appeared to be meeting the following measure, although not in every quarter:
- M05: % of children exiting to a permanent home within 12 months of entering care

Seven performance measures a critical need for improvement, all of which scored below the established performance standards in at least four of the last six quarters. They are:
- M01: Rate of abuse per 100,000 days in foster care
- M03: % of children who are not neglected or abused after receiving services
- M07: % of children who do not re-enter care within 12 months of moving to a permanent home
- M08: Placement moves per 1,000 days in foster care
- M09: % of children in foster care who received a medical service in last 12 months
- M10: % of children in foster care who received a dental service in last 7 months
- M12: % of sibling groups where all siblings are placed together

Scorecard Measure	FY 2016 Q3	FY 2016 Q4	FY 2017 Q1	FY 2017 Q2	FY 2017 Q3	FY 2017 Q4
M01: Rate of abuse per 100,000 days in foster care	10.77	11.50	13.06	15.83	21.43	23.43
M02: % of children who are not abused/neglect during in-home services	98.70	97.30	95.80	98.30	98.00	97.50
M03: % of children who are not neglected or abused after receiving services	94.60	97.40	95.00	95.80	93.60	91.50
M04: % of children under supervision who are seen every 30 days	99.80	99.60	99.80	99.90	99.70	99.80
M05: % of children exiting to a permanent home w/in 12 months of entering care	37.50	38.60	45.70	47.80	42.00	42.50
M06: % of children exiting to a permanent home w/in 12 months for those in care 12 to 23 months	44.40	47.80	44.70	51.90	48.90	53.10
M07: % of children who do not re-enter care w/in 12 months of moving to permanent home	90.40	94.30	90.30	90.50	91.30	79.70
M08: Placement moves per 1,000 days in foster care	5.19	5.45	6.40	6.26	6.21	6.18
M09: % of children in foster care who received a medical service in last 12 months	95.20	92.20	93.70	95.80	93.80	93.60
M10: % of children in foster care who received a dental service in last 7 months	86.00	84.70	85.20	92.90	89.60	93.90
M11: % of young adults exiting foster care at age 18 completed/are enrolled in sec. ed., voc. ed, or adult ed.	90.70	92.00	91.20	88.60	87.70	88.20
M12: % of sibling groups where all siblings are placed together	64.10	61.00	60.40	60.00	61.70	61.30

Standard or Better Below Standard Red Zone

Last Updated:7/11/2017

Rate of abuse per 100,000 days in foster care
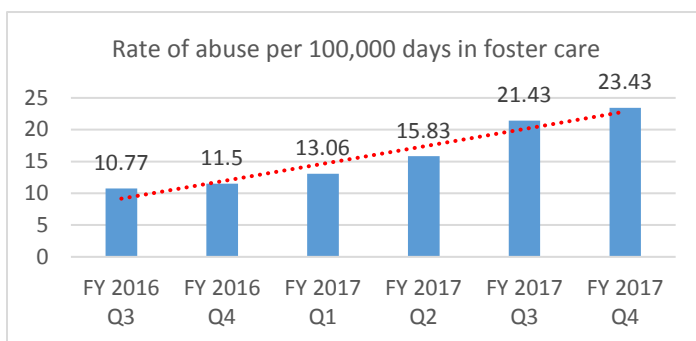
While all seven measures are concerning, the most urgent concern is the rate of abuse per 100,000 days in foster care as CNSWFL has not met this measure in any of the last six quarters and performance continues to rapidly decline. In Q4 of FY 2016-2017, the rate was 23.43 which is more than double the statewide rate of 10.61. This represents the rate of verified maltreatments for children in out of home care per 100,000 days. An analysis is needed to examine the root cause of this issue.

Also of significant concern is percentage of children who do not re-enter care within 12 months of moving to permanent home (M07). This measure has only been met once in the last six quarters. However, in the last

quarter, it dropped significantly, going from 91.3% to 79.7% of children re-entering care after achieving reunification. Analysis into the reason for the significant drop is warranted.

Quality Measures

The quality assurance data is information collected through the CBC's approved quality assurance program. The Florida Continuous Quality Improvement (FL CQI) data is information gathered using the FL CQI tool through individual case file reviews on in-home and out-of-home cases. The Rapid Safety Feedback (RSF) data is information gathered using the RSF Tool. The RSF Tool focuses on safety and is used to review active in-home cases that have specified high risk factors. The FL CFSR data is information collected as part of Florida's Federal Children and Families Service Review. The FL CFSR score included in this report is derived from statewide averages.

Both the RSF and CQI/CFSR data indicate a need for focus on the quality of case work in several areas. CNSWFL has achieved 94.1% rating in both the frequency of contacts with the mother. In the remaining areas, there is significant need for improvement, primarily in the following areas:

- Sufficiency of family assessments (RSF 1.2)
- Ensuring the frequency and quality of contacts with the child's father is sufficient to address risk and safety issues (RSF 2.6)
- Ensuring appropriate background screening is completed and utilized in assessments (RSF 3.1 & 3.2)
- Sufficiency and ongoing monitoring of safety plans (RSF 4.1 & 4.2)

Rapid Safety Feedback

Children's Network of Southwest Florida YTD FY 2016-17	Applicable Cases	% Strength		% Needing Improvement	
		State wide	CNSWFL	State wide	CNSWFL
1 Are family assessments of danger threats, child vulnerability, and family protective capacities sufficient to identify safety concerns and case plan actions needed to effectively address caregiver protective capacities and child needs?					
1.1 Is the most recent family assessment sufficient?	35	51.2%	68.6%	48.8%	31.4%
1.2 Is the most recent family assessment completed timely?	35	45.9%	34.3%	54.1%	65.7%
2 Are visits between case managers, children, and parent(s) or legal custodian(s) sufficient to ensure child safety and evaluate progress toward case plan outcomes?					
2.1 Is the quality of visits between the case manager and the child(ren) sufficient to address issues pertaining to safety and evaluate progress toward case plan outcomes?	35	64.2%	80%	35.8%	20%

Children's Network of Southwest Florida FY 2016-17 (July 1-March 31, 2017)	Applicable Cases	% Strength		% Needing Improvement	
		Statewide N=590	CSWFL	Statewide N=590	CNSWFL
2.2 Is the frequency of visits between the case manager and the child(ren) sufficient to ensure child safety and evaluate progress toward case plan outcomes?	35	78.8%	85.7%	21.2%	14.3%
2.3 Is the quality of visits between the case manager and the child's mother sufficient to address issues pertaining to safety and evaluate progress toward case plan outcomes?	33	68.6%	84.8%	31.4%	15.2%
2.4 Is the frequency of the visits between the case manager and the child's mother sufficient to ensure child safety and evaluate progress toward case plan outcomes?	34	83.8%	94.1	16.2%	5.9%
2.5 Is the quality of the visits between the case manager and the child's father sufficient to address issues pertaining to safety and evaluate progress toward case plan outcomes?	18	56.1%	66.7%	43.9%	33.3%
2.6 Is the frequency of the visits between the case manager and the child's father sufficient to ensure child safety and evaluate progress toward case plan outcomes?	25	54.7%	48%	45.3%	52%
3 Are background checks and home assessments sufficient and responded to with a sense of urgency when needed to address potential danger threats?					
3.1 Are background checks and home assessments completed when needed?	35	69.0%	65.7%	31.0%	34.3%
3.2 Is the information assessed and used to address potential danger threats?	35	74.4%	71.4%	25.6%	28.6%
4 Is a sufficient safety plan in place to control danger threats to protect a child?					
4.1 Is the safety plan sufficient?	35	60.5%	60%	39.5%	40.0%
4.2 Is the safety plan actively monitored to ensure that it is working effectively to protect the child(ren) from identified danger threats?	33	54.7%	45.5%	45.3%	54.5%
5 Is the case manager supervisor conducting guided discussions at specific points in the case management process focused on promoting effective practice and decision making?					
5.1 Is the supervisor regularly consulting with the case manager?	35	55.3%	74.3%	44.7%	25.7%
5.2 Is the supervisor ensuring recommended actions are followed up on?	35	49.2%	54.3%	50.8%	45.7

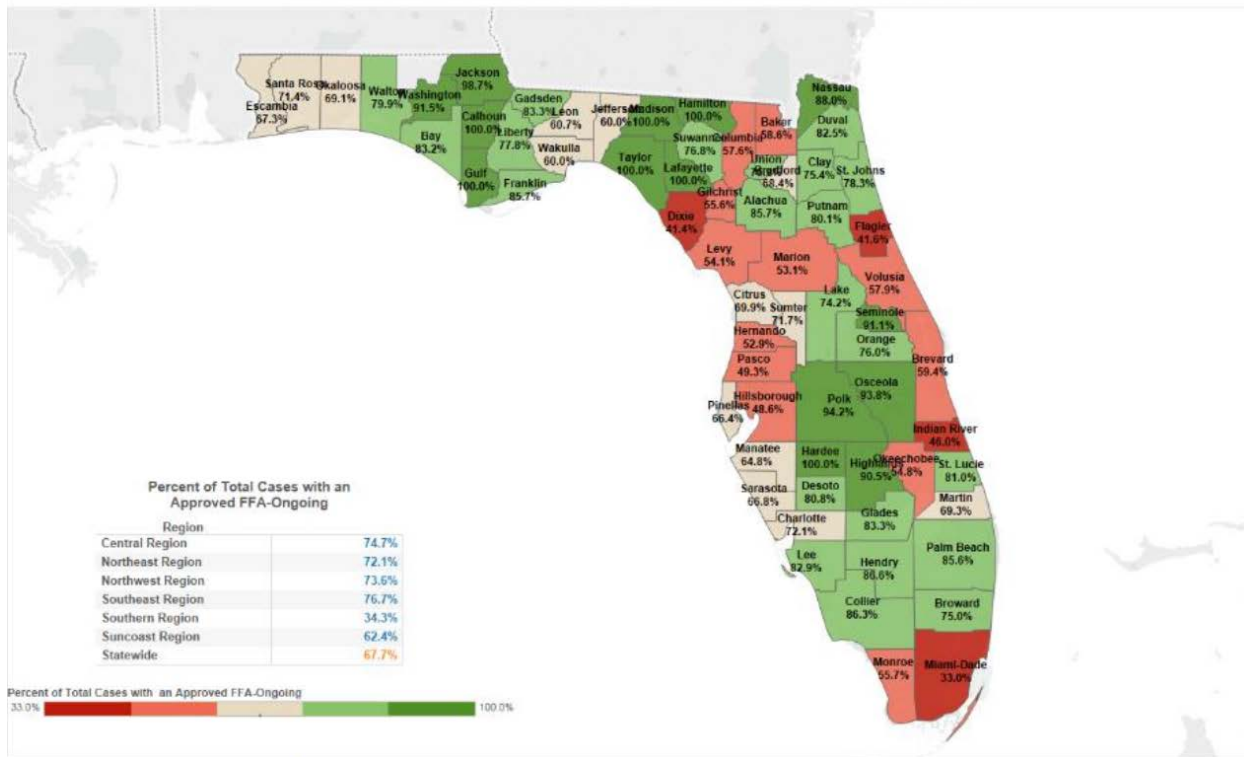Source: CMS Reviews Q3 2016-17 QA Web Portal Data as of 5/4/2017; Subject to change pending more case reviews

Assessment of Child Welfare Practice	Number of Cases in Sample	Safety Outcome 1 Outcome Rating		Safety Outcome 2 Outcome Rating		Permanency Outcome 1 Outcome Rating		Permanency Outcome 2 Outcome Rating		Well-Being Outcome 1 Outcome Rating		Well-Being Outcome 2 Outcome Rating		Well-Being Outcome 3 Outcome Rating	
		Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect.		Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate.		Children have permanency and stability in their living sitations.		The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children.		Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs.		Children receive appropriate servies to meet their educational needs.		Children receive adequate services to meet their phyical and mental health needs.	
Community Base Care Agency		N	Sub. Achieved	N	% Strength	N	% Strength	N	% Strength	N	% Strength	N	% Strength	N	% Strength
Big Bend	17	6	100%	17	100%	15	73%	15	93%	17	82%	14	79%	15	100%
Brevard	17	10	100%	17	88%	10	20%	10	30%	17	53%	10	90%	10	50%
CBC Central Fl Orange/Osceola	20	13	92%	20	80%	15	40%	15	47%	20	60%	9	89%	17	76%
CBC Central Fl Seminole	8	3	100%	8	75%	5	40%	5	60%	8	25%	5	100%	5	80%
ChildNet Broward	20	9	100%	20	90%	12	83%	12	75%	20	85%	12	92%	12	67%
ChildNet Palm Beach	20	12	83%	20	95%	12	58%	12	92%	20	90%	13	85%	17	65%
CNSWFL	22	13	77%	22	77%	12	67%	12	100%	22	59%	10	100%	18	78%
Community Partnership for Children	15	10	100%	15	80%	9	78%	9	67%	15	67%	8	88%	11	64%
Devereux	20	13	92%	20	80%	12	67%	12	67%	20	60%	10	90%	15	73%
ECA - Hillsborough	21	12	100%	21	95%	13	77%	13	54%	21	67%	10	100%	18	61%
ECA - Pinellas Pasco	20	16	100%	20	55%	12	58%	12	67%	20	50%	15	67%	17	76%
Families First Network	20	12	67%	20	60%	12	33%	12	83%	20	25%	9	89%	19	53%
Family Support Services of North Florida	21	14	100%	21	67%	12	50%	12	83%	21	57%	13	100%	16	94%
Heartland	21	12	100%	21	90%	12	83%	12	75%	21	62%	13	100%	18	89%
Kids Central	21	11	82%	21	57%	12	83%	12	67%	21	38%	8	100%	13	77%
Kids First of Florida	7	4	100%	7	43%	4	50%	4	75%	7	57%	5	100%	4	100%
Our Kids	21	10	90%	21	52%	12	67%	12	50%	21	14%	20	65%	21	24%
Partnership for Strong Families	15	8	63%	15	40%	9	33%	9	11%	15	7%	8	38%	11	36%
Sarasota YMCA	15	8	75%	15	67%	15	67%	15	87%	15	67%	12	83%	15	67%
St. Johns Cty Commission	8	7	86%	8	75%	5	100%	5	80%	8	50%	5	80%	8	63%
FL CQI Statewide (Reviews conducted Jan. 2017 - March 2017)	349	203	90%	349	74%	220	62%	220	69%	349	55%	209	85%	280	68%
FL CFSR Statewide (Reviews conducted April 2016 - September 2016)	80	47	91%	80	70%	55	49%	55	69%	80	40%	53	92%	67	75%

Practice Model Implementation

CNSWFL has made progress toward implementation of the Practice Model (Safety Decision Methodology).

As of 5/18/17, CNSWFL's status for Safety Decision Methodology Implementation is as follows: Charlotte (72.1%), Collier (86.3%), Glades (83.3%), Hendry (86.6%) and Lee (82.9%), which is higher than the average in Suncoast Region at 62.4% and the statewide average at 67.7%. This percentage represents the of active cases with an approved Family Functioning Assessment Ongoing (FFA-O). This demonstrates CNSWFL's commitment to the Practice Model.   (Source: Child Welfare Key Indicators Monthly Report, May 2017)

Ongoing Services Safety Methodology Implementation Status as of 5/18/2017

Percent of Total Cases with an Approved FFA-Ongoing

Region	
Central Region	74.7%
Northeast Region	72.1%
Northwest Region	73.6%
Southeast Region	76.7%
Southern Region	34.3%
Suncoast Region	62.4%
Statewide	67.7%

Percent of Total Cases with an Approved FFA-Ongoing
33.0%   100.0%

Service Array

This section includes information on CNSWFL's program development for family support services and safety management as well as their rating from the Office of Child Welfare.

Family Support Services

CNSWFL has two primary family support services programs that are utilized in Circuit 20, Camelot Community Care and Behavior Education and Therapy (BET). Both programs utilize standardized assessments to determine the needs of the family and provide services to improve protective factors. Both programs are available across all service areas and there are no capacity issues. At times, the programs are underutilized. CNSWFL has a rating of "3" from the Office of Child Welfare for their family support services program, which means the services are aligned with the service array framework and are available across the entire service area, when needed. As indicated above, 96.9% of children who have received family support services do not experience maltreatment in the six months following services. See the chart below. *(Source: Child Welfare Key Indicators Monthly Report, May 2017)*

Camelot Community Care

Camelot Community Cares provides two tracks for service. The first uses a care coordinator to assess the family's needs and assist the family with community service access. This service is provided in the home as the coordinator ensures the family receives and benefits from the referred services. The second track for services are in home support services which include teaching skills such as parenting, budgeting, family home cleanliness and safety, behavior management as well as coordinating and monitoring community services.

Behavior Education and Therapy

Behavior Education and Therapy utilizes a certified behavioral analyst to complete a behavior assessment and then educates the parent by teaching them behavior modification tools. They also identify other needs, when

applicable, and help the family access services to address those needs.

Percent of Children Terminated from Family Support Services in Quarter Who Were Not Maltreated within Six Months, for Children with Services Terminated April-June 2016

CBC Lead Agency	Percent
St Johns/Family Integrity Program (n=22)	100.0%
Partnership for Strong Families (n=41)	100.0%
Childnet Palm Beach (n=116)	99.1%
Eckerd Community Hillsborough (n=72)	98.6%
Devereux CBC (n=55)	98.2%
Childrens Network of SW Florida (n=157)	96.9%
CBC of Central Florida (n=703)	95.5%
Family Support Services (n=618)	95.3%
Statewide (n=3819)	94.2%
Comm. Partnership For Children (n=214)	94.2%
Kids Central, Inc. (n=297)	93.6%
CBC of Seminole (n=223)	93.6%
Heartland For Children Inc (n=109)	93.1%
Families First Network (n=292)	92.9%
CBC of Brevard (n=318)	92.9%
Our Kids of Miami-Dade/Monroe (n=165)	92.1%
Eckerd Community Alternatives (n=142)	91.6%
Big Bend CBC (n=134)	90.5%
ChildNet-Broward (n=58)	89.2%
Kids First Of Florida Inc (n=24)	88.8%
Sarasota Y/Safe Children Coalition (n=59)	88.0%

GOOD →

Source: FSFN Report "Children with No Verified Maltreatment Within Six Months of Termination of Family Support Services."

Safety Management

CNSWFL currently has a rating of "1" from the Office of Child Welfare for safety management services, which means the services are not available for every category of safety management needed and/or are not aligned with the purpose of safety management services.

Per their updated safety management services plan, CNSWFL utilizes their sub-contracted case management agencies to provide safety management services with additional programs providing some safety management for specific circumstances. Lutheran Services and Pathways Human Services provide safety management both during investigations and during ongoing case management and have no reported capacity issues. However, per the Department staff in the region, there have been accessibility and criteria issues that have prevented safety management services from being accessed regularly.

One provider used for safety management, previously provided a prevention based service that limited which families it would work with based on specific family conditions. For example, they would not work with families who were experiencing domestic violence if the perpetrator was still in the home. Since the program started providing safety management service, referrals are still being turned away in these circumstances, which is not in line with the intent and purpose of safety management services. While efforts are underway to address this issue, it is still a barrier to receiving timely services when needed.

Additionally, while there are multiple providers throughout the circuit to provide services, there are challenges with the location of the providers which is potentially inhibiting their ability to access services across the service area in a manner that is within the time frame needed to be able to safely maintain children in their home when needed.

Financial Viability Report Analysis

The Office of CBC/ME Financial Accountability performed financial monitoring procedures, based on the DCF 2016-17 CBC-ME Financial Monitoring Tool for Desk Reviews, of CNSWFL and found three areas of noncompliance. The desk review period was from July 1, 2016 through September 30, 2016. The areas of non-compliance were:

1. Non-compliance with travel requirements - CNSWFL reimbursed the cost of meals when staff were attending a conference which provided the meals (in violation of CFOP 40-1). CNSWFL reclassified the meals to unallowable expenses.
2. Non-compliance with Federal/State regulatory requirements – CNSWFL failed to properly document FSFN for a licensed residential group care/emergency shelter payment to a client turning 18. CNSWFL recouped the overpayment from the vendor.
3. Non-compliance with Federal/State regulatory requirements – CNSWFL incorrectly classified a Road to Independence scholarship expenditure to EFC Cost Pool. Also, CNSWFL failed to properly document FSFN for an EFC payment to a client turning 21. CNSWFL reclassified the RTI expenditure and corrected the FSFN entry.

DCF Contract Manager Feedback

This section includes information related to placement process and resources provided by the contract manager.

Foster Home Recruitment and Retention

CNSWFL has had three primary efforts to improve foster home retention and recruitment, which are outlined below. As of June 30, 2016, CNSWFL started with 382 homes and closed 106 homes. CNSWFL lost 27.7% of homes, but had a net positive of 3 homes. The primary reason homes closed was because after adopting, they no longer wanted to foster, however, the next largest group of homes closed was at the request of the foster parent but it is unclear why the request was made.

Recruit quality foster homes utilizing "Fill Your Seat" initiative

- **Objective:** Implement the "Fill Your Seat" initiative to recruit quality foster homes by assisting families in identifying natural supports within their network that have like interests of the families enrolled in the current PRIDE classes.

  Actions/Update as of 6/30/2017: The "Fill Your Seat" initiative was not fully implemented.

Recruit quality foster homes utilizing traditional and social media

- **Objective:** Increase social media posts, radio ads, TV commercials and billboards to increase interest in foster care licensure.

  Actions Underway: CNSWFL began a "thank you campaign" that highlighted foster families on a Billboard thanking the foster parent featured for their involvement and posted contact information for the public to contact if interested in more information.

Retain quality foster homes by reaching out to families each month

- **Actions Underway:**
  1. Call existing foster homes and verbally thank them for their commitment to our children and families, identify any current or past issues through discussion with the family.
  2. Assist in resolving any current issues identified with the responsible agency, department and/or individual.
  3. Cross-reference closure forms for families closing due to dissatisfaction or lack of support (not due to natural maturation reasons) to determine if issues were identified and resolved.
  4. Review Foster Home closures and follow-up with calls to determine reasons for closure and utilize information for retention.
  5. Contact family to determine if any additional supports can be offered to retain the family, even if only for respite/short-term placements.
  6. Intervention of Licensing Supervisor and Programs Director when issues arise with CMO to discuss with foster parent and assist with resolution.
  7. Utilize social and traditional media to thank current foster parents to show recognition.
  8. Held a Joint FP Appreciation Picnic (5/20/17) to show appreciation for Foster Parents.

Placement Process

CNSWFL's approach to placement is unique compared to other CBCs in the Suncoast Region. CNSWFL utilizes their sub contracted case management agencies to make the placement decisions within the foster home provider network. The most notable strengths and challenges related to CNSWFL's placement process are below:

- Every effort is made to first place out-of-home children with a family member or with a non-relative known to the child.
- Efforts to develop more providers for therapeutic foster homes include contracting with the National Youth Advocate Program and with Devereux to assist with providing therapeutic family care homes
- Utilized licensing waivers to have children in homes at over capacity
- CNSWFL placement moves per 1,000 days in foster care is above the statewide standard of 4.12 or less. The scorecard performance for report FY 2017 Q1 was 6.40, FY 2017 Q2 was 6.26, FY 2017 Q3 was 6.21 as of 4/16/2017 and the Key Indicator report for the May 2017 reporting period had CNSWFL at 6.48. CNSWFL needs to review if appropriate services are being done to mitigate placement disruptions and validate data entry in FSFN to ensure accuracy of performance.

Group Care

CNSWFL does not have many children in group homes compared to the other CBC's in the region as most group homes are out of circuit. CNSWFL makes every effort to first place out-of-home children with a family member or with a non-relative known to the child. CNSWFL is attempting to work with Circuit 20 providers to notify CNSWFL as placements become available before they are filled by children from other circuits.

Supports for Relative and Non-Relative Placements

CNSWFL assists caregivers with accessing relative caregiver funds and utilizes community gatherings to show support to relative and nonrelative caregivers.   CNSWFL needs to conduct analysis to determine barriers as to why non-relatives are not accessing the stipends available to support the family.

Extended Foster Care

The Children's Home Society is a sub contracted provider of CNSWFL and utilizes their independent case management for young adults aging out.   The Children's Home Society is providing extended foster care services to 70 young adults as of 5/11/17. CNSWFL reviews and conducts fee waivers especially for young adults who will be aging out.

Placement System

CNSWFL is monitored on an annual basis by the DCF licensing staff to ensure foster home initial and relicensing applications meet the required statutory and administrative code requirements. There have not been any substantial concerns related to licensing requirements.   The monitoring has included tools with questions/review on the quality component of placements. CNSWFL should take actions to improve the use of available beds and minimize the over use of capacity waivers. As of 7/17/17, 48 homes are over the license capacity and 2 of the homes have six children over license capacity.   Regarding possible under-utilization, as of 7/17/17, 105 homes did not have any children in the home.

Corrective Action Plan

The Corrective Action Plan (CAP) from the previous year's monitoring by COU is about to close because the provider has submitted the last update. The region will be developing a new plan that will incorporate this COU Desk Review and other information available regionally. The new plan will allow areas of the previous CAP to be

absorbed. A new, separate CAP was established and due in February 2017 due to an audit of caseloads for case managers and supervisors. The audit found that the caseloads were too high with one of the subcontractors having the highest caseloads in the state. The provider created an action plan to address this area and the final task was due July 15, 2017. In addition, another formal CAP is being created to address the issue of children sleeping in an office instead of a licensed placement. This CAP is still in the initial stages of development.

Conclusion

Children's Network of SW Florida is struggling to meet performance measures and needs improvement in quality standards for casework practice. These measures and standards are used to gauge how well the CBC is executing the goal of their contract, which is to provide for the safety, permanency, and well-being needs of the children and families they serve. There are several areas that should be considered in need of critical action and additional areas in need of improvement. However, it is likely that many of these issues are inter-related and will likely need to be addressed collectively.

Areas with Critical Need for Improvement

Rate of Children Coming into Care

Nationally and statewide, there has been an increase in children in out-of-home care. However, the rate at which CNSWFL has seen an increase is almost twice the statewide rate. There are multiple factors that can contribute to this increase. Analysis is needed, on a local level, to determine the cause of this significant rate of increase to develop methods to address this issue.

Performance Measures

The following performance areas are in critical need of improvement as they have been below the target for five or more of the last six quarters:

- M01: Rate of abuse per 100,000 days in foster care
- M03: % of children who are not neglected or abused after receiving services
- M07: % of children who do not re-enter care within 12 months of moving to a permanent home
- M08: Placement moves per 1,000 days in foster care
- M09: % of children in foster care who received a medical service in last 12 months
- M10: % of children in foster care who received a dental service in last 7 months
- M12: % of sibling groups where all siblings are placed together

Quality Measures

Another critical area in need of improvement is the quality of case work. There is need for improvement across most quality measures. However, the most critical measures to focus on are:

- Sufficiency of family assessments (RSF 1.2)
- Ensuring the frequency and quality of contacts with the child's father is sufficient to address risk and safety issues (RSF 2.6)
- Ensuring appropriate background screening is completed and utilized in assessments (RSF 3.1 & 3.2)
- Sufficiency and ongoing monitoring of safety plans (RSF 4.1 & 4.2)

Areas for Improvement

- Safety Management Services have been implemented relatively recently and there are still some challenges with the application, including:
  - criteria that limits the use of the service
  - accessibility across entire service area

- Given the steady increase in children in out of home care and the steady rise of children re-entering care within twelve months of permanency, it would be prudent to conduct an analysis on the children who are re-entering care after achieving permanency to determine the root cause. CNSWFL is just short of achieving the national standard of 91.7% for this measure, however it has been steadily increasing over the past two years.
- Conduct an analysis to determine barriers as to why non-relatives are not accessing the stipends available to support the family.
- Strengthen staff knowledge and resources on caregiver support to increase placement stability and retention.