



# Child and Family Services Reviews

Round 3 Findings  
2015-2016

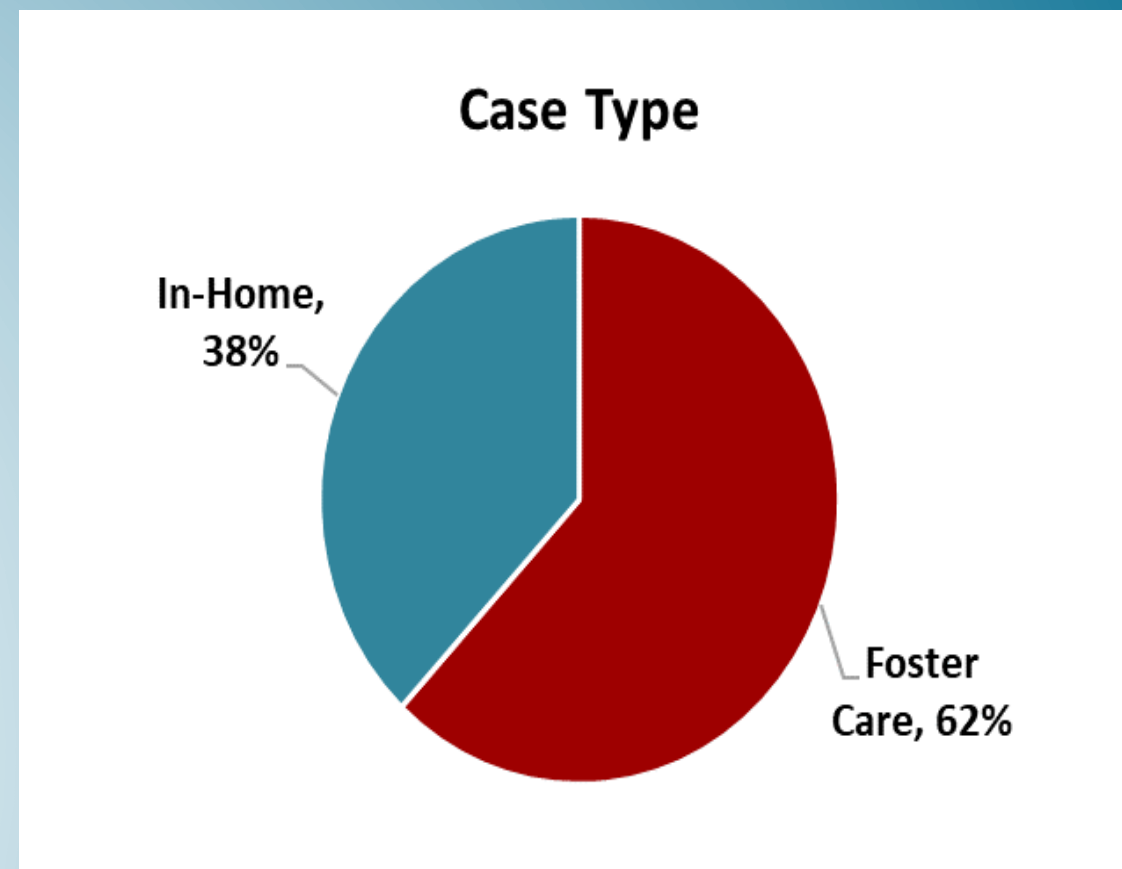


# CFSR Round 3 Changes

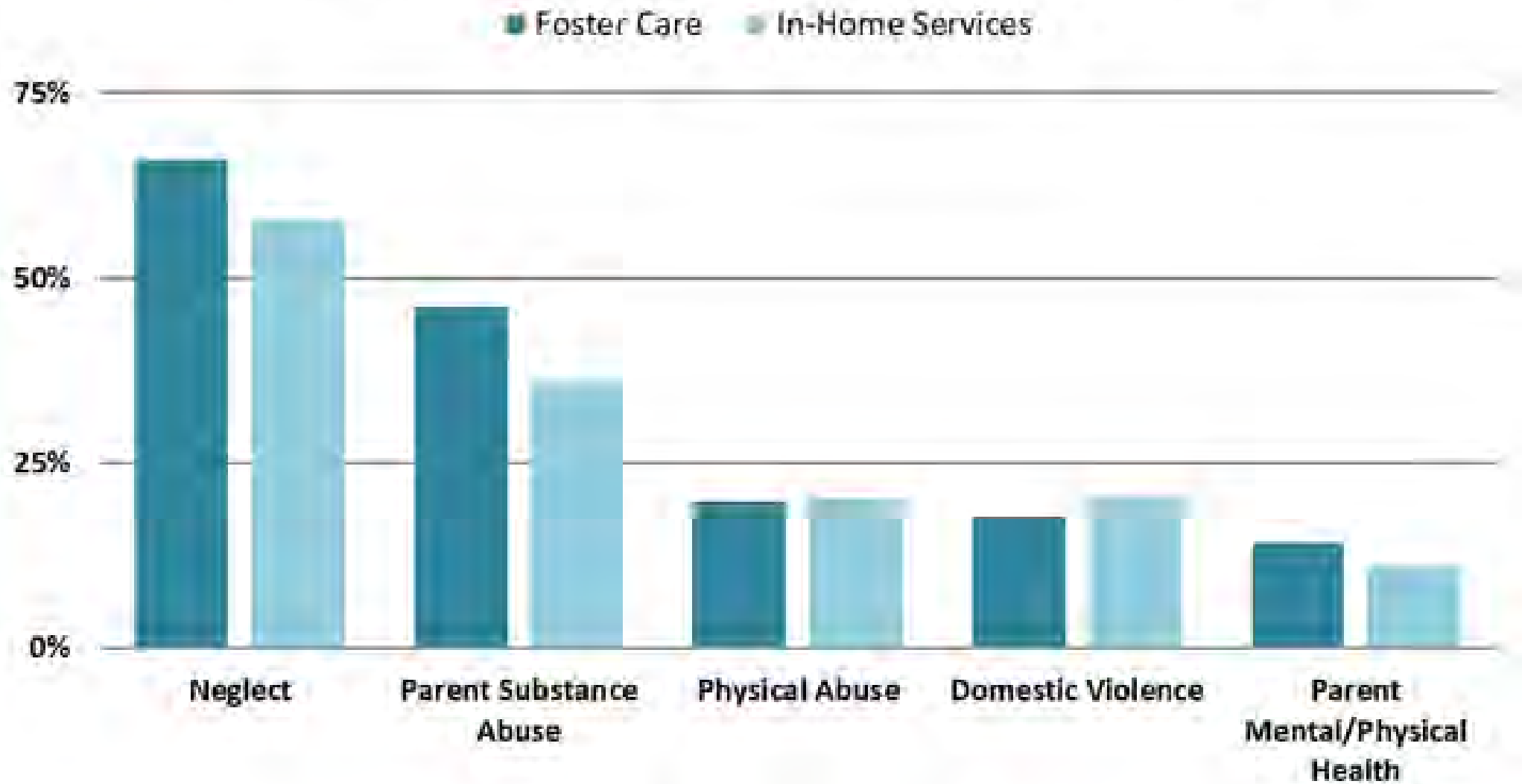
- Opportunity to more fully integrate Child and Family Services Plan/Annual Progress and Services Report with CFSR processes
- Number and scope of stakeholder interviews depend upon state's ability to demonstrate systemic factor functioning
- Changes to CFSR instruments
- Changes to data indicators and national measures
- Option for State Conducted Case Review

# FY 2015 – 2016 Reviews

- 24 states
- 2,073 cases were reviewed
  - 9 Traditional Reviews examined 584 cases
  - 15 State Conducted Case Reviews examined 1,489 cases

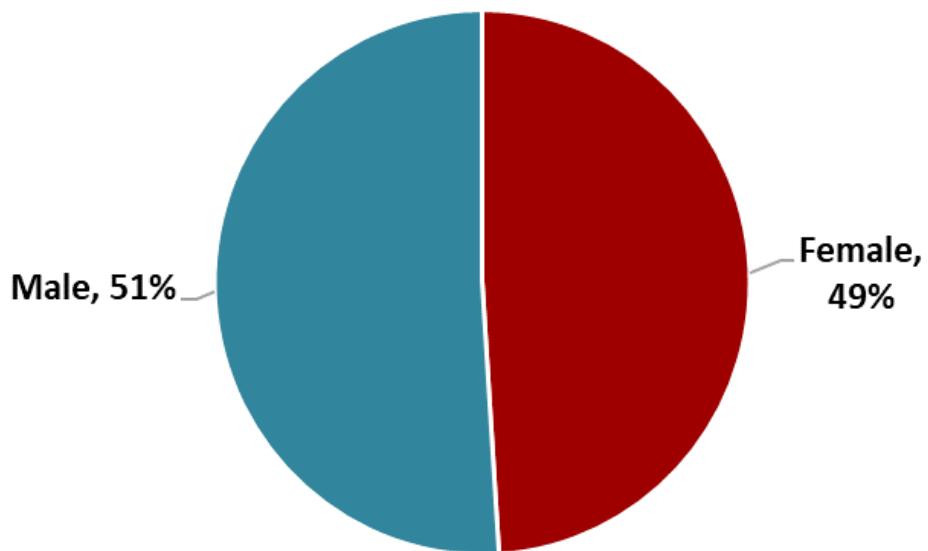


## Percent of Cases with Reason for Opening by Case Type

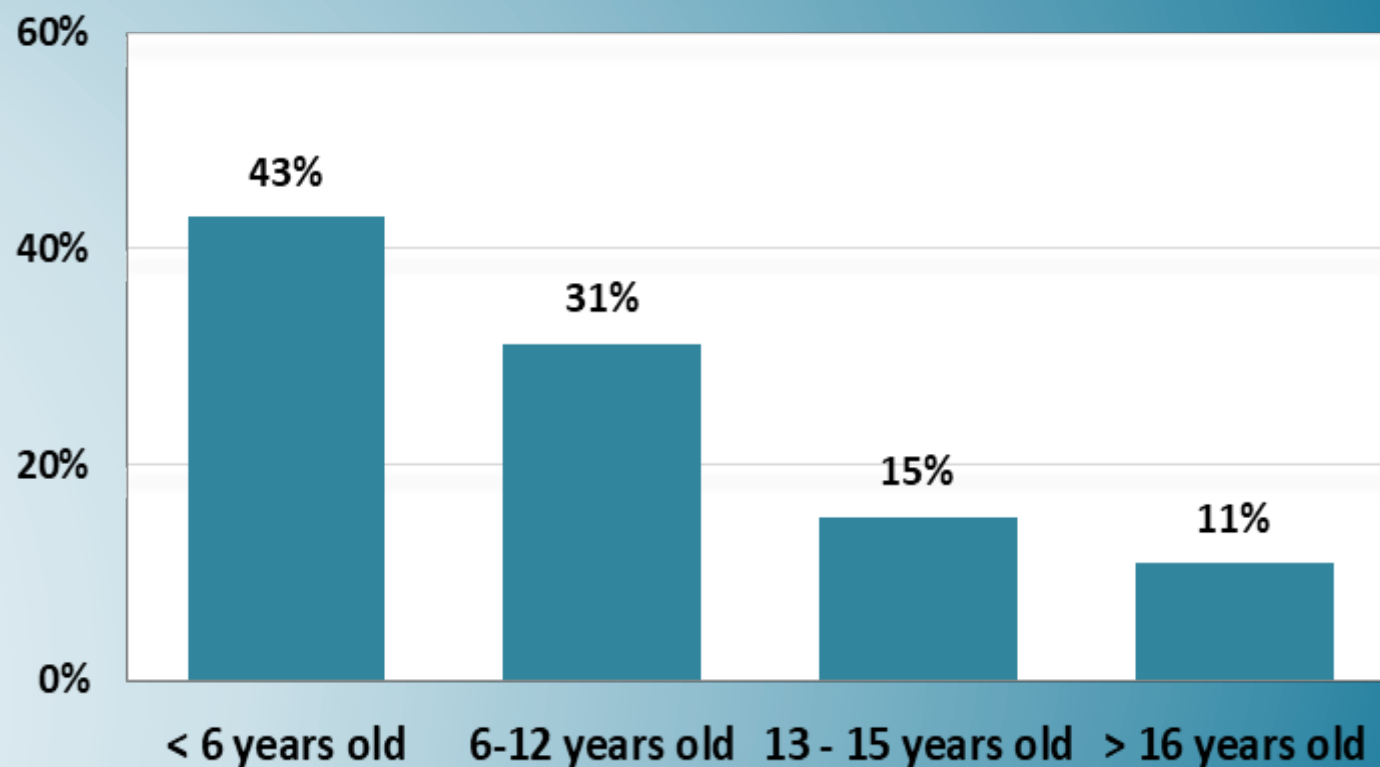


# Demographics

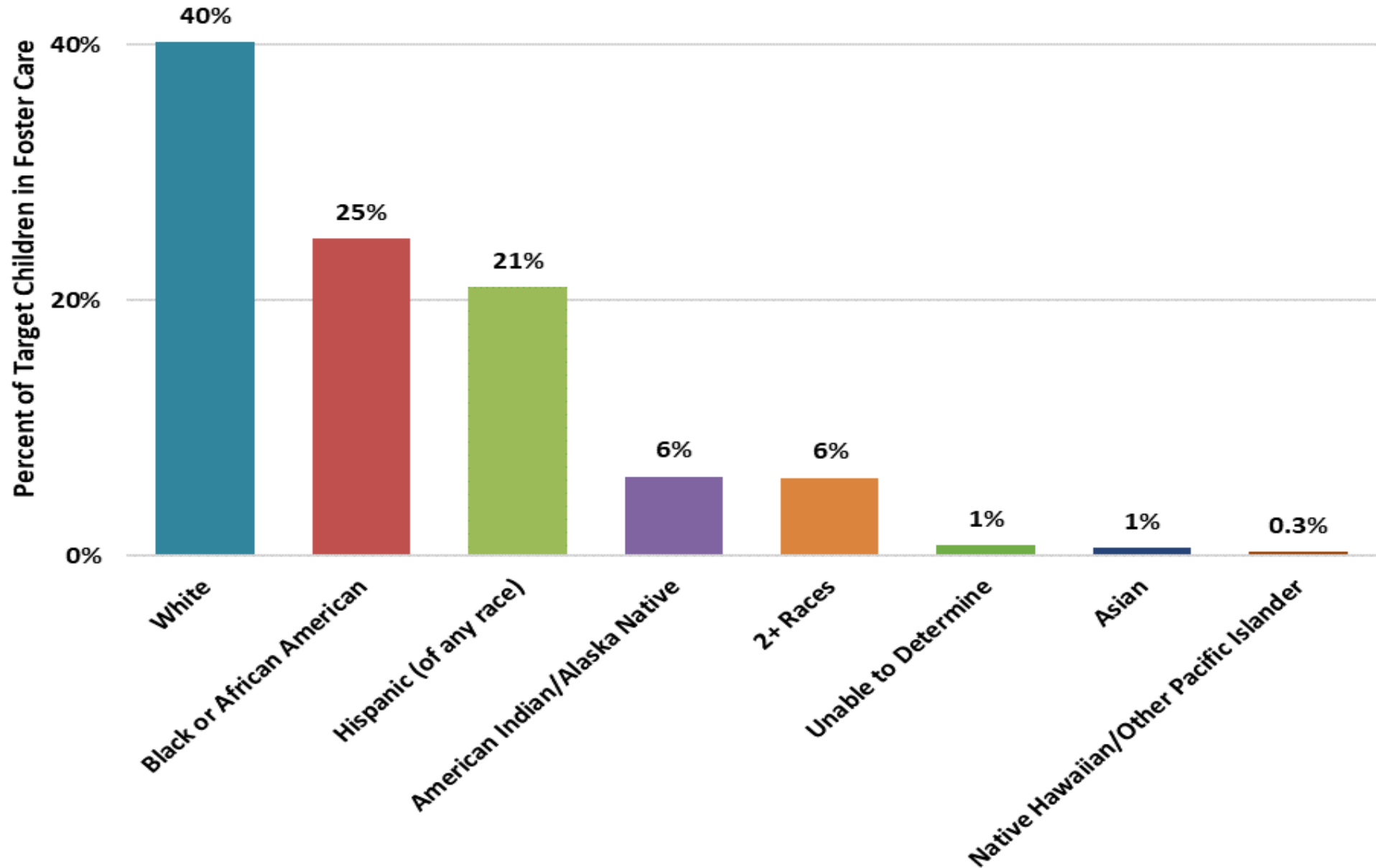
## Gender of Target Child



## Age of Target Child at Start of PUR



## Race/Ethnicity

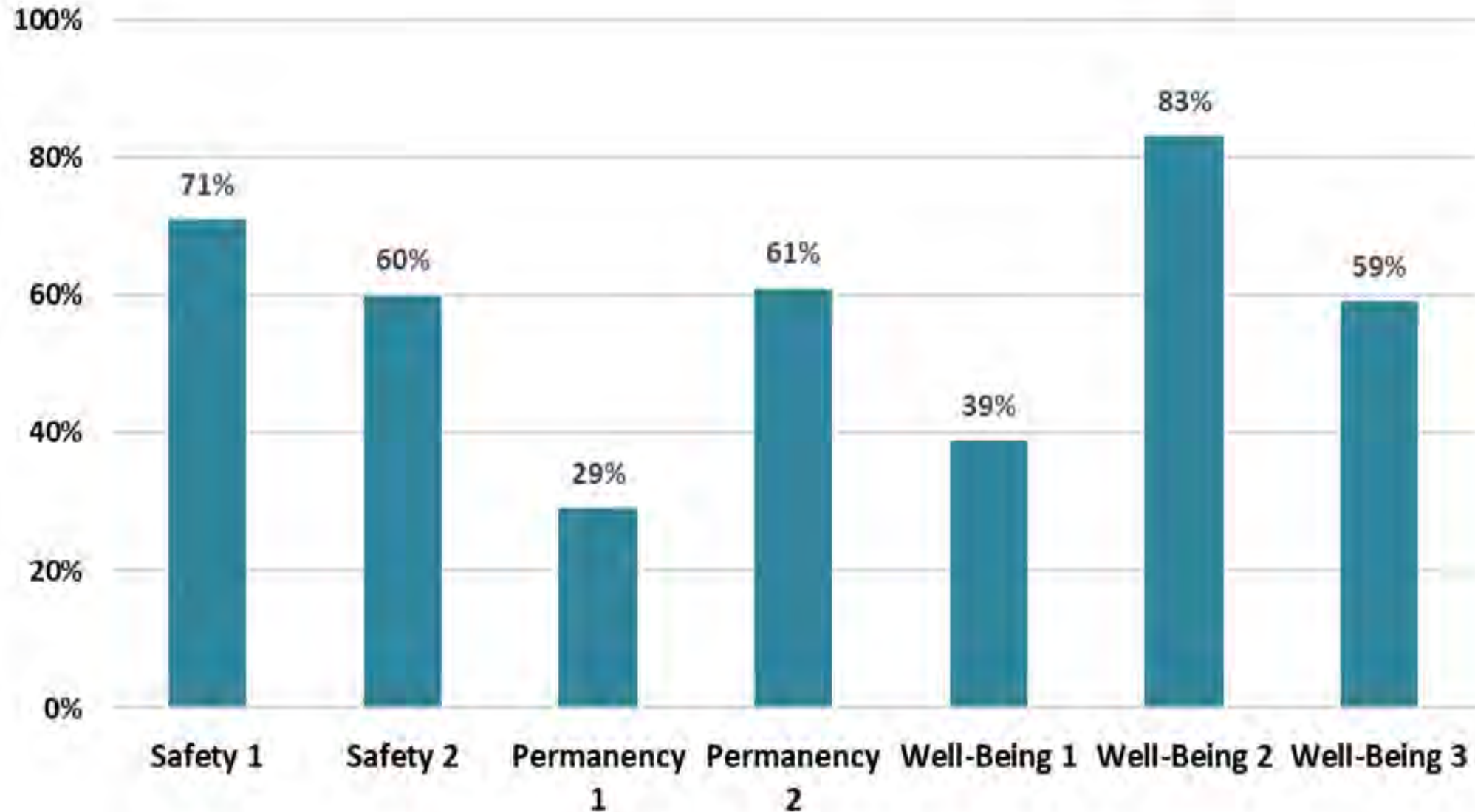


# CFSR Results

FY 2015-2016

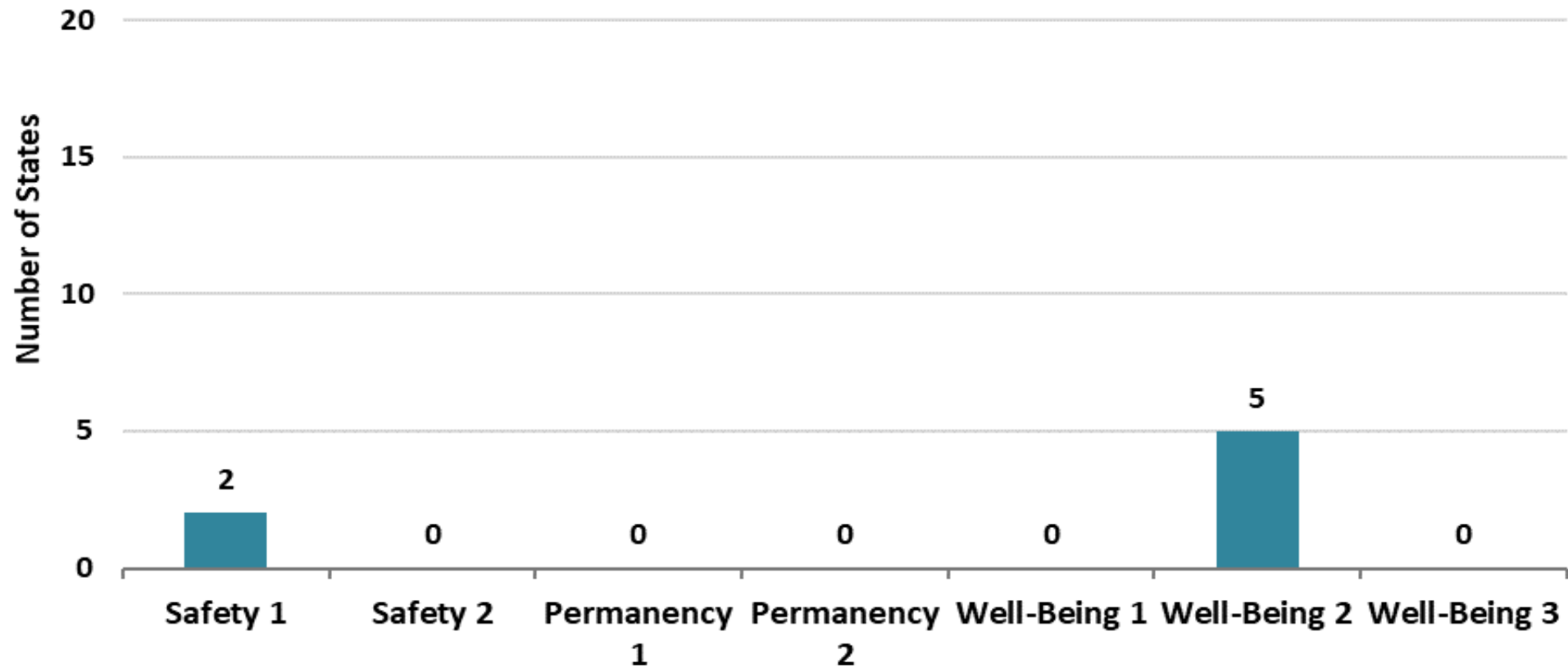


# CFSR Performance Overview: Outcomes

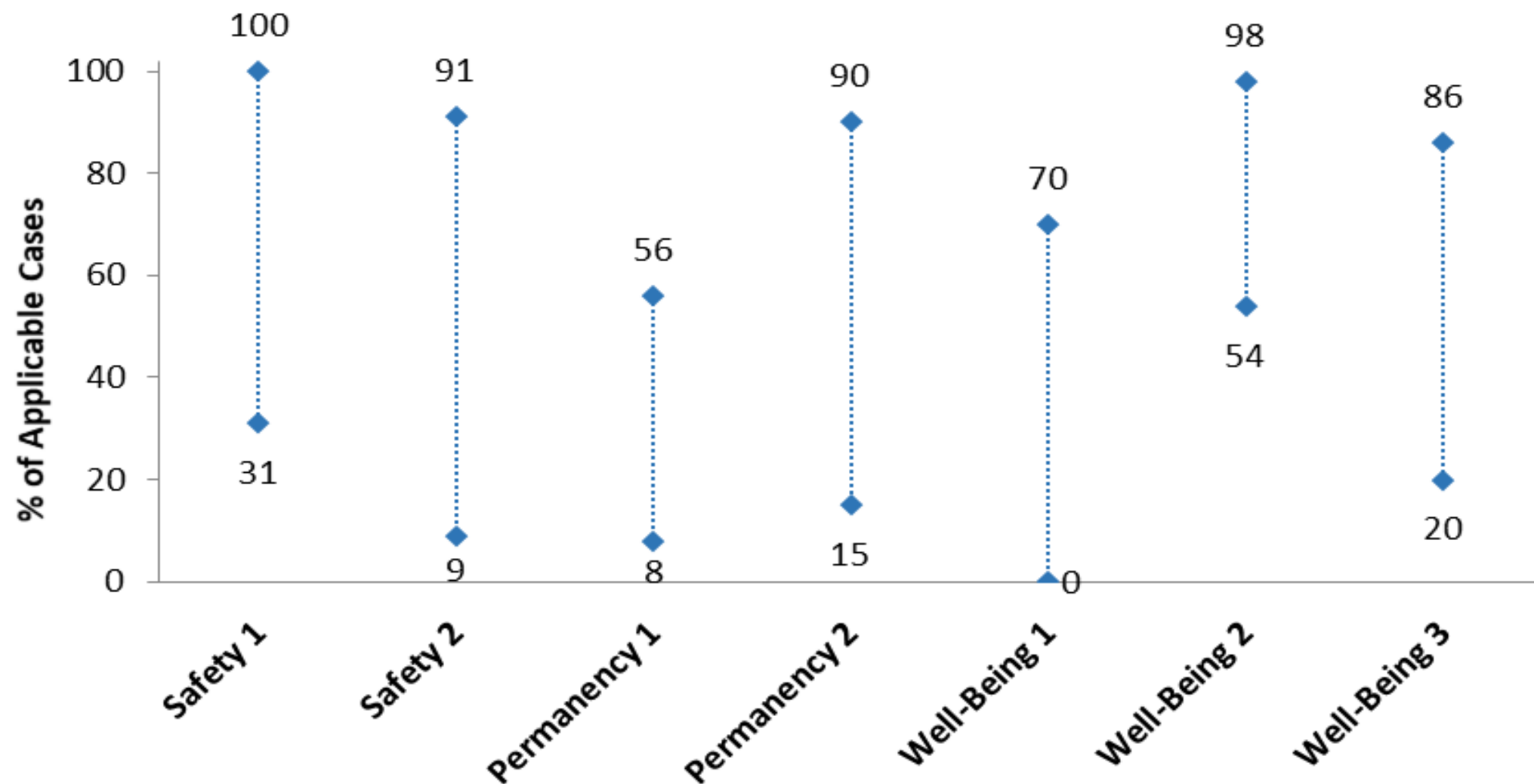




# States Achieving Substantial Conformity with Outcomes



## Range Across States: % of Cases Substantially Achieving Outcomes



# Overarching Practice Themes

- Stronger performance for foster care cases than in-home cases in safety outcomes and child well-being items
- Efforts/work with children was generally stronger than with parents
- Efforts/work with mothers was stronger than with fathers
- Concerns with adequacy of assessments and providing services that target identified needs

# Related Practices

Frequent and quality visits with parents and children are associated with better performance on safety, permanency, and other well-being outcomes.

# Safety Outcome 1

Children are, first and foremost,  
protected from abuse and neglect.

# Item 1

## Timeliness of initiating investigations of reports of child maltreatment

71% of applicable cases rated as a Strength

- 84% initiated in accordance with state time frames
- 68% of face-to-face contacts with child victims were made timely

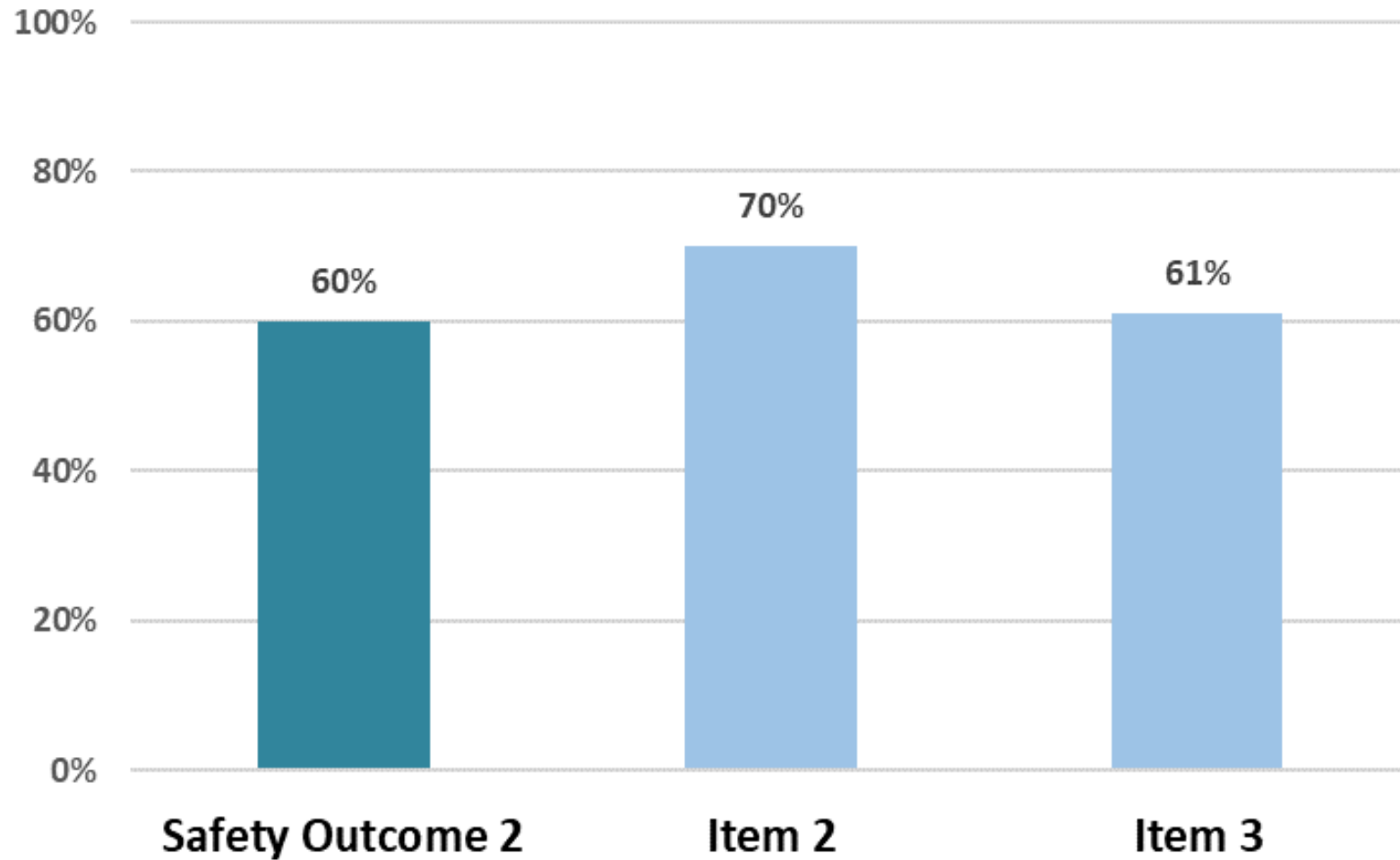
Factors contributing to lack of timely initiation and face-to-face contact include:

- Efforts to locate family diminish after initial unsuccessful attempts
- Not all alleged child victims in the family are seen timely

# Safety Outcome 2

Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate.

# Safety Outcome 2





## Item 2

### Services to Family to Protect Child(ren) in the Home and Prevent Removal or Re-Entry Into Foster Care

- In 76% of the applicable cases, where a child was removed from home without providing services, this was necessary to ensure the child's safety.
- In 22% of the applicable cases, safety-related services were not provided and children were left in homes with unaddressed safety concerns.

## Item 2

### Practice Concerns:

- Appropriate services were not provided to address the existing safety concern due to inadequate assessment of safety or lack of available services.
- Delays in providing safety services
- Failure to ensure that parents engaged in, or successfully accessed, services

## Item 3

### Risk and Safety Assessment and Management

Performance by case type:

- 68% of foster care cases rated as a Strength
- 49% of in-home cases rated as a Strength
- In 73% of cases, the initial assessment accurately assessed all risk and safety concerns.
- In 67% of cases, ongoing assessments accurately assessed all risk and safety concerns.

## Item 3

### Assessment Practice Concerns:

- Not including all relevant household members in assessments
- Not reassessing based on changes in circumstances
- Not reassessing children remaining in the home
- Lack of frequent and quality visits with children

## Item 3

In 54% of cases, appropriate safety plans were developed and monitored.

Practice Concerns:

- Plans did not address all the safety concerns identified
- Plans relied on parental promises
- Plans were not monitored
- Plans were not updated when circumstances changed
- Individuals involved were not clear on expectations or able/willing to implement the plan
- Alternative caregivers were not utilized appropriately

## Item 3

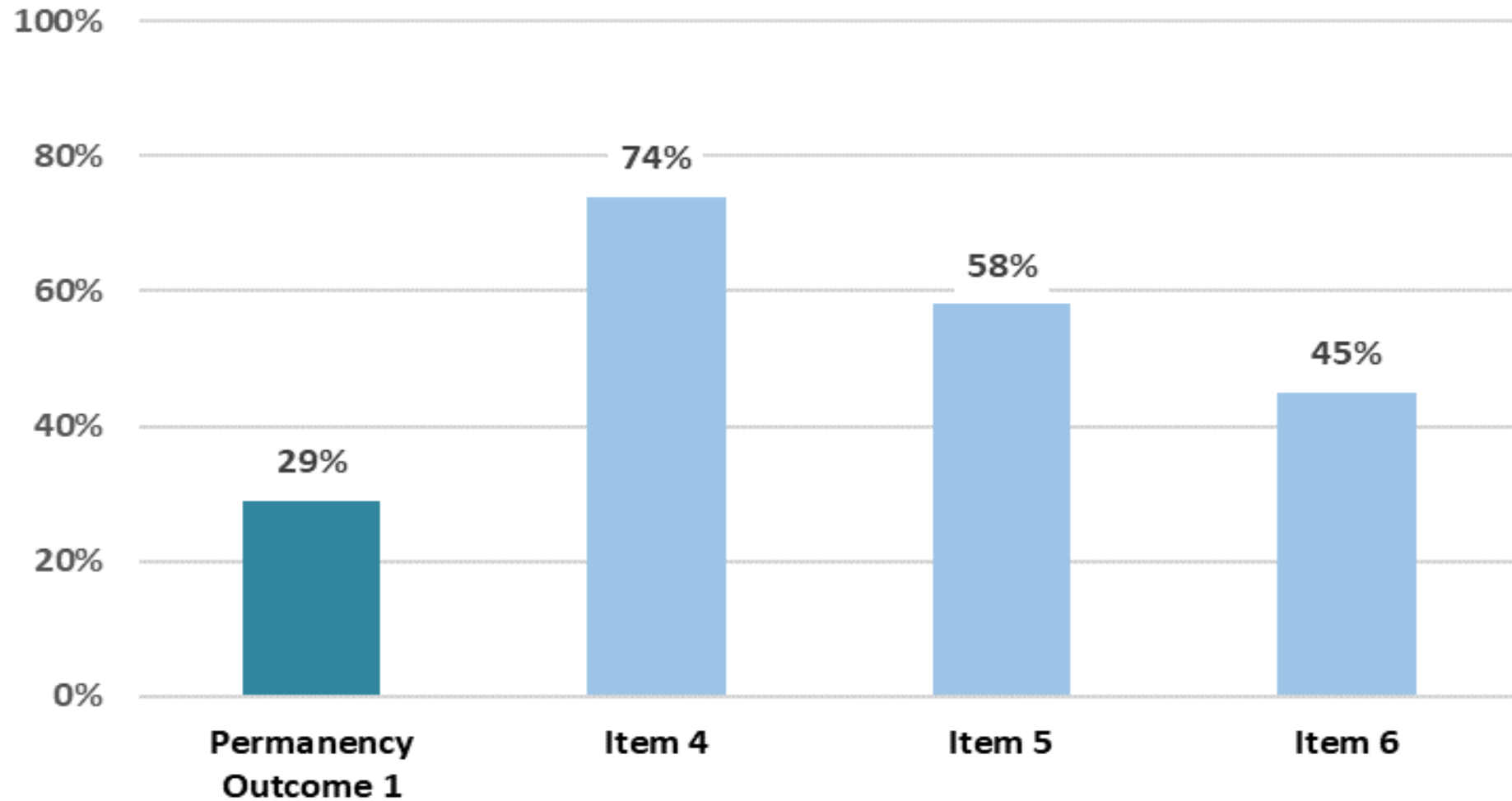
- 32% of cases had safety concerns pertaining to children remaining in the home that were not adequately or appropriately addressed.
- 8% of cases had safety concerns related to the target child in foster care during visitation that were not appropriately addressed.
- 6% of cases had concerns for the target child's safety in the foster home that were not adequately or appropriately addressed.



# Permanency Outcome 1

Children have permanency and stability in their living situations.

# Permanency Outcome 1



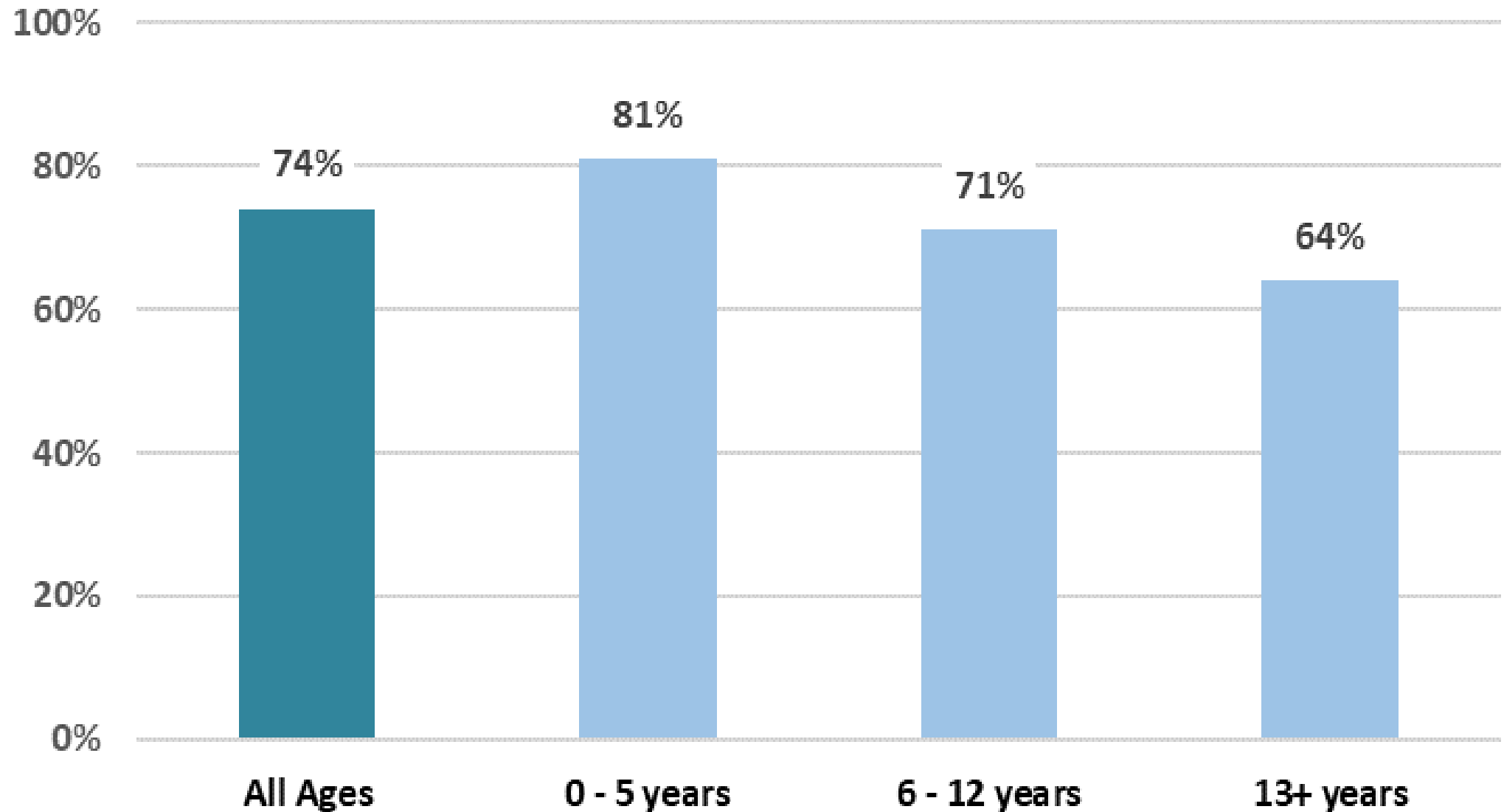


## Item 4

### Stability of Foster Care Placement

- In 45% of cases, placement changes were planned in an effort to achieve case goals or meet the needs of the child.
- The child's placement was considered stable at the time of the review in 90% of cases.

## Strength Rating on Item 4 by Age



# Related Practices

- Placement with relatives is positively associated with placement stability.
- Assessing and addressing the needs of foster parents is positively associated with placement stability.

# Lack of Placement Stability

- Child's behavior - more than a third of cases
- Lack of appropriate foster homes - slightly more than a third of cases
- Lack of agency responsiveness in addressing concerns - more than 15% of cases
- Allegations of child maltreatment in the foster home - slightly more than 10% of cases

# Item 5

## Permanency Goal for Child

- Permanency goals were established timely in 77% of cases.
- Permanency goals were appropriate to the child's needs and circumstances in 79% of cases.

## Item 5

When children were in foster care for 15 of the most recent 22 months:

- Agencies filed TPRs prior to the PUR or timely during the PUR in 51% of applicable cases.
- TPR was not filed and no exception existed in 27% of cases.

## Item 5

### Practice Concerns:

- Reunification plans kept in place too long
- Inappropriate goals based on child's age, case circumstances, and need for permanency:
  - Guardianship rather than adoption for very young children
  - OPPLA goal for children under the age of 16
- Selecting OPPLA without adequate consideration of other goals



# Related Practices

It appears that cases were more likely to be rated as a Strength when:

- The needs of children and parents were assessed and services were provided.
- Children and parents were involved in case planning.



## Item 6

### Achieving Reunification, Guardianship, Adoption, or Other Planned Permanent Living Arrangement

Concerted efforts towards timely achievement were seen in:

- 52% of cases with a plan of reunification
- 40% of cases with a plan of guardianship
- 35% of cases with a plan of adoption

65% of children with a goal of OPPLA were placed in a permanent arrangement.

# Related Practices

It appears that cases were more likely to be rated as an Area Needing Improvement when:

- Parents' needs were not assessed and services were not provided to address parents' needs.
- Children and parents were not involved in case planning.

# Related Practices

It appears that cases were more likely to be rated as a Strength when:

- Children were visiting with parents and siblings in foster care.
- Concerted efforts were made to promote, support, and/or maintain positive relationships between children and parents.

## Item 6

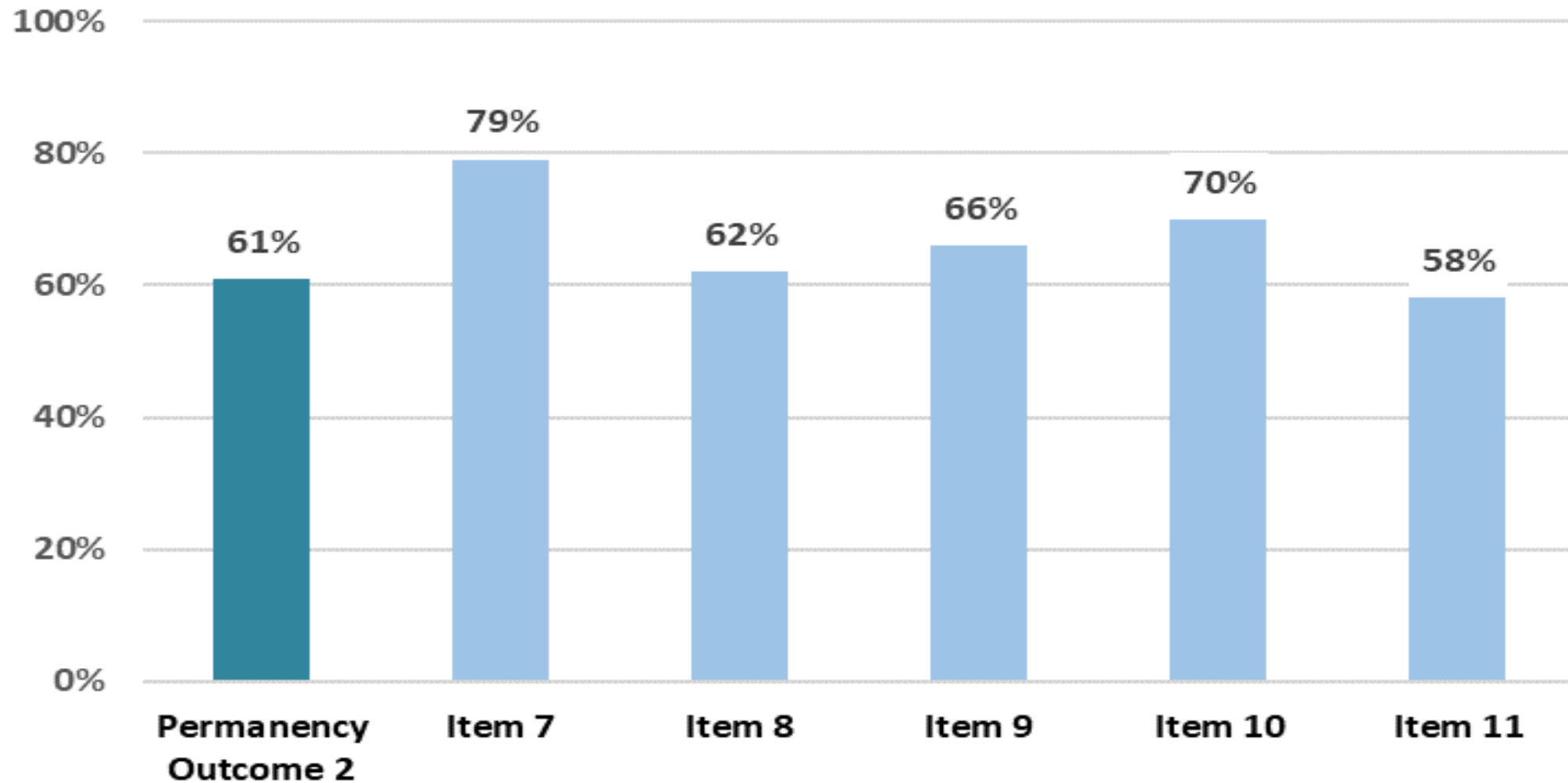
### Practice Concerns:

- Delays in completing the paperwork and filing TPRs
- Children and parents not receiving needed services
- Caseworker/attorney high case loads and turnover
- Delays in scheduling hearings
- Multiple court continuances
- Contested TPRs and lengthy appeals processes

# Permanency Outcome 2

The Continuity of Family Relationships and Connections is Preserved for Children.

# Permanency Outcome 2



# Item 7

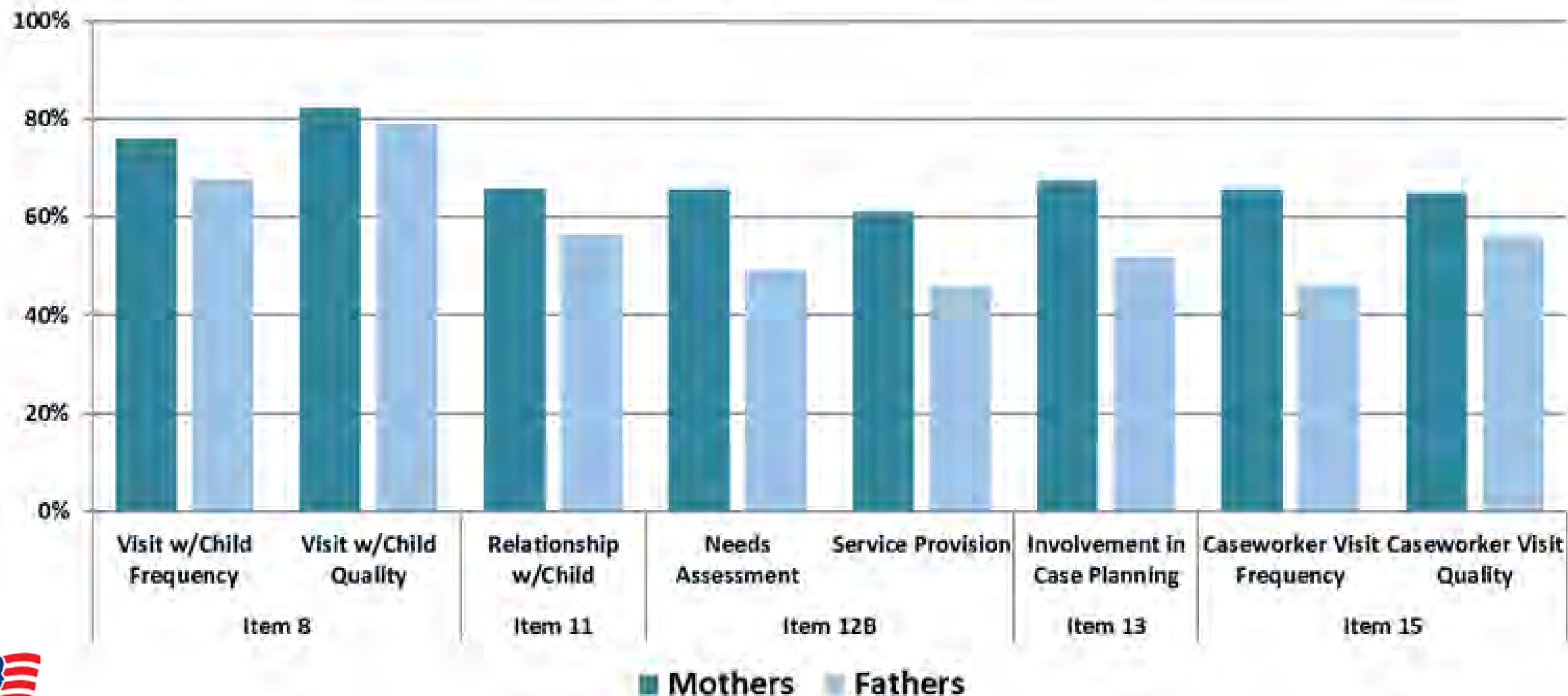
## Placement With Siblings

- In 79% of cases the child was placed with all siblings who were also in foster care, or if not, there was a valid reason for the child's separation from siblings.
- Practice concerns:
  - Lack of placement resources able to accept sibling groups
  - Failure to reconsider placement of siblings together after initial separation



# Engaging Mothers and Fathers

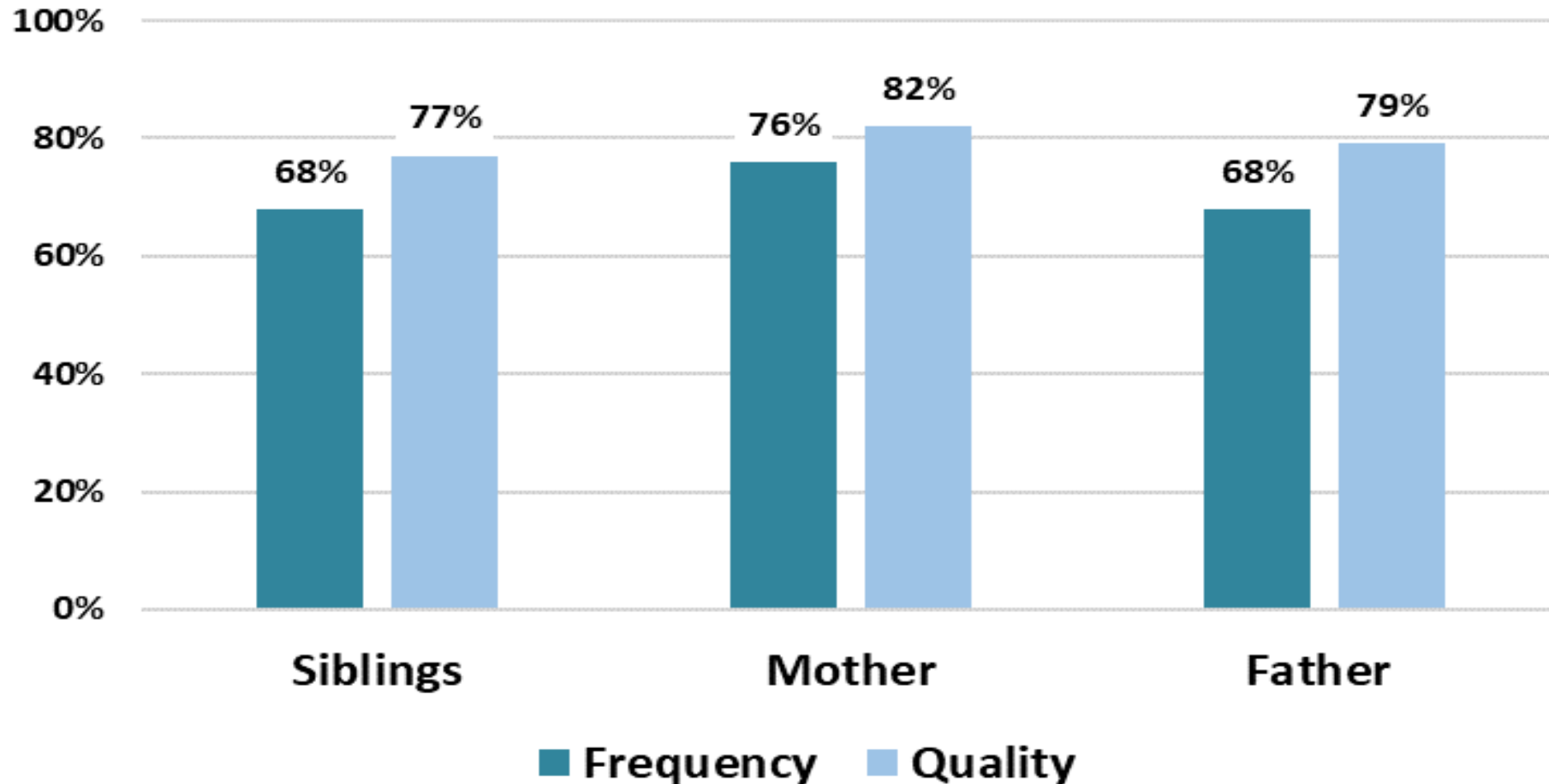
Percent of Cases Meeting Practice Standards on Items 8, 11, 12, 13, and 15  
Subquestions





# Item 8

## Visiting With Parents and Siblings in Foster Care



# Item 9

## Preserving Connections

- In 68% of cases, agencies made concerted efforts to maintain the child's important connections.
- Related Practice:
  - It appears that children placed with relatives were more likely to have their important connections maintained.

# Item 9

## Preserving Connections

For children who were members of, or eligible for membership in, a federally recognized Tribe:

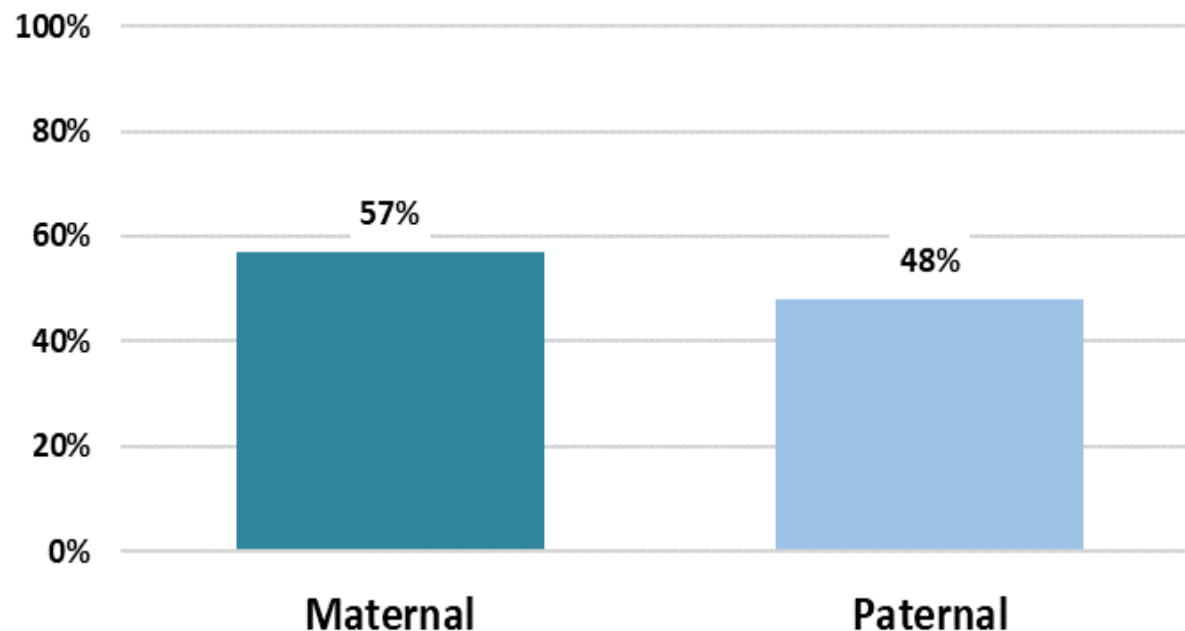
- The Tribe was provided timely notification in 73% of cases.
- Concerted efforts were made to place the child in accordance with ICWA placement preferences in 68% of cases.

# Item 10

## Relative Placement

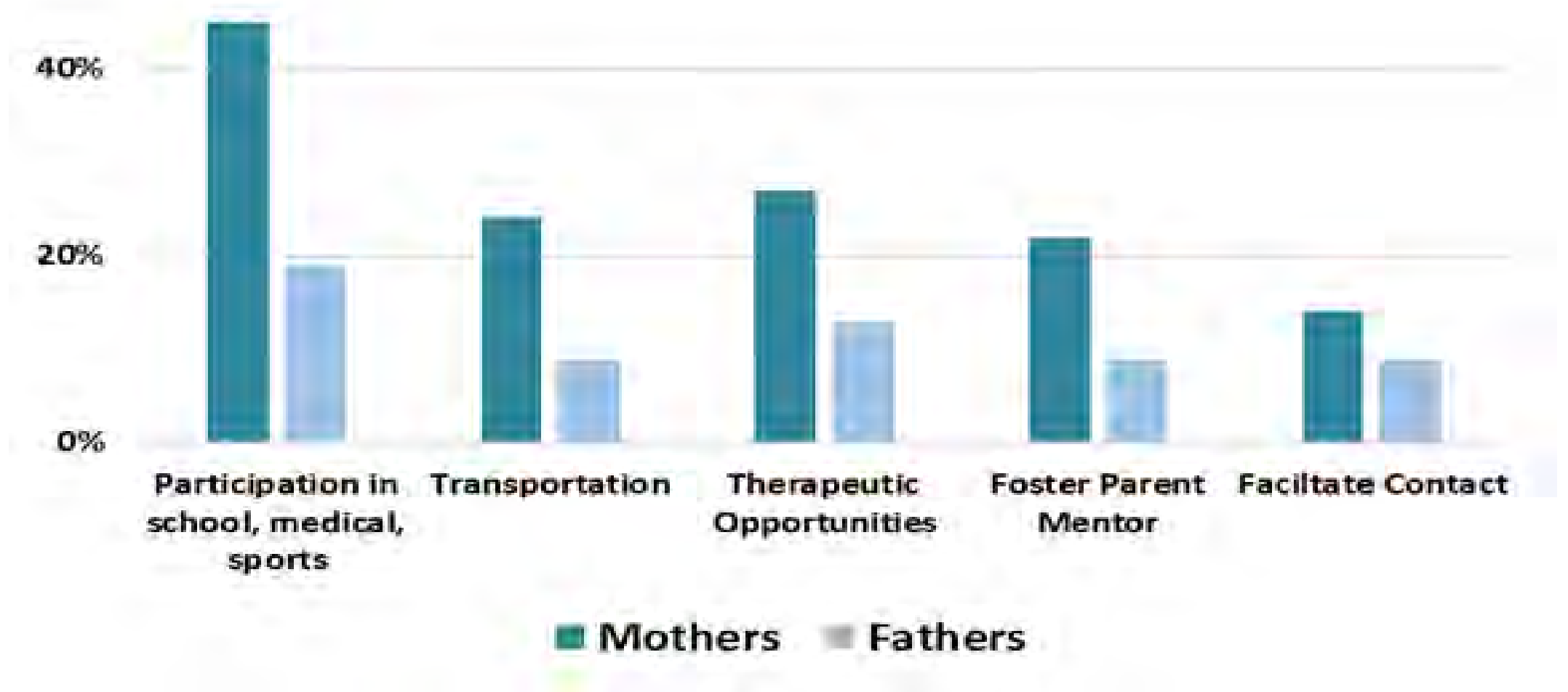
- The child's current or most recent placement was with a relative in 34% of cases.
- The relative placement was considered stable and appropriate in 93% of those cases.

### Concerted Efforts to Identify, Locate, Inform, and Evaluate Relatives



# Item 11

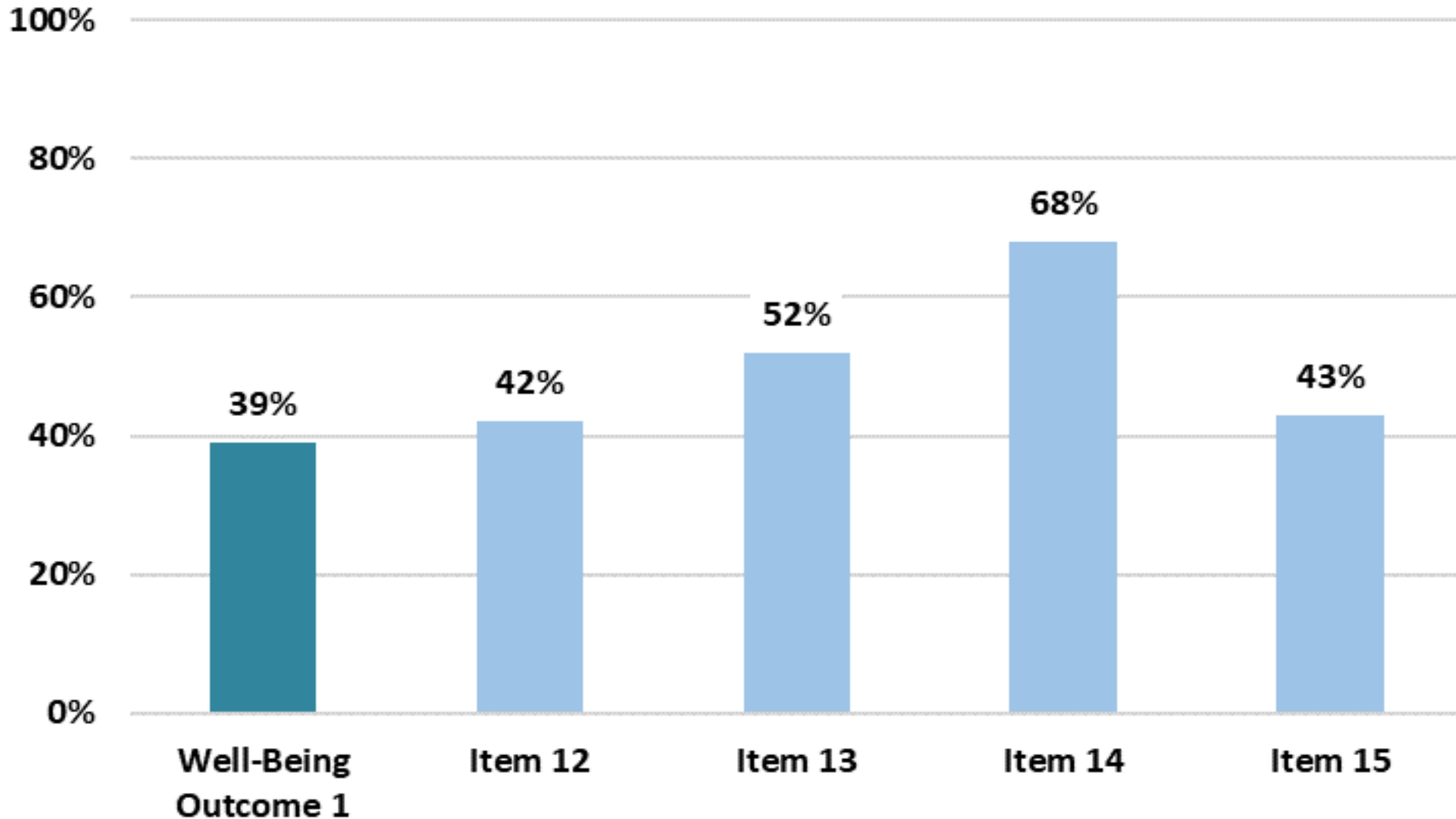
## Relationship of Child in Care With Parents



# Well-Being Outcome 1

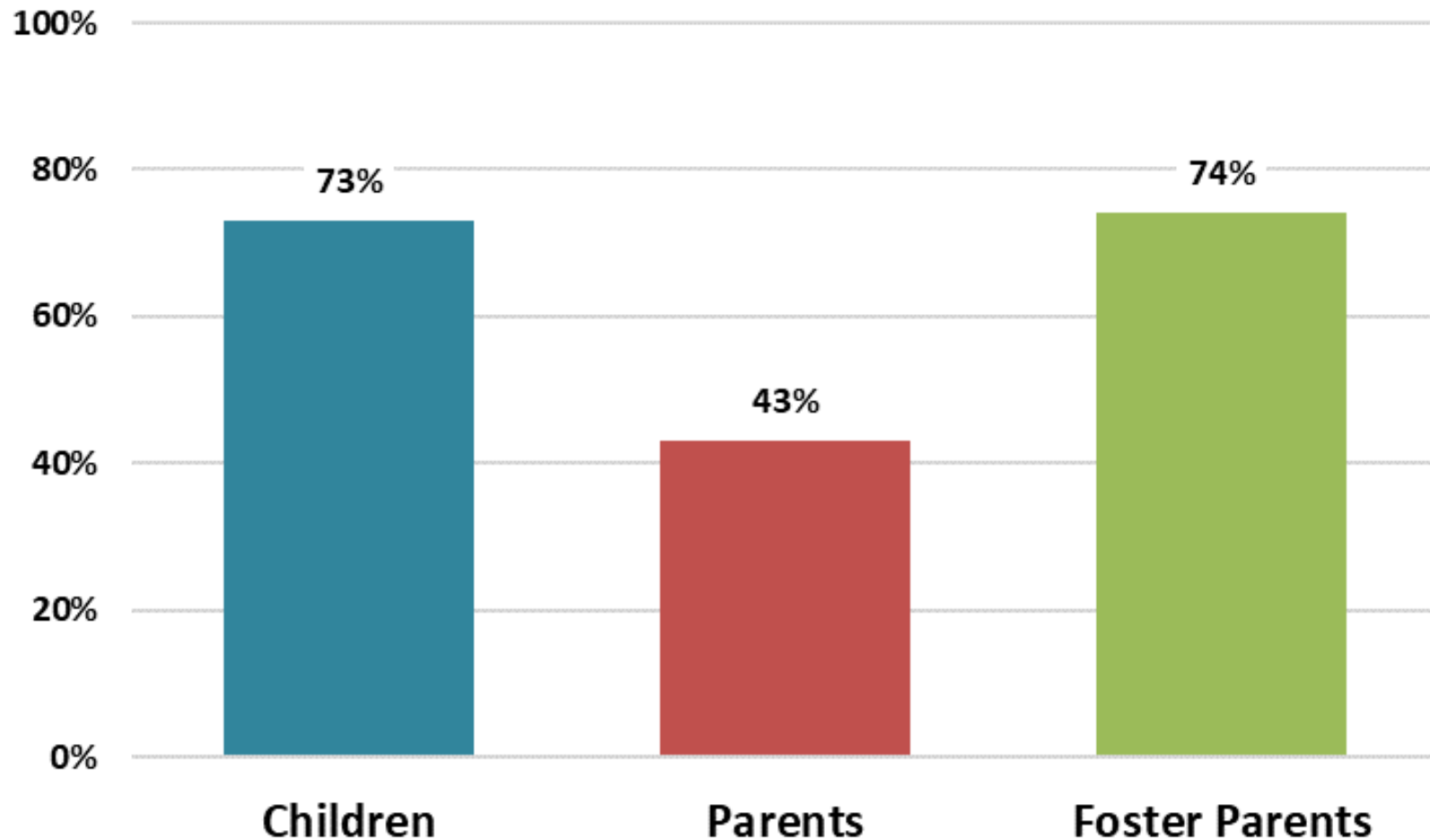
Families Have Enhanced Capacity to Provide for Their Children's Needs.

# Well-Being Outcome 1



# Item 12

## Needs and Services of Child, Parents, and Foster Parents





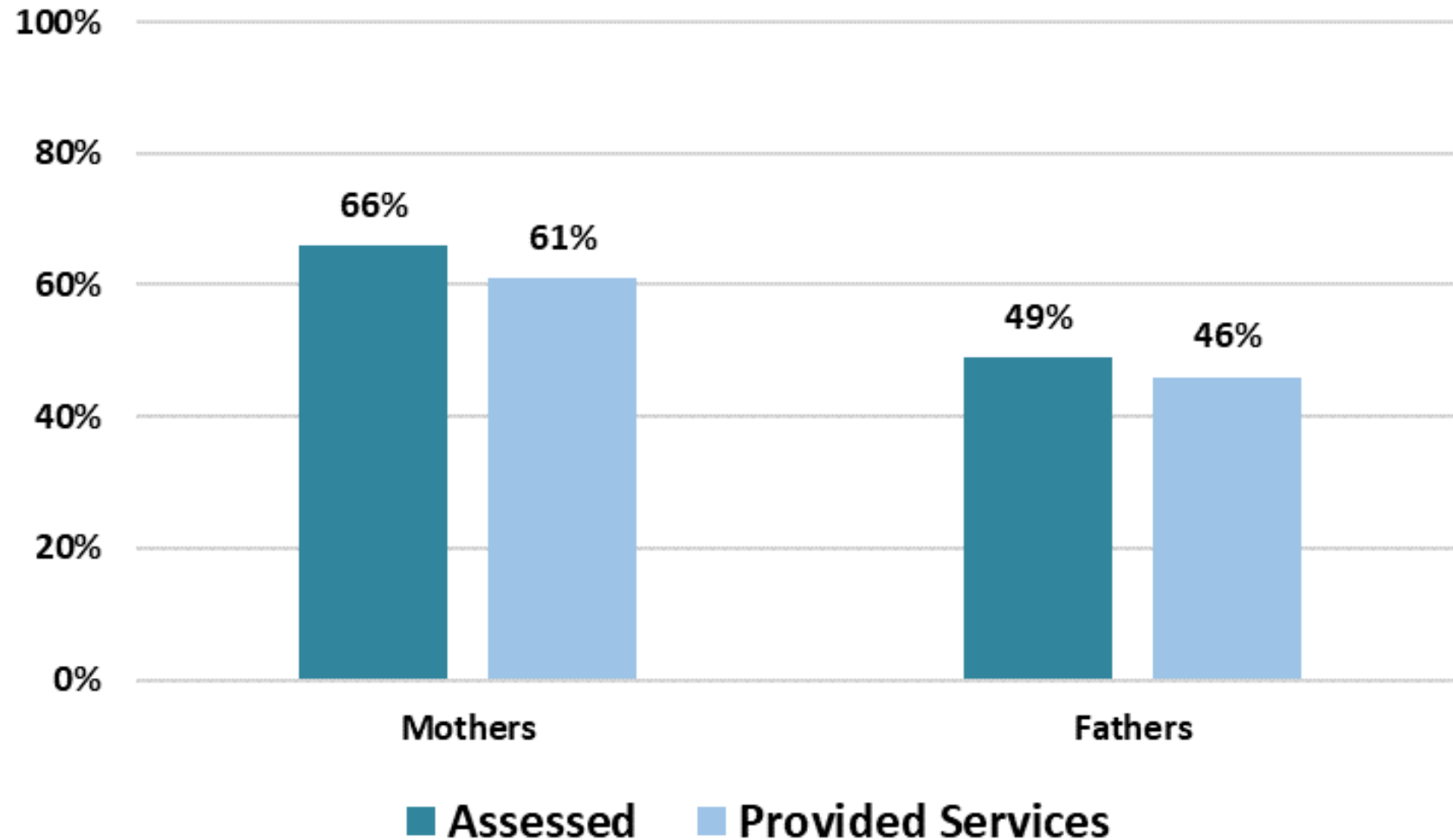
# Item 12A

## Needs Assessment and Services to Children

- Performance by Case Type:
  - 78% of the foster care cases were rated as a Strength
  - 65% of the in-home cases were rated as a Strength
- In 79% of cases, initial and/or ongoing assessments that accurately assessed the child's needs were conducted.
- In 67% of cases, appropriate services were provided to meet the child's identified needs.

# Item 12B

## Needs Assessment and Services to Parents

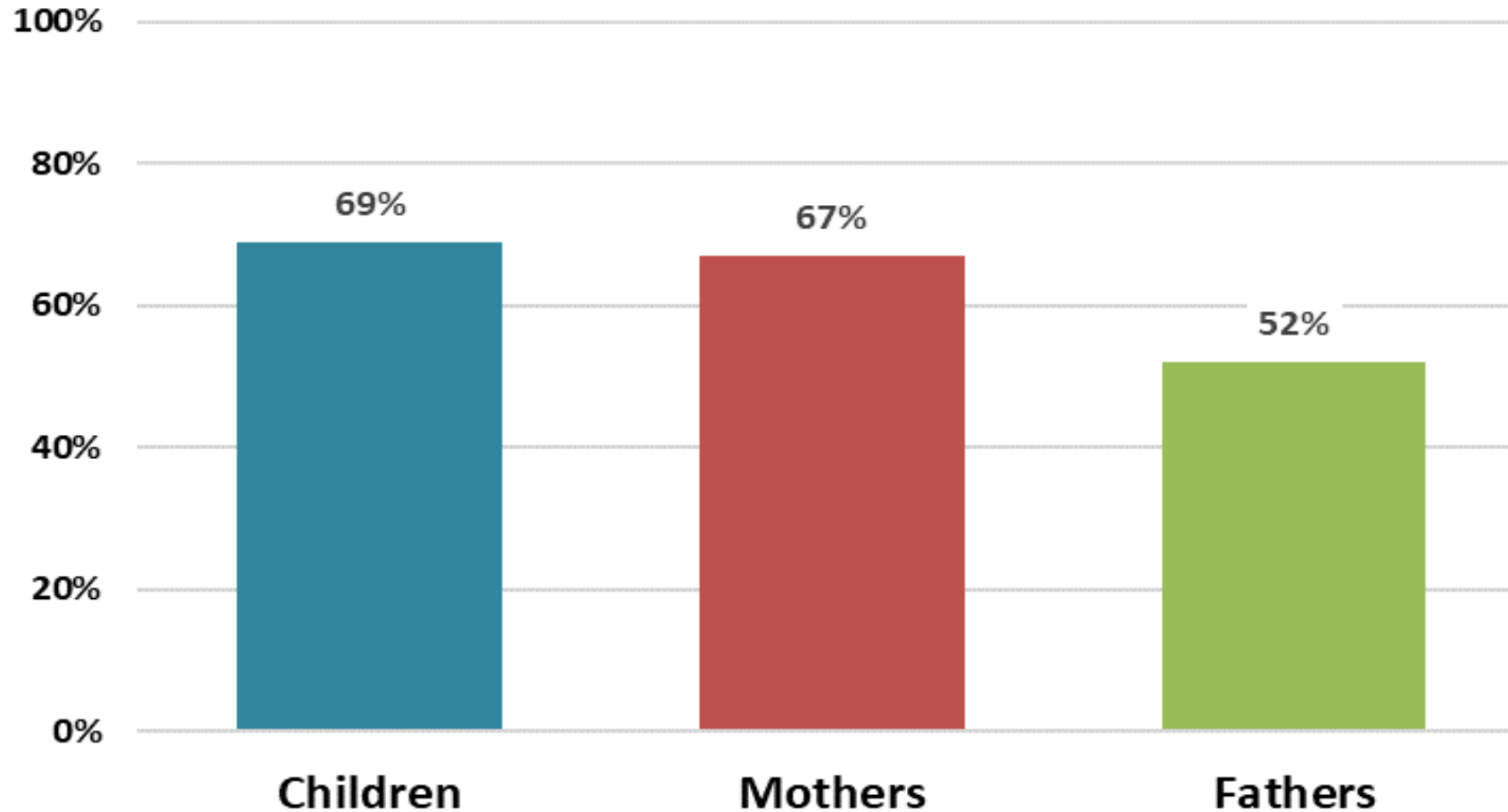


# Related Practices

It appears that for both mothers and fathers, Sub-Item 12B was more likely to be rated as a Strength when parents were involved in case planning and had visits with the case worker that were of sufficient frequency and good quality.

# Item 13

## Child and Family Involvement in Case Planning



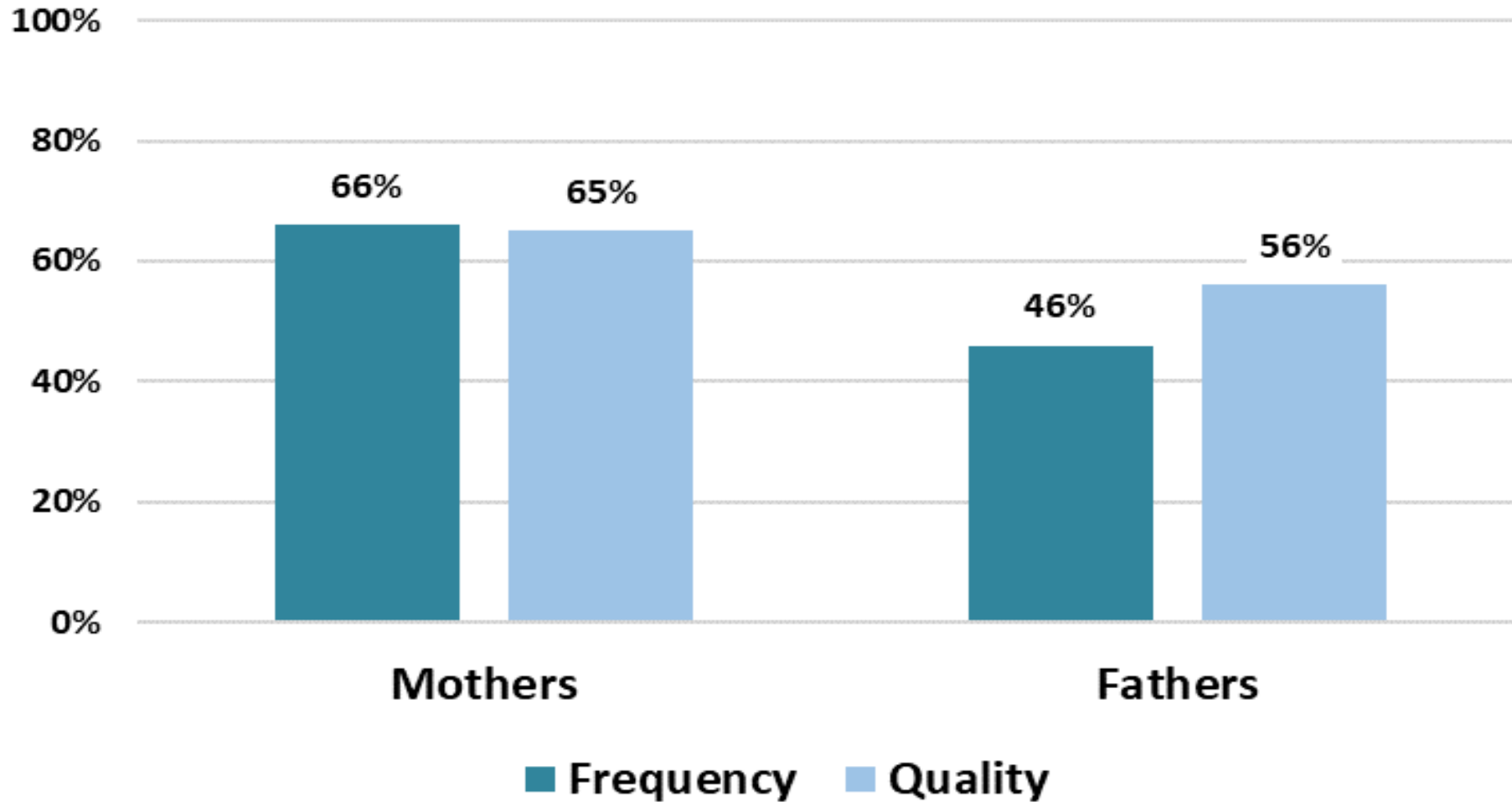
# Item 14

## Caseworker Visits With Child

- Performance by Case Type:
  - 77% of foster care cases were rated as a Strength.
  - 54% of in-home cases were rated as a Strength.
- In 82% of cases, the frequency of visits between the caseworker and the child was sufficient.
- In 86% of cases, caseworkers had at least monthly visits with child(ren).
- In 73% of cases, the quality of visits between the caseworker and the child was sufficient.

# Item 15

## Caseworker Visits With Parents



# **Well-Being Outcome 2**

Children Receive Appropriate Services  
to Meet Their Educational Needs.



# Item 16

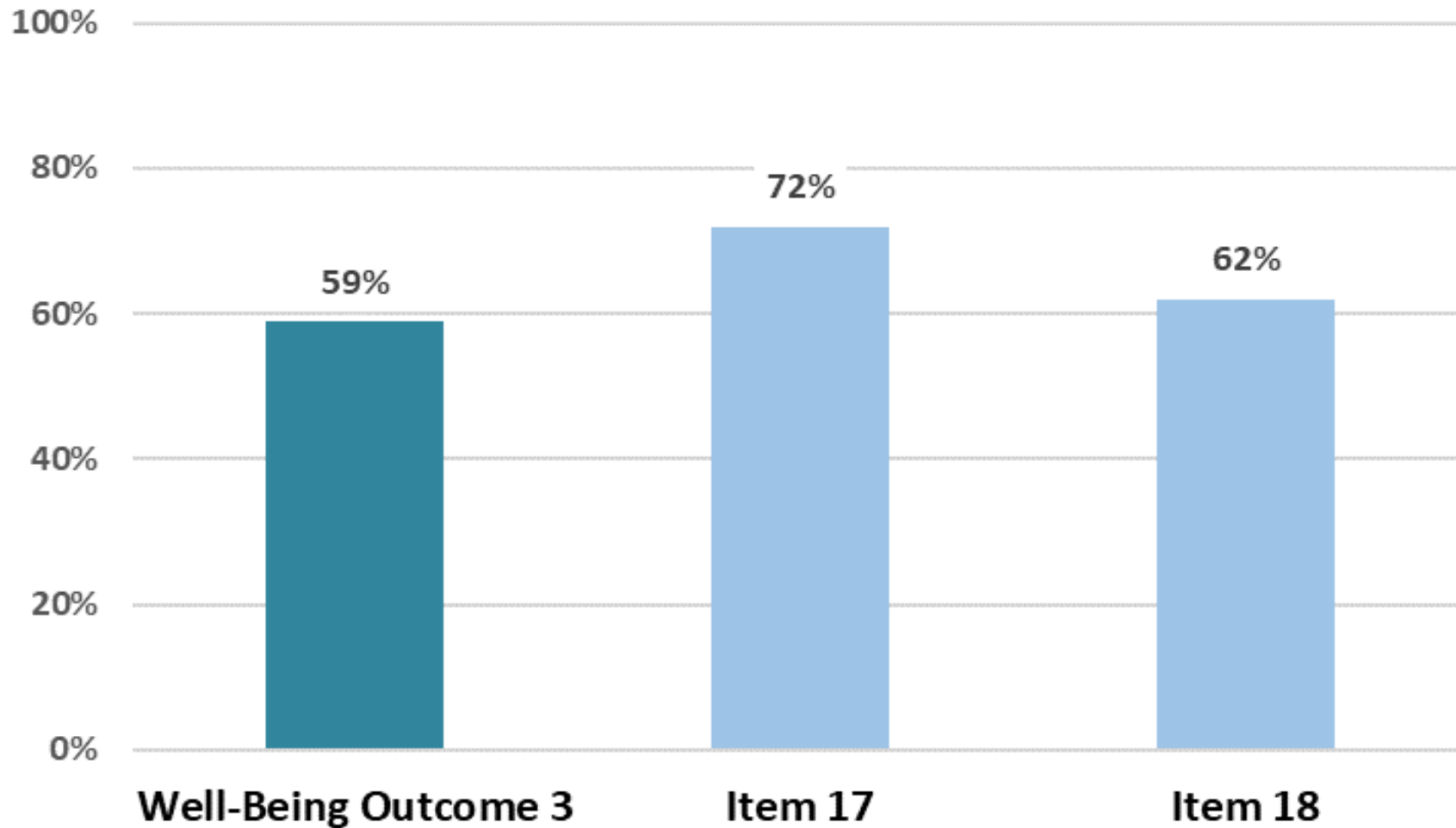
## Educational Needs of the Child

- 82% of applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- In 87% of cases, agencies made concerted efforts to accurately assess the child's educational needs.
- In 78% of cases, agencies made concerted efforts to address the child's educational needs through appropriate services.
- There was better performance in foster care cases.

# Well-Being Outcome 3

Children Receive Adequate Services to Meet Their Physical and Mental Health Needs.

# Well-Being Outcome 3



# Item 17

## Physical Health of the Child

- Children's physical health care needs were accurately assessed in 88% of cases and appropriate services provided in 83% of cases.
- Children's dental health care needs were accurately assessed in 85% of cases and appropriate services provided in 78% of cases.
- In 81% of cases, agencies provided appropriate oversight of medications prescribed for physical health issues.
- There was better performance in foster care cases.

# Item 18

## Mental/Behavioral Health of the Child

- In 79% of cases, accurate initial and ongoing assessments of children's mental/behavioral health needs were conducted and in 66% of cases children received appropriate services to meet the identified needs.
- In 70% of cases, agencies provided appropriate oversight of medications prescribed for mental/behavioral health issues.
- There was better performance in foster care cases.

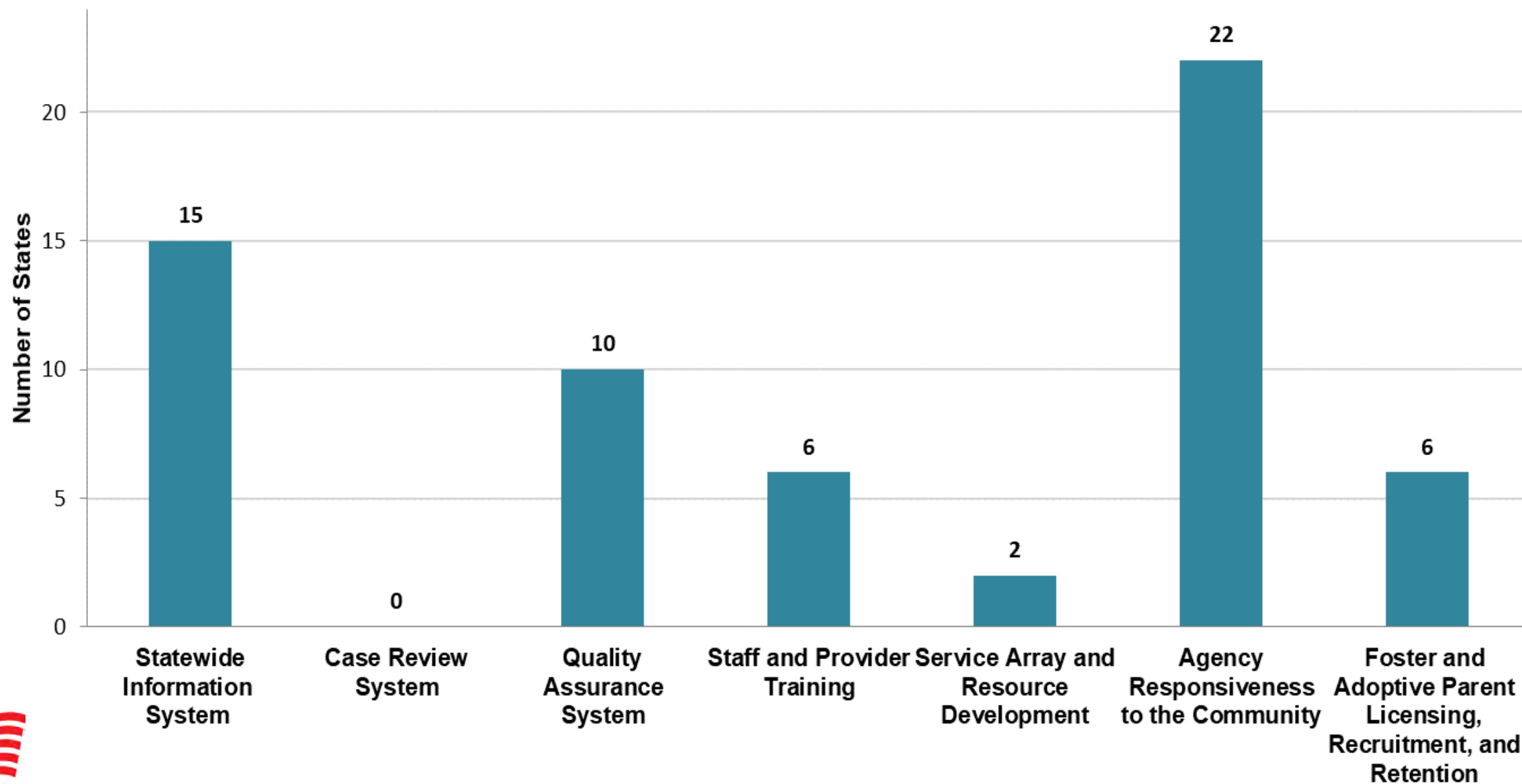
# Systemic Factors

# Systemic Factors

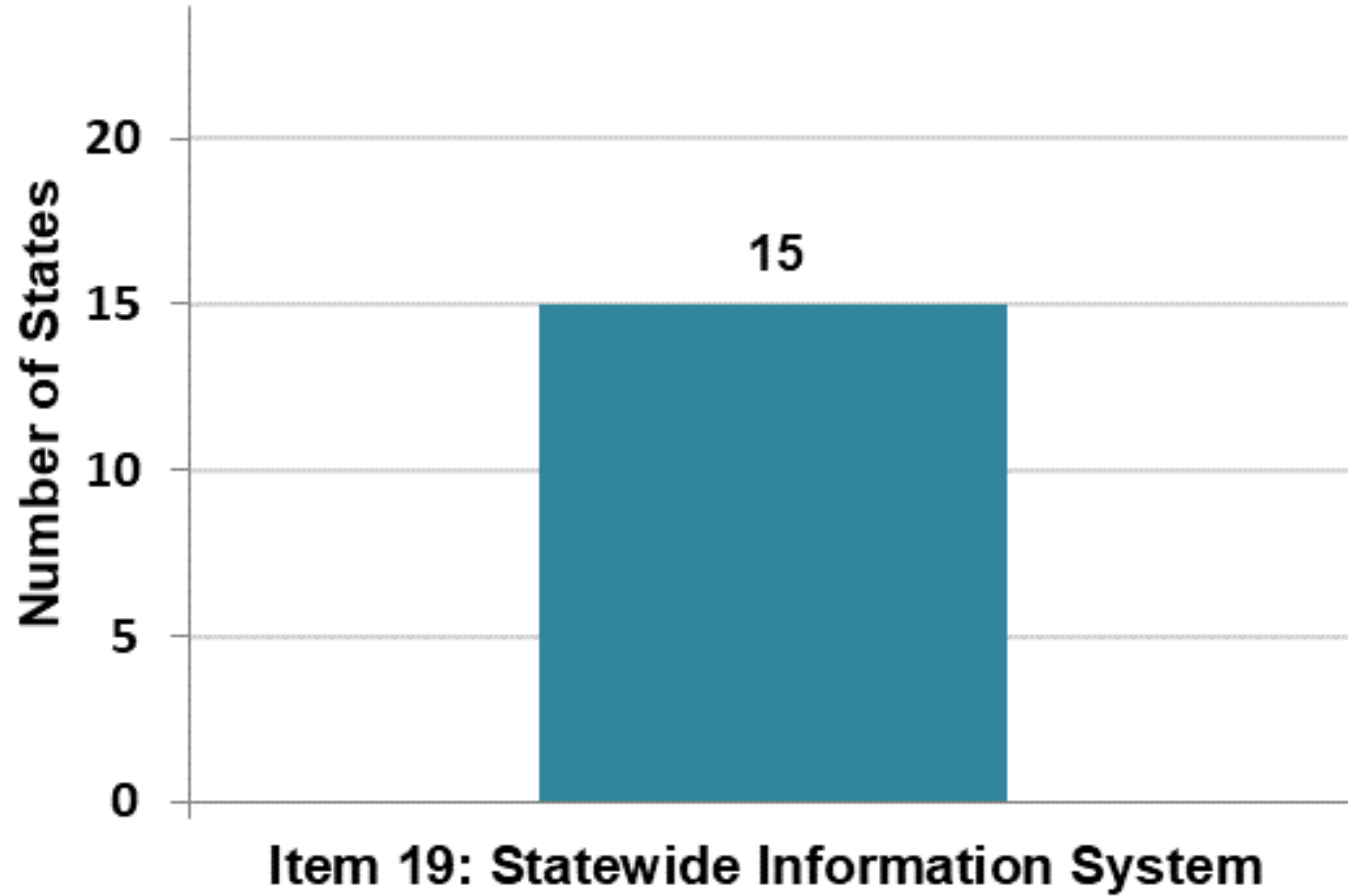
- Statewide Information System
- Case Review System
- Quality Assurance System
- Staff and Provider Training
- Service Array and Resource Development
- Agency Responsiveness to the Community
- Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention



## States in Substantial Conformity with Systemic Factors



## Statewide Information System Item Strength Ratings



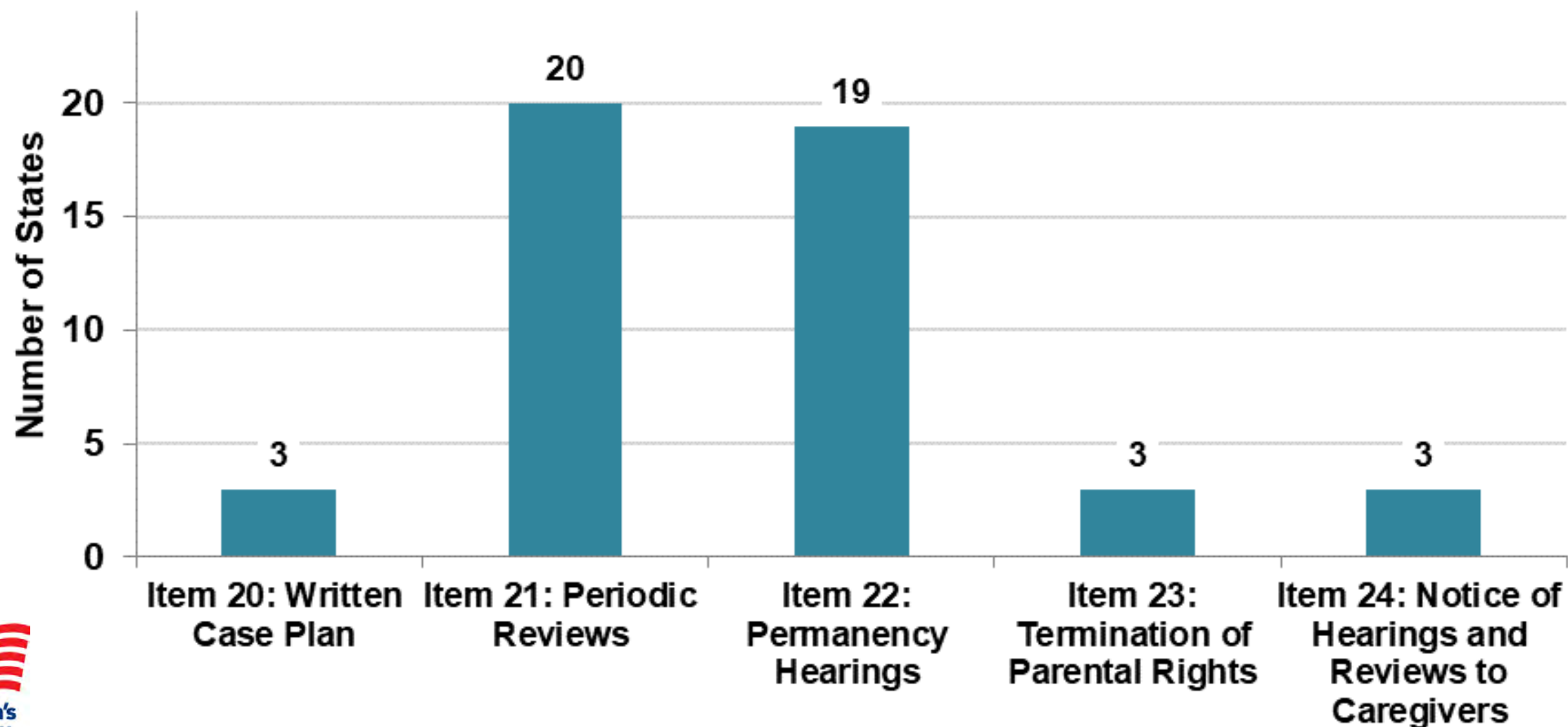


# Statewide Information System

- Timeliness of data entry
- Accuracy of the information in the system



## Case Review System Item Strength Ratings



# Case Review System

- Periodic reviews and permanency hearings are the strongest items as reviews/hearings are happening and generally within frequency requirements.
- Case plans: state policy exists but there is a lack of oversight to know that plans are consistently developed on an ongoing basis.
- Parental engagement in case plan development is lacking.

# Case Review System

- Termination of parental rights – process left to judges/attorneys' timelines without agency intervention, default filings, and waiting to ensure non-appealable cases.
- Notice of hearings to caregivers – states did not have a process in place to ensure notice is routinely provided.

## Quality Assurance System Item Strength Ratings





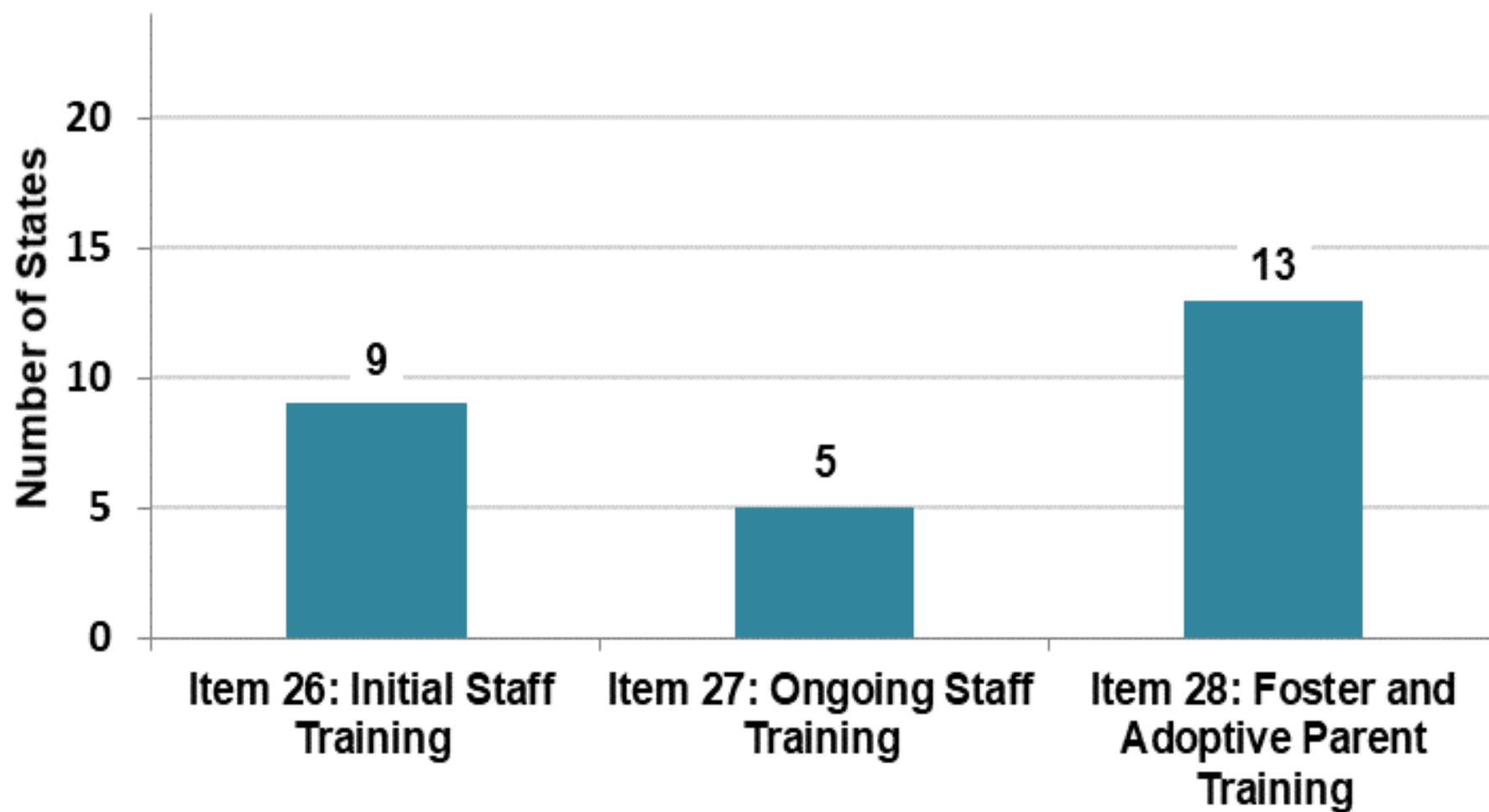
# Quality Assurance System

Most states had some components of a quality assurance system.

The most commonly missing components included:

- A process to evaluate planned program improvement
- Standards to evaluate the quality of services
- A process or method for identifying the strengths and needs of the service delivery system

## Staff and Provider Training Item Strength Ratings



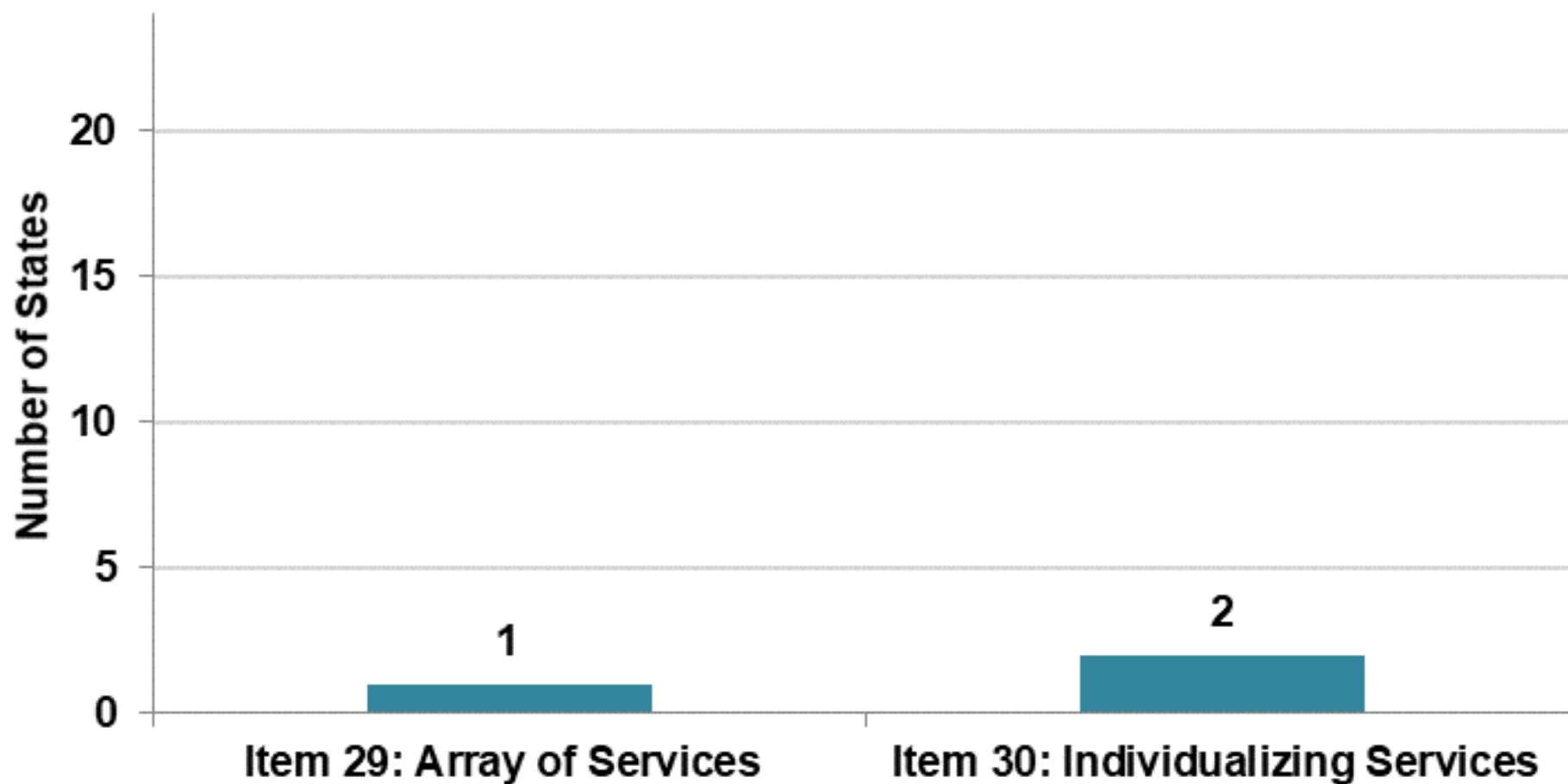
# Staff and Provider Training

- New workers were assigned cases before completing training.
- The frequency and location of initial and ongoing training was a barrier to attending.
- Caseloads and workloads were a barrier to attending ongoing training.
- Some agencies did not have ongoing training requirements.
- Caseworkers were not always aware of ongoing training requirements.

# Staff and Provider Training

- Although many new workers said that initial classroom training was well done, they felt it did not accurately reflect the demands of the position.
- Caseworkers spoke favorably about formal mentoring programs, shadowing experienced workers, and the use of embedded trainers.
- There was inconsistency and some lack of clarity concerning requirements for ongoing foster parent training.

## Service Array and Resource Development Item Strength Ratings



# Service Array and Resource Development

- Lack of services in rural areas
- Gaps in availability of services and waiting lists
- Difficulty accessing services because of payment-related issues

# Service Array and Resource Development

The services most often needed but insufficiently available to meet the demand include:

- Substance abuse treatment
- Domestic violence services
- Mental health services
- Trauma informed services
- Housing



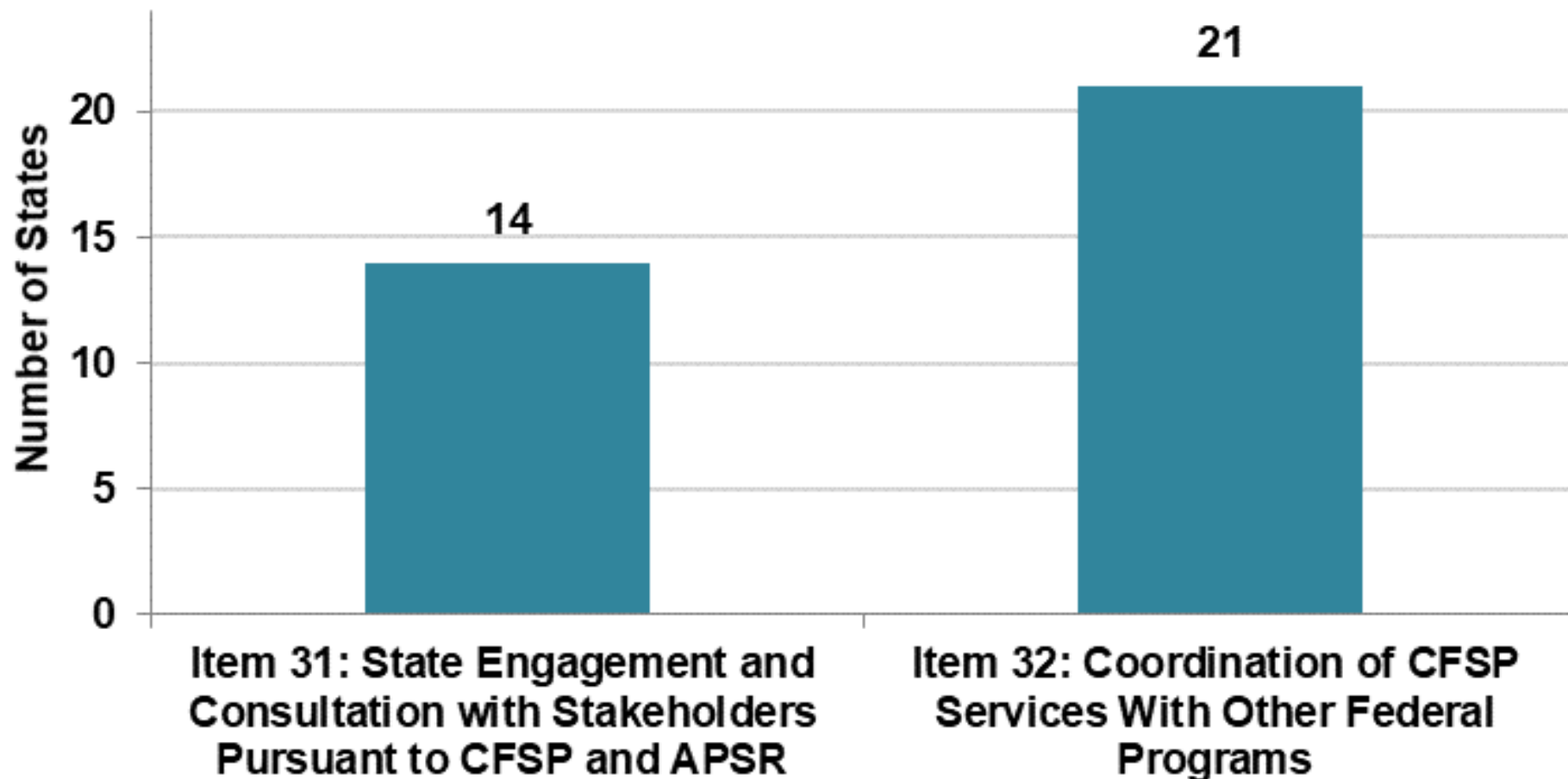
# Service Array and Resource Development

Challenges with individualizing services included:

- Lack of linguistically appropriate services
- Lack of child psychiatrists
- Lack of appropriate service providers
- Inability to meet the cultural needs of the diverse populations served



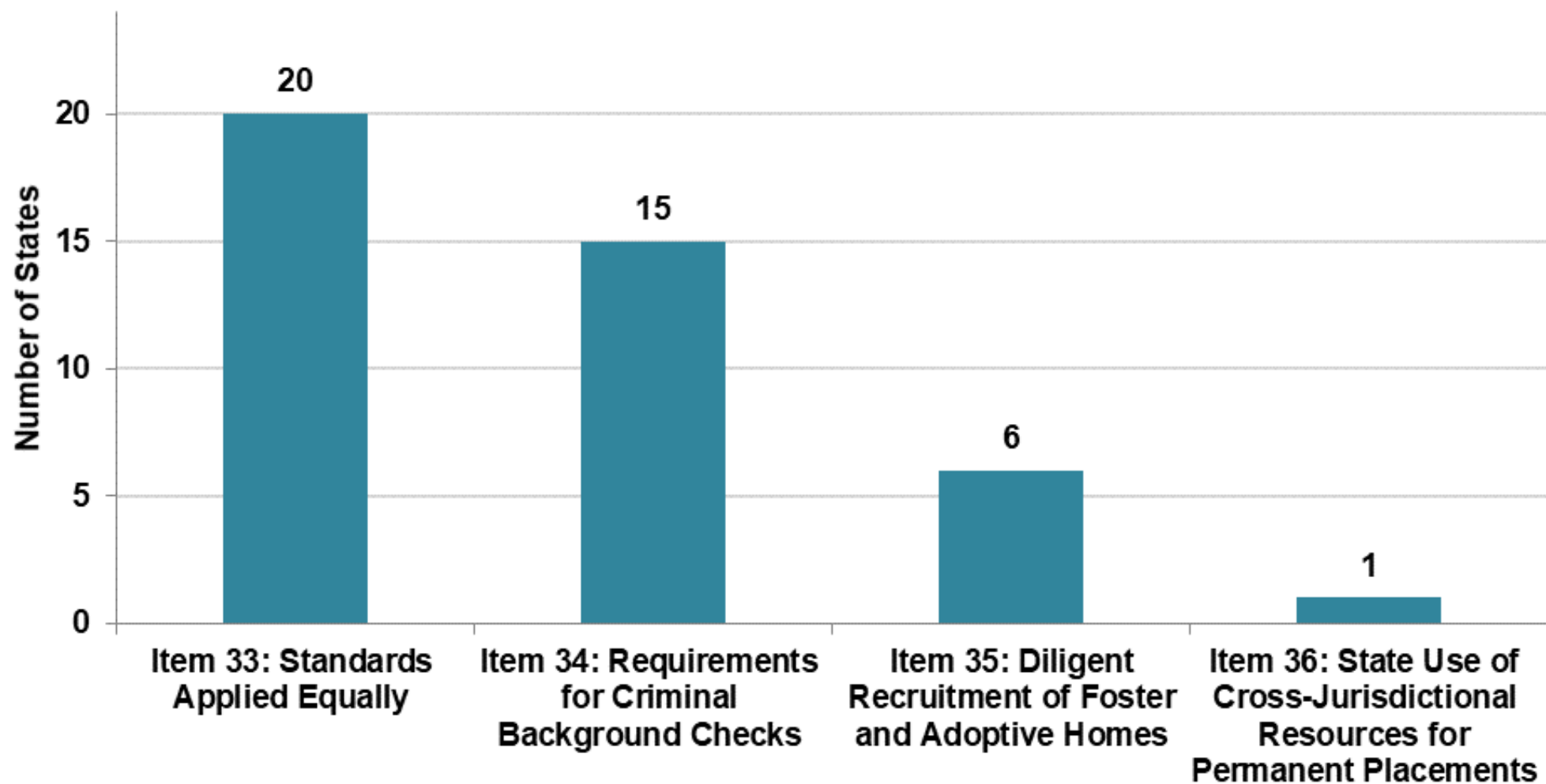
## Agency Responsiveness to Community Item Strength Ratings



# Agency Responsiveness to the Community

- There was failure to engage some key stakeholders, such as parents, foster parents, caseworkers, and Tribes.
- Not having a consistent process for engagement, or engaging stakeholders for the development of the CFSP and not the APSR.
- Failure to coordinate with key federal programs, or not having information about those efforts or results of those efforts.

## Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention Item Strength Ratings



# Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention

- Not having a statewide recruitment plan
- Not having information to know whether policies requiring criminal background checks were being followed
- Not having case planning processes for addressing the safety of foster care and adoptive placements
- Challenges in administering the Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children

# ***What Youth Say.....***

Information collected during Round 3  
stakeholder interviews with youth

# About *Family*

*“When you have a missing father or both parents, you feel empty, real empty.”*

- We want to maintain our relationships with our brothers and sisters.
- Many of us don’t have anywhere to go for holidays and summer vacations.

# About *Being in Foster Care*

- If you removed us from our home for abuse and neglect, we want to be in a place that is safer and better.
- We need the system to stand by our side and support us on all aspects of life.
- Many of us attended court hearings; but it all seemed impersonal.
- We want to be like other kids, including able to obtain driver's licenses, and use computers and cell phones.



# About *Foster Homes and Foster Parents*

- We think foster parents need to be able to call someone when they need help.
- Relative homes are not always the best resource for protecting us. They don't always have the same level of support.
- Foster parents sometimes give up too quickly and we blame ourselves.



# About *Caseworkers*

- Caseworkers can make a big difference and changing caseworkers creates major disruptions for us.
- We see that high caseloads affect our caseworkers' ability to spend time with us and help us.
- To better understand us, caseworkers need better training on what we experience.

# About *Caseworkers*

- We like it when caseworkers are available after hours and will listen to us and provide us with guidance.
- We find it helpful when caseworkers address our needs, such as accessing IL funds, visiting colleges, and helping us get health care.

# About *Services*

*“Nothing was personalized...I am a box and shouldn't have to fit into a circle.”*

- We received therapy, but we couldn't always connect with our therapists, or sometimes we needed a different kind of therapy.
- We still need a safety net and support after we turn 21.

# About *Independent Living Services*

- We are expected to be self-sufficient by age 18, but we are not taught how to be independent and self-sufficient.
- We think that IL services should be available much earlier – around age 14.
- Our IL workers are able to advocate for us.

# ***What Parents Say.....***

Information collected during Round 3  
stakeholder interviews with parents

# About *Their Children in Foster Care*

- We feel that the agency should search for noncustodial parents or relatives to keep children out of foster care.
- Our children should not be separated from each other when placed into foster care.
- We should be able to talk with foster parents about our children.
- Six weeks of training does not prepare foster parents for the trauma the children experienced and what they need while in foster care.



# About *Visitation With Their Children*

- We aren't able to see our children often enough.
- We shouldn't have to visit with our children at county offices – it is an unnatural setting.
- We feel that visits are scheduled to meet the needs of the caseworker or the foster parent and don't take our needs into account.

# About *Involvement in Case Planning*

- Agencies make the plan and we don't have a choice. We agreed to it because we don't want to lose our children.
- Completing the plan doesn't mean that we get our children back. *"They keep wanting us to jump through more hoops."*
- We are scared to share information about our past because it seems we will be penalized for it.
- We don't always understand the case planning process.



# About *The Court Process*

- We don't have a voice. The court seems to rubber stamp what the agency wants.
- We don't understand the court and the purpose of the various hearings.
- We rarely see our attorneys outside of the court room and they don't seem to be familiar with our cases.

# About *The Court Process*

- We don't think efforts are made to reunite families.
- We are threatened with termination.
- We would like grief counseling after our rights are terminated.

# About *Services*

- The parent aids/mentors help us navigate the system and communicate better with the caseworker and agency.
- Some of the services really help make us better at parenting.
- We have difficulty accessing services because of distance, lack of transportation, waitlists, payment problems, and basic gaps in services.
- The services should meet the needs of our families.
- Twelve months is too short to deal with our addiction issues.

# About *Caseworkers*

- Our caseworkers and supervisors make all the difference – either they help you get your children back or they don't.
- We think that caseworkers need more training/experience about what it is like to be a parent involved in the system or a parent struggling with addiction.
- We think that caseworkers should do better assessments of the people involved in safety plans.

# About *Caseworkers*

We found it helpful when caseworkers met with us and talked with us about our children, supported us, provided encouragement, and helped us get the services we needed.

# **Program Improvement Plans**

## Planning, Leading, and Sustaining Change



“PIPs are not the follow-up;  
they are the main event.”

James Harrell

Former Deputy Commissioner

Administration for Children, Youth and Families

# Leadership

- Key to PIP development, implementation, and sustaining change
- How are you using CFSR/PIP to create/support a vision for systems change?
- How are you encouraging and supporting involvement and responsibility at the county and local levels?



# Leadership

- In what ways are you “messaging” the review results and PIP goals with the governor and legislature to gain their support?
- How are you modeling a change in agency culture and climate?
- How are you promoting and demonstrating receptivity to change?

# Using Data

- What data have you looked at before forming your PIP goals and strategies?
- Have you run reports in the OMS to understand your case review findings?
- What else do you need to know and how do you gather that information? If a practice or a tool or a policy that's in place isn't working, have you asked the field "why not"?

# Engaging Stakeholders

- You can't improve practice until you seek out and understand the perspectives of the front line staff carrying out the work and the recipients of services (children, youth, birth parents, foster/adoptive/relative caregivers).
- There are key entities that need to be engaged (e.g., courts). If they aren't engaging, ask for assistance.

# Engaging Stakeholders

- Engagement has to be meaningful and stakeholders need to be prepared to fulfill their role in the process.
- SurveyMonkey and focus groups are great ways to gain input.
- Engage with the stakeholders that you usually don't want to.

# PIP Goals and Strategies

- Move beyond policy, training, new tools, and “plan-to-plan”
- How are strategies addressing underlying issues and not just the presenting problem?
- Are cross-cutting issues addressed, e.g. parent engagement?

# PIP Goals and Strategies

- How will the PIP align with other initiatives, e.g., consent decrees, and how are you avoiding “initiative fatigue”?
- Have you identified workforce challenges beyond just workload? What does the field want/need in order to improve day-to-day practice?
- What evidence-informed practices are being used?



# PIP Goals and Strategies

- In what ways are systemic factors being addressed, e.g., case review system, CQI, training, service array, recruitment/retention?
- What are technical service providers “offering” and does it fit with your needs? Will the practices and initiatives really lead you to address the challenges?

# Implementation

- Anticipate complexity of implementing some strategies.
- Think through implementation with various levels of the organization and stakeholders.
- Ask about how you are preparing the field for change and what supports they will need for it.
- Consider different scales of change, i.e., statewide versus innovation zones (NOT “pilots”).



# Implementation

- How are you building a learning organization?
- What are the current and future resources needed for full implementation?

# Monitoring and Sustaining Change

- Institutionalize CQI throughout the organization, and ensure that results are used at the local level.
- Promote supervisory development.
- Open communication between the field and administration.
- Use forums and other means to engage stakeholders – analyze and correct problems.

# Monitoring and Sustaining Change

- Continue addressing agency culture and climate.
- Perform ongoing planning for resources.
- Collect evidence of improvement and make adjustments.
- Institutionalize change at all levels of the organization.

# “Big Picture” Lessons Learned

- Understanding performance across states is important.
- Encouraging a learning environment between federal, state, and counties is a critical component of CQI and important to advances in our field.
- Improvements must occur in other systems affecting child welfare.

# “Big Picture” Lessons Learned

- “How” change is implemented is as important as “what.”
- Leaders of child welfare systems must provide vision for reform and be actively engaged as leaders in the change process.



# Thank You

