The findings discussed in this annual report for Fiscal Year 2010-2011 are from the 68 files assigned as Base Reviews conducted semi annually during the 1st and 3rd Quarters by Child and Family Connections. The reviews were conducted utilizing the Quality of Practice Standards Case Management Services from the Family Safety Program Office.

**Overall Performance in Achieving Safety, Permanency and Well-Being**

Below are the results for safety, permanency, well-being and federal Child and Family Services Review for the reviews conducted during this past year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fiscal Year 2010-2011</th>
<th>Quarter 1</th>
<th>Quarter 3</th>
<th>Overall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Safety Outcome 1 %Yes</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety Outcome 2 % Yes</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanency Outcome 1 %Yes</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanency Outcome 2 %Yes</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well-Being Outcome 1 %Yes</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well-Being Outcome 2 %Yes</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well-Being Outcome 3 %Yes</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal Child and Family Services Review % Yes</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall % of Yes Responses</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Quarter 3, Child and Family Connections ended the semiannual case file reviews with an increase in the percentage of overall Yes Responses on the tool by 11%. The area of Safety, Outcome 2 which includes standards for assessment, service referrals and the management of risk did rise 19% during the second set of reviews during this year, with an overall compliance of 79% for the year. Continued improvement in standards associated with both Permanency Outcome groupings were again noted this year. Most significant may be the increase between Quarters 1 and 3 for Permanency, Outcome 2, which increased by 12%. Stability or improvement in Yes Responses for questions as to visitation with parents and siblings, maintaining important connections, ICWA inquiries, and parent participation in decision making were found in this particular grouping. In Quarter 3, there were only two case files that did not contain documentation of an ICWA inquiry. When considering the Well-Being Outcomes, Outcome 1, resulted in a 7% improvement from the Quarter 1 to Quarter 3. Well-Being Outcome 3 increased by 18% by the year end. These areas encompass the child’s physical
health, dental health, mental and behavioral needs as well as psychotropic medications. While an increase was noted, Well-Being Outcome 3 remains the lowest in compliance for overall compliance with a compliance rate of 64% overall.

**Summary of Case Management Practice Trends**
The following section is a summary of the practice trends noted during these reviews in an effort to provide an analysis and evaluation of the following areas: Assessment, Family Engagement, Service Planning and Provision, Promoting Case Progress, and Supervisory Review and Oversight.

**Assessment**

**Continuing and Ongoing Assessments:** The updated family assessment focused on the immediate and prospective safety of the child, as well as any changes and implication in the family’s situation related to emerging concerns and service needs. The Service Worker is required to complete the family assessment in FSFN. An increase in compliance was noted as Quarter 1 yielded 56% compliance and Quarter 3 yielded 76% compliance. The overall finding for this area of assessment is 66% which is an increase of 35% from the reviews completed in the 2009-2010 year. However, the overall percentage of compliance for the sub question: the family assessment was completed at least every six months and/or at critical changes in circumstances of the family unit is 21%.

**Pre-Independent Living:** Cases that involved youth who reached 13 but not yet 15 years of age and he/she is living in a licensed, out-of-home care placement, a pre-independent living assessment was completed that identified service needs and services were provided. For this area, the reviews indicated an overall compliance of 100% for the eight applicable cases.

**Ongoing Assessment of the Child’s Needs:** This area remained relatively stable throughout the reviews this year with all but nine of the cases reviewed containing documented efforts that an assessment of the child’s needs was conducted to provide information for case planning purposes. The overall finding for this area of assessment is 87%.

**Ongoing Assessment of the Parent’s Needs:** In evaluating the ongoing assessment of the Mother’s Needs for case planning purposes, reviewers found an acceptable level of compliance with the overall finding for this area of assessment being 83%. In evaluating the ongoing assessment of the Father’s Needs for case planning purposes, reviewers found an overall finding for this area of assessment to be 65%.

**Physical Health and Dental Health Needs Assessment:** During this fiscal year, these areas of assessment were the focus of a special review conducted on all out of home cases. In that review process, which was conducted in a side by side format with CFC QA staff and CMO Case Management staff, it was learned that while a majority of the children reviewed were up to date with assessment and services, documentation was lacking in the cases files. Follow up required as a result of these reviews was a priority with both the CMO and CFC tracking and reporting the follow up. The base reviews conducted this year also reflected this as an area in need of
improvement. A stronger area for CFC is the area of physical health assessment as compared to the dental health needs assessment. The overall compliance for the physical health needs assessment is 81% and the overall compliance for dental health needs assessment is 39%. Both did experience an increase in Yes Responses from the first reviews to the second reviews conducted in the 3rd Quarter sample.

Family Engagement

Visitation with Parents: Concerted efforts were made to ensure visitation (or other contact) between the child and parents were sufficient to maintain or promote the continuity of the relationship between them. Generally, findings in this area of Family Engagement remained stable throughout the reviews with an overall finding of 89% compliance for the parental visitation. The overall finding in the 2009-2010 year was 90%, further indicating stability in this area.

Important Connections: Concerted efforts were made to maintain the child’s important connections for the majority of the cases; the overall finding was 94%.

Engaging the Child’s Mother and Father: Concerted efforts were made to support parental engagement in services. These two areas of Family Engagement remained fairly stable with the overall finding for parental engagement is 76% for the Mother and 66% for the Father. While compliance regarding the Father was similar to the findings from reviews conducted in the previous year, a decrease in compliance was noted for the Mother this year.

Case Planning Process: Family Involvement: This area remained relatively stable throughout the reviews this year. The overall finding for this area of assessment is 80%.

Psychotropic Medications Express and Informed Consent or Court Authorization: There were ten applicable children reviewed during the semiannual file reviews this year for this area of Family Engagement. The overall finding was 45%. Reviewers must consider several sub questions when determining compliance with the child’s well-being in terms of psychotropic medications. For involving the child and parents/legal guardian in the decision making process by facilitating contacts with physicians for treatment planning, the number of Yes Responses increased by the second set of reviews resulting in an overall finding of 71%.

Service Planning and Provision

Service Referrals: Completed service referrals were consistent with the needs identified. Reviewers continue to see documentation that referrals are being provided to families based on assessed needs. The overall finding for the year is 91%.

Immediate and Emerging Safety Concerns: All immediate and emerging safety concerns were addressed and additional needed interventions were provided to protect the child. There were seven cases during this year that did not meet this standard, for an overall compliance of 83%.
Efforts to Locate Other Potential Placements: Concerted efforts were made to identify, locate and evaluate other potential relatives and possible permanent placements for the child. The overall finding for this year is 97%.

Independent Living Teen Plan and Transition Planning: The teen-aged child is afforded opportunities to participate in normal life skills activities and youth over age 15 have their progress monitored through regular informative staffings. The two questions on the tool related to these areas, yielded an overall compliance of 92% and 90% respectively.

Service Worker Visits: Frequency and Quality of Visits: The frequency and quality of the service worker’s visits with all case participants was sufficient to address issues pertaining to safety, permanency goal, and well-being of the child. Both of these Service Planning and Provision areas decreased from last year’s overall findings from reviews completed in 2009-2010. The Quarter 3 reviews resulted in an increase from the previous review period for the frequency of visits, however the compliance for quality remained the same. For frequency of visits, Quarter 1 had a finding of half of the cases meeting the standard and Quarter 3 had 73% for an overall finding of 61%. For quality of visits, the finding was 79%. Service Workers must complete unannounced visits to the child’s place of residence at least one every three months; this requirement is assessed in Frequency of Visits questions on the tool. Reviewers held Service Workers more accountable this year for meeting this requirement and found that files often did not contain documentation that unannounced visits were being conducted and/or attempted. The concern was addressed at a Quality Improvement Committee and also in the CMO annual Program Evaluation for contract monitoring.

Promoting Case Progress

Stability of Child’s Placement: The child’s current placement is stable and appropriate to meet the child’s needs with no apparent or significant risks or projections of disruption. The overall finding for this area of Promoting Case Progress is 94% for this year. Also relevant, is the compliance found in the question involving the child experiencing no more than two out-of-home placement settings during the period under review. The overall finding was 95% for Yes Responses with only three of the applicable children noted to have in fact experienced more than two placements during the review period.

Case Plan: Timeliness: The case record contained a current (not expired) case plan. The overall compliance for this year was 79%. An increase occurred in the Quarter 3 reviews; only one of the reviewed cases did not contain a current case plan. This has been an area of ongoing discussion in Quality Improvement Committees and an increase of 19% since the findings of the 2009-2010 is significant.

Communication with Service Providers: Reviewers found proof of communication with service providers for case participants, increasing during the year, with an overall finding of 77%. In the 1st Quarter reviews, contact with service providers for the child was deemed to be only 66% but did rise during the 3rd Quarter reviews to 84%.
Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) Inquiry: A very significant increase was experienced this year with compliance with ICWA. The overall finding for the year is 87% and last year the overall finding was 28%. ICWA not only was addressed at previous Quality Improvement Committees but also it is the subject of conversation at transfer staffings and permanency staffings to ensure files contain evidence that an inquiry was made. Additionally, training is provided at CFC’s System of Care training with each cycle of pre-service training.

Independent Living Plans: If the child is 13 years of age or older and in licensed foster care, the case management agency provided guidance and assistance in developing an educational and career path that is based on the child’s individual abilities and interests. Thirteen children were applicable during this year’s reviews. This area resulted in an overall finding of 85%, with two files reviewed during the Quarter 1 reviews noted to be missing proof of compliance in this area.

Judicial Review (Timeliness and Quality): Compliance in this area remained stable with an overall compliance with this area for the year is 81%. Likewise, the 2009-2010 finding for compliance in this area was 82%

Supervisory Review and Oversight

Supervisory Reviews: Supervisory reviews are evaluated for the following three standards, resulting in an overall response: reviews are completed quarterly, supervisor considered all aspects of the child’s safety, well-being and permanency and supervisor ensured follow through on guidance and direction or documented the reasons the guidance and direction were no longer necessary. It is also important to look at this practice trend area by discussing the sub-questions as well. The requirement for reviews being completed quarterly, every 90 days, was met for 81% of the cases reviewed this year. The reviews included proof that the supervisor considered the child’s safety, well-being and permanency 79% of the time. Finally, indication that the supervisor ensured follow through and guidance occurred in 65% of the cases. The overall compliance for this year is 72%. For the 2009-2010 year, 71% of the cases met all the requirements for a supervisory review conducted in quality manner.

Areas of Excellence

Independent Living
Ongoing Assessment of the Child’s Needs
Ongoing Assessment of the Mother’s Needs
Physical Health Needs Assessment
Visitation with Parents
Important Connections
Case Planning Process: Family Involvement
Service Referrals
Safety Concerns
Efforts to Locate Other Potential Placements
Stability of Child’s Placement
Case Plan: Timeliness
Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) Inquiry
Judicial Reviews

Child and Family Connections demonstrated strengths in the reviews for the above areas. The following areas that were previously noted to be strong points for our system of care are again noted to be strengths based on these reviews: Ongoing Assessment of the Child’s Needs, Ongoing Assessment of the Mother’s Needs, Visitation with Parents, Service Referrals, and Stability of Child’s Placement.

**Opportunities for Improvement**
Continuing and Ongoing Family Assessment
Ongoing Assessment of the Father’s Needs
Dental Health Needs Assessment
Engaging the Child’s Parents
Psychotropic Medications
Frequency and Quality of Visits
Supervisory Reviews

The review also noted the above opportunities for improvement. To address the findings, CFC plans to continue to monitor these areas through the QA reviews planned for the 2010-2011 fiscal year. These areas that include safety, permanency and well-being objectives will be focal points during upcoming Quality Improvement Committees.

**Addressing Findings**
The Quality Assurance Department at Child and Family Connections believes that a system wide focus on quality will lead to better safety, permanency and well-being outcomes for the children we serve. Improving quality is an ongoing process. Identifying qualitative areas of excellence and opportunities for improvement enhances our ability to focus on initiatives and bring this information to the case management organizations. We operate with the idea that quality in casework and services provided to families begins with case management supervisors as they have the responsibility of guiding the front line case managers. CFC will continue to directly involve supervisors in the Quality Improvement Committees and will bring data and results directly to the supervisors for action planning. The goal to see improvement in the area of supervisory reviews was not met with results as high as CFC QA expected. Due to this, it will remain a priority. This year, CFC will comply with the new process of conducting Quality Service Reviews. CFC expects to gain valuable information not only on a case by case basis but also to tell the “big picture” of our system of care. This process will be used to identify service gaps and also areas of excellence in our system. We also feel that this process which involves a debriefing with Case Management will give the opportunity to express the importance of a supervisor as we reflect back on the casework practice with the Case Manager and Supervisor. Many of the areas that are identified as opportunities for improvement may be best captured and evaluated in the Quality Service Review. Qualitative data detailing compliance with assessment, engagement, and contacts with parties for addressing safety, permanency and well-being may
best be attained by having intensive conversations with parents, caregivers, children and other case participants. Also, in the 2011-2012 fiscal year, CFC QA plans to begin a new component to our monitoring process that includes a peer review model. These reviews, using portions of the Quality of Practice Standards will involve the Case Managers and will permit data for contract compliance to be collected based on file reviews.