

# Statewide Assessment

## Child and Family Services Review Round 4

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Wyoming  
Department of  
Family Services

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August 2024

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# SECTION I: GENERAL INFORMATION

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## WHAT IS A STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT

Every 5-7 years, federal law requires that child welfare agencies undergo a Child and Family Services Review (CFSR). The goals of the CFSR are to: 1) Ensure substantial conformity with title IV-B and IV-E child welfare requirements using a framework focused on assessing seven safety, permanency, and well-being outcomes and seven systemic factors; 2) Determine what is happening to children and families as they are engaged in child welfare services; and 3) Assist states in helping children and families achieve positive outcomes.

The CFSR is a two-phase process. The first phase is a statewide assessment conducted by staff of the state child welfare agency, representatives selected by the agency who were consulted in the development of the Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP), and other individuals deemed appropriate and agreed upon by the state child welfare agency and the Children's Bureau.<sup>1</sup>

The second phase of the review process is an onsite case file review. The onsite case file review includes case record reviews, case-related interviews for the purpose of determining outcome performance, and, as necessary, stakeholder interviews that further inform the assessment of systemic factors. Information from both the statewide assessment and the onsite review is used to determine the degree to which the state is in compliance with the seven outcomes and seven systemic factors.

## PERIOD UNDER REVIEW

The period under review (PUR) is the timeframe within which a random sample of cases meeting specific criteria can be selected and reviewed. The PUR for cases reviewed as part of the statewide assessment is April 1, 2022 - present.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/cb/round3\\_cfsr\\_sai.pdf](https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/cb/round3_cfsr_sai.pdf)

LIST OF STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT PARTICIPANTS

<b>Name</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>	<b>Role in Statewide Assessment Process</b>
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Bobbi Jennings	Absaroka Head Start	Focus Group Participant
Karen Rossetti	Wyoming Department of Family Services	Focus Group Participant
Brooke Benson	BBBS	Focus Group Participant
Megan Wild	BBBS of Wyoming	Focus Group Participant
Shari West	Sweetwater Family Resource Center	Focus Group Participant
Shelly Martin	Martin Family	Focus Group Participant
Jennifer Hall	Jenn's Daycare	Focus Group Participant
Betina Angle	DFS	Focus Group Participant
Shari West	Sweetwater Family Resource Center	Focus Group Participant
James Edward-Lee II	Transportation Services and Protective Services	Focus Group Participant
Camron Hokanson	Personal	Focus Group Participant
Penny Hotovec	Department of Family Services	Focus Group Participant
Tyson Wilke	Family Services	Focus Group Participant
Alicia Renae Altizer-Jackson	Lived Experience	Focus Group Participant
Misty Ramirez	Independent	Focus Group Participant
Feliciana Turner	WY Dept of Health	Focus Group Participant
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Brad LaCroix	WCSD 1	Focus Group Participant
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\*Participant with lived experience

## DESCRIPTION OF STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT IN STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Throughout the course of the assessment, a collaborative and inclusive approach was adopted to gather insights and perspectives from various stakeholders. This engagement involved leadership and staff from all levels of the child welfare agency; families, youth, the legal and judicial communities, tribal representatives, and other significant partners and stakeholders.

The assessment process was comprised of the following key activities:

1. **Stakeholder Identification:** A diverse range of stakeholders were identified and invited to participate. This included individuals directly involved in child welfare services, such as agency employees, caseworkers, supervisors, and managers. Families and youth who have interacted with the child welfare system were also considered crucial contributors. In addition, legal professionals, judges, tribal representatives, community organizations, advocacy groups, and other partners with a vested interest in child welfare were included.
2. **Stakeholder Surveys:** Surveys were designed to capture the opinions, experiences, and perceptions of various stakeholders. These surveys were distributed electronically or in print, making them accessible to a wide range of participants. Questions focused on different aspects of the child welfare system, including strengths, challenges, communication, collaboration, and opportunities for ongoing improvement. The surveys allowed stakeholders to provide anonymous feedback and express their views openly.
3. **Focus Groups:** Focus groups were conducted to facilitate deeper discussions and conversations around specific topics. These sessions provided an opportunity for stakeholders to share their insights in a more interactive and dynamic setting. Focus groups were organized around themes such as casework practice, family engagement, collaboration between agencies and support for youth in care. Trained facilitators guided the discussions to ensure all feedback was captured without bias.
4. **Data Analyses:** The Department collected survey responses and insights from focus groups, compiled them and analyzed the data to identify common themes, patterns, and areas of consensus. This data-driven resulted in a less subjective and more comprehensive understanding of the state child welfare system's strengths and opportunities for improvement.

Through the involvement of child welfare leadership, staff, families, youth, legal professionals, tribes, and other stakeholders in surveys and focus group discussions, the assessment process promoted transparency, collaboration, and a shared commitment to showcasing system strengths and identifying opportunities for ongoing system improvement. All with the intended goal of improving the well-being of children and families within the state's child welfare system.

## SECTION II: STATE CONTEXT AFFECTING OVERALL PERFORMANCE

### VISION AND TENETS

The Wyoming Department of Family Services (Department) is the state's statutorily designated authority serving children, youth, vulnerable adults, and families in need of temporary or ongoing financial assistance and/or social services to keep individuals safe and families intact and, if necessary, to care for children and youth who are court-ordered into the State's custody.

The Department is guided by three values:

- **Safe at Home** - We believe that all children and adults deserve to live and be safe in their own homes and communities. We strive to serve individuals and families before a crisis hits. We help by building upon an individual or family's strengths and connecting them to the supports and services they need when they need them.
- **Opportunities for Success** - We believe that all individuals and families deserve a fair chance at success. We provide access to concrete supports (i.e. material resources to meet needs) and community-based services that strengthen individual and family self-sufficiency and stability.
- **Supporting the People who Support the Families** - We believe that our greatest resources are those people serving families directly in their communities - our staff and our partners. We provide opportunities for staff and partners to succeed and promote system partnerships that focus on prevention and family well-being.

The Department's values provide the foundation for WY Home Matters, a framework that guides how the Department works across divisions, systems, and within communities to engage and serve children, youth, vulnerable adults, and their families. This framework is built on a belief that children and vulnerable adults do best when they can stay safely at home.

The Department has 27 Field offices in 23 counties. County offices are grouped by geographic distribution to create nine judicial districts. Wyoming is a large and rural state. Some districts will span across multiple counties.

### CHALLENGES

Throughout the course of the assessment, the Department identified several core challenges that directly impacted programs and practice. These challenges demonstrate widespread impact on various items and systemic factors throughout the statewide assessment.

- In 2020, the Department was required to make budget cuts, resulting in the loss of five caseworker positions as well as funding to support direct service delivery.
- In 2020, the Department was significantly impacted by the COVID19 pandemic. The COVID19 pandemic required an unexpected and emergent operational and practice pivot into a different way of meeting the needs of families, keeping children safe, and maintaining the health and safety of staff. Services available to support families changed drastically while protocols and technology were put into place to meet the needs. The impacts of COVID19 have been widespread and they continue to fuel challenges with staff retention and burn out.
- The Department has experienced significant caseworker and supervisor turnover since 2022, recording a 32% turnover in caseworker positions statewide. Supervisor turnover increased from 29% in 2021 to 32% in 2022. Several of the Department's small field offices experienced a 100% turnover of supervisors and/or caseworkers, directly impacting families served by the agency.
- Upcoming discussion related to Item 19 highlights challenges specific to the current case management system and the Department's lack of quality data. Work is underway to replace the current system, with a September 1, 2024 implementation date.
- In 2022, internal case reviews for the purpose of performance monitoring were suspended temporarily to focus on other division projects such as the WYOSAFE procurement.

Significant budget cuts, COVID19, a mass reorganization of service delivery, the great resignation and impacts associated with increases in mental health needs across the board are all factors directly impacting the cases reviewed within the PUR.

#### CURRENT INITIATIVES

Work is underway on a number of projects and initiatives aimed at building capacity and resources to support families, youth and vulnerable adults.

- In 2020, WYHome Matters launched as a way to codify and create a platform for upcoming prevention focused initiatives. WYHome Matters is a philosophical framework, focused on prevention and early intervention, that is used to guide the day to day work of staff. The goal of WYHome Matters is to transform Wyoming's child welfare and juvenile justice system into a child well-being system. This initiative is further discussed in Item 31.
- As a result of the CFSR Round 3 Assessment, and to help standardize and support the operationalization of division policy, the Department developed detailed procedures to direct implementation and compliance for each policy. During the Round 3 PIP, procedures were implemented to support staff with completing initial and ongoing risk and safety assessments. Work continues to



ensure all policies are updated and that they also include corresponding procedures.

- In 2021, the Wyoming Legislature authorized funding to procure a new case management system. Procurement activities kicked off in late 2021. In June 2022, the Department executed a contract with Accenture to build a federally compliant child welfare case management solution. WYOSAFE is well underway and is scheduled to go live on September 1, 2024. Operational efficiencies, streamlined documentation processes, along with automated workflow functionality and procedural standardization will enable field staff to spend more time with families while meeting all performance and practice expectations of the Department.
- In 2022, as the result of a regional compensation study, the Legislature authorized funding to increase staff wages. A second compensation adjustment was authorized in 2023, moving all staff to a minimum wage equal to 90% of the market average. Over the course of the two years, the starting wage for a caseworker increased from \$21.40/hr. to \$27.13/hr.
- In 2022, Division leadership took advantage of several retirements to restructure the program and policy unit. A determination was made that there needed to be more of an intentional focus and investment in performance monitoring and ongoing continuous quality improvement (CQI). At the time, both CQI and Data/IT systems were managed by one full time person. Vacant positions were reclassified to provide for a full time Data and IT Systems Manager and a full time CFSR/CQI Manager. The Data and IT Systems Manager position was filled in December 2022 and the CFSR/CQI Manager in February 2023. Separating these programs into two full time positions has allowed for more intentional focus on each area.
- In 2023, the Department's training unit established a CORE Advisory Committee to help develop a more comprehensive pre-service caseworker training academy to better prepare and support staff with the day to day work in the field.

## ASSESSMENT OF CHILD AND FAMILY OUTCOMES

Each section below contains a table illustrating observed case review outcomes across various points in time. Measurements have been extracted from an in-depth review of 65-71 individual cases, representing practice from various judicial districts as noted. Both in-home and foster care cases were randomly selected during the PUR. The Department's Round 4 practice review included a total of 71 cases representing all nine



judicial districts. For context, the Department assigned 4,788 child protective services cases from July 1, 2022 to present.

Information about the state child welfare agency compiled and analyzed through the statewide assessment process may be used to support the CFSR process in several ways: 1) Provide an overview of the state child welfare agency’s performance for the onsite review team; 2) Facilitate identification of issues that need additional clarification before or during the onsite review; 3) Serve as a key source of information for rating the CFSR systemic factors; and 4) Enable states and their stakeholders to identify early in the CFSR process the areas potentially needing improvement and to begin developing their performance improvement plan.<sup>2</sup>

Statewide assessment outcomes are a point in time evaluation of specific metrics and systemic factors. Results should not be considered to be representative of all cases statewide. Successful completion of a comprehensive statewide assessment serves as one component of what should be a much more comprehensive and robust CQI Program.

**Table 1. WY Performance**

<b>Data Source</b>	<b>Time Period and Number of Sites</b>	<b>Total Cases and Breakdown of Cases</b>
CFSR Round 3 Review	2016 District 1-Cheyenne District 5-Cody District 7- Casper	65 Cases 25 In-Home, 40 Foster Care
Round 3 PIP Review	2022 All nine judicial districts	65 Cases 25 In-Home, 40 Foster Care
Round 3 National Review	2022	
Round 4 Practice Review	2023 All nine judicial districts	71 Cases 35 In-Home, 36 Foster Care

Data Source: [cfsrportal.acf.hhs.gov](https://cfsrportal.acf.hhs.gov)

# SAFETY

## SAFETY OUTCOME 1: CHILDREN ARE, FIRST AND FOREMOST, PROTECTED FROM ABUSE AND NEGLECT

- ITEM 1: TIMELINESS TO INITIATING INVESTIGATIONS OF REPORTS OF CHILD MALTREATMENT

**Purpose:** To determine whether responses to all accepted child maltreatment reports received during the period under review (PUR) were initiated, and face to face contact with the child(ren) made, within the timeframes established by agency policies and state statutes.

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/cb/round3\\_cfsr\\_sai.pdf](https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/cb/round3_cfsr_sai.pdf)

Table 2. **Item 1 Performance**

Outcome to be achieved	Round 3 CFSR Strengths	Round 3 PIP Strengths	Round 4 Practice Review Strengths
Item 1: Timeliness of initiating investigations of reports of child maltreatment	86.67% (30 applicable cases*)	89.66%	54.29% (35 applicable cases)

\*Applicable cases are cases that meet required criteria as outlined per item

In a detailed review of Item 1, the Department identified opportunities to improve its processes for initiating face to face contact with the child, while timely initiation of investigations, more generally, was identified as a strength. Results of a root cause analysis identified turnover of supervisors and caseworkers as a primary contributing factor and led to policy, procedure and rule revisions clarifying Department response expectations and ensuring the accuracy of data collected. A contributing factor to accurate data collection was noted to be a limitation of the current WYCAPS case management system. WYCAPS only captures a portion of the data required to fully assess this performance standard, making it difficult to track as a more systemic statewide metric.

**Conclusion:** The Department is already taking steps to address the opportunities identified through policy and procedure reviews, strengthening caseworker training, targeting strategies around recruitment and retention in its upcoming SFY 2025-2029 Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) as well as including related strategies to support achievement of the Department’s strategic plan. Work is currently underway to enhance the pre-service training for caseworkers and ensure skill building aligns with policy and procedure. WYOSAFE, the new case management system, has also been configured to capture specific data points required to accurately assess and monitor this metric.

**SAFETY OUTCOME 2: CHILDREN ARE SAFELY MAINTAINED IN THEIR HOMES WHENEVER POSSIBLE AND APPROPRIATE**

- ITEM 2: SERVICES TO FAMILY TO PROTECT CHILD(REN) IN THE HOME AND PREVENT REMOVAL OR RE-ENTRY INTO FOSTER CARE

**Table 3. Item 2 Performance**

<b>Outcome to be achieved</b>	<b>Round 3 CFSR Strengths</b>	<b>Round 3 PIP Strengths</b>	<b>Round 4 Practice Review Strengths</b>
Item 2: Services to family to protect child(ren) in the home and prevent removal or re-entry in to foster care	79.17% (24 applicable cases)	95%	41.51% (53 applicable cases)

**Purpose:** To determine whether, during the period under review, the agency made concerted efforts to provide services to the family to prevent children’s entry into foster care or re-entry after reunification.

In a more detailed review of Item 2, opportunities were identified to improve the initial identification of needed services and/or the ongoing monitoring of services provided.

**Conclusion:** The rural nature of Wyoming makes it difficult to identify and provide access to needed services related to safety and risk. Using the information gathered through the course of the assessment process, the Department intends to provide a small number of grants to community based organizations aimed to support the expansion of services into more rural and geographically isolated areas of the state. Focus will be put on creative and innovative ways of expanding access to and the availability of services to support families, youth and vulnerable adults to prevent removal or reentry into foster care.

- ITEM 3: RISK AND SAFETY MANAGEMENT

**Purpose:** To determine whether, during the period under review, the agency made concerted efforts to assess and address risk and safety concerns relating to the child(ren) in their own homes or while in foster care.

Table 4. **Item 3 Performance**

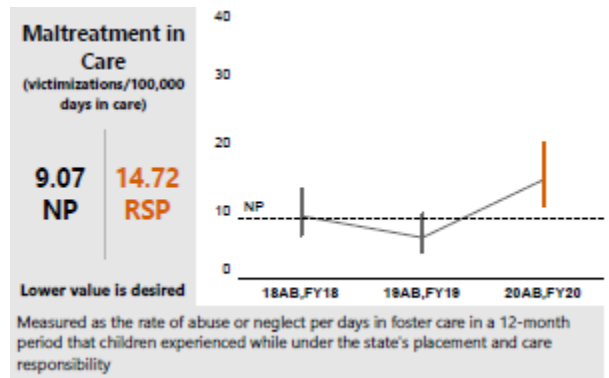
Outcome to be achieved	Round 3 CFSR Strengths	Round 3 PIP Strengths	Round 4 Practice Review Strengths
Item 3: Risk and safety assessment and management	52.31%	80.56%	33.8% (71 applicable cases)

In a more detailed review of Item 3, opportunities to improve practice were identified in 46 of 71 cases reviewed, while 25 of 71 cases demonstrated strong performance in this area. Opportunities to improve include better documentation and performance of ongoing risk and safety assessments to prevent repeat maltreatment in care.

In reviewing the most recent data profile (February 2023), the Department has identified data collection specific to maltreatment in foster care as an opportunity for improvement. The Department’s current data system, WYCAPS, does not allow a caseworker to capture and report the date on which an incident occurred (incident date). Data collection is

limited only to the date the allegation was reported, which artificially inflates this measurement. Of the 16 children reported as having experienced maltreatment in care, 13 of those reports were dismissed as being errors related to data entry. WYOSAFE will be able to capture the allegation date which will more accurately represent the current state.

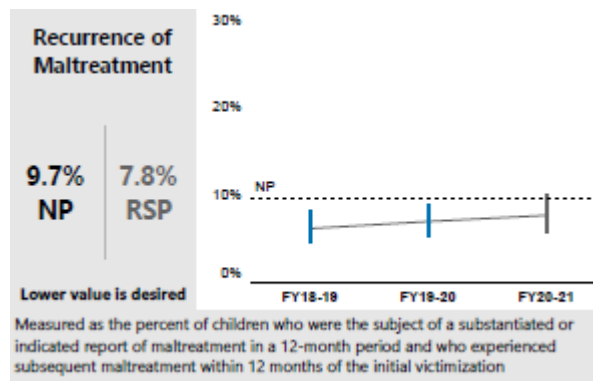
Figure 1  
Maltreatment in Care



Data Source: February 2023 Data Profile

Wyoming currently ranks below the national average for recurrence of maltreatment - which is considered to be a strength. Ratings for Item 3 specific to the need for more comprehensive on-going assessments of safety and risk appear to be directly correlated to reported repeat maltreatment.

Figure 2  
Recurrence of Maltreatment



Data Source: February 2023 Data Profile

In a more detailed review of Safety Outcome 2, the Department has identified opportunities to continue to improve practice related to initial and ongoing assessments of risk and safety, as well as processes for identifying and enabling access to needed services. Safety Outcome 2 was a focus of the Department's Round 3 program improvement plan. As previously noted, turnover of supervisors and caseworkers has had a significant impact on local field offices.

# PERMANENCY

## PERMANENCY OUTCOME 1: CHILDREN HAVE PERMANENCY AND STABILITY IN THEIR LIVING SITUATIONS

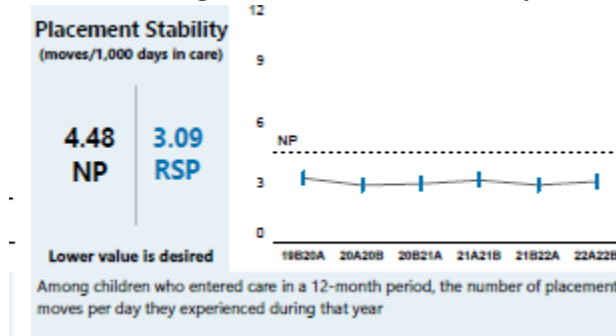
- ITEM 4: STABILITY OF FOSTER CARE PLACEMENT

**Purpose:** To determine whether the child in foster care is in a stable placement at the time of the onsite review and that any changes in placement that occurred during the period under review were in the best interests of the child and consistent with achieving the child’s permanency goal(s).

Table 5. **Item 4 Performance**

Outcome to be achieved	Round 3 CFSR Strengths	Round 3 PIP Strengths	Round 4 Practice Review Strengths
Item 4: Stability in foster care placement	80% (40 applicable cases)	91.49%	77.78% (36 applicable cases)

Figure 3 **Placement Stability**



Data Source: February 2023 Data Profile

The Round 4 practice review, in conjunction with the Department’s most recent data profile, illustrates a commitment to maintaining youth in stable placements whenever possible.

**Conclusion:** The Department, along with its community and system partners, is doing well providing stability for foster children through the utilization of local community resources such as counseling, transportation, child care and respite. This measure also speaks to the support provided by the Department to its network of relative and

non-relative foster family homes and the commitment of the foster family homes to providing safe and stable environments for children and youth to thrive.

- ITEM 5: PERMANENCY GOAL FOR CHILD

**Purpose:** To determine whether appropriate permanency goals were established for the child in a timely manner.

Table 6. **Item 5 Performance**

Outcome to be achieved	Round 3 CFSR Strengths	Round 3 PIP Strengths	Round 4 Practice Review Strengths
Item 5: Permanency goal for child	67.5% (40 applicable cases)	74.47%	77.14%

In a more detailed review of Item 5, Table 6 illustrates a significant improvement in appropriate permanency goals being established in a timely manner.

**Conclusion:** The Department continues to see an improvement in establishing timely and appropriate permanency goals. Changes have been made to the case plan template to simplify data capture. The Department will continue to work with the courts and families to ensure timely and appropriate permanency goals are established.

- ITEM 6: ACHIEVING REUNIFICATION, GUARDIANSHIP, ADOPTION, OR ANOTHER PLANNED PERMANENT LIVING ARRANGEMENT

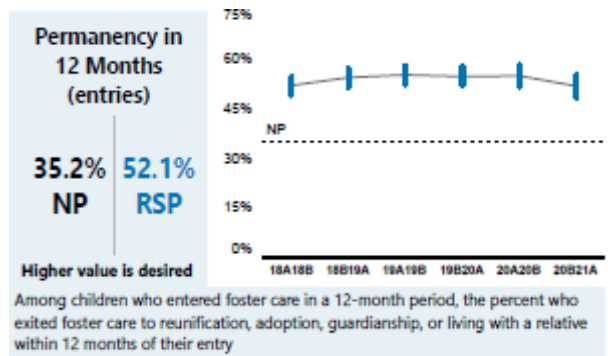
**Purpose:** To determine whether concerted efforts were made, or are being made, during the period under review to achieve reunification, guardianship, adoption, or another planned permanent living arrangement.

Table 7. **Item 6 Performance**

Outcome to be achieved	Round 3 CFSR Strengths	Round 3 PIP Strengths	Round 4 Practice Review Strengths
Item 6: Achieving reunification, guardianship, adoption, or other planned permanent living arrangement	62.5% (40 applicable cases)	74.47%	63.89% (36 applicable cases)

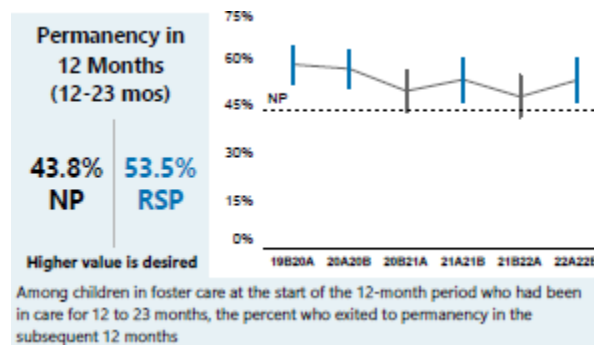
In a more detailed review of Item 6, observed delays in achieving permanency were a result of turnover, lack of timely court reviews and a delay in the finalization of adoption cases (most related to court delays as a result of COVID19).

Figure 4. **Permanency in 12 Months**



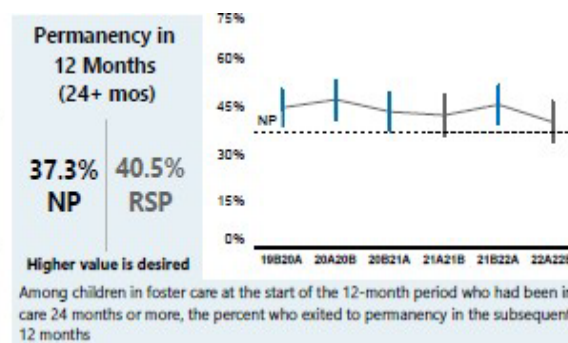
Data Source: February 2023 Data Profile.

Figure 5. **Permanency in 12 Months (12-23 Months)**



Data Source: February 2023 Data Profile.

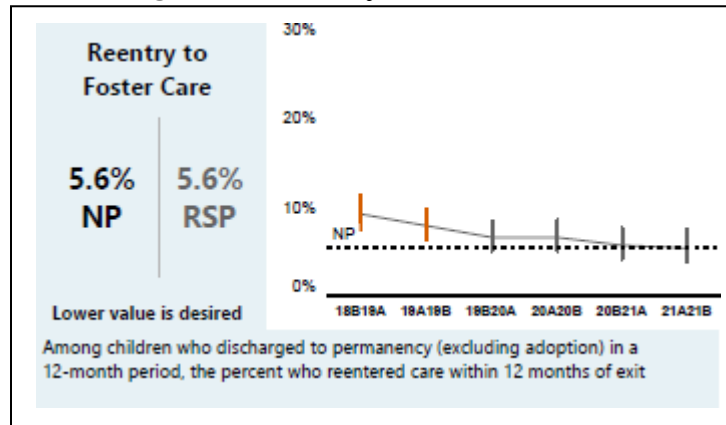
Figure 6. **Permanency in 12 Months (24 plus Months)**



Data Source: February 2023 Data Profile.



Figure 6. **Reentry to Foster Care**



Data Source: Data Profile February 2023

As illustrated by the most recent data profile (February 2023), the Department is performing above the national performance average in achieving permanency timely.

**Conclusion:** The Department strives to achieve permanency timely and, based upon the data profile, there is good work occurring in this area. In discussions during focus groups with 42 legal personnel (judges (10), prosecutors (11), GALs (14), and parents attorneys (7)), concurrent case planning and inconsistency in how and when concurrent planning is appropriate is a challenge. A permanency task force has been developed to include a District Court Judge, prosecuting attorney, GAL, parent attorney, CJP members and the Department to develop training and guidelines around concurrent planning.

**PERMANENCY OUTCOME 2: THE CONTINUITY OF FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS AND CONNECTIONS IS PRESERVED FOR CHILDREN**

- ITEM 7: PLACEMENT WITH SIBLINGS

**Purpose:** To determine whether, during the period under review, concerted efforts were made to ensure that siblings in foster care are placed together unless a separation was necessary to meet the needs of one of the siblings.

Table 8. **Item 7 Performance**

Outcome to be achieved	Round 3 CFSR Strengths	Round 3 PIP Strengths	Round 4 Practice Review Strengths
Item 7: Placement with siblings	95% (20 applicable cases)	91.43%	88.24% (17 applicable cases)

**Conclusion:** The Department and its system partners recognize the importance of keeping siblings together when safe and appropriate to do so. This intentionality is reflected by the ratings for this item.

- ITEM 8: VISITING WITH PARENT AND SIBLINGS IN FOSTER CARE

**Purpose:** To determine whether, during the period under review, concerted efforts were made to ensure that visitation between a child in foster care and his or her mother, father, and siblings is of sufficient frequency and quality to promote continuity in the child’s relationship with these close family members.

Table 9. **Item 8 Performance**

Outcome to be achieved	Round 3 CFSR Strengths	Round 3 PIP Strengths	Round 4 Practice Review Strengths
Item 8: Visiting with parents and siblings in foster care	78.13% (32 applicable cases)	90.91%	88.24% (35 applicable cases)

In a more detailed review of Item 8, 19 applicable cases demonstrated successful efforts to maintain visitation between parents and siblings in foster care. In general, visitation between parents and siblings occurs more than once a week.

**Conclusion:** The Department believes in supporting the relationships between parents, siblings and children placed in foster care. Moving forward, the Department is interested in focusing on ways to better engage fathers in visitation plans.

- ITEM 9: PRESERVING CONNECTIONS

**Purpose:** To determine whether, during the period under review, concerted efforts were made to maintain the child’s connections to his or her neighborhood, community, faith, extended family, kin, tribe, school, and friends.

The Department has established ICWA policies and procedures that require staff to inquire about tribal affiliation upon removal in order to properly notify the tribe, as well as continue those established connections. The Department works with two tribal offices in Wyoming - Northern Arapaho and Eastern Shoshone. Both tribal programs consistently support efforts to quickly identify tribal youth and families, and establish jurisdiction in order to preserve existing connections.

Table 10. **Item 9 Performance**

Outcome to be achieved	Round 3 CFSR Strengths	Round 3 PIP Strengths	Round 4 Practice Review Strengths
Item 9: Preserving connections	80% (40 applicable cases)	100%	77.14% (35 applicable cases)

A more detailed review of Item 9 highlights statewide efforts to preserve important connections whenever possible. Of the cases where opportunities to improve were noted, most observations were related to the need for better documentation and evidence of concerted efforts to maintain relationships with extended family.

**Conclusion:** As evidenced, the Department strives to preserve connections for children in foster care. The Department has done well maintaining prior established connections regarding school, community, faith, other activities and extended relatives.

- ITEM 10: RELATIVE PLACEMENT

**Purpose:** To determine whether, during the period under review, concerted efforts were made to place the child with relatives when appropriate.

Table 11. **Item 10 Performance**

Outcome to be achieved	Round 3 CFSR Strengths	Round 3 PIP Strengths	Round 4 Practice Review Strengths
Item 10: Relative placement	81.58% (38 applicable cases)	92.68%	59.26% (27 applicable cases)

In a more detailed review of Item 10, opportunities were identified to improve documentation specific to efforts undertaken to identify, locate, inform and evaluate both maternal and paternal relatives for potential placement.

**Conclusion:** The Department will continue to assess existing processes in order to develop strategies to improve the identification and location of relatives. WYOSAFE is being configured to incorporate automated interfaces to people finding software and databases to ensure a more comprehensive and efficient approach to identifying relatives.

- ITEM 11: RELATIONSHIP OF CHILD IN CARE WITH PARENTS

**Purpose:** To determine whether, during the period under review, concerted efforts were made to promote, support, and/or maintain positive relationships between the child in foster care and his or her mother and father or other primary caregiver(s) from whom the child had been removed through activities other than arranging for visitation.

Table 12. **Item 11 Performance**

Outcome to be achieved	Round 3 CFSR Strengths	Round 3 PIP Strengths	Round 4 Practice Review Strengths
Item 11: Relationship of child in care with parents	77.42% (31 applicable cases)	90.24%	63.64% (33 applicable cases)

In a more detailed review of Item 11, 12 cases illustrated opportunities to improve the demonstration and documentation of concerted efforts to promote, support, and maintain a positive and nurturing relationship with both fathers and mothers. The impact of COVID19 on in person visitation, and the need to establish alternate methods of maintaining connections proved challenging.

**Conclusion:** The Department will continue to assess existing processes in order to develop strategies to improve its focus on preserving relationships with mothers and fathers. Mothers and/or fathers who find themselves in correctional facilities or inpatient treatment can be difficult to connect with. Further, the impact of COVID19 on in person visits and routine activities that would have normally promoted and supported nurturing relationships was detrimental.

## WELL-BEING

### WELL-BEING OUTCOME 1: FAMILIES HAVE ENHANCED CAPACITY TO PROVIDE FOR THEIR CHILDREN’S NEEDS

- ITEM 12: NEEDS AND SERVICES OF CHILD, PARENTS AND FOSTER PARENTS

**Purpose:** To determine whether, during the period under review, the agency made concerted efforts to (1) assess the needs of children, parents, and foster parents (both initially, if the child entered foster care or the case was opened during the period under review, and on an ongoing basis) to identify the services necessary to achieve case goals and adequately address the issues relevant to the agency’s involvement with the family, and (2) provide the appropriate services.

Table 13. **Item 12 Performance**

Outcome to be achieved	Round 3 CFSR Strengths	Round 3 PIP Strengths	Round 4 Practice Review Strengths
Item 12: Needs and services of child, parents, and foster parents	41.54% (65 applicable cases)	72.22%	36.62% (71 applicable cases)
Item 12A: Needs assessment and services to children	64.54% (65 applicable cases)	87.5%	61.97% (71 applicable cases)
Item 12B: Needs assessment and services to parents	45% (60 applicable cases)	82.61%	41.18% (68 applicable cases)

Item 12C: Needs assessment and services to foster parents	80% (35 applicable cases)	85%	61.54% (26 applicable cases)
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In a detailed review of Item 12, opportunities to improve practice and documentation were identified in 45 cases. Upon further review of children, parents and foster parents’ assessments of need, there are opportunities to more consistently assess needs on an ongoing basis, and make intentional connections to available services. The rural nature of Wyoming makes it difficult to identify and provide access to needed services. Using the information gathered through the course of the assessment process, the Department intends to provide a small number of grants to community based organizations aimed to support the expansion of services into more rural and geographically isolated areas of the state. Focus will be put on creative and innovative ways of expanding access and the availability of services to support families, youth and vulnerable adults.

**Conclusion:** The Department will continue to assess existing processes in order to develop strategies to improve its focus on assessing needs and providing connections to related services and supports. Already, the Department made updates to WYCAPS to make the Family Assessment more accessible to caseworkers, removing some of the documentation and administrative burden associated with utilization of the assessment.

- ITEM 13: CHILD AND FAMILY INVOLVEMENT IN CASE PLANNING

**Purpose:** To determine whether, during the period under review, concerted efforts were made (or are being made) to involve parents and children (if developmentally appropriate) in the case planning process on an ongoing basis.

Table 14. **Item 13 Performance**

Outcome to be achieved	Round 3 CFSR Strengths	Round 3 PIP Strengths	Round 4 Practice Review Strengths
Item 13: Child and family involvement in case planning	55.38% (65 applicable cases)	80.56%	46.38% (69 applicable cases)

A more detailed review of Item 13 illustrates a decline in the engagement of children and parents involved in the case planning process initially and on-going. This data is further supported in item 20 of the focus survey and focus group data in which only 63% of biological parents felt it was likely or somewhat likely that they had been authentically involved in the case planning process. With successful engagement being heavily reliant on in-person contacts, trying to support families and youth via an exclusively virtual process created barriers and challenges. Additionally, staff turnover made the continuity of relationships and engagement difficult to sustain.

**Conclusion:** The Department recognizes the importance of children and parents being actively involved in the case planning process. Successful strategies will be pulled from highly rated cases and evaluated for broader dissemination across the state.

- ITEM 14: CASEWORKER VISITS WITH CHILD

Table 15. **Item 14 Performance**

Outcome to be achieved	Round 3 CFSR Strengths	Round 3 PIP Strengths	Round 4 Practice Review Strengths
Item 14: Caseworker visits with child	64.62% (65 applicable cases)	84.72%	52.11% (71 applicable cases)

In a more detailed review of Item 14, 31 cases demonstrated opportunities to improve both the quality and the frequency of caseworker visits. The Department also reviewed ROM data, which indicated that from August 2022 through July 2023, children in foster care were seen 72.7% of the time and children served in the home during the same time period were seen 46.1% of the time. The Department also acknowledges the limitations of WYCAPS, its data collection system. Data entry errors and/or omissions can impact the reported compliance rates with established policy. WYOSAFE has been configured to automate and streamline data collection specific to caseworker visits, which will improve overall data quality and accuracy.

**Conclusion:** The Department will continue to look for opportunities to support improved practice and data entry specific to caseworker visits. Implementation of WYOSAFE will improve data collection tremendously.

- ITEM 15: CASEWORKER VISITS WITH PARENTS

**Purpose:** To determine whether, during the period under review, the frequency and quality of visits between caseworkers and the mothers and fathers of the child(ren) are sufficient to ensure the safety, permanency, and well-being of the child(ren) and promote achievement of case goals.

Table 16. **Item 15 Performance**

Outcome to be achieved	Round 3 CFSR Strengths	Round 3 PIP Strengths	Round 4 Practice Review Strengths
Item 15: Caseworker visits with parents	48.33% (60 applicable cases)	78.26%	41.18% (68 applicable cases)

In a more detailed review of Item 15, there were no notable differences in the quality or frequency of caseworker visits with mothers versus fathers.

**Conclusion:** The Department will continue to explore strategies for improving the quality and frequency of caseworker visits with mothers and fathers. Challenges discussed during focus group and staff debriefs include parents incarcerated both in state and out of state, as well as cases in which a “mother” or “father” wasn’t located in order to materially participate in a case.

**WELL-BEING OUTCOME 2: CHILDREN RECEIVE APPROPRIATE SERVICES TO MEET THEIR EDUCATIONAL NEEDS**

- ITEM 16: EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF THE CHILD

**Purpose:** To assess whether, during the period under review, the agency made concerted efforts to assess children’s educational needs at the initial contact with the child (if the case was opened during the PUR) or on an ongoing basis (if the case was opened before the PUR), and whether identified needs were appropriately addressed in case planning and case management activities.

Table 17. **Item 16 Performance**

Outcome to be achieved	Round 3 CFSR Strengths	Round 3 PIP Strengths	Round 4 Practice Review Strengths
Item 16: Educational needs of the child	80.85% (47 applicable cases)	97.92%	89.13%(46 applicable cases)

A detailed review of Item 16 illustrates improved performance between Round 3 and Round 4. Practice strengths were identified in 42 of the 46 cases reviewed. The Department did identify opportunities to improve its oversight and monitoring of IEP needs and services.

**Conclusion:** All nine judicial districts reported having good relationships with their schools and other entities responsible for providing educational services. The Department will continue to focus on building and maintaining collaborative partnerships with school districts and early education providers.

**WELL-BEING OUTCOME 3: CHILDREN RECEIVE ADEQUATE SERVICES TO MEET THEIR PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS**

- ITEM 17: PHYSICAL HEALTH OF THE CHILD

**Purpose:** To determine whether, during the PUR, the agency addressed the physical health needs of the children, including dental health needs.



Table 18. **Item 17 Performance**

Outcome to be achieved	Round 3 CFSR Strengths	Round 3 PIP Strengths	Round 4 Practice Review Strengths
Item 17: Physical health of the child	91.49% (47 applicable cases)	91.07%	60.87% (46 applicable cases)

A detailed review of Item 17 illustrated challenges with assessing the physical health of children throughout the PUR. Opportunities for improvement include closer monitoring of dental health, assessment of physical health upon case initiation and, in some cases, challenges were noted as a result of needed services simply not being available or accessible. The Department is actively engaged in conversations with the Wyoming Medicaid program to establish privacy and confidentiality agreements that would allow for limited data sharing across agencies to improve the quality and accuracy of healthcare information available to the Department.

**Conclusion:** Since the conclusion of the Round 4 practice review, the Department has provided updated training and completed policy and procedure amendments to clarify expectations for monitoring the physical health needs of children. Exploration of best practices leveraging telehealth functionality when a medical or dental service is not available is underway. WYOSAFE will have the capability for medical and dental providers to upload reports directly to the case through a user portal, which will improve outcomes in this area.

- ITEM 18: MENTAL/BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

**Purpose:** To determine whether, during the PUR, the agency addressed the mental/behavioral health needs of the children.

Table 19. **Item 18 Performance**

Outcome to be achieved	Round 3 CFSR Strengths	Round 3 PIP Strengths	Round 4 Practice Review Strengths
Item 18: Mental/behavioral health of the child	69.23% (52 applicable cases)	90.38%	66.07% (56 applicable cases)

A more detailed review of Item 18 illustrated opportunities for improvement in 19 of the 56 applicable cases. Improvement strategies include more consistent oversight of initial mental health evaluations and assessments being completed timely, and ensuring appropriate follow up when ongoing needs are identified. Eighteen of the 56 cases reviewed demonstrated intentional, targeted and effective support of identified mental health service needs.

**Conclusion:** Exploration of best practices leveraging telehealth functionality when a mental health service is not available is underway. WYOSAFE will have the capability for mental health providers, outpatient and inpatient, to upload reports directly to the



case through a user portal. The Department is also actively engaged in conversations with the Wyoming Medicaid program to establish privacy and confidentiality agreements that would allow for limited data sharing across agencies to improve the quality and accuracy of healthcare information (physical and mental health) available to the Department.

## SECTION IV: ASSESSMENT OF SYSTEMIC FACTORS

- ITEM 19: STATEWIDE INFORMATION SYSTEM

**SACWIS Overview:** The Department is currently operating a Statewide SACWIS (WYCAPS). WYCAPS is a legacy system, which was implemented over 25 years ago. WYCAPS contains a case management system for both placement and in-home services cases. It is available and utilized by Managers, Supervisors, and Caseworkers for both child protection and juvenile justice cases within the agency. Currently, the Department does not use private agencies to perform case management functions; however, WYCAPS does have the functionality to allow secure access to outside entities. To allow Managers and Supervisors access to necessary reports as it pertains to WYCAPS data, the agency utilizes the Results Oriented Management (ROM) system, which provides ongoing outcomes and management reporting across the domains of safety, permanency, and well-being. ROM is a web-based reporting tool developed by the University of Kansas School of Social welfare that provides over 90 interactive, longitudinal reports that are available across all levels of the agency daily. ROM provides functionality to report data at the geographic/position level as well as at the demographic child/case level as well as providing child level detail records for quality assurance purposes. Data is mapped directly from the agency's SACWIS data to calculate and create the available reports. For more information on ROM and to see the reporting tool please visit <https://romreports.org/>.

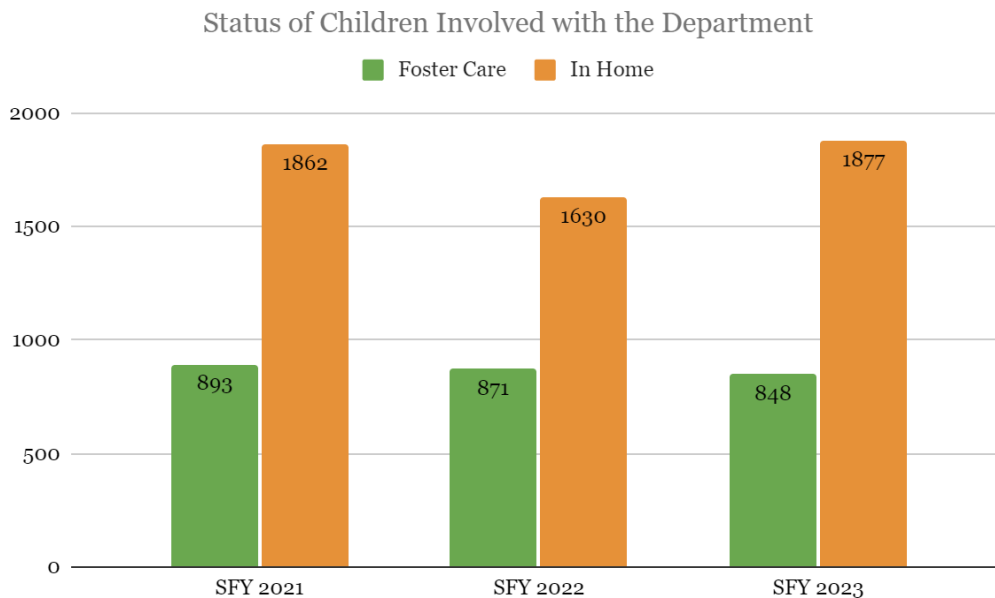
The Department is currently in the process of developing a CCWIS system. The Department's new CCWIS system will be called WYOSAFE. WYOSAFE will replace the legacy case management system, WYCAPS, and provide a modern, intuitive system that will improve efficiency and user access statewide. The goal of this project is to replace WYCAPS with WYOSAFE, which will be compliant with federal and state laws, rules, and regulations and will support child welfare, juvenile justice, and adult protective services policy and practice. It will also improve data quality and reporting, meet federal and state reporting, auditing, and review requirements. WYOSAFE will be implemented statewide on September 1, 2024.

**Department Policy and Procedure for Data Entry into the SACWIS:** In order to assist in improving data entry for staff, the Department has updated policy and procedures, which include requirements for timely entry of intakes. This captures

demographic information for each child. Placement policy and procedure has also been updated, outlining when and how a child in placement is entered into WYCAPS. Lastly, reports can be compiled via ROM and should be reviewed by supervisors and district managers to ensure accuracy of the information entered into WYCAPS. WYCAPS also generates alerts based on the policy and procedure requirements, which aid in ensuring that data is entered timely. These alerts provide guidance to caseworkers on when and how to enter the information to ensure accurate reporting.

**Data Findings:** The status of children involved with the agency can be determined based on placement and custody episode information that is input into WYCAPS. If placement and custody episode information is present this represents children in foster care, whereas when this information is not entered this represents children who are being served in-home. Figure 1 represents the status of children who are involved with the Department.

Figure 7. **Status of Children Involved with the Department**



Data Source: Point in time counts of the status of children involved with the Department were taken on the last day of each state fiscal year reported. 3/31/2023 was used as the point in time date for state fiscal year 2023. Tribal children were excluded. Numerator = status of children, denominator = all children involved with the agency.

Table 21 represents the age and gender demographic data that is captured via WYCAPS. Table 20 illustrates the race and ethnicity demographic data that is captured via WYCAPS. All cases, including cases in which children are in foster care, capture demographic information beginning at intake. The intake process requires the entry of multiple fields including date of birth, race, and ethnicity. These fields can be updated on the person maintenance screen if new information becomes available throughout the life of the case.

Table 20. **Race and Ethnicity Data SFY 23 Children on Composition for All Cases**

	Hispanic	Not Hispanic	Unidentified	Total
AMER IND-AK NATV	29	124	7	160
ARAPAHO	13	51	15	79
Asian	3	211	2	216
BLACK-AFR AMER	27	239	33	299
NTW HWN/PCFC ISL	5	8	0	13
MULTI RACE	21	105	0	126
WHITE	1102	6132	681	7915
DECLINED OR UNKNOWN	182	60	338	580
<b>Total</b>	<b>1382</b>	<b>6930</b>	<b>1076</b>	<b>9388</b>

Data Source: Point in time counts of the status of children involved with the Department were taken on the last day of each state fiscal year reported. 3/31/2023 was used as the point in time date for state fiscal year 2023. Tribal children were excluded. Numerator = status of children, denominator = all children involved with the agency

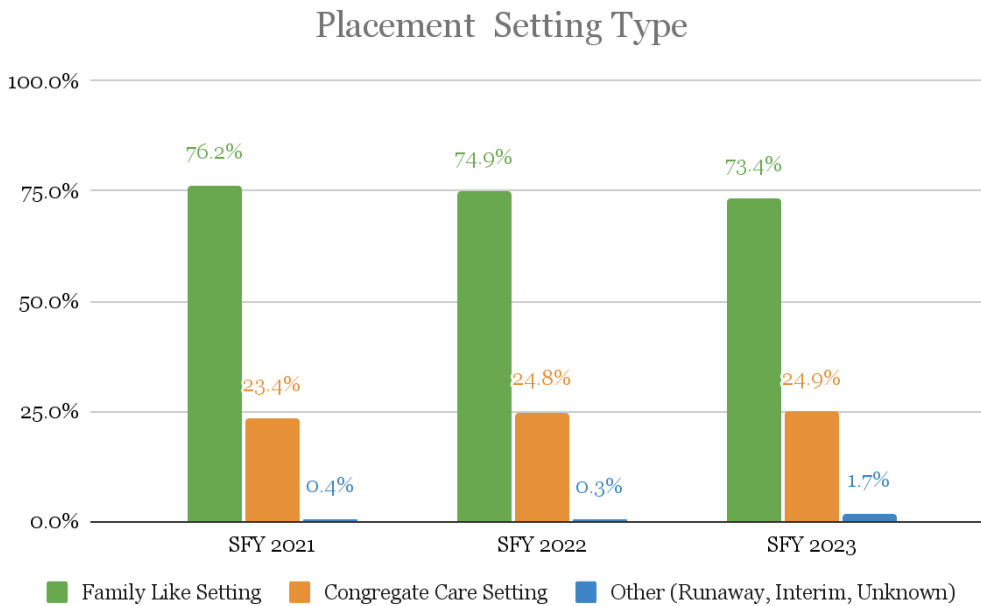
Table 21. **Gender and Age Group for Children in Placement.**

	SFY 2021	SFY 2022	SFY 2023
Female			
0 - 2	70	74	96
3 - 5	87	72	57
6 - 8	62	67	56
9 - 11	53	56	47
12 - 14	71	70	62
15+	99	100	118
<b>Female Total</b>	<b>442</b>	<b>439</b>	<b>436</b>
Male			
0 - 2	86	88	80
3 - 5	90	83	69
6 - 8	69	52	51
9 - 11	52	63	47
12 - 14	85	69	85
15+	147	156	151
<b>Male Total</b>	<b>529</b>	<b>511</b>	<b>483</b>

Data Source: Point in time counts of children in placement by race gender and age group at the end of month were taken on the last day of each state fiscal year reported. 3/31/2023 was used as the point in time date for state fiscal year 2023. Tribal placements were excluded.

Figure 7 represents data pertaining to child location. This data is broken down by family-like setting versus congregate care settings, however WYCAPS captures the date and time of each placement, the placement end date and time, as well as the placement provider information, which includes the placement provider’s address. The Placement Type ROM report is available and captures every placement entered into WYCAPS. The Foster Care Counts also captures all the child specific information related to children in placement for any given time period. These reports allow for data to be separated by program type, CPS versus JS. State office staff, managers, and supervisors all have access to these reports and utilize this information to ensure data entry in WYCAPS is timely and accurate. In order for provider payments to occur, placements must be entered into WYCAPS, therefore outside of policy and procedure and WYCAPS alerts, placement data entry is necessary for fiscal processes to occur.

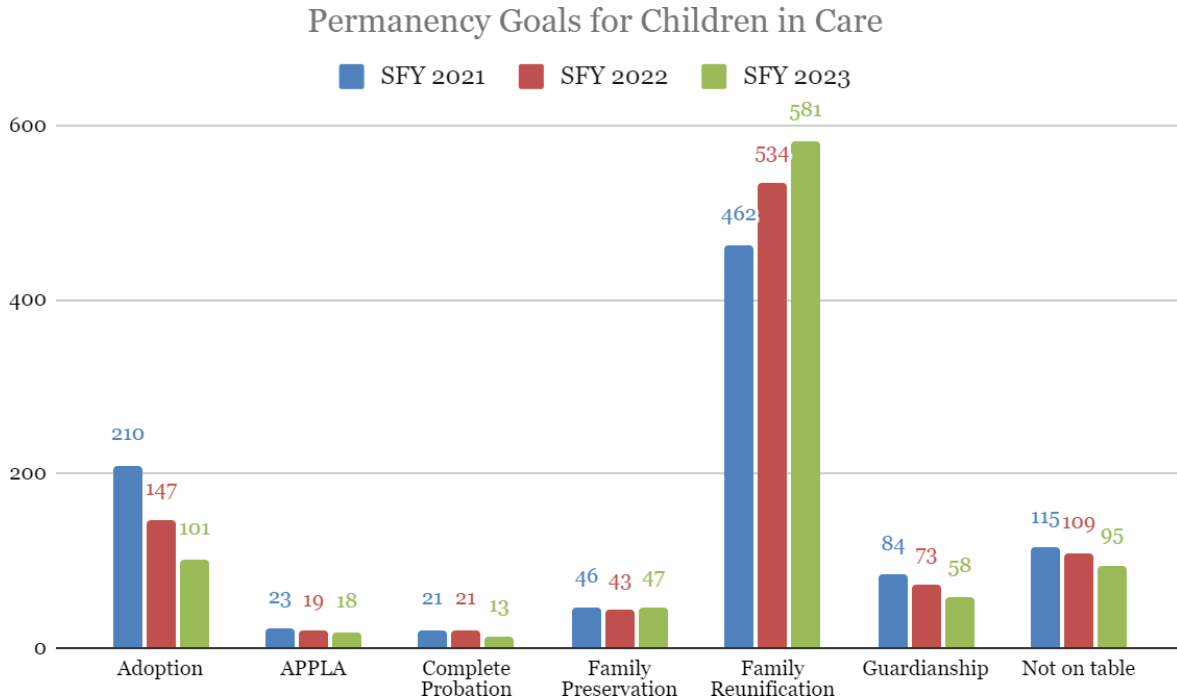
Figure 8. Placement Setting Type



Data Source: Point in time counts of children in placement-by-placement setting were taken on the last day of each state fiscal year reported. 3/31/2023 was used as the point in time date for state fiscal year 2023. Tribal placements were excluded.

Figure 8 and Table 22 illustrate permanency goals for children in foster care. Every case in which a child is or has been in foster care for 60 days receives a permanency goal that is documented in the WYCAPS system through the case plan screen. An alert is also sent every six months to prompt updates to the case plan, including the permanency goal. WYCAPS currently only captures primary goals, as demonstrated in Figure 8. ROM reports can be completed to capture all primary permanency goals entered for each child in foster care or previously in foster care.

Figure 9. **Permanency Goals for Children in Care**



Data Source: Point in time counts of children in placement by permanency goal; were taken on the last day of each state fiscal year reported. 3/31/2023 was used as the point in time date for state fiscal year 2023. Tribal placements were excluded.

Table 22. **Gender and Age Group for Children in Placement.**

Permanency Goal	SFY 2021	SFY 2022	SFY2023
Adoption	210	147	101
APPLA	23	19	18
Complete Probation	21	21	13
Emancipation	1	0	0
Family Preservation	46	43	47
Family Reunification	462	534	581
Guardianship	84	73	58
Independent Living	5	4	4
Live with Relative	1	1	1
Long Term FC	2	0	0
Not Established	1	0	1

Not on table	115	109	95
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Data Source: Point in time counts of children in placement by permanency goal; were taken on the last day of each state fiscal year reported. 3/31/2023 was used as the point in time date for state fiscal year 2023. Tribal placements were excluded.

**Key Findings:** In Round 3, this item was rated as an ANI due to the inaccuracy and inability to appropriately track a child’s location/address. With that, the Department conducted an evaluation of addresses for children in WYCAPS. It was determined that multiple addresses would be correct, however location information may not always be accurate. Similarly, the system has the ability to capture all demographic information, however staff are not prompted to update data, especially around race and ethnicity. As demonstrated in the data, the data indicates that there are many children whose race related data is reported as unable to determine or declined to answer. Lastly, per the data in Figure 2, Placement Setting Type, there are unknown placement types for children. Although these current gaps and inefficiencies exist, the Department is in the process of developing and implementing a CCWIS system, as discussed below. Through the development of that system the Department has worked diligently to ensure all of these areas will be addressed and future reporting will meet the requirements within this item.

**Strengths:** The Department has identified several strengths as it pertains to our current WYCAPS and the ability to capture information pertaining to demographics, location, and permanency goals.

- WYCAPS captures the status of every child involved with the Department via placement and custody episode information.
- WYCAPS currently captures all demographic information beginning at the intake level, which includes date of birth, race, and ethnicity. This information can be updated at any time on the person maintenance screen, which carries through the entire system, not just at the case specific level.
- WYCAPS currently captures the location of every child in placement. Placement information is required in order to make any payments. The placement screen captures the provider for every placement and therefore captures the address for the child in that placement.
- WYCAPS currently captures the primary permanency goals for children in care. This is captured on the case plan screen and is required within 60 days of case opening. Alerts are generated to help ensure this data is entered timely and alerts are also generated every six months to help ensure this information is updated regularly, in accordance with policy.

**Opportunities for Improvement:** The Department recognizes that there are areas within its case management, data tracking, reporting and fiscal management functions that need to be improved. These include:

- Lack of alerts or reminders to update demographic information once an intake has been accepted.
- The system currently tracks addresses based on provider addresses in the system, however multiple addresses may exist for children in care (i.e., their removal home address, foster home address, etc.).

**Promising Practices:** As mentioned previously, the Department is working diligently to ensure the new CCWIS system, WYOSAFE, will capture information in ways the Department currently cannot. WYOSAFE will provide reminders to enter and/or update race, ethnicity, date of birth regularly, as the Department recognizes that this information may not be reviewed or updated regularly in current practice. In addition, the workflows within WYOSAFE will aid in ensuring placement information is entered accurately and timely.

WYOSAFE will allow for analytics and reporting on every field within the system, which will be accessible to all users based on their security profiles. WYOSAFE will include a monthly review of all placements by caseworkers and approval of placements by supervisors. WYOSAFE will include permanency workflows to allow the agency to better track and manage court hearings, outcomes from court hearings and update permanency goals simultaneously. WYOSAFE will also capture concurrent permanency goals for every child.

**Conclusion:** Based on the information and data presented above, the Department recognizes that this item is an area needing improvement. The Department also knows that this is moving to an area of strength as we are working towards implementation of WYOSAFE.

## CASE REVIEW SYSTEM

- [ITEM 20: WRITTEN CASE PLAN](#)

**Department Policy and Procedure for Case Plans:** Wyoming’s Case Plan Policy and Procedure is designed to ensure that the case plan is a comprehensive living document that outlines the outcomes, goals, and tasks to meet the needs of the family through services and interventions. Key components of the case plan related to safety, permanency and well-being of the child are developed in collaboration with the family and formal and informal supports. Wyoming has a templated hard copy case plan for all foster care cases that is required per policy to be completed within 60 days from the initial foster care placement. The date of completion is then entered into WYCAPS by the caseworker. The Department uses the templated case plan for all children in foster care which requires an established permanency goal; goals for each case participant (parents/legal guardian, child(ren), and placement); action steps to reach the goals to include the Department’s responsibilities; goals towards medical and dental health of each child(ren), and a visitation plan. Parents/guardians are engaged in the case plan process by having specific time set aside to discuss their strengths, needs, and progress

or barriers to the case plan goals in one or all these Department practices; family team meetings, case plan meetings, and Multidisciplinary meetings.

**Data sources that were utilized included:**

- WY Policy regarding the timely completion of case plans and the engagement of parents in case plan development
- Quantitative case plan data entered in WYCAPS
- Qualitative data sources, including:
  - Survey data – April 2023
  - Focus Group data – April and May 2023

**Data Methodology:** All custody entries per state fiscal year, which begins July 1 through June 30<sup>th</sup> of the following year (excluding tribal entries), that had a length of custody >= 60 days during the state fiscal year were selected. The minimum case plan creation date for each custody was determined and the length between the custody begin date and the minimum case plan date was calculated in days. Custodies with a length between custody begin and minimum case plan creation <= 60 days were updated to Case Plan within 60 days. Custodies with a length between custody begin and minimum case plan creation > 60 days were updated to No Case plan within 60 days (Note: 3/31/2023 was used as the end date for state fiscal year 2023).

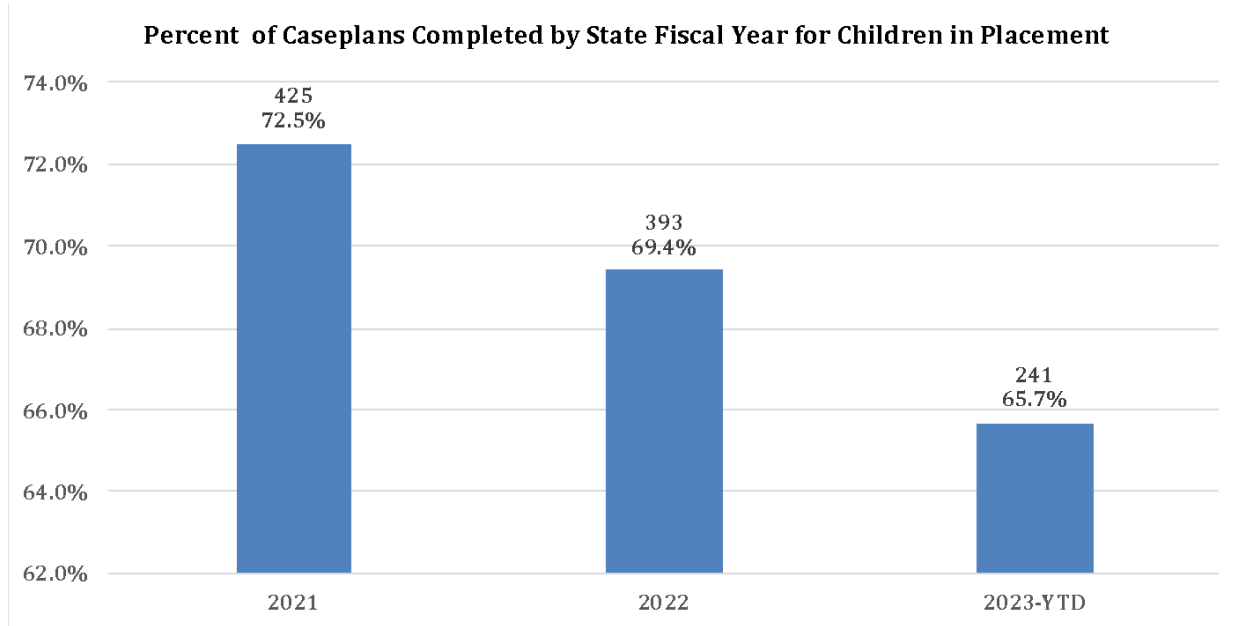
Table 23. **Count of Case Plans Completed by State Fiscal Year for Children in Placement**

	2021	2022	2023-YTD	Grand Total
Case Plan completed within 60 days	425	393	241	1059
Case Plan not completed within 60 Days	161	173	126	460
Grand Total	586	566	367	1519

Data Source: WYCAPS AIP Data Warehouse (6/8/23)



Figure 10. WYCAPS AIP Data Warehouse (6/8/23)



Data Source: WYCAPS

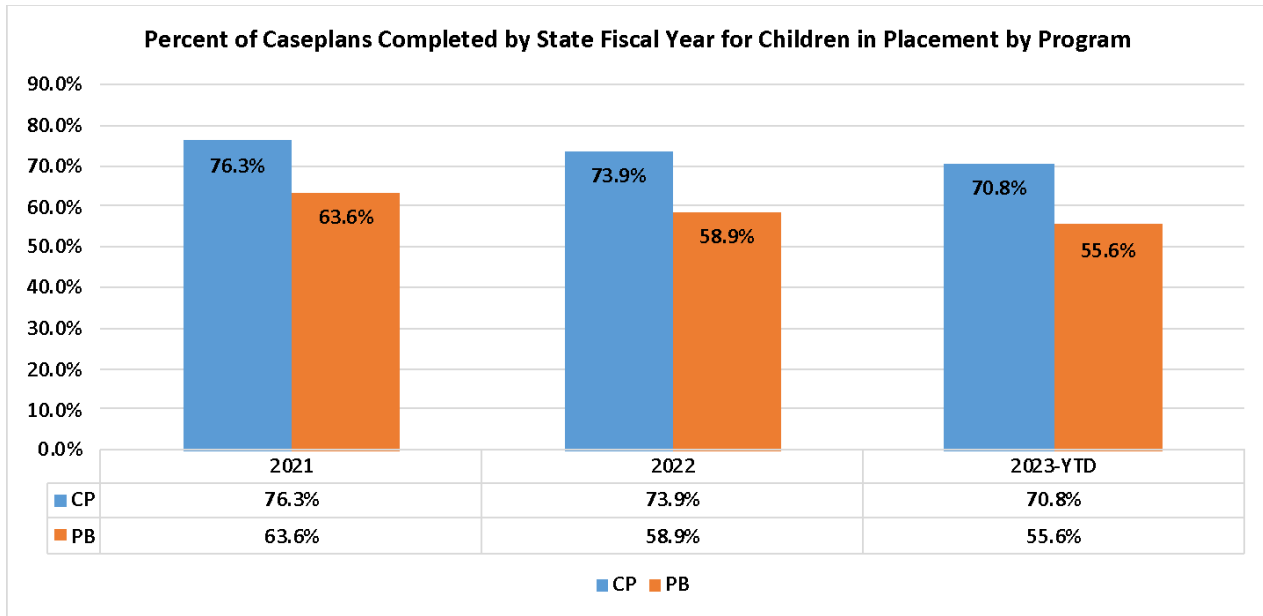
Table 23 and figure 9 capture information entered in WYCAPS as to when the case plan was completed. It is noted there has been a steady decline in entering case plans into WYCAPS in a timely manner. Through on-site case reviews of 71 cases there does appear to be a data entry issue, as case plans do exist in hard copy in most instances where WYCAPS indicates the absence of a case plan.

Table 24. **Count of Caseplans Completed by State Fiscal Year for Children in Placement by Program (WYCAPS AIP Data Warehouse (6/8/23))**

	2021	2022	2023-YTD	Grand Total
CP	410	398	243	1051
Case Plan within 60 days	313	294	172	779
No Case Plan within 60 Days	97	104	71	272
PB	176	168	124	468
Case Plan within 60 days	112	99	69	280
No Case Plan within 60 Days	64	69	55	188
Grand Total	586	566	367	1519

Data Source: WYCAPS

Figure 11. WYCAPS AIP Data Warehouse (6/8/23)



Data Source: WYCAPS

Table 36 and Figure 13 demonstrates CPS case plans are being entered at a higher rate than Juvenile Probation cases. WYCAPS alerts need to be utilized by supervisors and managers to ensure case plans are being completed and entered timely and accurately. The Department will be taking a closer look at the discrepancies between timeliness of case plans for probation versus child welfare cases.

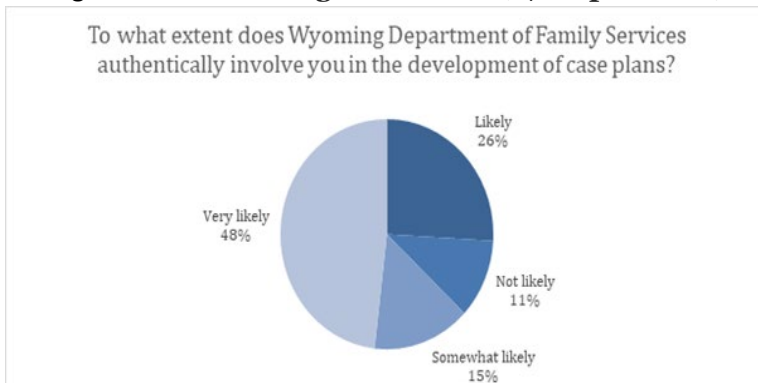
**Engagement of Parents in Development of Case Plans:** In order to evaluate the prevalence of case plans developed with the child’s parent(s), the Department’s CQI team conducted reviews of all Districts using the OSRI with a specific focus on Item 13. Interviews of parents and caseworkers, as well as a review of the case file, allowed reviewers to capture how and if parent(s) were actively involved in the development of the case plan and compare these outcomes to findings from Round 3. Surveys and focus groups were also completed with parent(s) to determine their level of engagement in the case plan process.

Table 25. OSRI Item 13 Summary

Item 13-To Determine whether, during the PUR, concerted efforts were made or are being made to involve parents and children (if developmentally appropriate) in the case planning process on an on-going basis	
Round 4 Preparation Practice Review Strength Results (2023) *all cases reviewed are included in %	46.38% (69 applicable cases)

**Survey and Focus Groups Findings:** Surveys and focus groups were conducted in April and May 2023 with a variety of stakeholders covering multiple topic areas. Below are key findings related to the development of case plans.

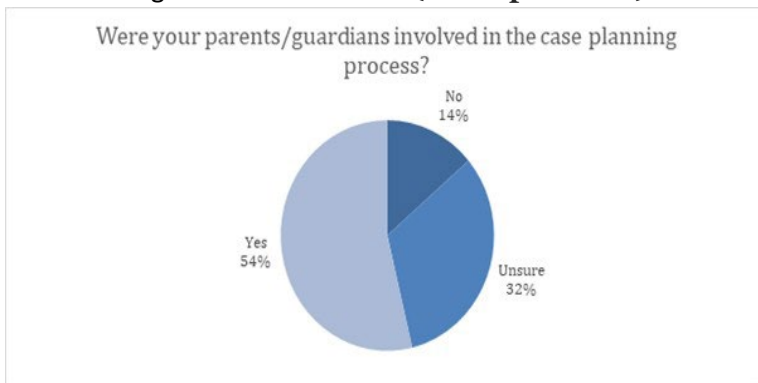
Figure 12. **Biological Parents (27 respondents)**



Data Source: 2023 Stakeholder Survey Report

63% of parents who responded to the survey indicated they were either very likely or somewhat likely to be involved in the development of their case plans. The two primary modes of engagement cited by parents in the survey were by virtue of attending Family Team Meetings or via visits with their case worker. Biological parent engagement was a challenge via the survey as there was insufficient representation from across the state with District 7 providing 11 of the responses, District 5 providing six responses, followed up by Districts 4 and 6 providing four responses each.

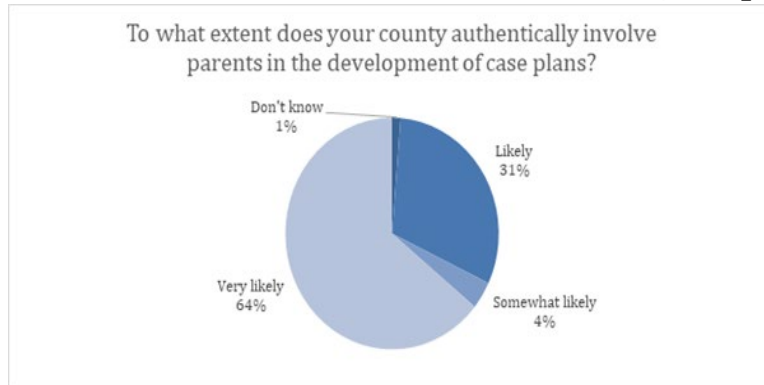
Figure 13. **Youth (80 respondents)**



Data Source: 2023 Stakeholder Survey Report

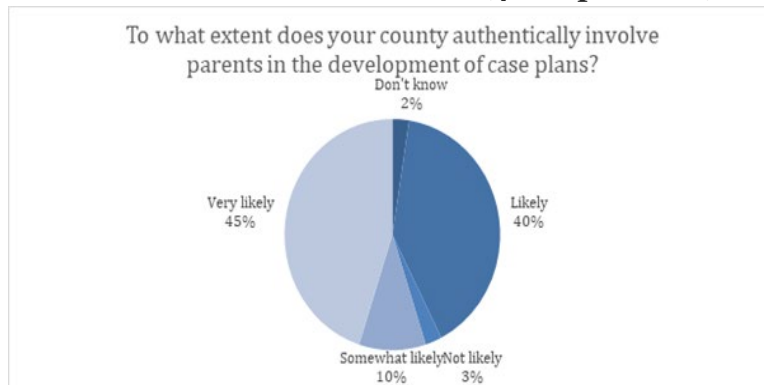
Youth were also surveyed about the extent to which they were aware of their parents or guardians' involvement in case planning, with approximately half of respondents indicating their belief that such involvement was occurring. The 80 responses from youth were from across the state providing a comprehensive evaluation.

Figure 14. **Field Staff (includes caseworkers and foster care coordinators) from across the state that work with in-home and foster care cases (78 respondents)**



Data Source: 2023 Stakeholder Survey Report

Figure 15. **Supervisors from across the state that supervise caseworkers working with in-home and foster care cases (40 respondents)**



Data Source: 2023 Stakeholder Survey Report

Field staff and supervisors were asked about how well biological parents were being engaged in case plan development with both groups rating their county practice in this area at a high level.

Specific ways in which field staff and supervisors indicated parents were engaged in case planning included the use of Family Team Meetings which are required for all cases when an MDT has not been ordered and are driven by the family. Multi-Disciplinary Team Meetings are ordered by the court and allow for parents to provide input into their plan, including strengths and needs as well as steps to achieve their goals, and through quality caseworker visits with parents during which case plan goals are discussed.

Table 26. **County Engagement of Lived Experience**

<b>How does your county engage birth parents/guardians, foster parents, and youth (as appropriate) in case planning? (Select all that apply)</b>		
Choices	Field Staff	Supervisors
Multi-Disciplinary Team Meeting	(74) 94.9%	(37) 92.5%
In Family Team Meetings	(73) 93.6%	(36) 90.0%
During quality caseworker visits	(67) 85.9%	(35) 87.5%

Data Source: 2023 Stakeholder Survey Report

Focus Group Findings: All supervisors and caseworkers were asked to participate in a focus group. A total of 19 supervisors and 45 caseworkers (see [survey appendix](#) for breakdown of participants) were asked about ways in which parents are engaged in the development of their case plans. Key themes were consistent with survey data which included:

- Initial case planning meetings per the Wyoming Practice Model (WPM) are utilized to determine the initial needs of parents, as well as through periodic meetings, and the use of WPM tools
- Monthly meetings and face to face contacts are used to discuss case plans
- Specific meetings are often held to engage parents in targeted goal setting
- Multi-disciplinary Team Meetings (MDTs), Family Team Meetings (FTMs), and Safety Network Meetings are used to facilitate case plan development with parents

Caseworkers discussed the importance of making efforts to accommodate case plan scheduling to meet the needs of parents, sitting down with parents to go through the case plan to get their ideas and input, and connecting foster parents with parents to ensure they are working together to meet child needs.

Finally, legal staff (see [Survey Appendix](#) for specific breakdown of participants) were surveyed on this same topic with a total of 55 responding. 62% of respondents indicated that the Department was *very likely* or *likely* to authentically engage parents in the development of their case plans.

**Key Findings:** Wyoming received an overall rating of Strength for Item 20 in Round 3 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews which indicated that written case plans included the required provisions and that parents were

engaged in case plan development via both a Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) approach and implementation of the state's Practice Model.

Current data suggests that there has been a decline in staff entering case plans into the state's primary information system, WYCAPS. There was a 32% turnover of caseworkers in 2022 and no formal WYCAPS training is available. WYCAPS training that is completed by supervisors and caseworkers is not formal, and is generally conducted via observation and repetition. This impacts timely and accurate data being entered into the system and the ability to determine whether case plans have been completed timely.

Parent focus group and survey data demonstrate that just over half of parents surveyed feel they are authentically involved in the development of their case plan. Field staff, including caseworkers, supervisors, and managers, believe overwhelmingly that there is active engagement with parents in the development of the case plan.

**Strengths:** As there are some identified issues highlighted in the data, the Department recognizes the following strengths:

- The Department has a function in WYCAPS which establishes an alert to the caseworker and supervisor that a case plan needs to be entered at 60 days from the case opening. The case plan goal, date established, identified treatment team members and the identified child(ren) are entered into the WYCAPS system. Supervisors are able to review alerts for all case workers under their supervision to ensure entry into WYCAPS. Furthermore, supervisors are required to review and sign all case plans
- Based upon survey data, field staff vastly believe they are authentically engaging parents in the case planning process
- The Department uses a template for all cases to ensure all required provisions are included in the case plan

**Opportunities for Improvement:** The Department recognizes, based upon data analysis, case reviews, and survey and focus group data, there are opportunities for improvement:

- Lack of using the WYCAPS system alerts to follow-up and ensure case plans are being completed and entered accurately
- There is a 30% respondent discrepancy between parents and field staff regarding authentic involvement in the case planning process
- Lack of quality data or incorrect data entry regarding case plan completion

**Promising Practices:** The Department is implementing a new data system in which the case plan will live within the system itself. Parents will have access through the portal and a system workflow will be established for which a case cannot move forward without a case plan entered and signed off by a supervisor.

Development of new procedure and practice targeted at improving timely case plan completion and engagement of parents is under development. Post implementation monitoring will be accomplished through a monthly supervisory case review - evaluating files, narratives, and reports to determine completion of the case plan and level of parental engagement.

The engagement of parents in the development of their case plan and the overall quality of the case plan is essential to children achieving timely permanency. As demonstrated by the lack of quality data to support timeliness and required case plan components, this item is assessed by the Department as an area needing improvement.

- ITEM 21: PERIODIC REVIEWS

**Department Policy and Procedure for Periodic Reviews:** The Department's Juvenile Court Timelines, Reports and Review policy and procedure states the Juvenile Court shall conduct a review hearing 6 months from the date of child's removal, and every 6 months thereafter in all cases in which a child is in an out-of-home placement and in the custody of the Department. Although review hearings are typically held every 6 months, the Caseworker is expected to submit a written report on a quarterly basis, using the date of the child's physical removal from the home.

In order to enhance the periodic review process, the Department and court require quarterly Multi-Disciplinary Team Meetings for all children placed outside of the home. Regarding child protection cases Wyoming State Statute 14-3-431(c) states "The court shall conduct a review hearing six (6) months from the date of the child's removal from the home and every six (6) months thereafter." Further, Wyoming State Statutes outline the requirement for periodic reviews at 6 months for Child in Need of Supervision (CHINS) 14-6-429(c)(i)(B) and Delinquents 14-6-229(e) when a child is placed outside of the home. All six-month hearings shall review the case plan and determine:

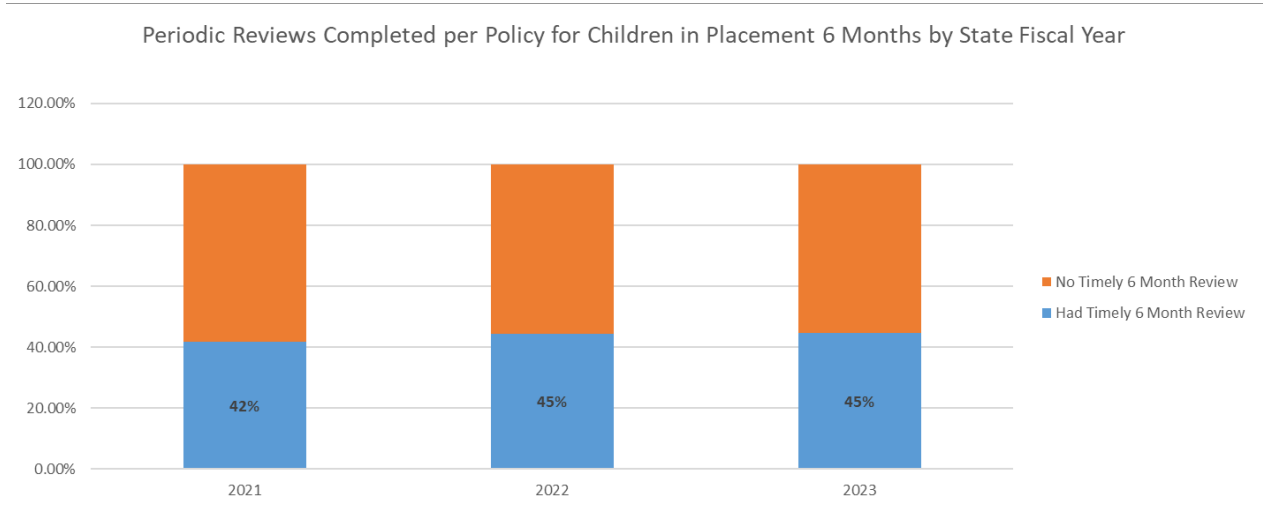
- The health and safety of the child
- The continuing necessity of placement
- The appropriateness of the current placement
- The reasonableness of efforts made to reunify the family and the consistency of those efforts with the case plan
- The appropriateness of the case plan and the extent of compliance with the case plan including the permanent placement of the child
- If progress has been made toward alleviating or mitigating the causes necessitating placement outside the home and the extent of that progress and
- The date the child is expected to be returned home or placed for adoption or legal guardianship

Data sources that were utilized included:

- WY Policy requirements regarding initial and periodic administrative case reviews for children in care

- Quantitative data entered in WYCAPS
- Qualitative data sources, including:
  - Survey data - April 2023
  - Focus Group data - April and May 2023

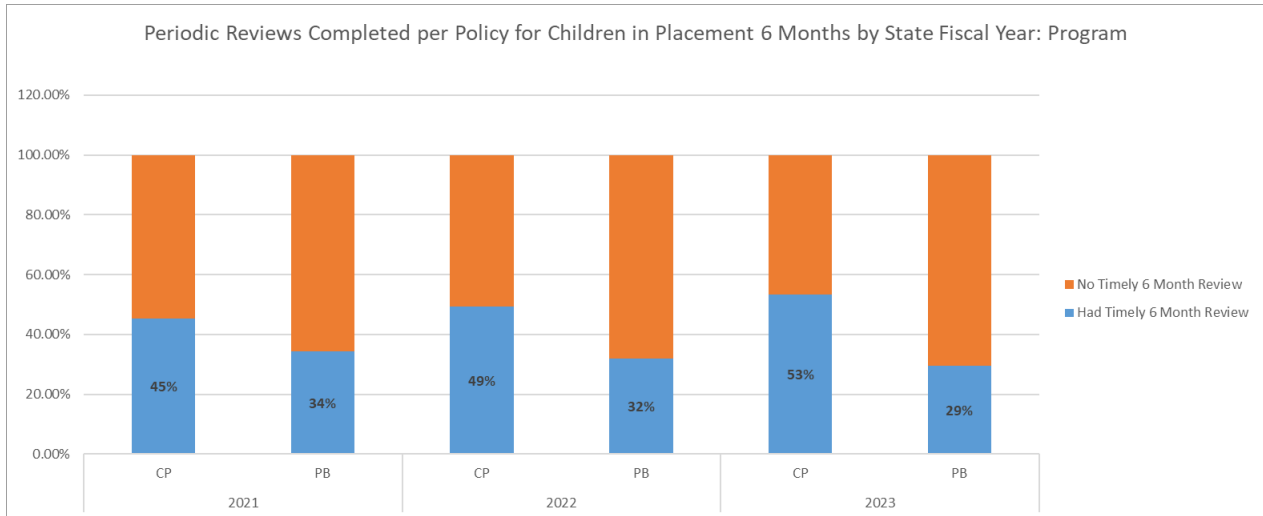
**Figure 16. Periodic Reviews Completed by SFY**



Data Source: WYCAPS AIP Data Warehouse<sup>3</sup>

Figure 16 indicates based upon information entered into WYCAPS, less than half of the children in care are receiving timely 6-month reviews.

**Figure 17. Periodic Reviews Completed by Program**



Data Source: WYCAPS AIP Data Warehouse

<sup>3</sup> All custody entries per state fiscal year (excluding tribal entries) entering in the first 6 months of the state fiscal year were selected. Placement review dates and completion status were determined for both completion and timeliness for children with custodies > 3 months and > 6 months. 3/31/2023 was used as the end date for state fiscal year 2023 and all custodies entering during the first quarter of SFY2023 were selected.



Figure 17 breaks down 6-month reviews completed timely by child protection and juvenile justice. According to the findings, juvenile justice cases are less likely to have timely reviews.

**Key Findings:** In a review of available data, 6-month periodic reviews continue to be a struggle, specifically for juvenile justice cases. As the data appeared low for most Districts, a request was made for overdue alerts in the WYCAPS system regarding 6-month placement reviews. The Department discovered there were 419 overdue alerts from 2018 to present. Further exploration led to an ad hoc review of 20 cases from across the state in which there was a required 6-month review. WYCAPS was searched to determine if the hearing did occur, making the issue related to data entry and not practice. If a hearing was found to have been completed, a review of the court order occurred to ensure the 6-month review met the required statutory and federal requirements. This manual review found that only two had 6-month review hearings that were completed timely. One case occurred timely, however the language in the court order did not support a 6-month review finding. Other data entry issues noted were entering the 6-month review as pending rather than completed.

It should also be noted that the court does not track timely permanency hearings. CJP does conduct yearly closed case audits to review 6-month reviews. The review focuses more on timeliness and not the court language for the hearing to qualify as a 6-month review hearing.

It will be imperative to complete a deeper exploration of cases across the state with the help of CJP to ensure the 6-month hearings being entered are supported by the statutory requirements for this hearing type.

### **Strengths:**

- The Department does have a mechanism to track 6-month periodic reviews
- The Department and State have statutes in place requiring quarterly reviews through the Multidisciplinary Team
- The State has statutory language requiring 6-month periodic reviews

### **Opportunities for Improvement:**

- Lack of using the WYCAPS system alerts to monitor periodic review due dates
- Lack of quality or incorrect data entry regarding when or if the review occurred
- Lack of training on how to enter 6-month periodic reviews in the data system
- Language in court orders does not meet statutory requirements for 6-month reviews

**Promising Practices:** The Department is implementing a new data system that will provide reminders of periodic reviews and ensure proper data entry of the review. A

Permanency Task Force has also been established that includes a Judge, District Attorney, GAL, Parent's Attorney, CJP members, and the Department to enhance periodic review hearings as well as develop strategies to improve data collection and accuracy overall.

In Round 3, the area of periodic reviews had noted concerns indicating periodic review hearings were occurring, however they were not timely. Current data is showing a lack of review hearings happening. In instances when they do occur, the court order language is often not in compliance with state statute and federal requirements. The Department would view this as an area needing improvement.

- ITEM 22: PERMANENCY HEARINGS

**Department Policy and Procedure for Permanency Hearings:** The Department's Juvenile Court Timelines, Reports and Review policy and procedure state that the Juvenile Court shall have a Permanency Hearing conducted no later than 12 months from the date the child(ren)/youth's removal from the home and not less than once every 12 months thereafter if the child(ren)/youth remain in custody of the state. This is supported by State Statute 14-3-431(d).

In order to enhance the permanency review hearing, the Department requires a Permanency Report. The Permanency Report is a culmination of the three previous Quarterly Progress Review Reports and shall document:

1. The identified needs of the child(ren)/youth and family
2. The reasonable efforts made to reunify the family
3. If applicable, the existing barriers to reunification
4. If reunification is not the plan, the efforts made to effectuate the established permanency plan
5. If a change in permanency plan is being considered, the Caseworker shall specify which alternative plan, detail the reasons why an alternate permanency plan is being recommended, and, if applicable and appropriate, what the child(ren)/youth's input is on a change in permanency

If the permanency plan is not reunification, adoption or legal guardianship, the caseworker shall state the compelling reasons for establishing another permanency plan.

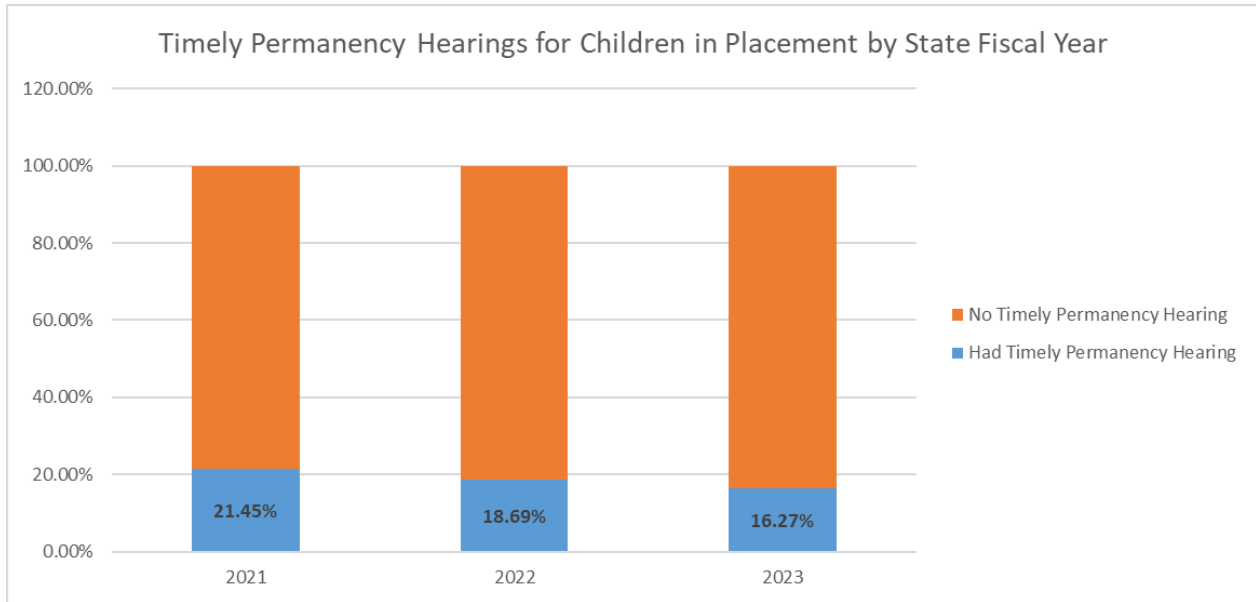
The Department has implemented a function in WYCAPS to alert the caseworker to conduct a review of cases in which a child is placed outside of the home every 3 months. This allows the caseworker to submit the Permanency Report to the court for review. Caseworkers must enter the information into WYCAPS on the hearing maintenance screen inputting the type of review. Supervisors are also provided with an alert to follow-up with caseworkers on the review of cases within the judicial system.

**Data sources that were utilized included:**

- WY Policy re: permanency hearings

- WY State statute re: permanency hearings
- Quantitative data sources – WYCAPS, ROM (State and Regional)
- Qualitative data sources (State and Regional)

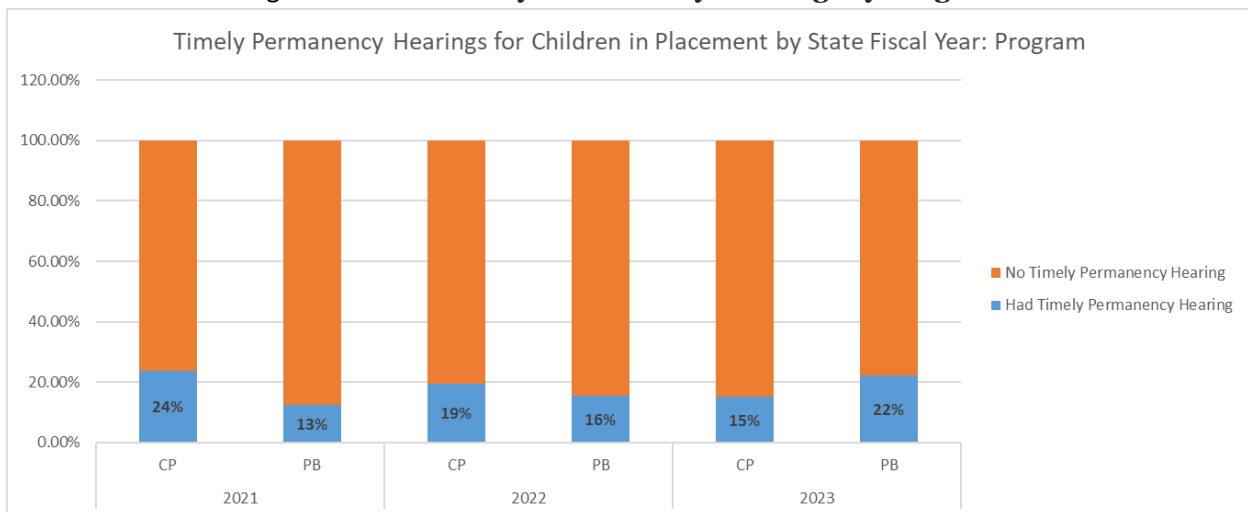
Figure 18. **Timely Permanency Hearings by SFY**



Data Source: WYCAPS AIP Data Warehouse<sup>4</sup>

Figure 18 demonstrates the prevalence of timely permanency hearings entered into WYCAPS.

Figure 19. **Timely Permanency Hearings by Program**



Data Source: WYCAPS AIP Data Warehouse

<sup>4</sup> All custody entries per state fiscal year (excluding tribal entries) entering in the 12 months prior to the state fiscal year reported were selected. Completion of a permanency hearing within the 12 months preceding entry were determined. 3/31/2023 was used as the end date for state fiscal year 2023.

Figure 19 breaks down by juvenile probation and child protection case types regarding timely permanency hearings entered in WYCAPS.

**Key Findings:** Based upon a review of the above data from WYCAPS regarding timeliness to permanency, an ad hoc review was subsequently completed in June 2023 of 20 cases across the state. Of the 20 cases 2 were not applicable based upon their placement only being a parental placement, therefore leaving a total of 18 cases which were applicable. Of those 18 cases, 11 had timely permanency hearings which is 61.12% and significantly higher than what is being captured in WYCAPS. As mentioned in item 20, data entry issues are prevalent throughout the assessment, and WYOSAFE has been configured to address current findings.

Additional barriers were identified during the ad hoc review. In one instance, a district court judge was not applying permanency hearing requirements to Juvenile Justice cases where a child has been placed outside of the home for 12 months. In another instance, a parent's attorney requests an evidentiary hearing before the court rules on a change in permanency. This hearing is then set a few months out, causing a delay with the permanency hearing. These are examples of scenarios that the Department and CJP will need to monitor and prepare to address on a more statewide basis.

**Strengths:** The Department and State have strong policy, procedure, and statutes around permanency hearings.

**Opportunities for Improvement:** The Department recognizes, based upon data analysis and on-site case reviews, that there are also opportunities for improvement.

- Increase the use of WYCAPS system alerts to follow-up and ensure permanency hearings are being completed and entered accurately
- Setting Evidentiary Hearings prior to the Permanency Hearing

**Promising Practices:** WYOSAFE will be configured to provide reminders for upcoming 12-month review hearings and require comprehensive data entry in order to move forward in a case workflow. A Permanency Task Force has also been established that includes a Judge, District Attorney, GAL, Parent's Attorney, CJP members, and the Department to enhance judicial hearing processes.

The Department will be establishing an internal CQI process that will include the 12-month permanency hearing as part of a case file review. Reviews will be conducted on a consistent basis.

During Round 3, there were noted concerns of timely permanency hearings occurring and data suggests this area remains an area needing improvement. COVID19 also impacted all judiciary hearing processes, causing significant delays.

- [ITEM 23: TERMINATION OF PARENTAL RIGHTS](#)

**Department Policy and Procedure for Permanency Hearings:** Wyoming statute specifies the circumstances under which a petition to terminate parental rights may be filed and adjudicated. Specifically, W.S. §14-3-431 provides that a petition to terminate parental rights is to be filed within 60 days of the judicial determination that reasonable efforts to reunify the child and parent are not required due to certain criminal behavior. Wyoming statute does not establish a timeline to file a petition for termination of parental rights in situations where the Court finds that reunification with a family is not required for other reasons.

However, statute does mandate that for children having been placed in foster care under the responsibility of the state 15 of the most recent 22 months, the State is to file a petition to terminate parental rights or seek to be joined as a party to the petition if a petition has been filed by another party unless:

- The child is in the care of a relative
- The Department has documented in the case plan a compelling reason for determining that filing the petition is not in the best interest of the child; or
- The Department has not provided services to the child's family deemed to be necessary for the safe return of the child to the home if reasonable efforts are required to be made

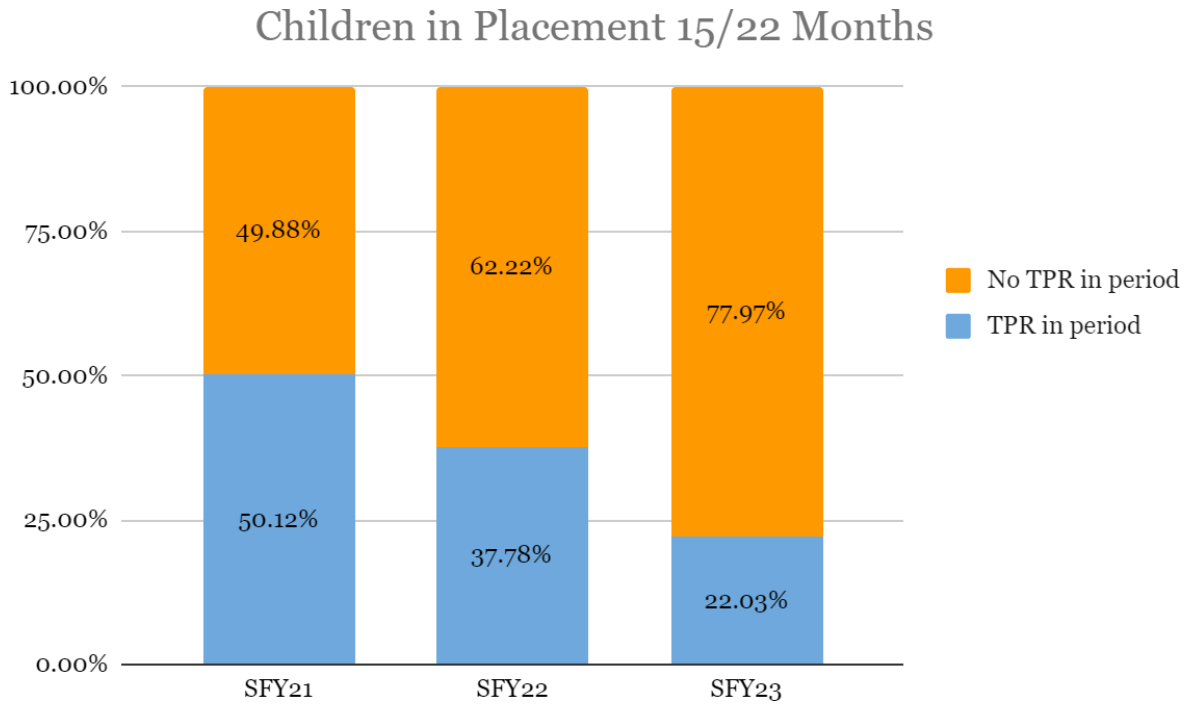
State statute requires that a TPR hearing be held within 90 days of the filing of a termination petition unless continued by the court for good cause. Department policy and procedure permits a parent to voluntarily relinquish parental rights and consent to adoption or guardianship. The written relinquishment is required to be completed in the presence of a District Court judge. The County or District Attorney or Attorney General's Office represents the Department in filing a petition for TPR.

The Department identifies children who have been in care for 15 of the last 22 months using WYCAPS data. A report that monitors ASFA compliance is updated through ROM and can be accessed by Department administration, district managers and supervisors.

Data sources that were utilized included:

- WY Policy re: filing of Termination of Parental Rights, including exceptions/compelling reasons
- WY State statute re: filing of Termination of Parental Rights, including exceptions/compelling reasons
- Quantitative data sources – WyCaps, ROM (State and Regional, Child Welfare/Probation)
- Qualitative data sources (State and Regional, Child Welfare/Probation)
  - Case review (OSRI) data (Round 3, Practice Reviews)
  - Survey and Focus Group data

Figure 20. Children in Placement by SFY



Data Source: WYCAPS AIP Data Warehouse<sup>5</sup>

Figure 20 demonstrates the statewide prevalence of timely permanency hearings entered into WYCAPS. There was initial concern with the rise in lack of TPR’s being filed at 15 of 22 months, however in exploring the data, there are data entry barriers preventing accurate data capture when a TPR petition is filed. WYOSAFE has been designed to capture a TPR petition file date or an exception to TPR, both of which will provide more accurate data in the future.

**Key Findings:** As noted, there is a steady rise in the number of child protection cases where children have been in care at least 15 cumulative months and a TPR petition has not been filed or a compelling reason has not been entered.

As noted in several other systemic factor narratives, accurate data entry is a contributing factor. Other challenges with data collection include instances in which the Attorney General tracks petitions filed by their office, not petitions filed by District or County attorneys. CJP also lacks the capability to track this data through their judicial system.

<sup>5</sup> All children (excluding tribal records) that were in custody at any time during the 22-month period preceding the end of the reported state fiscal year that were in care at least 15 cumulative months in program type CP that did not have a compelling reason by Termination status (includes, relinquishment, death, termination, and petition). 3/31/2023 was used as the end date for state fiscal year 2023.

Through the case review process held April 2023-June 2023, the Department found that language specific to *compelling reasons to not move forward with a TPR petition* had been removed from the case plan template which impacted the overall scoring of Item 5.

**Strengths:** State Statute and Department policy and procedure clearly outline requirements around timely filing of TPR petitions.

**Opportunities for Improvement:**

- Improve the use of WYCAPS for housing language specific to the *compelling reasons* as well as the dates when a TPR petition was filed
- The court system does not have a data system which captures when a TPR petition is filed

**Promising practices:**

- WYOSAFE development remains ongoing, including the addition of a TPR petition file date to enable better tracking of timeliness.
- The Department’s CQI team will be completing a deeper dive into the accuracy of available data and will provide training on data entry into the current WYCAPS system.
- The current case plan template has been updated to include *compelling reasons to not move forward with a TPR petition* and updated policy and procedure on how to enter this information into WYCAPS.
- The permanency task force developed in March 2023 that includes a judge, prosecuting attorney, parent attorney, GAL, member of the CJP and the Department will be taking a deep dive into the data to determine if there are any judicial root causes in this area and develop possible solutions

CFSR Round 3 findings also raised concerns around data quality for this item and an increase in the number of cases not demonstrating timely TPR filings. Based upon continued concerns related to the lack of quality data and evidence demonstrating an increase in cases not complying with requirements, this remains an area needing improvement.

- [ITEM 24: NOTICE OF HEARINGS AND REVIEW TO CAREGIVERS](#)

**Department Policy, Procedure and Rule of Procedure for Juvenile Courts:** In Department policy, *Family Foster Home Department Responsibilities and Problem Solving*, it is noted the Department caseworker shall provide notice of all juvenile court proceedings to foster parents involving a child in their care. However, the Rule of Procedure for Juvenile Courts Notice to Parents, Guardians, Custodians, Foster Parents,

Pre-Adoptive Parents, or Relative Caregivers states that prior to each hearing, the county or district attorney, or another entity designated by the court, shall provide written notice of such hearing to the parents (both custodial and non-custodial), guardians, custodians, foster parents, pre-adoptive parents, or relative caregivers. The notice shall include the time, place, and purpose of each hearing. This provision shall not be construed to require foster parents, pre-adoptive parents, or relative caregivers to be made a party to the hearing or proceeding solely on the basis of such notice and opportunity to be heard. As of the date of this report, no District/County attorney or other entity designated by the Court has designated authority to the Department to notify caregivers.

### **Data Sources:**

- WY Policy re: notice of administrative case reviews and hearings including methods and timeframes
- WY State statute re: notice of hearings including methods and timeframes
- Quantitative data sources – WyCaps, ROM (State and Regional, Child Welfare/Probation)
- Qualitative data sources (State and Regional, Child Welfare/Probation)
  - Case review (OSRI) data (Round 3, Practice Reviews)
  - Survey and Focus Group data

**Key Findings:** There is currently no data system to track when and how caregivers are notified of reviews or hearings. In a survey conducted in February and March of 2023 of 117 foster and adoptive parents, they were asked “How Effective is Wyoming Department of Family Services in notifying you in a timely manner of upcoming court hearings and/or panel reviews”? Respondents indicated that most find the notification process to be effective overall (34.2% Very Effective, 31.6%- Effective), but with additional room for improvement (18.8% Somewhat Effective 12% Not Effective and 3.4% Don’t know).

In focus groups with legal partners conducted in April and May 2023, (10 Judges, 7 Parent’s Attorneys, 14 GALs, and 11 Prosecuting Attorneys), participants were asked: “Are foster parents, birth parents, or other parties being made aware of court hearings (by receiving notices)?” The primary theme heard from participants was that timely notices were happening the majority of the time as there is a system in place to notify all parties of court hearings, and that the information is consistent and responses are shared within the court system. In addition, participants indicated it was their belief that it was the Department’s responsibility to notify caregivers of hearings. Participants also indicated that there may be some variation across counties, and some noted that being able to, since Covid, appear in court via phone or Zoom has made it more convenient for parents to attend.

Participants also indicated that courts routinely send notices out to parents. However, there are sometimes challenges with having correct contact information on file for parents as well as with ensuring they attend court. Not all parents have phones that work or voicemail mailboxes are full. The most common challenge identified was that



parents cannot always be located or attend hearings due to transportation issues. However, participants noted that the Department generally does a good job reconciling this.

In the same focus groups, legal staff were also asked: “Are foster families, birth parents and other court parties allowed to participate in hearings”? The key theme heard is that when foster parents are present most judges allow the foster parent to be heard. Furthermore, in focus groups involving a total of 16 foster parents, participants indicated that when they attend hearings, they are allowed to participate.

### **Strengths:**

- There is Department Policy and Procedure requiring caseworkers to notify caregivers of court hearings.
- Survey results noted 65.8% of foster and adoptive parents stated the Department was very effective and effective in notification of hearings.
- There is a Juvenile Court Rule requiring notice to caregivers and the right to be heard.

### **Opportunities for Improvement:**

- There is no current tracking system by the courts or the Department on when and how caregivers are notified of hearings.
- There is a lack of understanding on who is responsible for the notification to caregivers.
- As previously noted, there has been judge turnover and lack of training.

**Promising practices:** As noted in several other items, there are multiple opportunities for improvement with the implementation of WYOSAFE. The Department is currently working with the developers to implement an automatic notification issuance to caregivers specifically when a hearing is entered.

The permanency task force will be adding this to their agenda to explore how to provide training on the responsibility of notification and right to be heard for caregivers. The issues raised regarding the lack of tracking notifications to caregivers and questions around roles and responsibilities for the notification are consistent with findings from CFSR Round 3.

Currently, this is still seen as an area needing improvement, however there are active efforts underway to improve this practice for the Department and Judicial system.

- [ITEM 25: QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM](#)

**Department Policy and Procedures:** In 2020, the Department developed a Continuous Quality Improvement Procedure Manual based upon the CB’s 2012

Information Transmittal which outlined the functional components of an effective CQI Program. These components include:

1. Foundational Administrative Structure
2. Quality Data Collection
3. Case Record Review - Data and Process
4. Analysis and Dissemination of Quality Data
5. Feedback to Stakeholders and Decision-makers and Adjustment of Programs and Process

The Department recognizes the need to take the aforementioned guidance from the CB and further customize it to develop and implement a CQI program that is tailored to Wyoming.

**Statewide Data and Information:** The Department regularly gathers and disseminates data regarding current trends broken out by Judicial District. The data is collected from WYCAPS and distributed to District Managers, Supervisors, Caseworkers, and State Office staff. The data is compiled into reports which live in the ROM system which managers, supervisors, and which state staff have access to. The following are examples of reports housed in ROM:

- All Protective Services Report by Screening Decision
- Recurrence of Maltreatment
- Incidents
- 30-Day Incident Count
- Face-to-Face Contact
- Placements
- Entries v Exits
- Average Length of Custody Episode (days)
- Custody Re-Entry within 12 Months of Exit
- Relative Care
- IV-E Foster Care Penetration Rate

District Managers and Supervisors are responsible for reviewing the information found in ROM and discussing performance with their staff. Additionally, District Managers have bi-weekly calls with their peers and the Services Division Manager to discuss trends and interventions to address potential problem areas.

**Case Reviews:** The Department uses qualitative case reviews, conducted with the OSRI tool, of all 9 Districts as a primary method for the evaluation of outcomes and services for families. The Department is committed to ensuring that the case review process is an integral part in the continued development of the division's CQI program. Case reviews serve as a shared opportunity for staff and stakeholders to participate in the ongoing improvement of case practice and outcomes for WY children and families.

The Department's CFSR Case Review Team, also known as the CQI Team, is inclusive of both internal Department staff and external stakeholders. All case reviewers are required to be trained and certified in the use and application of the OSRI prior to reviewing cases. The Department also implements rigorous quality controls to ensure the accurate and consistent application of OSRI instructions and collection of high quality and reliable case review data.

Final review results are completed at the end of the review process and entered into the OMS for the preliminary results meeting, which is held with the reviewers, QA Lead Team and district field staff to discuss the preliminary findings.

These case reviews took place annually as part of the CFSR Round 3 PIP measurement plan. Case reviews were re-initiated in 2023 in preparation for CFSR Round 4. A Practice Case Review for Round 4 was conducted to include representative samples from all 9 districts between April and June 2023. The results of that practice review have been used to inform findings throughout the Safety, Permanency, and Well-Being sections of the WY Statewide Assessment.

**Wyoming Child Major Injury and Fatality Review Team:** As outlined in the most recent APSR, the Wyoming Citizen Review Panel is responsible for overseeing the Child Major Injury and Fatality Review Team. This team reviews substantiated cases of child maltreatment, major injury and fatalities across the state. Reviews occur on a quarterly basis and the team is composed of several stakeholders. Data gathered through this review are then used to make recommendations regarding child maltreatment prevention.

**Key Findings:** The Department has a CQI process in partnership with other stakeholders to evaluate the child welfare system and identify strengths and needs for service delivery, safety, permanency, and well-being. The Department also has an internal tracking system for data collection which can be used by State staff, District Managers, and Supervisors to assess progress in safety, permanency, and well-being at the field level as well as across the state. However, as previously noted in several CFSR Items in the Statewide Assessment, Wyoming's current statewide information system has various challenges as it pertains to the generation of accurate and reliable data.

The Department will continue to work closely with the WYCRP regarding the review of substantiated child major injury and fatality reports. There has been a recent conversation within the Department about implementing an internal review process for these cases. The purpose would be to initiate reviews more quickly to identify themes to better inform internal prevention efforts and to provide staff with timely support.

### **Strengths:**

- The Department has a written CQI manual that can be further refined and implemented to guide the direction of an effective CQI/QA process.
- The Department has a process to review substantiated major injury and child fatality reports with community stakeholders.

- The Department has recently reinvested in a qualitative case review process that can be used to generate data that highlights case practice and systemic strengths and challenges.
- There are opportunities as outlined in Items 31 and 32 to receive and provide feedback to jurisdictions receiving services outlined in the CFSP once a CQI team is established.

### **Opportunities for Improvement:**

- The Department needs to work on implementing the groundwork laid out in the CQI Procedure Manual.
- The Department needs to identify and explore data sources in addition to the CFSR case review process to evaluate quality of services in meeting the needs of children and families.
- The Department needs to ensure data collection through the CQI/QA process is regularly disseminated and that staff and WY stakeholders have the opportunity to provide input when evaluating systemic challenges and developing appropriate solutions.

**Promising Practices:** In February 2023 a CFSR/CQI Program Manager was hired by the Department to lead CQI processes for the Department. The Department recognized a need for a more detailed focus on CQI which led to the development of the CFSR/CQI program manager position.

Efforts are also underway to enhance the CQI/QA process which will allow for more targeted reviews and data analysis to determine strengths and needs in regard to outcomes for children and families. The Department recognizes this as an area needing improvement, but has already taken steps to demonstrate improvement.

### **STAFF AND PROVIDER TRAINING**

- ITEM 26: INITIAL STAFF TRAINING

**The Department’s Initial Staff Training Policy and Practice:** Training is centered around the Department’s core values - safe at home, giving families opportunities for success and supporting the people who support the families. These values provide an opportunity to be goal-oriented when working with children and families. The Department’s staff development and training for child welfare and juvenile justice workers is provided collaboratively by both the Social Services Division and the Training Unit within the Support Services Division. Training curriculum is developed based on the competencies established for caseworkers, to measure agency staff’s knowledge, skills, abilities, and behaviors critical to successful job performance. The Department casework is a highly specialized and critical area of work, which requires training and professional supervision. The Department caseworkers are required to be trained in child and adult protection as well as juvenile justice and have successfully

completed Core training to work with children, youth, older adults, and families. The Department caseworkers who are not yet certified may manage cases under the supervision of a certified Supervisor or District Manager until he or she has completed Core to be certified (within one year of hiring). Supervisors or District Managers provide close oversight, coaching, and supervision for new caseworkers not yet certified, including meeting with new caseworkers weekly to provide input and feedback on work, conducting observations of new caseworkers working with families, and ensuring transfer of learning between what is taught in Core and the work with families. The Training Unit provides consultation and extra support until a new worker has completed the Core requirements and is certified. The following information provides the specific requirements for staff training.

**Wyoming Practice Model (WPM)/Safety Organized Practice:** The Wyoming Practice Model (WPM) is a solution-focused approach that aims to build and strengthen partnerships with the Department and within a family by involving their informal support networks of friends and family members. Staff receive approximately 11 hours of CORE training on the Wyoming Practice Model, which incorporates Signs of Safety, Motivational Interviewing, and Solution-Based Casework philosophies, which will be monitored through the LYSSN<sup>6</sup> platform to demonstrate fidelity of the practice. The Wyoming Practice Model provides a framework in which the Caseworkers can directly engage the child, family, and Family Team (Wyoming’s term for Family and Permanency Team) in identifying concrete strengths, increasing engagement by the family and their network, and focusing on enhancing child safety through quality Safety Plans and quality, behaviorally centered Case Plans.

The Wyoming Practice Model is at the core of all work done for and with families. Knowing the WPM, staff have the knowledge, skills, and tools (i.e., Motivational Interviewing (MI), mapping, Safety Circles, genograms, Three Houses, etc.) to manage case work throughout the life of a case and to engage the family in conduct informal assessments of safety and well-being during quality visits (i.e. Face to Face visits, Family Team Meetings, etc.). Collectively, the formal and informal assessments support staff in their ability to objectively assess family strengths and needs, as well as obtain family voice at all times and at all stages of a CPS or JS case. Fidelity to the WPM is assessed by supervisors and trainers through a knowledge test and through observations of caseworkers throughout Core training.

**Evaluation of Functioning of Initial Staff Training: Requirements for Initial Staff Training - Core Training:** Currently the Department has a hybrid training approach consisting of self-paced, virtual training and in-person training. The self-paced allows staff to learn at their own pace and is a minimum of a month to complete. Virtual training is offered within a time frame of 2 to 3 weeks. Following the completion of self-paced and virtual training, in-person training is a week.

The supervisor serves as the caseworkers’ primary mentor during the Core training period. Supervisors are responsible for:

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<sup>6</sup> LYSSN is an Artificial Intelligence platform that monitors MI fidelity and the WPM.

- Providing opportunities for caseworkers to shadow them or designated others in conducting various caseworker duties in the field and office.
- Collaborating or asking upper level or policy questions of the Training Team as appropriate.
- Ensuring the training guide plan is followed and completed in a timely manner.
- Keeping a copy of the training certificates in the field office file.

The Department is working on implementing a Learning Management System (LMS) to collect the training information as the Department currently has the pen and paper system.

**Phase 1: Self-Learning:** Self-learning CORE training encompasses a diverse range of engaging material and activities that are designed to facilitate effective learning. The self-learning modules are available to employees within the first month of hire and attendees have one (1) month to complete the content. The self-paced modules are facilitated in Google Classroom and employees are added when notification is received of hire by their supervisor, which is monitored by the Training Unit for completion. To move to Phase 2, caseworkers must complete Phase 1 training.

The self-learning modules incorporate various types of instructional and informational videos. Self-learning modules include videos (featuring experienced instructors who provide clear explanations of key concepts or real-world examples to illustrate practical information), assignments tailored to the specific subject matter, and a wide array of tasks. The assignments involve problem-solving exercises, questionnaires, reading materials, relevant links, and informative website articles. Assignments also involve opportunities for meaningful discussions with supervisors and co-workers, as well as shadowing experiences are provided. Attendees are encouraged to research policy and procedure, familiarize themselves with specific forms and important documents and gain an understanding of responsibilities and tasks associated with being a Foster Care Coordinator or Benefits Worker. Self-learning modules promote peer interaction by facilitating question and answer sessions where attendees actively participate and respond to the contributions of their fellow attendees. Additionally, knowledge checks are incorporated into the course structure to assess and reinforce learners' understanding of the material. For more information on the Self Learning Modules, refer to Appendix: Training, Table 51

**Phase 2: Virtual Instructor Led Training:** Virtual instructor-led training is conducted utilizing the video conferencing platform Zoom and is offered over a two-to-three-week period to help combat virtual fatigue, trainers schedules and to not compete with attendees' work schedules or personal commitments. Attendees can access the training from their own computers or devices, eliminating the need for travel or physical attendance. For more information on the Virtual Instructor Led Learning Modules, refer to Appendix: Training, Table 52.

**Phase 3: In-Person Training:** In-person training is conducted in Riverton Wyoming. It is offered in one-week sessions (twice a year) following virtual CORE. In-person training facilitates face-to-face interactions and direct engagement with the trainer and other attendees. This includes receiving immediate feedback and the direct presence of the trainer enables dynamic and spontaneous exchanges, promoting active participation and collaborative learning. In-person training incorporates hands-on activities and practical exercise. Attendees engage in demonstrations, group exercises that are skill based and the advantage of approaching the trainer directly, reducing potential misinterpretations or delays in understanding the material. New caseworkers complete a full evaluation of the Core training, however, the data is not collected in a manner which can be provided, as it is completed in paper format for presenters. In person-training alleviates potential technological glitches or connectivity issues that arise during virtual training and can hinder the training experience. For more information on the In-Person Learning Modules, refer to Appendix: Training, Table 53.

**Phase 4: Coaching and Observations:** Caseworkers engage in shadowing, coaching, and observing day-to-day tasks and interactions by seasoned caseworkers and supervisors that help them enhance their skills and knowledge. Supervisors and seasoned caseworkers provide feedback to the new caseworker to help support their development. Feedback is provided to new caseworkers to build their skills in working with families. New case workers have access to additional resources such as policy and procedures, one-on-one time with supervisors to gain feedback and address any concerns or questions. By engaging in these pre-certification activities, new case workers gain confidence, refine their skills, and develop a solid foundation in their profession. The combination of shadowing, coaching and other supportive measures helps to equip them with the necessary competencies to excel in their roles as case workers.

**Certification Requirements:** To fulfill this statutory obligation in relation to initial staff training, the Department requires that every Services Division worker with case management responsibilities as well as all Services Division State Office workers complete the Department Certification process. Staff required to complete the Certification process include all staff who have case management responsibilities in the areas of child protection services, family preservation and support services, foster care services, adoption services, and IL services. The Department's case management responsibilities fall to Service Division staff members, as no case management contracting is undertaken by the Department.

Independent case management responsibilities are granted to staff members only upon completion of certification, which is mandatory within 12 months of hire. The certification process includes:

- Successful completion of 100 hours of CORE training,
- CORE final passed at 80%,
- One year field experience obtained with competencies demonstrated by the supervisor to show the new caseworker understands the job requirements,

- 80 hours of field experience focused on child welfare (or alternative plan for state office staff) in the, and one year on the job experience
- Multi-Ethnic Placement Act film
- The information stated above is documented on the request for certification form (F-SS23) and submitted to the Services Division Training unit by the appropriate District Manager and or Supervisor and signed.

Failure to meet these requirements within 12 months of hire will result in non-certification and the individual will not be assigned a full caseload until the certification process is completed. As noted above, caseworkers, working with Supervisors or District Managers, can carry a limited caseload. Supervisors provide coaching and training support for new caseworkers to ensure certification. In the event a new caseworker doesn't pass the CORE test, then the training unit reaches out to the new caseworker and their supervisor to discuss their struggles and assists them in understanding gaps in knowledge and skills and how to fill those gaps. The goal is to help the new caseworker be successful in reaching certification.

**Training Completion Tracking:** The current system of tracking training completion in Social Services and across the agency is a combination of spreadsheets and documents housed on Google Drive. These documents are shared with the Training Unit to be distributed to supervisors, district managers and program staff so that program staff know when employees are attending training. Social Services employees are required to submit a DFS SS-23 Request for Protective Services Certification or a DFS SS-24 Request for Continuing Social Services Certification each year. These two documents are reviewed and logged into either a training spreadsheet or training database once submitted.

In early 2023, the State of Wyoming Department of Administration and Information implemented a new statewide LMS for all State of Wyoming employees. The Department is working closely with staff from Administration and Information (A&I) to develop this system as a training tracking system for Social Services employees. At the end of 2023 all employees will be required to submit their SS-23 and SS-24 through this new system. The system will log those employees that have completed this requirement by December 31, 2023. Those who have not will automatically be notified, and the manager will receive a notification that staff have not completed the required training. Supervisors are then required to work with the staff to complete the training requirements and complete the Certification/Recertification form for the Training Unit. Moving forward Wyoming is also utilizing this system to log individual employee training programs completed and track employee training more closely.

Table 27. **2020-2023 Core Training Completions**

Category	2020	2021	2022
Number of Attendees	33	58	51



Number who Completed Core	29	43	39
Number Certified	29	43	39

Data Source: Training Coordinator’s Spreadsheet June 2023

Currently, the Department does not track hiring data to cross reference with training data. This is an opportunity to explore.

**Providing Necessary Skills and Knowledge:** To determine how well the initial training addresses basic skills and knowledge needed by staff to carry out their duties, the Department staff, biological parents, and foster parents completed a survey regarding current training practices and if staff are prepared to deliver services after completing the initial training. The follow are the results front he survey:

Table 28. **2023 Stakeholder and Staff Survey Results about Pre-Service Training**

Group	Very Prepared	Prepared	Somewhat Prepared	Not Prepared	Don't Know	Number of Respondents
Biological Parents	37%	30%	19%	7%	7%	27
Foster Parents	14%	27%	17%	9%	37%	117
Caseworkers	14%	54%	27%	1%	4%	78
Supervisors	15%	43%	40%	3%	0%	40
Legal (Attorney General’s Office, Judges, County/District Attorneys, Defense/Parent Attorneys, and GALs)	5%	36%	31%	9%	18%	55

Data Source: 2023 Stakeholder Survey Report

The Department also conducted Stakeholder focus group meetings to obtain feedback about initial training. The information provided during the Stakeholder focus groups can be found in Appendix: Training, Table 54.

Through the survey and Stakeholder focus group meetings, it was noted that many staff and stakeholders believe new workers were adequately equipped with the basic skills and knowledge needed to carry out their duties.

**Strengths:** The Department believes there are a number of demonstrated strengths in regard to CORE training:

- The Department is working to diversify the content delivery model. The Department developed online content that can be delivered to new hires soon after they are hired. The Department has also redeveloped the virtual offerings to be more effective and efficient to convey needed information. The Department also re-introduced in-person training with skills-based training that better meets the needs of new caseworkers.
- The Department provides around 100 hours of self-paced, virtual instructor-led and in-person training to new employees which provides them with the knowledge and skills necessary to successfully complete their jobs.
- The Department is in the process of implementing a new LMS to better track employee training.
- The Department has a rolling start for employees to begin CORE training, which includes starting the online self-paced modules when they are added into the system. This prepares them for the virtual and in-person sessions which gives them a much-needed basis of knowledge to complete the tasks asked of them prior to entering the CORE virtual and in-person sessions.
- The Department has a strong team of trainers that is composed of subject matter expert volunteer trainers that currently work in the field they are training on. These individuals have the most up to date knowledge of policy and procedure and can ensure that employees have the knowledge necessary to complete their tasks. These trainers are largely made up of individuals who have the most experience with the department and have proven longevity.

**Opportunities for Improvement:** While there are a number of demonstrated strengths, the training unit also recognizes there are opportunities for improvement:

- Supervisors have indicated that they feel they are disconnected from the CORE training process.
- Caseworkers and Supervisors indicate that the training does not provide enough skills practice and feedback to prepare staff to work directly with families.
- The department currently has a pen and paper system for tracking training and training registration, however, is developing the LMS system to improve tracking of training.

**Promising Practices:**

- Wyoming has a new LMS system that will track employee training and provide for training registration.
- WYOSAFE is being implemented and once rolled out CORE training will be updated to be inclusive of WYOSAFE
- The CORE Advisory Committee is in the process of being developed to engage more stakeholders in the CORE training curriculum.

- Once the CORE Advisory Committee is established the training unit will engage the committee in a training needs assessment and revisions to make CORE more effective.

In the CFSR Round 3, Item 26 was rated as a strength for initial training. As a result, Wyoming did not develop strategies or evaluate Item 26 during the Round 3 PIP. With the information recently provided by Department staff and stakeholders, the Department considers pre-service training to be an area needing improvement. There is no tracking system to collect the data on how well a new caseworker is doing nor is there an observation form used to demonstrate the new caseworker is able to perform the required duties.

- **ITEM 27: ONGOING STAFF TRAINING**

**The Department’s Ongoing Staff Training:** As mentioned in Item 26, the Department Services casework is a highly specialized area of work and has critical training requirements. The Department caseworkers are required to complete initial training to become certified. All Division staff with case management and oversight responsibilities, including Supervisors, Managers, and State Office staff, are required to maintain training hours to retain certification. The supervisor of the staff is required to monitor, support, and ensure staff maintain their Recertification. On-going training can consist of using local partnerships with law enforcement, the court disciplines, mental health providers, and many others. The training that is held at the local level is important as this partnership helps address and meet the individual needs of children and families. Other opportunities for training are also available to staff, which are completed with State level partners. Some examples include Children’s Justice Project (CJP), the Guardian ad Litem (GAL) Program, and the Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Coalition.

**Requirements for Ongoing Training:** Wyoming statute does not differentiate between the requirements for initial or ongoing training for the Department staff with case management responsibilities; therefore, those elements outlined in W.S. 14-3-203(c) are applicable for ongoing training. To fulfill these statutory provisions, the Department requires its staff with case management responsibilities, including Supervisors of individuals with case management oversight responsibilities, to renew the Department Certification on an annual basis. As stated in the Department response to Item 26, these requirements only apply to the Department staff as no case management responsibilities are contracted by the Department.

Each staff member must complete a minimum of 21 hours of advanced training each calendar year after initial Certification to maintain Certification status for adult and child protection and juvenile justice services to renew certification. The 21 hours must be distributed as follows:

- A minimum of six (6) hours is required for all staff specific to adult protective services and/or aging issues;

- A minimum of six (6) hours is required for all staff specific to child protections issues; and
- A minimum of six (6) hours is required for all staff specific to juvenile justice issues.

The remaining three (3) hours may be distributed as needed. Each staff member is required to meet with their supervisor throughout the year to develop a plan for renewed Certification utilizing the following approved types of training:

- Training conferences provided by the Department.
- Conference, in-service training, or local training covering issues approved by the District Manager or designee and the SSD Trainer.
- Forms of self-study, such as correspondence work, televised courses, videotapes, and books, with approval of the District Manager or designee, to update or enhance caseworker competence; or
- Academic courses and seminars given by an accredited university, college, or institution of higher education, relevant to case work practice.

The ongoing training hours are required to be documented in the Request for Continuing Certification (F-SS24). The form is required to be submitted by SSD Supervisors to the Training Unit no later than December 31st of each year to ensure all staff have completed the certification requirements to meet the federal and state laws. For the 2022 calendar year, approximately 50% of SSD staff completed the Recertification renewal process, which includes completing the process within the required timeframe per the Department policy. Due to the “pen and paper” process, the Department does not have the data from 2019-2021 because the person who had the info is no longer with the Department. The new LMS System will improve tracking of training in the future.

**Identifying Training Needs:** Caseworkers work with supervisors to determine which ongoing training to participate in based on identified training needs. Not every training is mandated, but it is encouraged. Knowing the time challenges of staff and knowing they cannot attend every training at the time it is scheduled, every training is recorded and available added on the Department’s training website for viewing at any time. review of the training later. However, the IV-E Prevention Plan and CFSR training series were mandated to ensure staff had all the knowledge and understanding of the federal and state requirements/laws.

Training is a positive solution to help improve practice. It is also a tool to gather information on good practices as well as the challenges when working with children and families. Many training webinars came from the CQI reviews for the last few years, as the review team would identify the positive work seen in communities, and wanted to share the work, as well as the barriers. Some of the barriers were policy and procedure, so making those changes, when possible, was helpful in improving practice. There were other training needs identified through a multitude of mechanisms. These include:

- Surveys provided to caseworkers, supervisors, and managers (Please refer to Appendix: Training, Table 56 for more information).
- Ongoing supervisor and manager meetings.
- Feedback and identified needs during staff training.
- Feedback and identified needs from collaboration with community and state agencies.
- CQI case reviews, including client, caseworker, and stakeholder interviews.
- CFSR and PIP; and
- State team reviews including the Youth Involvement and child major injury and fatality case reviews.

One example of training needs being identified by staff and the Department providing training is the Lunch and Learn Training. The Department identified a need for just in time training for staff, based on hot topics, changes in policy, or data driven gaps in performance. The Department delivers that training via live webinar.

Training and workforce development is just one component to ensure the Department's child welfare and juvenile justice staff are knowledgeable about the expected approach to case work practice based on the Department's vision. The SSD division identifies training needs through several mechanisms (listed below) to develop a training plan for staff. Most of the training is developed in partnership with state and field staff and sometimes includes other stakeholders, such as the GAL Program, CJP and other guest speakers. Developing the training with state and field staff facilitates support for improved policy, procedures, and practice.

**Ongoing Trainings:** Training and development for the agency's child welfare staff is available by utilizing classroom and in person training, and via electronic technologies. Technology, such as webinars and online training, is made available to staff to access educational curriculum outside of a traditional classroom. Coaching from supervisors, flex hours, coworker, and supervisor support in covering caseloads and allowing workers to deal with work situations as needed during training are provided to the workforce to offset their workload while completing training. Other supports are provided to off-set expenses for training, to include reimbursements for travel cost or direct bill for hotel costs. Feedback is provided about training from participants after the training is completed, but there is no current formal evaluation plan.

**Ongoing Training Offered by the State:** Ongoing training events take place differently to support practice, policy and procedure changes, and initiatives for the division. These type training events occurred at a state level to ensure the information was provided to all field and state staff statewide with the training events being recorded for the staff who could not attend when provided. For a list of training, refer to Appendix: Training, Table 55.

Coaching by supervisors and support of seasoned staff to implement policy into procedure is one of the many ways the processes and supports are operating within the

state to support staff in applying what they learned in initial or ongoing staff training in their work with children, youth, and families. Many field staff, to include caseworkers, supervisors, district managers and foster care coordinators assist in training events, whether it be the Lunch and Learn webinars, or other training mentioned in this section. Also, there are approximately ten (10) field staff facilitating the MI training for Core and on-going training webinars.

**Lunch and Learn:** Many of the training events were facilitated through Lunch & Learn training webinars, which were usually an hour and would review policy and procedures, which could include updated changes. The Lunch and Learn training events get a high volume of attendance and allow for staff to ask questions about policy and procedure so it is clear in the policy/procedure documents. To further examine the level of skills and knowledge provided to staff through ongoing training efforts, a survey is provided to the Department staff members with case management responsibilities annually. Survey results are provided in Appendix: Training, Table 56.

**Initiatives Training:** Initiative training events were mandatory and would last 2-3 hours. The Initiatives training was conducted to provide information about new initiatives to support child welfare and juvenile justice programs. The Initiative training events were mostly facilitated in “series or rounds,” so the information could be strategically provided to support practice.

**Motivational Interviewing:** Motivational Interviewing (MI), being the Well-Supported practice approved by the Title IV-E Clearinghouse, was selected as the Title IV-E Prevention Service for Wyoming because it has been a part of the aforementioned Wyoming Practice Model (WPM) since 2015. To ensure that staff can provide MI with fidelity, the Department has contracted with a local business, Communicating for Change and its owner, Kayla Opdahl, a certified MINT trainer, who provided the initial MI training at first, then trained the MI TNT trainers. Communicating for Change codes the MI recordings when staff have completed the training and provides consultation if needed for the staff to ensure proficiency.

Communicating for Change provided training for all Department staff to ensure consistency of the training and curriculum, as well as coaching until proficiency. The MI training was facilitated in Rounds, with Department leadership, GAL leadership and WCTF staff completing the training first, then field staff in following Rounds, until everyone completed MI training. The Department has a tracking sheet to show the staff who are trained and proficient. The staff are also entered into the LYSSN platform to maintain fidelity. The training was conducted in three (3) day training sessions. The staff were assigned to “Coaching Pods” to ensure that staff in different roles and in different local field offices were able to work together in reaching proficiency. Communicating for Change set up monthly coaching events to focus on the specific needs of each member of each Coaching Pod. Each staff then submitted a recording using MI to Communicate for Change for coding and proficiency. If a staff did not meet proficiency standards, then Communicating for Change provided coaching and support until the staff met proficiency. More information on how the MI Training was provided, refer to Appendix: Training, Table 57.

**Title IV-E Prevention Plan/Family First Prevention Services Act:** The Department strives to build a system in which children live safely at home by providing opportunities for success, and by supporting the people who support families. These Core Values serve as the map for every step taken by the Department to build the Title IV-E Prevention Plan.

The Department is striving to provide access to evidence-based, trauma-informed interventions that meet the unique needs of each child and family in Wyoming. Building on the existing infrastructure that exists in the Department's state-wide child welfare and juvenile justice system, to include the WyHome Matters initiative, training on the requirements of the goals within the Title IV-E Prevention Plan is only the beginning. The Department, to really support the field staff and stakeholders, developed a training plan in cohorts/rounds for the last two (2) years to support the Family First Prevention Services Act and Wyoming's Title IV-E Prevention Plan. For more information on the FFPSA training, refer to Appendix: Training, Table 58.

**Child and Family Services Review (CFSR):** To prepare for the federal review, the Department facilitated training on the CFSR Safety, Permanency and Well-Being Outcomes. Each training series connected the divisions policy, procedures, and practice to meet each Outcome, as well as the use of WPM skills and tools in engaging children, youth, parents, and foster parents discussing each CFSR Item. This training series provided an opportunity to ask questions about the expectations of the CFSR and examples from the field in how Wyoming could meet the CFSR requirements. More information about these series is listed in Appendix: Training, Table 59.

**District Training:** Lastly, District training, which provided each district one-on-one opportunities to ask specific questions and identify solutions to support each local district with changes in practice. The district training rounds included Department staff, courts (judges, county/district attorneys, GALs, and parent attorneys) as well as other stakeholders in each district. These training rounds were specific to the Wyoming Prevention Plan and the Family First and Prevention Services Act, which included QRTPs and Candidates for Foster Care. For a list of training, refer to Appendix: Training, Table 60.

**Ongoing Trainings offered with Statewide Partners:** The Department partners with many other agencies and organizations, which include but not limited to Wyoming Children's Justice Program (CJP/CIP), Wyoming Children's Trust Fund, Wyoming Citizen Review Panel, Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Coalition, Wyoming Department of Health and many more, to provide training statewide to support Department Staff in on-going training to meet child welfare and juvenile justice programs. The conferences which are approved by the division and provide opportunities for Department staff to receive training hours to help get recertification hours may include but not limited to:

- Wyoming Joint Symposium on Children and Youth Conference
- Wyoming Methamphetamine Conference

- Wyoming Conference on Violence Prevention and Response Conference

**Ongoing Local Training:** The local field Department offices also partner with local agencies and organizations for cross-training events to support community level training needs. Many of these training events may include cross-training with law enforcement, child development centers, hospital or other medical offices, mental health centers and many more. The training may include mandatory reporting, services available by each agency and/or local initiatives, etc.

**Tracking Ongoing Training Requirements:** As mentioned in Item 26, the current system of tracking training completion in Social Services is a combination of spreadsheets and documents housed on Google Drive. Social Services employees are required to submit a SS-24 Request for Continuing Social Services Certification each year which is logged into either a training spreadsheet or training database once submitted. The new statewide LMS will provide an improved tracking system for Social Services employees in the future.

**Providing Necessary Skills and Knowledge:** To determine the extent to which on-going training supports staff need for their job duties, Statewide Assessment Focus Groups were facilitated to gather information on whether the Department was providing on-going training for staff to conduct their case management responsibilities. The follow information was documented:

- On-going training is offered in a timely manner with policy and procedure updates that allow for refreshers of useful information and skills.
- Really good options available, sometimes an overwhelming amount. There is a wide variety of training available to continue to develop knowledge and skills.
- Ongoing training provides opportunities for both information and skills to staff.
- The variety of training available provides staff with opportunities to grow and develop their skill set and knowledge base.

**Strengths:** The Department currently has several strengths in regards Ongoing training:

- Lunch and Learn have been noted to be helpful in understanding policy, procedures, and practice. It is with the support of state and field staff partnering in developing these training events to ensure best practice for caseworkers, foster care coordinators, supervisors, district managers and state staff.
- The Initiative and District Training events have been strategic to ensure federal and state requirements are being followed and staff and stakeholders understand what the Department is accomplishing through practice. The Department's Title IV-E Prevention Plan made significant improvements in practice not just for the Department but also for the courts.
- The MI TNT support provides knowledge, skills, and tools at a local level. The MI TNT trainers are available to support supervisors in coaching staff as well as providing refresher training when requested. The MI Mondays also provide opportunities for staff to meet the fidelity of MI practice.



- The Department is in the process of implementing a new LMS to better track employee training. This system will replace the current outdated LMS and allow us to better track and disseminate training to employees.
- The Department is in the process of creating a SSD training committee to help ensure Core and Ongoing training reflects policy, procedures, and practice. The training committee will include state and field staff to ensure a strong partnership is present for all training.
- The Department has a strong team of trainers that is composed of subject matter experts who currently work in the state office and partner with field staff for training events. This partnership demonstrates collaborative efforts in improving practice statewide.

**Opportunities for Improvement:** While the Department has identified several strengths, there is also opportunities for improvement:

- The Department currently has a pen and paper system for tracking Ongoing training and if staff do not provide the SS-24 for Recertification, there is not a mechanism in identifying the staff who have not completed it.
- Ongoing training is mostly web-based/virtual, so supporting staff with “hands-on” skill is difficult. The Department will need to work on better coaching support for supervisors to support the “hands-on skills.”
- The Department will develop a mechanism to determine specific needs of caseworkers in regards to skill enhancement/development and have a formal evaluation of skills building for workers once they have been trained.

**Promising Practices:**

- The new LMS system will track employee training and provide for training registration.
- WYOSAFE is being implemented and Ongoing training will be updated to be inclusive of WYOSAFE
- The Training Advisory Committee is in the process of being developed in order to engage more state, field, and stakeholders in identifying Ongoing training needs.

In the CFSR Round 3, Item 27 was rated a Strength. Wyoming did not develop strategies or evaluate Item 27 during the Round 3 PIP. The Department dedicates considerable resources to ensuring that a variety of on-going training activities are offered to meet the diverse needs of staff in order to guarantee a well-informed and competent workforce. Through surveys, stakeholder information and training documentation, feedback about Ongoing Training (Item 27) is positive. However, the Department considers Item 27 to be an Area Needing Improvement because of the lack of tracking and record keeping. The Department recognizes Item 27 has several strengths, but there are opportunities for improvement and will be encompassing the improvements and promising practices in its Program Improvement Plan.

- ITEM 28: FOSTER AND ADOPTIVE PARENT TRAINING

**Pre-Service Training for Foster and Adoptive Parents:** The Department consistently ensures training is occurring for prospective foster parents and adoptive parents. Prospective foster and adoptive parents receive training pursuant to established annual training requirements and timelines as described below. The Department’s foster parent pre-service training is:

1. To provide information to applicants so they can make an informed decision about their commitment to foster a child and;
2. To prepare the applicant to be certified as a foster parent.

**Policy:** The following is from the training section of the Department’s Family Foster Home Application and Certification Policy:

- i) Complete and/or provide certification of completion of Department approved foster/adoptive home orientation training.
  - (1) Training curriculum shall include, but not be limited to, awareness and respect of individual:
    - a. heritage;
    - b. culture;
    - c. customs;
    - d. traditions;
    - e. beliefs; and
    - f. other factors which influence behavior and world view.
- ii) Complete Department training on applying the Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard.<sup>7</sup>
- iii) Complete infant/child and adult cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and First Aid from a Department approved certifying agency. Each prospective foster parent shall provide documentation of current certification.
  - (1) If one foster parent of a two-foster parent household cannot complete CPR due to health reasons, the foster parent shall submit documentation from a physician stating the reason they cannot complete the certification.
  - (2) First Aid and CPR requirements are met for foster parents that are employed as physicians, physician assistants, Emergency Medical Technicians, nurses, nurse practitioners, and certified nursing assistants with documentation of current license/certification for their profession.

**Identify Pre-Service Training for Foster/Adoptive Parents:** Parent Resources for Information, Development, and Education (PRIDE) training was chosen as the pre-service training curriculum by the Department because it is Child Welfare League of America (CWLA) developed curriculum to recruit, develop, assess, support, train, and retain foster families to help achieve Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) outcomes.

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<sup>7</sup> 471(a)(24); W.S. 14-13-104

**Training Process:** People interested in foster care must complete a Foster Care Application Packet. Once the application packet has been received by the FCC access to training resources is provided to the applicant. Accounts are established with WyoTraining and FPC. Initial pre-service training, Department Kinship specific training curriculum and Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard training is available on both platforms. In-person PRIDE and RPPS training is available as well, provided by the FCCs. Infant/Child and Adult CPR and First Aid training depends on the location of the applicant as resources vary by each location. Progress is tracked on each platform and certificates of completion must be provided to the FCC prior to certification.

**PRIDE:** The training requirements can be fulfilled by participation in PRIDE training, Reasonable Prudent Parent Standard (RPPS) and First Aid and Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) training. The CWLA developed PRIDE to recruit, develop, assess, support, train, and retain resource families to be team members in achieving Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) outcomes. PRIDE is a competency-based curriculum that trains and supports families in five broad categories: protecting and nurturing children, meeting children's developmental needs and addressing developmental delays, supporting children's relationships with their birth families, connecting children to safe, nurturing relationships intended to last a lifetime, and working as a member of a professional team.

Table 29. **PRIDE Training**

PRIDE Sessions and Clusters	Credit Hours
Session 1 Connecting with the PRIDE Model of Practice	Included in Cluster 1
Cluster 1 The Child Welfare Team Child Abuse and Neglect Child Development	12 hours
Session 2 Protecting and Nurturing Children	Included in Cluster 2
Cluster 2 Parent-Child Attachment Understanding Behavior in Foster Children Caring for Children Who Have Been Sexually Abused	12 hours
Session 3 Meeting Children's Developmental Needs: Separation and Loss, Trauma, Resilience	Included in Cluster 3
Cluster 3 Working Together with Primary Families Cultural Issues in Parenting Trauma-Informed Parenting	8 hours
Session 4	Included in Cluster 4

PRIDE Sessions and Clusters	Credit Hours
Supporting Relationships Between Children and Their Families	
Cluster 4 Reducing Family Stress Impact of Fostering on Birth Children of Foster Parents Foster Care to Adoption	10 hours
Session 5 Planning for Change	2 hours

Data Source: PRIDE Training Manual

Depending on the unique needs of the prospective foster or adoptive parent, PRIDE is delivered in a variety of methods by the local Foster Care Coordinator (FCC). PRIDE may be offered in-person with other applicants in a class setting, one-on-one, on-line, or a hybrid of in-person and online.

PRIDE coursework is also available at Foster Parent College (FPC). FPC is easily available and accessible to foster care applicants, foster parents, and adoptive parents. FPC offers research-based, interactive online courses accessible 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The content is developed by nationally recognized experts in the fields of parenting, social work, pediatrics, psychology, psychiatry, and education. FPC offers courses on a wide variety of topics including Children Entering Care: Mental Health Issues, Trauma-Informed Parenting, Cultural Issues in Parenting, Children Entering Care: Mental Health Issues, LGBTQ+ Issues, and numerous others, in both English and Spanish. Foster Care applicants are set up with a FPC account as part of the application process and, as an option, are able to access the curriculum.

Transfer of learning happens as foster parents do the actual work of fostering. No amount of training can truly prepare a family for their first placement. Ongoing debriefing and follow up with the FCC occur on a regular basis to help them apply what they've learned to fostering a child. Caseworkers also work with foster parents to help assist them in applying what they have learned to their current situation. On regular home visits, caseworkers observe interaction between the child and the foster parents and see how their newly learned skills and knowledge are used. Foster parents discuss issues with the FCC or caseworker and feedback is given specific to their situation and how their training would apply. Department FCCs facilitate monthly Statewide Foster Parent Support Meetings that cover a variety of topics specific to foster care, children, and families and present an opportunity for foster parents to interact with each other and give feedback to the FCCs.

Additional feedback comes from surveys of foster parents through the Wyoming Citizens Review Panel and through surveys of caseworkers and FCC through the CFSR process.

**Kinship Specific Training:** In 2022, to facilitate the increased use of kin as foster care providers, the Department completed an updated training curriculum specifically for kinship foster care providers. Objectives are to familiarize kin with the child welfare system, provide an overview of the benefits and challenges of kinship care, provide an

overview of grief and loss, grief manifestation and the stages of grief and an understanding of trauma, it's effects on behavior and how best to handle past trauma. In Wyoming, kinship providers are certified as non-relatives and training requirements cannot be waived. Updating the curriculum for kinship foster and adoptive homes ensures the training requirements are easier to accomplish by decreasing the training time commitment to around 12 to 15 hours. Training topics are more tailored and specific to kinship providers and include:

Table 30. **Kinship Specific Training**

Training Material	Subject Matter
Department of Family Services video series	The Child Welfare System
Guardian Ad Litem video	The Child Welfare System
Foster Parent College (FPC) video series	The Child Welfare System, Kinship and Relationships, Grief and Loss, Trauma and Behavior
Annie E. Casey Foundation video series <i>Coping With the Unique Challenges of Kinship Care</i> and Discussion Guide	Kinship and Relationships
Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard (RPPS) training	Parenting
Wyoming Children’s Justice Project (CJP) "How a Child Enters the Juvenile Court System" handbook.	The Child Welfare System
Foster Care Policy review	Department Policies
Foster Care Handbook review	Foster Care
Any one-on-one meetings you have with the Foster Care Coordinator	Subject matter varies

Data Source: Kinship Training Manual

**Waivers:** With the approval of the Foster Care Coordinator and District Manager, Initial Foster Care Specific Training PRIDE, and Infant/Child and Adult CPR and First Aid, may be waived for relative foster and adoptive providers. Ongoing training requirements may also be waived. Waivers are offered as an incentive to relatives to make it less burdensome to accept relative placement in their homes. Waivers are allowed so long as a waiver does not create a safety threat to the child or foster and adoptive family. Waivers are granted on a case-by-case basis after assessment of the foster or adoptive home and needs of the child they provide care for. Per Wyoming policy, relative foster and adoptive providers do not include kinship foster and adoptive providers. Kinship fosters and adoptive families are certified as non-relatives, so the above-mentioned waivers are not permissible.

**Training Requirements for Certification:** There is no specified time frame within policy for the completion of PRIDE, however, the initial training must be completed prior to the foster home becoming certified and/or the adoptive home being approved. To successfully complete the initial training requirements, the Department requires

foster and adoptive parents to complete a minimum of 20 hours of training. FCCs can track applicant’s PRIDE progress through the WyoTraining platform and through FPC. FCCs can log into both WyoTraining and FPC to track the progress of each individual. The reporting feature is flexible and can design almost any report needed. Options include summaries or details of member names and dates, courses enrolled in, begun, completed, and expired, hours earned, units used and more. A Certificate of Completion or other documentation must be provided as proof of completing training.

Infant/Child and Adult CPR and First Aid. Applicants can take local or on-line training and submit the proof of certification to the FCC. Costs are covered by the Department. Additionally, completion of a one-hour Department training on applying the Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard (RPPS) is also required prior to a home’s initial certification. RPPS can be completed in-person with a Foster Care Coordinator or online through a self-paced curriculum.

As detailed, individual training and support is available and provided by the FCCs through both in-person and online meetings.

Prior to approval of the initial certification of a foster or adoptive home, the Foster Care Coordinator compiles the necessary information, determines if the training requirements have been met, then provides this information to the District Manager for review prior to the District Manager approving the home’s certification. Currently, the Department are unable to track the number of homes completing certification from initial interest. However, WYOSAFE has been programmed to capture this data.

Table 31. **Training Progress**

Year	Individuals enrolled in training	Training courses completed
June 2020 through June, 2021	268	323
June 2021 through June, 2022	267	331
June 2022 through June 2023	318	520

Data Source: Foster Parent College, June 2023

**Tracking of Initial Certification:** After an application is received, the case is entered on WYCAPS and placed on “Pending” status until all certification requirements and training requirements are met. These homes are not used for placement and are not included as placement options for caseworkers. Once all certification requirements are met and the FCC has reviewed the file, it is submitted to the District Manager for final approval. The District Manager reviews the file and if all requirements are met, a certificate is issued. The status in WYCAPS is changed to “certified”. At that point, the home is available for use as a placement option.

**On-going Training for Foster and Adoptive Parents:** The Department ensures ongoing training occurs for foster parents and adoptive parents through a variety of

methods and topics. Prospective foster and adoptive parents receive ongoing training pursuant to established annual training requirements and timelines as described below.

After a one-year period of initial certification, foster and adoptive homes must complete a recertification every two years. Ongoing training varies depending on the type of foster or adoptive home (non-relative, relative, kinship, or specialized foster/adoptive homes).

**Biannual hourly training requirements are as follows:**

- Non-Relative Family Foster/Adoptive Care – Minimum of 24 hours;
- Relative Foster Care – Minimum of 12 hours unless a waiver for training hours has been approved by the District Manager;
- Specialized Foster Care – Minimum of 32 hours; and
- Kin providers - Minimum of 12 hours.

Training requirements are highly individualized and based on the needs and skills of the foster parent and the needs of the children placed in their home. While there is no formal assessment tool used to assess foster parents. Informal assessments are conducted and include:

- FCCs in each community engage directly with each foster or adoptive family in determining what activities may apply toward the required training hours based on the individual needs of the child;
- Face to face visits that the caseworker conducts with the child includes assessing the needs of foster parents;
- Annual Review that FCCs and foster parents jointly conduct each year where training is addressed;
- At the two-year recertification through the HOME STUDY UPDATE with the foster parents that addresses, among other topics, support needed, education or training needs;
- CFSR review in which the needs of foster parents are addressed.
- Foster families are encouraged to self-evaluate and pursue additional training and educational opportunities.

Needs identified are addressed through additional training, education, or other means.

**Ongoing Trainings Offered:**

- FPC
- Trust-Based Relational Intervention (TBRI)
- Reactive Attachment Disorder (RAD) and Children in Foster Care
- Statewide Foster Parent Support Meetings



FPC is available for ongoing training to foster and adoptive parents. The Department accepts FPC course certificates for the continued training requirements or foster parents. FPC offers courses on a wide variety of topics including Children Entering Care, Mental Health Issues, Trauma-Informed Parenting, Cultural Issues in Parenting, Children Entering Care: Mental Health Issues, LGBTQ+ Issues, and numerous other topics. Content is available in English and Spanish.

TBRI is offered to foster parents through periodic sessions throughout Wyoming. TBRI is an attachment-based, trauma-informed intervention that is designed to meet the complex needs of vulnerable children. TBRI uses Empowering Principles to address physical needs, Connecting Principles for attachment needs, and Correcting Principles to disarm fear-based behaviors. TBRI is offered by trained practitioners and is available on-line and at in-person training events throughout the year. FCCs inform foster parents of the availability of TBRI training opportunities.

Other commonly utilized ongoing training resources include but are not limited to:

- In-person trainings, webinars, workshops, classes, conferences, and support groups offered by the Department or other partner agencies that address various foster care related topics;
- Psychoeducation provided by child or youth's therapist;
- Topic-specific books and videos;
- College courses; and
- Review of relevant literature (i.e. Fostering Families Today; Adoption Today).

Department FCCs facilitate monthly Statewide Foster Parent Support Meetings that cover a variety of topics specific to foster care, children, and families. These meetings provide an opportunity for foster families to interact and support each other as well as provide opportunities for continued training or other identified support. Meeting agendas are developed and facilitated by the FCCs based on identified needs and suggestions and requests from foster and adoptive parents. These meetings are recorded and available on a shared google drive for foster parents.

Table 32. **Foster Parent Support Meetings**

Month	Topic
June, 2023	De-escalation/Safe Home for kids that have been sexually abused
April, 2023	Youth Bill of Rights and Foster Parents Rights and Responsibilities
March, 2023	Secondary Trauma
September, 2022	How DFS and Foster Care Coordinators Can Support Foster Parents
June, 2022	Independent Living
May, 2022	Recognizing and Addressing Anxiety in Children
April, 2022	How providing foster care has affected her children and ways to help your children thrive in the process of providing foster care
March, 2022	Domestic Violence



Month	Topic
February, 2022	Foster/Biological Family Relationships
September, 2021	The Impact of Trauma on Adolescents
July, 2021	Building Relationships Between Foster and Bio Children
June, 2021	Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)
May, 2021	Common Behaviors of Children in Foster Care and Child Care Assistance Application
April, 2021	Protective Factors
March, 2021	Renewing the Foster Parenting Heart - Part 2
February, 2021	Renewing the Foster Parenting Heart - Part 1
January, 2021	What does a GAL do?
November, 2020	Holiday Triggers & Potential Behaviors
September, 2020	Addiction
June, 2020	Emerging from shelter at home; strategy for connecting with 'intense' children
May, 2020	Emerging from shelter at home; getting back to 'normal'
April, 2020	Teens in Social Isolation
April, 2020	COVID-19 Challenges, Concerns, Needs

Data Source: Agendas

**Other Approved Trainings:** Department staff shall provide, or assist in identifying, ongoing training which will assist the foster parent in developing the skills, knowledge, and competencies to develop professionally as a foster parent and to assist in meeting the individualized needs of children placed in the home. Additional training options from Department Recertification Policy include but are not limited to:

- DVD's, podcasts, webinars;
- Books, movies, magazine articles, on-line research which are foster care or adoption related;
- Completing courses on FPC at [www.fosterparentcollege.com](http://www.fosterparentcollege.com);
- Workshops, training, classes, support groups, conferences, etc. offered by Department or other agencies or organizations that address foster care related topics; and
- Individualized or group instruction which helps foster parents meet the needs of specific children.

As detailed, for foster and adoptive homes without access to a computer or internet, or for those who prefer in-person training, training is available through DVDs, written training materials, in-person training with the FCC or other organizations, or other

formats.

**Tracking of Ongoing Training Hours:** On-going training hours are documented by foster and adoptive parents. Documentation of training is provided to the family's FCC for review and to ensure requirements are met prior to issuance of the foster home recertification. Prior to approval of the recertification of a foster or adoptive home, the Foster Care Coordinator compiles the necessary information, determines if the training requirements have been met, then provides this information to the District Manager for review prior to the District Manager approving the home's recertification.

Completed training hours are documented by obtaining copies of training certificates, if available, and a completed Training Log signed by the foster parent and Department Foster Care Coordinator. This information is also entered into WYCAPS.

**Initial Training for Staff of State Licensed Facilities:** The Department ensures training, pursuant to established requirements and timelines, occurs for staff of state licensed facilities.

During initial pre-service orientation training for staff employed at state licensed facilities, the Department requires 20-30 hours of training to be completed. The amount varies depending on the placement setting. Staff of Group Homes are required to complete a minimum of 20 hours of training. Staff of Residential Treatment Centers (RTC) and Qualified Residential Treatment Programs (QRTP) require a minimum of 30 hours of training.

As set forth in the Department's Substitute Care Licensing Rules, pre-service orientation and training must be completed before staff are allowed to work directly with children and be counted in the staff/resident ratio.

Topics of pre-service orientation training include:

- Organization policies and organization staff member roles;
- Responsibilities for reporting child abuse and/or neglect;
- The staff member's role and responsibilities in relation to the child and family and permanency;
- Training in the area of universal precautions (blood borne pathogens);
- Procedures for adherence to personal and professional ethics and conduct;
- Orientation to the organization's approved crisis intervention procedures (if the crisis intervention procedures include emergency restraint of children who are a danger to themselves or others, staff shall be trained in a nationally certified or accredited program which provides physical restraint training) and reporting of critical incidents and adverse events;
- Record-keeping requirements;
- Cultural competency;
- Helping juveniles with acceptance of the residential setting and separation and loss inherent in out-of-home care for children and families, and for the staff members when children leave;

- Confidentiality;
  - All staff must be instructed on the federal and state legal requirements of maintaining confidentiality; and
  - Failure to comply with confidentiality requirements may result in employment termination and/or criminal prosecution.
- Risk and impact of substance abuse on child population;
- The overall importance of the direct supervision and safety of children;
- Rights of the persons served by the program;
- Suicide prevention and intervention;
- Prevention of workplace violence, homicide, and other criminal acts;
- Procedures for safe transportation of children and orientation to organization vehicles, if applicable;
- Implementation of the organization's written emergency and evacuation plans;
- Recognition of eating disorders;
- Behavior management and appropriate discipline;
- Crisis prevention and intervention; and
- An overview of the Department's Substitute Care Rules.

Additionally, if the facility utilizes a Seclusion Room, the designated staff authorized to place a child in the Seclusion Room shall be oriented and trained in appropriate behavioral interventions procedures.

All administrative and managerial staff shall receive training and the training may include but is not limited to:

- General management, including labor law and staff/management relations;
- Child welfare, juvenile justice, and mental health systems;
- Relationships with other service organizations; and/or
- Best practices in the program area.

Within three (3) months of staff's start date, and prior to assuming any responsibility for unsupervised direct care of children, all staff sign a statement acknowledging they have read the facility policies, procedures, an overview of the Department Substitute Care Rules and completed required pre-service orientation training. All staff also complete CPR and First Aid training within ninety (90) days from the date of hire. CPR and First Aid training must meet the requirements of the American Heart Association, American Red Cross or National Safety Council including required updates. CPR and First Aid training does not count toward pre-service orientation training hours.

The Department's Substitute Care Licensors conduct three (3) unannounced visits at each state certified facility annually. The three staff who perform inspections communicate regularly and have training logs in place to assure staff training is being completed as required. If a staff member is found to have not complied with training

requirements, they are no longer able to work directly with youth. Once training requirements have been completed, and verification provided, staff may return to contact with children.

**Ongoing Training for Staff of State Licensed Facilities:** The Department ensures ongoing training, pursuant to established requirements and timelines, occurs for staff of state licensed facilities.

All direct care staff must complete 20 hours of annual training. Each year, all employees receive ongoing training in:

- Emergency plans;
- Suicide prevention and intervention;
- Prevention of workplace violence, homicide, and other criminal acts;
- Confidentiality;
- Behavior management and appropriate discipline;
- Crisis prevention and intervention; and
- Other areas of annual training shall be child and family related.

Additionally, designated staff receive training on the Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard.

The Department's Substitute Care Licensors conduct three unannounced visits at each state certified facility annually; In addition, recertification visits every one or two years require complete facility inspections. The three staff who perform inspections communicate regularly and have training logs in place to assure staff training is being completed as required. If a staff member is found to have not complied with training requirements, they are no longer able to work directly with youth. Once training requirements have been completed, and verification provided, staff may return to contact with children.

**Regulatory Process:** For foster and adoptive parents, the FCC verifies training hours have been completed per policy by obtaining copies of training certificates and other verification of training, as well as a completed Training Log signed by the foster parent or adoptive parents. These records are maintained in the foster care provider file and reviewed prior to certification or recertification. As part of the recertification process, annual reviews are conducted by the FCCs with the foster home. If training requirements are not current or will expire prior to when the foster home certificate expires, a plan is developed so all requirements are up-to-date before the certificate expires.

These reviews, along with the ongoing file reviews by the District Managers and FCCs, ensure training requirements for foster and adoptive parents are met.

As detailed above, the Department's Substitute Care Licensors conduct a series of unannounced and announced visits at each state certified facility annually to verify staff

training is being completed as required. If a staff member is found to have not complied with training requirements, they are no longer able to work directly with youth. Once training requirements have been completed, and verification provided, staff may return to contact with children. Staff who do not complete initial and/or ongoing training may also have their employment suspended and/or terminated.

Foster Care Coordinators interact regularly with foster parents to assess foster and adoptive parents have the skills and knowledge needed to carry out their duties. FCC and caseworker observations help to identify if the foster parent can provide appropriate care for the child. Foster parents are encouraged to provide feedback to caseworkers and FCCs on any additional training needs they identify. Initial foster care training is usually adequate to meet the general needs of providing foster care but if other needs are identified, through observation, self reporting or other means, additional training is provided. Additional training and interaction happen at monthly Statewide Foster Parent Support Meetings. Training is provided at these meetings and topics are often decided based on feedback from the foster parents. Information is exchanged and unidentified training needs discovered are used to identify future training topics.

Foster parents and adoptive parents were surveyed in Spring of 2023. The survey included questions regarding how prepared foster/adoptive parents were prepared to carry out their duties to foster/adopt children once training was completed. Of the total 117 respondents for the question asking to what extent the Department provides initial or ongoing training to carry out duties to foster/adopted children, 71% responded always and frequently. While it is difficult to assess if training is 100% sufficient to meet every type of foster care situation, this rating is further indication that overall, training the Department provides is sufficient for giving foster parents the skills needed to carry out their duties.

Additionally, of the total 117 respondents for the question regarding how prepared foster/adoptive parents are to carry out duties once training is complete, 70% indicated very prepared and prepared. An additional 23.9% indicated somewhat prepared. These levels of positive responses are indicative that training is sufficient for giving foster parents, adoptive parents, the skills needed to carry out their duties. Please see below for more details.

Staff of state licensed facilities are observed by licensing staff during regular visits throughout the year which allows for some limited identification of any concerns related to skills needed to meet their duties. If concerns are observed, otherwise reported, or is requested by the facility, training and support is provided by the licensing staff and to assess the knowledge of the staff member and provided needed training and assistance.

During COVID-19, all training was made available online. PRIDE training is a hybrid in-person/on-line program and so the in-person portion was easily adapted and made available on-line. FPC coursework is completely on-line or available on DVD. During COVID-19 training was provided related to related health and safety but training remained the same otherwise.

Feedback on training is gathered by the FCC for their area and that information is used to inform their annual recruitment and retention plans, and to adjust their local training efforts. Information gathered is also shared with other FCCs to collaborate on potential training opportunities statewide. Surveys specific to PRIDE, FPC and other training provided are conducted by the Wyoming Citizen Review Panel and through the Department CFSR Round 4 Stakeholder Survey. The Wyoming Citizen Review Panel survey questions and a summary of answers included:

- What additional topics would you like to see provided through foster parent training?
- If additional foster parent training was offered, what would make it easier for you to attend?
- What is the best way for you to participate in foster parent training (in person, virtually, pre-recorded training, etc.)?
- What would assist you in accessing training through the Foster Parent College?

The survey was anonymous, and the answers were in narrative form and varied significantly from respondent to respondent. These results were shared with the FCCs and even though the responses could not be linked to their specific area, the results provided a good overview of training needs from a larger perspective. To address some of the more common responses, TBRI availability was increased and, at no cost to the foster parents, made available not only in-person but with numerous online opportunities. PRIDE is available in-person, on-line and through DVDs. In addition, FCCs discuss training needs at monthly Statewide Foster Parent Support Meetings and individually with their foster parents.

**Data Sources:** State requirements for initial and ongoing training are included in Family Foster Home Application and Certification Policy and Family Foster Home Recertification Policy.

To summary, to complete the initial pre-service training requirements, the Department requires foster and adoptive parents to complete a minimum of 20 hours of training. The training requirements can be fulfilled by participation in Parent Resources for Information, Development, and Education (PRIDE) training and through First Aid and Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) training.

After a one year period of initial certification, foster and adoptive homes must complete a recertification every two years. Ongoing training varies depending on the type of foster or adoptive home (non-relative, relative, kinship, or specialized foster/adoptive homes).

Biannual hourly training requirements are as follows:

- Non-Relative Family Foster/Adoptive Care – Minimum of 24 hours;
- Relative Foster Care – Minimum of 12 hours unless a waiver for training hours has been approved by the District Manager;
- Specialized Foster Care – Minimum of 32 hours; and

- Kin providers - Minimum of 12 hours.
- What is the process for the state to track and collect information about training, who attended, and that requirements are met?

Prior to approval of an initial certification or recertification of a foster or adoptive home, FCC compiles the necessary information, determines if the training requirements have been met, and provides this information to the District Manager for review prior to the District Manager approving the home's recertification.

indicated that training requirements had been met by foster homes, but those results had not always been entered into WYCAPS. For those instances, the FCC was made aware and entered the completion dates into WYCAPS.

Applicants do not complete initial training for various reasons and do not become certified. That number is not tracked by the Department. The Department currently has 277 certified non-relative foster homes which have completed the training requirements. This number does not include certified relative foster homes who may have completed training.

Of the 22 state licensed facilities, all staff complete initial training, or they are not able to have direct contact with children or their employment is suspended and/or terminated.

100% of foster and adoptive homes complete required ongoing training. If ongoing training requirements are not met, the home is not recertified. The number that does not become recertified because they have not completed ongoing training is not tracked.

Of the 22 state licensed facilities, all staff complete ongoing training, or they are not able to have direct contact with children or their employment is suspended and/or terminated.

- Survey feedback from training attendees
- CFSR Round 3 and Practice Round case review information
- CFSR Round 4 Stakeholder survey and focus group information (PK)

**Functioning of Initial and Ongoing Training:** To determine how well training functions, foster parents and adoptive parents were surveyed in Spring of 2023. The survey included questions regarding how prepared foster/adoptive parents were prepared to carry out their duties to foster/adopt children once training was completed. The results of the survey are illustrated in the table below.

Table 33. **Foster & Adoptive Training Survey Results**

Survey Question	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Never	Don't Know
To what extent does the Department provide initial or ongoing training in order for you to carry out your duties to foster/adopt children?	29.1%	41.9%	21.4%	0%	0%

Data Source: 2023 Stakeholder Survey Report

Table 34. **Foster & Adoptive Training Survey Results**

Survey Question	Very prepared	Prepared	Somewhat prepared	Not Prepared	Don't know
How prepared are you to carry out your duties to foster/adopt children once you complete training?	29.1%	41%	23.9%	0%	0%

Data Source: 2023 Stakeholder Survey Report

Of the total 117 respondents for the question asking to what extent the Department provides initial or ongoing training to carry out duties to foster/adopted children, 71% responded always and frequently. This rating illustrates that training is effective.

Additionally, of the total 117 respondents for the question regarding how prepared foster/adoptive parents are to carry out duties once training is complete, 70% indicated very prepared and prepared. An additional 23.9% indicated somewhat prepared. These levels of positive responses are indicative of how effective training is in preparing foster and adoptive parents to carry out their duties.

**Strengths:** The evidence identifies that training for foster and adoptive parent training is a strength. As detailed above, foster, and adoptive parents receive training pursuant to the established hourly requirements for the provision of initial and ongoing training. This is demonstrated by the rate of retention for foster homes, surveys of foster parents and positive individual or group communication with the FCCs.

Survey results indicate that initial and ongoing training for foster and adoptive parents is a strength because a large majority of the respondents indicated that the Department always provides or frequently provides ongoing training to carry out duties to foster/adopted children. This rating illustrates that training is effective. Survey results also indicate that a large majority of respondents are prepared to carry out duties once training is complete. This is evidenced by foster parent survey results that show 70% of respondents feel that the Department “always” or “frequently” provides initial or ongoing training for them to carry out their duties to foster/adopt children and that 70% feel that either “prepared” or “very prepared” to carry out their duties to foster/adopt children once they complete training.



These levels of positive responses are indicative of how effective training is in preparing foster and adoptive parents to carry out their duties.

**Opportunities for Improvement:** The evidence identifies that the Department's current system does not produce the necessary data to support a lot of the statements. WYOSAFE will have the capability to produce data to support training efforts.

- The Department is developing a new CCWIS system (WYOSAFE) which will provide:
- Additional functionality and ease of tracking of training requirements
- Ensure training information easily accessible by foster parents and Foster Care Coordinators
- Improve communication between foster parents and Foster Care Coordinators on training requirements and training opportunities, and
- Help to identify and match a foster family with specific training, with the specific needs of the child.

In the future, a goal of the Foster Care and Substitute Care Licensing teams is to ensure training is provided to foster/adoptive parents and facility staff on the Youth Bill of Rights.

Additionally, an opportunity for improvement of the Substitute Care Licensing team is to develop and offer training available on online platforms to make services more accessible and consistent throughout the state.

A new case management system is being developed which will assist with accurate tracking of training requirements.

**Promising practices:** Additional training for specialized foster parents caring for special needs children. This provides additional training that is specific to the child's identified needs outlined in the case plan. This helps to decrease the need for more restrictive placements and keep the child in a more family-like setting.

Mentoring of new foster parents by long standing foster parents. More seasoned foster parents provide helpful insight, advice and to newer foster parents to encourage and support newer foster parents.

Development of kinship specific training curriculum. This decreases the amount of training time to become a certificate foster parent to allow for more kinship placements and provides better outcomes for foster children.

Four Wyoming RTCs have received endorsements as QRTPs which ensures, among other things, that treatment is trauma informed and requires additional national accreditations.

**Conclusion and Key Findings:** The Department believes this item should be rated a strength. As detailed above, the Department is consistently ensuring training is occurring statewide for current or prospective foster parents, adoptive parents, and staff of state Department of Family Services | 2023 CFSR Statewide Assessment | August 2023

licensed facilities (who receive title IV-E funds for care of children).

As described in initial and ongoing training sections, current or prospective foster parents, adoptive parents, and staff of state licensed facilities receive training pursuant to established annual training requirements and timelines. Furthermore, as explained, the Department evaluates how well the required training addresses the skills and knowledge required to fulfill the duties and responsibilities about foster and adopted children.

## SERVICE ARRAY AND RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

- ITEM 29: ARRAY OF SERVICES

**Service Array Policy and Practice Elements:** The vision for the Department is to increase the number of children safely cared for at home, to build permanent and stable families, and to assist families in transitioning to long term success.

The Department and its community partners are active in on-going discussions focused on ways Wyoming can engage with families and community partners through relevant and meaningful services and interventions to strengthen families and prevent unnecessary out-of-home placements of children. The Department realizes that it is not the totality of the child welfare system in Wyoming. The child welfare system also includes community stakeholders, community providers, other governmental entities, institutional providers, and all state citizens.

Wyoming being a rural, frontier state, faces unique challenges due to a small population dispersed across a large geographic area. To manage the obstacles and provide effective services to differing populations, Wyoming is divided into nine Judicial Districts. Each District has at least one local Department office that provides child protection and juvenile justice services to the community. The local office(s) are overseen by District Managers, who are intimately familiar with the service challenges within the community. The District Managers work to collaborate with community partners to address challenges, utilizing elements of the Department service array to individualize services to best serve children and families in this area.

The Department is striving to identify children most at risk of removal from their home and provide access to evidence-based, trauma-informed interventions that meet the unique needs of each child and family in Wyoming. Through surveys, stakeholder meetings and high-level observations of the current condition of Wyoming's child welfare system, the Department has taken attempts to transition to a trauma-informed child well-being system. Due to the 2018 PIP, the Department has already made efforts toward establishing a foundation of evidence-based approaches to casework in child welfare. Building on the existing infrastructure that exists in the Department's state-wide child welfare system, the continued plan of highlighting the strengths of the Department's system is to elevate the outcomes for children and families in Wyoming.

**Community Family Support Forum:** The Department holds a monthly focus group to provide an open forum and call to action for state and community organizations to share resources, ideas, and activities each are using to connect directly with children,

families, and vulnerable adults to prevent abuse and neglect while promoting resilient communities. The monthly focus group aims at making direct contact with children, families, and vulnerable adults now, and building community-level strategies to strengthen families and build resilient communities for the future.

**Child and Family Services Plan and Statewide Assessment Information:** The Department, in partnership with the Wyoming Children’s Trust Fund, Wyoming Citizen Review Panel and Public knowledge, conducted surveys and stakeholder meetings to gather information from parents, youth, foster parents, Social Services Division staff, legal partners and many service providers statewide for the CFSP, APSR and Statewide Assessment.

**Wyoming Practice Model:** As stated previously, the WPM is the practice model used by Department staff to engage children and parents in indicating their strengths and needs to identify interventions and services throughout the life of the case. Rather than focus on compliance, WPM emphasizes supporting changes in behavior to assist the family in addressing the core concern in the case. WPM utilizes engagement tools to elicit active participation in planning and development of case goals on the part of children and families and supports the training of caseworkers in these tools as well as in building skills and strategies to improve practice.

**Prevention and In-Home Services:** Keeping families together requires a focus on prevention and in-home services provide the necessary support to prevent unnecessary out of home placements for children. Prevention and in-home services are a cornerstone of the Department work. Services provided to the family in the home emphasize assisting the family to develop the appropriate skill sets and behaviors to keep children safely in the home. Wyoming, as stated above, is a rural, frontier state, and every community differs in services available due to the service providers in each community.

In the Statewide Assessment survey, biological parents identified that they utilize Individual Counseling and Family Team Meetings the most in their community with education and educational parent support being the next most used service(s) (refer to Services Tables 1 and 2 for more information). Department staff’s results were similar in the survey indicating Wrap Around services were used mostly to keep families together in their community, with Counseling, childcare and educational services being the services supporting the families the most (refer to Services Table 3-6 for more information).

**Wyoming 211:** People need essential services every day, from finding food and shelter to securing adequate care for a child or an aging parent. Faced with multiple agencies and nonprofits providing a broad range of social services, people often don't know where to turn or how to start. In many cases, they end up going without these necessary services. Launched in February 2011, Wyoming 211 is a statewide helpline and website which provides free, confidential, health and human services information and referral. By dialing 211 or visiting the website from anywhere in the state of Wyoming, people are

linked to information about local resources, from both government and nonprofit agencies.

**Community Child Protection Teams:** An important and high-functioning resource for the Department is the local community Child Protection Teams (CPTs). CPTs are created to identify or develop local resources to serve abused and neglected children within the community, to advocate for improved services or procedures for such children, and to provide information and assistance to the Department. CPTs allow several disciplines, such as child welfare, mental health, and education, among others, to have in-depth discussions about increasing front end services to keep children and youth safe in local communities, out of placement, and to identify services and service gaps within the community to achieve positive outcomes.

**Community Juvenile Service Boards:** The Community Juvenile Service Boards (CJSBs) are also a local team of disciplines who establish, maintain, and promote the development of juvenile services in communities aimed at allowing early identification and identifying resources for at-risk youth who are at risk of entry into the juvenile court system. CJSBs facilitate local planning efforts and partnerships to develop and enhance locally based services for a continuum of care for at-risk youth and families. The CJSBs have allowed for service decisions to be made at a local level; aided in the development of local, regional, and Statewide partnerships; and ensured coordinated transitions for improved services for youth from early identification and intervention through aftercare.

**Mental Health Services:** Enhancing and supporting mental health services and accessibility in Wyoming communities is a priority of the Department. Mental health services aid children, youth, and parents suffering from mild to severe mental illnesses. Mental health services vary in each community Statewide and differ in services available. Mental health services can vary from individual to family to group therapy; early intervention services; psychological evaluations, and substance abuse treatment, among others.

In addition to the 2023 survey, the Department Caseworkers and Supervisors cited the following mental health services are in the community to help keep families safely at home:

Table 35. **Mental Health Services**

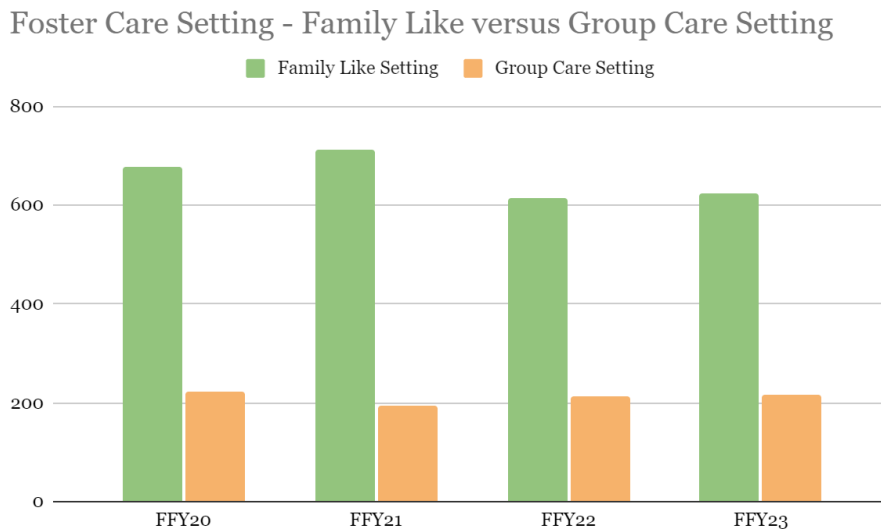
Services	Caseworkers	Supervisors
Individual Counseling for Children/Youth	98.7%	97.5%
Individual Counseling for Adults	96.2%	97.5%
Family Counseling	94.9%	95.0%
Outpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Adults	88.5%	90.0%

Data Source: 2023 Stakeholder Survey Report

Additionally, many staff provided examples of specific strengths and challenges locating and accessing mental health services. Some noted that mental health service providers are helpful in assisting families in supporting the family unit. However, the main challenge identified is the lack of mental health service in some communities. Other challenges noted by caseworkers, supervisors and other stakeholders include variance in capability and practice in mental health providers and providers that have too many patients.

**Out of Home Services:** If an out of home placement of a child or children is necessary due to unmitigated safety concerns, the Department works to help stabilize and support the family unit enabling a timely reunification. Ensuring that the Department has foster homes able and willing to support the needs of all children, particularly older youth, is paramount. Children deserve to live in family-like settings and the Department’s focus is on placing children, first and foremost with relatives or family foster homes. If family-like foster settings are not appropriate, the Department will utilize crisis shelters, GHs, RTCs, PRTFs, and BOCES placements. Figure XX illustrates the Department’s utilization of various placement types, showing that the Department consistently placed children in family-like settings versus group care settings during FFY20, FFY21, FFY22 and FFY23.

Figure 21. Utilization of Placement Type during FFY20, FFY21, FFY22 and FFY23.



Data Source: ROM July 2023

The Department provides reasonable efforts to prevent placement(s) when safety can be addressed by providing interventions and/or services; however, when children are at imminent risk, the Department works with the family to identify family members who may be an appropriate placement for the child(ren) or place the child(ren) in a family foster home. If community resources and support cannot meet a child’s needs, the Department works with a team to determine if placement for a child will be appropriate in residential care. Through evaluations and assessments, the team determines the most

appropriate placement, and the Department makes the recommendations to the court for the facility placement.

**Clinical Services within the Department:** The Department's Clinical services assists the Department caseworkers in ensuring the proper provision of clinical, medical, pharmacological, therapeutic, and psychosexual services to children and youth in the Department custody. The Clinical Services staff conduct continued stay reviews on children placed in congregate care; participate in case reviews and quality assurance reviews; provide professional consultation from multi-disciplinary team meetings in the Judicial System; arrange inpatient treatment admissions; arrange and consult on outpatient treatment provision; and guide administrative decision making on clinical matters.

**Wyoming Department of Health Medication Oversight:** The Wyoming Department of Health (WDH) aids with medication oversight for children in the Department custody. WDH provides the Department's caseworkers assistance in ensuring the appropriate medications and dosages are prescribed, particularly in relation to psychotropic medication. The goal of this partnership is to provide the Department's caseworkers with a level of medical expertise in addition to their casework training and experience to best ensure that children in care receive adequate and appropriate medical treatment.

WDH contracts with Seattle Children's Hospital for the Wyoming Partnership Access Line (PAL) program for questions about mental health care such as diagnostic clarification, medication adjustment or treatment planning. The Department's caseworkers may initiate a call into PAL or through the youth's treatment team. The Seattle Children's is also contracted by WDH to do Medication Reviews for:

- Children receiving two or more atypical antipsychotics (AAPs);
- Children aged four or younger receiving psychotropic medications;
- Children receiving five or more psychotropic medications; and
- High doses (two times FDA maximum)

This service is available Statewide with no gaps in service, and is provided for all Wyoming Medicaid enrolled children, not just children in the custody of the State.

**Independent Living and Transitional Services:** Independent Living (IL) and transitional services are an area of focus for the Department. There are four agencies who receive Chafee funding to provide IL services statewide which include: Youth Emergency Services; Volunteers of America; the Cathedral Home for Children; and Goodwill Industries of Wyoming. The major components in the delivery of the services administered by the Department and implemented by IL Coordinators who provide services such as basic life skills assessments, life skills development, supervised independent living, education, employment, and career planning for youth ages 14 to 21 years.

**Flexible Funding/Family Preservation:** The Department works to meet the needs of families Statewide. An effort to resolve one of the major barriers to service array improvement was the development of a flexible funding plan using the Promoting Safe and Stable Family funds. Flexible funds are a resource for local offices and available to provide individualized services to meet the needs of children, youth, and families to support and preserve the family. When case plans are developed with the family and identify specific services needed, the flexible funding plan enables local offices to address those needs in a timely and cost-effective manner.

Flexible Funding/Family Preservation funds have been used for the following specific goals:

- Assistance with rent;
- Fixing vehicles for transportation;
- Transportation assistance;
- Assistance with utility bills;
- Activities for the children;
- Purchase of a washer and dryer; and
- Purchase of clothing for children.

**GAPS in Services:** As the Department started gathering information through the surveys and stakeholder meetings from parents, youth, foster parents, Social Services Division staff, legal partners and many service providers for the CFSP/APSR and Statewide Assessment, there were many gaps identified. Transportation, housing, mental health and substance abuse treatment, and childcare were the most identified services mentioned due to lack, affordability, and/or availability (long waitlist) were mostly mentioned in the survey and stakeholder meetings.

**Strengths:** The Department has a number of strengths in regard to Service Array: WyHome Matters has started the transformation of Wyoming's child welfare and juvenile system into a child well-being system. The Steering committee has strived to strengthen outreach to statewide community partners and tailor to specific community partners to help in identifying and developing individualized services available to children, youth, and families.

WPM has been a work in progress, but the Department has made system changes with the practice. WPM, being the core practice of working with families, has provided staff with the knowledge, skills, and tools (i.e. MI, mapping, Safety Circles, genograms, Three Houses, etc) to engage all family members in facilitating informal assessments of safety and well-being during quality visits (i.e. Face to Face visits, Family Team Meetings, etc). Department staff, by utilizing WPM, engage the child, family, and Family Team in identifying concrete strengths, increasing engagement by the family and their network, and focusing on enhancing child safety through quality Safety Plans and quality, behaviorally centered Case Plans.

Wyoming 211 provides free, confidential, health and human services and local resources through a statewide helpline and website. The service is a great resource for Wyoming families.

**Opportunities:** While the Department feels there are several strengths in Service Array, there are some areas that are opportunities for improvement:

Wyoming communities lack a coordinated, “no wrong door” human services system. Siloed approaches to delivery of services, agency duplication and gaps in data sharing create barriers for Wyoming families. In addition, Wyoming lacks the coordination of human services data across community organizations. Through surveys and stakeholder meetings, the following information gathered demonstrates areas for improvement:

- Transportation-inability to access services;
- Housing-lack of affordability and availability;
- Mental Health and Substance Use Treatment-lack of services; and
- Child Care-affordability and accessibility

Wyoming needs a collaborative, community-based entity with an individualized, family-centered approach to provide targeted programs, services, and resources to strengthen families and Wyoming communities.

**Promising Practices:** Family Resource Centers-The Governor's Health Task Force identified a need to have a stronger coordination of human services and collect data for multi-generational family approach statewide, so during the 2023 legislative session, funds were provided to develop Family Resources. The project has two primary goals:

- Create a statewide network whose focus will be to provide technical assistance and best practice for communities who receive family resource center grants; and
- Provide grants to individual Wyoming communities to help establish and/or strengthen family resource centers and envelope a structure for collecting and monitoring family resource center data.

**Analysis:** The Department considers Item 29 - Service Array to be an area of area needing improvement. There are challenges in providing a consistent level of service and care to individuals across the State. The Department has strong partners statewide to help provide service needs at a community level for children, parents, and foster parents. The Clinical Services Unit allows for direct support for caseworkers in accurately assessing the needs of children. The Family Resource Centers will be a great asset in Wyoming, since it will be community directed and supported; however, the Family Resource Centers will not be in place for at least two years.

- [ITEM 30: INDIVIDUALIZING SERVICES](#)

The primary goal of the Department is to ensure children and youth are safe and preserve the family unit through interventions and direct work with children, youth, and



families. For this reason, the Department has implemented the Differential Response (DR) system to respond with more flexibility to child abuse and neglect reports and to better meet individual family needs. In Wyoming’s DR system, incidents can be screened in as an Investigation, Assessment, or Prevention Track case as stated in the response to Safety, Permanency, and Well-Being Outcomes above. Investigations include the most severe allegations of abuse or neglect. Assessment Track is defined as cases where abuse may have occurred but does not rise to the level of an investigation. Finally, the Prevention Track is used where no abuse or neglect has occurred, but where there are identified risk factors.

The DR system allows Department staff to work to assess the family’s needs, build upon their strengths, and individualize services to keep the child(ren)/youth safely at home with their families. The Department uses the same DR philosophy in Juvenile Justice cases, allowing the juvenile and family to receive individualized services as an intervention before court action and possible placement.

Wyoming is far less diverse than most other states. According to the United State Census Bureau<sup>8</sup> 2020 DEC Demographic Profile, 84.7% of the state’s population is White/Caucasian, 0.8% Black/African American, 2.4% American Indian/Alaska Native, 0.9% Asian, 0.1% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, 3.5% identified as other race while 7.5% identified as two or more races. Furthermore, only 10.2% of Wyoming’s total population is Hispanic or Latino and 89.8% is Non-Hispanic or Latino.

Table 36. **SFY 23 Children on Composition for All Cases**

	Hispanic	Not Hispanic	Unidentified	Total
AMER IND-AK NATV	29	124	7	160
ARAPAHO	13	51	15	79
ASIAN	3	211	2	216
BLACK-AFR AMER	27	239	33	299
NTW HWN/PCFC ISL	5	8	0	13
MULTI RACE	21	105	0	126
WHITE	1102	6132	681	7915
DECLINED OR UNKNOWN	182	60	338	580
Total	1382	6930	1076	9388

<sup>8</sup>Data Source: : WYCAPS AIP Data Warehouse

<https://www.google.com/url?q=https://data.census.gov/table?t%3DRace%2Band%2BEthnicity%26g%3D040XX00US56%26d%3DDEC%2BDemographic%2BProfile%26tid%3DDECENNIALDP2020.DP1&sa=D&source=docs&ust=1691528605031973&usg=AOvVaw1c9LY5565BLtJMy59bJI9E>

Data Source:

\*Data table does not include Eastern Shoshone or Northern Arapaho children

Table 37. **SFY 23 Children on Composition for All Cases**

	Hispanic	Not Hispanic	Unidentified	Total
AMER IND-AK NATV	0	158	1	159
ARAPAHO	2	317	4	323
Other	2	4	3	9

Data Source:

\*Data table is only Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapaho Children

**Wyoming Practice Model:** The Department, as mentioned throughout this document, utilizes the Safety Organized Practice Model (WPM), to gather and assess information from children, youth and families and supports their efforts in identifying services they need. The WPM is a solution-focused, trauma -informed, family-centered approach that uses strategies and techniques that build on the children and family’s strengths to find solutions that ensure safety, permanency, and well-being for children. The Department has integrated elements of evidence-based practices and techniques into an overall philosophy, which includes Motivational Interviewing (MI). A primary emphasis of WPM is to engage each family member regarding their unique strengths and then to build on those strengths through the case planning process and throughout the life of the case.

The Department uses the Family Assessment to identify the individual strengths and needs of each parent and child(ren) for the purpose of ensuring appropriate services are provided to the identified needs and guide the Case Planning process. The Family Assessment provides individual needs of each family member to provide distinct services tailored to the specific needs of the family rather than providing cookie-cutter solutions based on a predetermined set of services.

**Individualizing Services through Agency Coordination:** As stated in the response to Item 29 much of the Department service array is individualized to meet the specific needs of Wyoming’s children and families. Individualizing services is a particular strength of the Department, and one element that allows for services to be tailored to specific, individual needs in each case is the strong interagency partnerships that exist in Wyoming. The following elements of the service array allow for individualization of services and are available Statewide upon request:

Table 38. **FFY 22 Service Array Utilized by Clients**

Service	Clients Utilizing Service
Adoption Subsidy	835
Clothing Allowance	67
Counseling	366
Day Care	26
Day Treatment	8
Detention	139
Evaluation	571
Non-Relative Foster Care	639
Relative Foster Care	387
Family Preservation	628
Group Home	118
Guardianship Subsidy	206
MDT Coordinator	1512
Mentoring	43
Parenting Skills Development	22
Residential Treatment	89
Respite Care	301
Specialized Foster Care	78
Transportation Assistance	164

Data Source: ROM July 2023

**Community Resources:** CPTs and CJSBs are an excellent source for developing individual community resources to serve children, youth, and families. With each team/board having a specific focus for the related program, the services identified in local communities assists the children and families in meeting their individual needs. Furthermore, these resources are highly individualized, as the CPTs and CJSBs are composed of local members who are engaged in and aware of both the challenges of and the resources available in each community. The CJSBs and CPTs were created with the intention to allow for local control to most effectively individualize services to assist Wyoming’s children and families.

**Flexible Funding:** As mentioned in Item 29, flexible funding was developed to resolve some major barriers to the service array for the Department staff. The Promoting Safe and Stable Family funds have been available for local offices since FFY 2015 to support and provide flexible funding so staff can individualize services to meet the needs of children, youth, and families. Flexible Funds are available in all nine Judicial Districts. The local offices utilize the funding to provide individual services to families to keep them together.

As stated previously, Flexible Funding funds have been used for the following specific goals:

- Assistance with rent;
- Fixing vehicles for transportation;
- Transportation assistance;

- Assistance with utility bills;
- Activities for the children;
- Purchase of a washer and dryer; and
- Purchase of clothing for children.

The following tables<sup>9</sup> identify how the Flex Funds support the child and family: Family Support, which provides financial supports to relative caregivers to keep the children within the family; Preservation, which provides financial supports to keep families together and keep children out of foster care; Timely Reunification, which provides financial support to help the parent(s) reunify with their child(ren) or if keep their child in their home if they had reunified in the last 12-15 months; and Adoption Services funds, to support the foster parent in preparing for adoption of the child(ren) or adoptive parent keep the adopted child(ren):

### 2020-2021 Updates:

Table 39. **FFY21 PSSF budgeted amounts and total expenditures**

	Expenditures*
Prevention and Support	\$10,125.56
Family Preservation	\$9,187.86
Timely Reunification	\$17,454.50
Adoption Support	\$4,716.03

Data Source: WOLFS June 2023

\*Expenditures current as of May 2021

Table 40. **FFY21 IV-B Part II expenditures by category**

IV-B Part II	Expenditures*
Rent and Housing	\$13,205.00
Family Member Services (i.e. medical needs)	\$7,296.24
All Other Goods (i.e. furniture and appliances)	\$2,135.28
All Other Services (i.e. pest control)	\$819.83
Transportation	\$6,476.03
Utilities and Communication	\$2,956.59
All Other Services (i.e. pest control)	\$819.83

\*Expenditures current as of May 2021

### 2021-2022 Updates:

Table 41. **FFY21 PSSF budgeted amounts and total expenditures**

	Expenditures*
Prevention and Support	\$27,997.05
Family Preservation	\$32,099.96
Timely Reunification	\$59,686.39
Adoption Support	\$18,254.64

<sup>9</sup> The Department continues to use 20% of funds received for Preserving Safe and Stable Families for planning and service coordination; the remaining 80% of funds is divided equally between the four (4) service categories. The Tables illustrate the amount of overall PSSF spending for each specific category.

\*Expenditures current as of May 2022

Table 42. **FFY21 IV-B Part II expenditures by category.**

IV-B Part II	Expenditures*
Rent and Housing	\$37,116.91
Family Member Services (i.e. medical needs)	\$5,468.62
All Other Goods (i.e. furniture and appliances)	\$17,670.18
All Other Services (i.e. pest control)	\$4,323.42
Transportation	\$22,824.25
Utilities and Communication	\$1,917.52

\*Expenditures current as of May 2022

**2022-2023 Updates:**

**Table 43. FFY23 PSSF budgeted amounts and total expenditures.**

	Expenditures*
Prevention and Support	\$9,367.40
Family Preservation	\$6,975.62
Timely Reunification	\$18,699.98
Adoption Support	\$0

\*Expenditures current as of May 2023

Table 44. **FFY21 IV-B Part II expenditures by category.**

IV-B Part II	Expenditures*
Rent and Housing	\$7,480.95
Family Member Services (i.e. medical needs)	\$3,900.65
All Other Goods (i.e. furniture and appliances)	\$8,055.47
All Other Services (i.e. pest control)	\$1,596.45
Transportation	\$5,754.15
Utilities and Communication	\$872.87

\*Expenditures current as of May 2023

The Flex Funds help support the child and family, as indicated in the above tables, with Timely Reunification being mostly used. Rent, which may include a deposit to get housing, was the most used service, with transportation and other goods/services being used next. The Department has seen an increase in using the flex funds to support individual needs, services, and interventions in the last five (5) years, as staff have seen the benefits of helping families using these funds.

**Independent Living (IL) and Transitional Services:** The IL and transitional services are another individualized element of the Department service array. In part a determination of IL or transitional services needed for a child is identified through the completion of the Ansell Casey Life Skills Assessment; however, additional needs can be identified by the youth in question regarding elements that may not be covered in the formal Assessment. IL Coordinators assist youth in identifying IL needs and match specific services with those needs, such as providing assistance learning to balance a checkbook for a youth who identified money management as a need.

**Individualizing Adoption Services:** Adoption services are also individualized by the Department. Adoption subsidies are available as are adoption incentive funds; pre- and post-adoption services are also available and based on the needs of the individual family. Individualized adoption funds are also available to all nine (9) Districts to resolve some barriers for children who are free for adoption or adopted and their families. The Individualized adoption funds have supported many children and their adoptive parents, which have included:

- Assistance paying for counseling and therapeutic supervision of adoptive placements;
- Safety resources (security systems, smart watches, etc);
- Assistance addressing environmental hazards at adoptive homes (tree removal, home repairs, etc);
- Travel expenses for adoptive parents and children;
- Cost of training and resources for adoptive parents;
- Purchase of therapeutic equipment and supplies; and
- Purchase of educational supplies (laptops, tablets, etc) to support adoptive children's unique educational needs.

**Services to Non-English-Speaking Families:** With Hispanic/Latino groups as the largest minority population, the Department addresses the needs of Hispanic/Latino clients in several ways. First, addressing any language barriers is often the highest priority. The Department utilizes a service called the Language Line, which is available Statewide. The Department caseworkers or other staff can call into the Language Line, which then provides translation services both from English to Spanish and from Spanish to English. This service is of particular use when there are no individuals in the local office who are fluent in Spanish. Additionally, foster care recruitment has focused on Spanish-speaking and Hispanic/Latino communities in Wyoming to recruit a variety of foster parents who can address the cultural needs of children in care. Finally, several of the Department brochures and forms have been translated into Spanish to address any language barriers.

The Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapaho Tribes both live on the Wind River Reservation. The Department provides coordination and collaboration with Tribal Departments to provide culturally competent services. Both Tribal Departments provide care and supervision of Tribal children, which means there is limited contact on the part of the Wyoming Department of Family Services with Tribal children. The Department

continues to work with the Tribal Department offices as appropriate and follows ICWA requirements.

**GAPS in Services:** The Department recognizes there are many services in the state that are available for individual children, parents and foster parents, and the Department does a good job in identifying individual services for each; however, there are still barriers to get services in several communities. Transportation, housing, mental health, and substance abuse treatment are the most services needed and are lacking statewide.

**Strengths:** The Department has a number of strengths in regard to Item 30 Individualized Services:

- Utilizing flexible funds has increased individualized services to meet the needs of children, youth and families and decreased major barriers for caseworkers in getting services for the families. This includes the individualized adoption funds for free for adopted children and their adopted families. Providing these services has increased prevention services, keeping children home, decreased the time in care/reunification timelines and increased adoptions.
- The Wyoming Practice Model has provided staff with the knowledge, skills, and tools to engage individual family members in identifying needs and services to develop the family Case Plan. When staff use MI, mapping, Safety Circles, and/or Three Houses, during quality Face to Face visits and/or Family Team Meetings, the child(ren), youth, parents, and family support networks can discuss strengths and needs to identify services and interventions to meet the needs of the family.

**Opportunities:** Wyoming, being the rural and frontier state, there is a lack of individualized services to help to meet the needs of each unique family. Access to services is a challenge in Wyoming, specifically access to mental health for children and parents and substance abuse treatment services, and being a frontier state, transportation is one of the biggest barriers.

**Promising Practices - Interagency Children's Collaborative (ICC):** During FFY 2023, under the statutory authority granted, the Department continued to work through a formal restructuring of the Interagency Children's Collaborative (ICC). The ICC regularly convenes a group of state officials from executive branch agencies who have a role in supporting Wyoming youth. In accordance with the approved charter, the goals of the ICC are:

- Systems of care assessment and ongoing evaluation
- Individual case management and crisis stabilization
- Interagency training and education

At the executive level this group aims to continually evaluate and reevaluate the systems of care supporting children and youth that are involved in one or more systems. Designated members of the ICC at the executive level include:

- The Director of the Department of Family Services or designee;
- The Director of the Department of Health or designee;
- The Superintendent of Public Instruction or designee;

- The Director of the Department of Workforce Services or designee; and,
- A Governor’s appointee who shall represent families receiving services from the state agencies represented herein

At the workgroup level this group aims to assist with the identification of and access to appropriate psychiatric and mental health treatment for youth and adolescents and related case management. The Department has taken the lead on facilitating monthly ICC Workgroup meetings during which cases involving youth with complex behavioral health and/or physical health needs are staffed by state level staff from the Department, Department of Education, and Department of Health, to include Wyoming Medicaid. During FFY 2023, cases involving 35 unique youth received various levels of coordination and support from the ICC Workgroup.

**Qualified Individual Assessments (QIAs):** Since October of 2021, the Department has been collaborating with a contracted network of providers to provide access to Qualified Individual Assessments (QIAs) for youth involved in court-ordered cases statewide. The QIA is a level of care assessment that considers 4 factors when recommending the most appropriate level of care for a child’s placement. These factors are:

- Child’s strengths and needs as identified in a Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) assessment
- Collateral information, including a clinical assessment, that document how the child is currently functioning in their community
- Input from the Family Team
- Completion of the QIA form that brings all of the information together.

Per the Assessment for Appropriate Placement in Residential Care Procedure, a QIA does not necessarily mean a child needs a higher level of care in a qualified residential treatment program (QRTP). It should be used as an assessment tool for collaboration with the Family Team, Multidisciplinary Team (MDT), and other providers to meet the needs of the child in their community when possible.

**Continued Stay Reviews:** In an effort to provide ongoing oversight to ensure youth placed in residential treatment settings are being provided care at the most effective and least restrictive level of care, regular Continued Stay Reviews (CSRs) conducted by the Department’s Clinical Services Unit were included in the Department’s Assessment for Appropriate Placement in Residential Care Policy & Procedure for youth placed at the residential Board of Cooperative Educational Services (B.O.C.E.S.), residential treatment center (RTC), and qualified residential treatment program (QRTP) levels of care. Per policy, CSRs are to be conducted every 30 days for children 12 and under placed in a qualifying placement or every 60 days for children 13 and over. 173 CSRs were conducted by the Clinical Services Unit in the calendar year 2022. As of 07/31/2023, 129 CSRs had been conducted in the calendar year 2023. A separate CSR process has been established by the Department of Health for youth placed at the PRTF



level of care. These reviews are conducted by Wyoming Medicaid’s utilization management contractor 14 days after admission and every 30 days thereafter.

**Analysis:** DFS considers Item 30, Individual Services, to be an area of area needing improvement mainly due to the state being so frontier, not all services are available statewide. There are challenges in providing individualized services across the State because of the lack of availability of services as well as transportation to get children and parents to the providers. The collaboration and coordination between State Office and local field staff allow for the individualization of services through flexible funds to provide support for transportation needs that are often identified in cases as a primary need. However, the Department struggles to show the data demonstrating the great work that is occurring at both the state and field level.

### **AGENCY RESPONSIVENESS TO THE COMMUNITY**

- ITEM 31: STATE ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS PURSUANT TO CFSP AND APSR

The Department routinely engages in consultation with tribal representatives, consumers, service providers, foster care providers, the juvenile court, and other public and private child and family-serving agencies through surveys, focus groups, cafes, youth conferences/forums.

#### **Data Sources:**

- Most recent APSR
- Survey or other solicited feedback from any stakeholder feedback methods
- CFSR Round 3 and Practice Round case review information
- CFSR Round 4 Stakeholder survey and focus group information

**Conclusion and Key Findings:** To best serve children and families in Wyoming and to inform the CFSP, collaboration among the Department, community partners and quality legal partners is imperative. Stakeholders include, but are not limited to mental health providers, local educators, WDE, WDH, GHs, RTCs, PRTFs, and child welfare boards and committees. Quality legal partners include GALs, county attorneys, OPC, and judges as well as those with lived experience. WYCRP and WYCTF also participate in our CFSR reviews as reviewers and/or engagement of key participants for interviews. This allows them to learn about what is going well with the Child Welfare System and where possible improvements could be made with their assistance. They are also able to disseminate results to stakeholders during their meetings and community groups.

Surveys and focus groups are used to help gather information around strengths and needs of the child welfare agency from all stakeholders. In 2019, there were three focus groups held for stakeholders and two focus groups in 2020. After the May 2020 focus group, the Department implemented Community Family Support Forums held monthly

with community partners from across the State to include Department staff. These forums provide an opportunity to receive information regarding strengths and needs, education on programs for families across the state, provide data updates, and follow-up of identified concerns.

**WY Home Matters:** WY Home Matters is a collaborative Department wide initiative that aims to transform Wyoming’s child welfare and juvenile system into a child well-being system. Through the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) and the Title IV-E Prevention Plan, the Department hopes to accomplish the desired system change. Partnerships and collaborative approaches are key. Figure 1 illustrates the overlapping spheres of influence within the existing family well-being system in Wyoming and the opportunities to collaborate in areas of shared responsibility and influence.

Figure 22. **Family Well-Being System**



Data Source:

Using this model as a basis, the Wyoming Department of Family Services convened a multi-agency WY Home Matters Steering Committee in February 2020 with representatives from:

- Wyoming Department of Family Services (the Department);
- Wyoming Office of Guardian Ad Litem (GAL);
- Wyoming Children’s Trust Fund (WCTF);
- Children’s Justice Project (CJP)/Court Improvement Project; and,
- The Governor’s Office.

The Steering Committee meets to share observations and experiences with the existing system, discuss opportunities for change and collaboration, and review progress made by the Department on the Title IV-E Prevention Plan. A WY Home Matters website will

be launching, which will provide a platform for WY Home Matters communications, data, and success stories to structure a conversation around child and family welfare to a prevention mindset regarding child and family well-being.

In efforts to strengthen outreach to statewide community partners, the Department has tailored to specific community partners to help in identifying and developing individualized services available to children, and families. Furthermore, the Department has strived to ensure that, by way of establishing state-wide communication across agencies, geographical areas, and stakeholders, the Department is thereby fostering a continuum of care to ensure that children and families are serviced by providers with a consistent belief in prevention and mitigating risk of entry into foster care.

A noted theme in these forums is for the Department to provide more out-facing data. There is discussion to have a data dashboard accessible as we move forward with our WYOSAFE system.

These Community Support Forums have discussed the following topics and data:

Table 45. **Community Forum Topics**

Date	Topic	Data Provided
10/6/2020	1. Social Services: CPS data story	APS Volume - Intakes CPS Intakes CPS Intakes by Referring Entity CPS - # of involved children - expected vs. observed vs. difference (presented to Joint Labor) Foster Care Cases and In-Home Cases"
11/30/20	1. My307Wellness, Carrie King 2. Parenting Check-In Challenge 3. Wyoming 2030, Michelle Sullivan	No data provided
1/8/21	1. 2020 Recap: 2021 shared priority discussions	Rolling 7 Day Total of CPS Intakes Top 3 CPS Intake Sources CPS Caseloads (In-Home vs. Foster Care) - monthly Rolling 7 Day Total of APS Intakes
2/12/21	1. Kinship Connections of Wyoming, Jena Monahan & Gabby Rogers 4. Rental Assistance Needs Reported by Group 5. ERAP Updates 6. Risk Factors for Housing Instability, Group Brainstorm	Rolling 7 Day Total of CPS Intakes Top 3 CPS Intake Sources CPS Caseloads (In-Home vs. Foster Care) - monthly Rolling 7 Day Total of APS Intake Rental Assistance Needs Reported by Group

Date	Topic	Data Provided
3/12/21	1. Hayden Peak Academy Services, Josh Anderson, Director 7. Community Opportunity Map, Casey Family Programs, Kirk O'Brien 8. ERAP Updates	Rolling 7 Day Total of CPS Intakes Top 3 CPS Intake Sources CPS Caseloads (In-Home vs. Foster Care) - monthly Rolling 7 Day Total of APS Intakes
6/11/21	1. Casey Family Programs, Community Opportunity Map 9. ERAP Updates	Rolling 7 Day Total of CPS Intakes Top 3 CPS Intake Sources CPS Caseloads (In-Home vs. Foster Care) - monthly Rolling 7 Day Total of APS Intakes
7/9/21	1. ERAP Updates	Rolling 7 Day Total of CPS Intakes Top 3 CPS Intake Sources CPS Caseloads (In-Home vs. Foster Care) - monthly Rolling 7 Day Total of APS Intakes
8/13/21	1. ERAP Updates: data, CDC eviction moratorium, application issues	Rolling 7 Day Total of CPS Intakes Top 3 CPS Intake Sources CPS Caseloads (In-Home vs. Foster Care) - monthly Rolling 7 Day Total of APS Intakes
9/10/21	1. Wyoming's Strategy to Survive, Drive, and Thrive, Jen Davis ERAP Updates	Rolling 7 Day Total of CPS Intakes Top 3 CPS Intake Sources CPS Caseloads (In-Home vs. Foster Care) - monthly Rolling 7 Day Total of APS Intakes
10/8/21	1. Child Care Relief Funds, Spending Proposal, Roxanne O'Connor 10. ERAP Updates 11. Child Tax Credit Resources	Rolling 7 Day Total of CPS Intakes Top 3 CPS Intake Sources CPS Caseloads (In-Home vs. Foster Care) - monthly Rolling 7 Day Total of APS Intakes
11/12/21	1. Data Sharing / Open dialogue	Rolling 7 Day Total of CPS Intakes Top 3 CPS Intake Sources CPS Caseloads (In-Home vs. Foster Care) - monthly Rolling 7 Day Total of APS Intakes ERAP Payment Breakdown
3/11/22	1. APS Funding RFP, Jane Carlson 12. Other Updates in support of vulnerable adults 13. Child Abuse Prevention Month	Rolling 7 Day Total of CPS Intakes Top 3 CPS Intake Sources CPS Caseloads (In-Home vs. Foster Care) - monthly Rolling 7 Day Total of APS Intakes
4/8/22	1. Wyoming Afterschool Alliance Q/A	Rolling 7 Day Total of CPS Intakes Top 3 CPS Intake Sources

Date	Topic	Data Provided
		CPS Caseloads (In-Home vs. Foster Care) - monthly Rolling 7 Day Total of APS Intakes
5/13/22	14. SNAP Overview	Rolling 7 Day Total of CPS Intakes Top 3 CPS Intake Sources CPS Caseloads (In-Home vs. Foster Care) - monthly Rolling 7 Day Total of APS Intakes
6/10/22	1. Discussion about screened out reasons in WYCAPS 15. ERAP/HAF updates 16. Open - Summer Supports Discussion	Rolling 7 Day Total of CPS Intakes Top 3 CPS Intake Sources CPS Caseloads (In-Home vs. Foster Care) - monthly Rolling 7 Day Total of APS Intakes
7/8/22	2. DFS Social Services Division Updates - 17. PIP performance improvements; 18. Foster care recruitment project launch (Thomas); 19. CFSR upcoming 20. Family Resource Centers Update (Sara and Kara)	Rolling 7 Day Total of CPS Intakes Top 3 CPS Intake Sources CPS Caseloads (In-Home vs. Foster Care) - monthly Rolling 7 Day Total of APS Intakes
8/12/22	3. Early Care and Education Panel - 21. 1. PDG (Sheila) 22. 2. Child Care Stabilization funding/projects (Roxanne) 23. 3. Centisble Nutrition (Mindy)	Rolling 7 Day Total of CPS Intakes Top 3 CPS Intake Sources CPS Caseloads (In-Home vs. Foster Care) - monthly Rolling 7 Day Total of APS Intakes
9/9/22	4. Foster Care Recruitment Project Follow Up 24. Project Scope webinar reminder 25. Governor's Mental Health Summit reminder	Rolling 7 Day Total of CPS Intakes Top 3 CPS Intake Sources CPS Caseloads (In-Home vs. Foster Care) - monthly Rolling 7 Day Total of APS Intakes
10/14/22	5. Mental Health Intensive Outpatient Program at Wyoming Behavioral Institute 26. Independent Living Services and Education Training Vouchers 27. Kinship Connections Program Update 28. Resources (Governor's MH Summit, FRC webinars, Chapin Hall webinar, Wyoming Young	Rolling 7 Day Total of CPS Intakes Top 3 CPS Intake Sources CPS Caseloads (In-Home vs. Foster Care) - monthly Rolling 7 Day Total of APS Intakes

Date	Topic	Data Provided
	Adult Survey, Young Entrepreneur Pitch Challenge	
12/9/22	1. Open Discussion 29. ARPA Direct Proposals - JAC 30. Project ECHO webinar series reminder	Rolling 7 Day Total of CPS Intakes Top 3 CPS Intake Sources CPS Caseloads (In-Home vs. Foster Care) - monthly Rolling 7 Day Total of APS Intakes
1/13/23	6. Child and Family Services Review & Statewide Assessment Overview and Launch. 31. Resources: Parent Cafe Survey, Protective Factors ECHO, MCH funding opportunity	Rolling 7 Day Total of CPS Intakes Top 3 CPS Intake Sources CPS Caseloads (In-Home vs. Foster Care) - monthly Rolling 7 Day Total of APS Intakes
2/20/23	7. Adult Protective Services - Request for Proposals Release 32. Housing Stability Services - Update and Discussion 33. Wyoming's Prevention Plan - Update and Discussion 34. Participant-Sharing and Open Discussion	Rolling 7 Day Total of CPS Intakes Top 3 CPS Intake Sources CPS Caseloads (In-Home vs. Foster Care) - monthly Rolling 7 Day Total of APS Intakes
3/3/23	8. Legislative Session Updates and Debrief - Korin Schmidt, Stefan Johannson	No data provided
4/14/23	9. CFSR Community Partner Focus Group #1	No data provided
5/12/23	10. CFSR Community Partner Focus Group #2	No data provided
6/9/23	11. Open Sharing 35. Family Resource Center project updates 36. Maternal and Child Health Unit updates 37. POSC updates 38. WYAC update 39. Mental Health and Vulnerable Adults Task Force updates	Rolling 7 Day Total of CPS Intakes Top 3 CPS Intake Sources CPS Caseloads (In-Home vs. Foster Care) - monthly Rolling 7 Day Total of APS Intakes

The Department encourages those with lived experiences to provide feedback. In collaboration with WYCTF, WCRP, Wyoming 211, Magellan Health Wrap Around, Parent Information Center and Wyoming Governor's Office parent cafes with a total of 130 participants have been held to discuss supports provided and identified needs:

#### Supports

- Schools
- Home visiting programs
- Department of Family Services
- Child development centers
- Wrap around services
- Telehealth

#### Needs

- Parent support programs
- Life skills classes for all ages
- Suicide Prevention Programs
- Programs for teenagers
- Community celebrations
- Transportation
- Services to remote areas
- Medical Care
- Interpretation Services
- Disability access
- Fatherhood support and programming
- Affordable housing
- Family activities
- Affordable child care

The Department and WYCTF recognized parents with a primary language of Spanish were being underserved based upon the language barrier. WYCTF initiated a Spanish speaking parent cafe in March 2021. The following needs were identified:

- Interpretation services and supports for parents
- Knowledge of Spanish speaking available services
- Fear of engaging in services affecting immigration status of parents

In 2022, WYCTF, in collaboration with WYCRP, Wyoming Guardian Ad Litem Program, and Kids Deserve Dads, held Virtual Dad Cafes that involved 35 fathers statewide with a birth father leading the planning and facilitation. Identified needs from these cafes:

- Lack of programs specifically for fathers
- General lack of knowledge of father specific opportunities



The Department developed the Wyoming Youth Advisory Council (WYAC) to provide a voice from youth and young adults who have experienced the foster care system. This council holds meetings monthly in which youth can express their concerns with the child welfare systems and talk about strengths they see as well. This also allows the Department to provide feedback on proposed changes. Suggestions brought forward:

- Improved foster parent training to better understand youth
- Develop a support group to foster youth from this with lived experience
- Inform youth reasons for non-placement with relatives
- Increase frequency of visitations with caseworkers to better develop rapport
- Improve foster home and respite home checks prior to and throughout the case
- Allow youth to shop for items they typically like to consume
- What happens when they age out of
- Foster youth support group/podcast
- Support for LGBTQI+ youth

WYAC continues to meet monthly to discuss their suggestions and find ways to improve the system. The Youth Bill of Rights was updated to address some of the issues.

The Department, in preparation for the Statewide Assessment, initiated surveys and focus groups starting in February 2023 through June 2023 for all stakeholders which included caseworkers, foster care coordinators, social service aides, supervisors, district managers, Tribal representatives, Judges, prosecuting attorneys, GALs, parents attorneys, foster parents, youth 14-16, youth 18-21, and numerous community partners (mental health providers, educators, CASA, advocates, etc).

Table 46. **Stakeholder Survey Participants and Responses**

Stakeholder	Number of Responses
Community Partners	286
Legal	55
Social Services Staff	118
Foster and Adoptive Parents	117
Birth Parents/Guardians	27
Youth/Foster Care Alumni	80

Data Source: 2023 Stakeholder Survey Report

Focus Group	Attendees
Community Partners	70
Judges	10
Prosecutors	11
Guardian Ad Litem	14
Parents Attorneys	7
Caseworkers under 2 years	28



Focus Group	Attendees
Caseworkers over 2 years	12
Supervisors under 2 years	15
Supervisors over 2 years	9
District Managers	5
Foster Parents	16
Parents	4
Youth 14-17	27
Youth 18-21	5

Data Source: 2023 Stakeholder Survey Report

**Strengths:** The Department provides numerous opportunities for community partners to participate and discuss strengths, areas of concern, and receive follow-up and data. These opportunities allow for the Department to engage partners throughout the work being done with the CFSP and annual APSR updates.

There is a strong partnership between several organizations to gain feedback from those with lived experiences which helps guide the work being done with the CFSP and annual APSR.

**Opportunities for Improvement:** Tribal partners have been invited to participate in surveys, focus groups, and initiatives throughout the State. At times there is active participation and at other times barriers with communication present an issue. The Department will continue to encourage engagement with Tribal partners.

It has been brought up in several focus group meetings that having more open access to outward facing data to the public about what is happening with the child welfare system. As the Department integrates WYOSAFE the opportunity to develop an accessible dashboard is being explored.

**Promising Practices:** As part of our CFSP the Department has placed a focus on prevention services. Wyoming Legislators recently awarded \$2 million for the development of Family Resource Centers in the state. This will help to address the needs identified by key stakeholders.

Based upon the numerous opportunities provided to stakeholders especially those with lived experiences to provide information and receive updates this area is being rated as a strength.

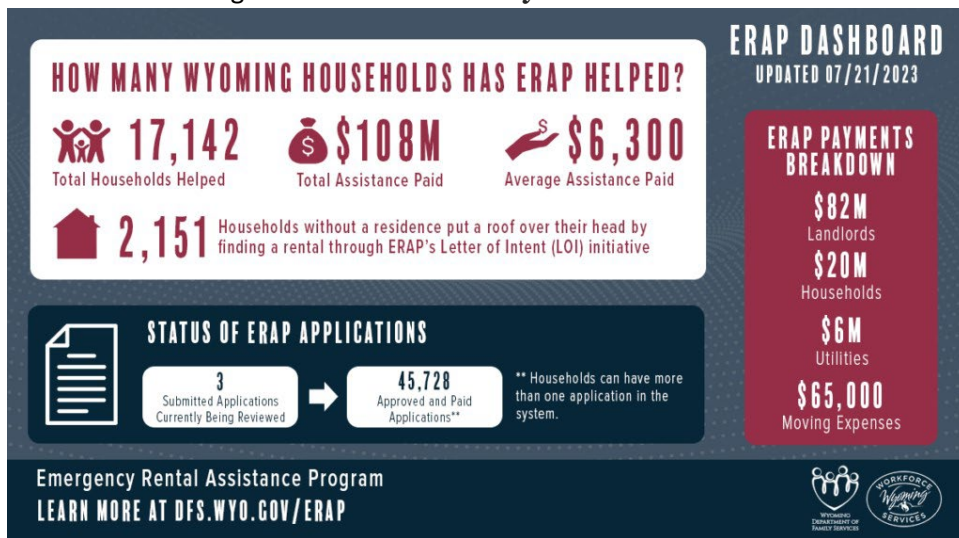
- ITEM 32: COORDINATION OF CFSP SERVICES WITH OTHER FEDERAL PROGRAMS

The very structure of the Department allows for better coordination of the CFSP with federal programs as the Department handles TANF for cash assistance for families, the SNAP program, and Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Programs (LIEAP home weatherization). The Department also oversees child care assistance and child support which receive federal funds. The Department further oversaw funds designated by ARPA

for the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ended June 30, 2023) and Homeowner Assistance Fund Program. By housing all these programs in the Department there can be transparent conversations to meet all the needs of the family.

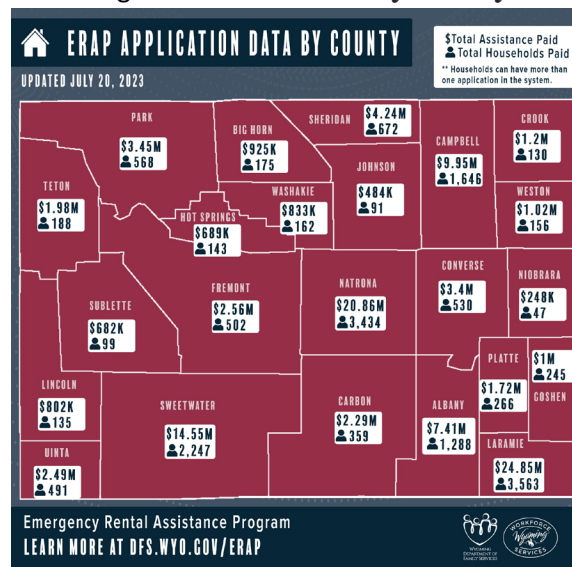
The Department is further required to share information with providers to link families to other available human service programs including Head Start and Early Head Start, WIC, Medicaid, Child and Adult Care Food Program, and CHIP. The Department also works with Wyoming 211 which connects people with community, health and disaster services through a free phone service and searchable online database (<https://wyoming211.org/wp-content/uploads/2022-Annual-Report.pdf>)

Figure 23. ERAP Payment Dashboard



Data Source:

Figure 24. ERAP by County



Data Source:

As stated in the 2020 CFSP and 2023 APSR, WCTF Board, WYCRP, the GAL program and many others support inter-agency, interdisciplinary work, as statutory provisions to support improving outcomes for children and families in Wyoming. In addition to the collaboration and coordination in the information listed above, other strong partnerships that support improving outcomes for the Wyoming Child Welfare system as well as prevention efforts includes:

- **Wyoming Department of Health:** Prevention services through home visits by public health nurses and Medicaid programs
- **Casey Family Program:** Collaboration to focus on large-scale system changes such as reduction in foster programs and reduction in length of stay in out-of-home placements
- **Prevent Child Abuse Wyoming:** Prevention education
- **Children’s Justice Project:** Court reforms in Wyoming
- **Wyoming Department of Education**
- **Wyoming Youth Services Association**
- **Wyoming Office of the Guardian Ad Litem**
- **Wyoming Association of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Treatment Centers**

Together, these agencies build a continuum of support and education services for families from preconception through adolescence that includes prevention, early intervention, family preservation, and child welfare intervention as well as strengthening services within the continuum by directing resources to areas of support improving child welfare statewide.

In addition, the table below contains a list of the Department’s Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) that allow for coordination of services with just some of our other partners serving vulnerable populations in Wyoming:

Table 48. **DFS MOUs**

Agency/Entity	Purpose of MOU
Wyoming Department of Health	Exchanging cost data for foster care participants
Goodwill Industries of Wyoming, Inc	Facilitate administration and day-to-day functions of the WWK grant to Goodwill Industries and provide support from the Department by offering expertise in adoption best practices and providing for supportive provisions
90th Missile Wing FE Warren AFB	Establishing procedures for reporting, investigating, coordinating, and managing child abuse and neglect cases involving active duty military families as well as to establish procedures for obtaining protective custody in appropriate cases
Northwest Community Action Programs of Wyoming	Provide home visiting services and Plans of Safe Care (POSC) to Fremont and Natrona County families pursuant to the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood
	Home Visiting Program Grant (MIECHV) and the Child Abuse Prevention Services Act (CAPTA) Grant for the Comprehensive Addiction Recovery Act (CARA).
Volunteers of America Northern Rockies	Provide Independent Living services to the youth in Johnson and Sheridan counties pursuant to the Foster Care Independence Act of 1999, Public Law 106-169, and Foster Care Program for Successful Transition to Adulthood Act 2018.
Community Juvenile Service Board	Provide Services for the Community Juvenile Service Board per Wyo. Stat. 14-9-108(a)(iv)

Data Source: MOUs from each agency 2023

**Strengths:** The Department, based upon its connections with numerous other federal programs, has established collaborative forums to coordinate oversight and service delivery to shared populations.

The Department oversees several federal programs allowing for families to work with one agency rather than multiple agencies, and has the ability to make referrals to those programs outside of the Department.

**Opportunities for Improvement:** Community Forums allow for the Department to learn about new opportunities to implement strategies to serve similar populations

**Promising Practices:** As noted in Item 31 Family Resource Centers are being explored to further enhance the ability of families to have one place with coordinated services locally, state, and federally.

As noted through item 32, the Department maintains oversight of several federal programs and has established relationships with other federal providers. Based upon the oversight the Department already has over some federal programs and its coordination with other agencies with federal benefits this is a strength.

## FOSTER AND ADOPTIVE PARENT LICENSING, RECRUITMENT, AND RETENTION

- ITEM 33: STANDARDS APPLIED EQUALLY

**State Response:** Department Foster Care Policy and Procedure is based on the National Model Foster Family Home Licensing Standards <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/policy-guidance/im-19-01>. These standards and policies are consistently applied to all certified foster family homes and childcare institutions. The Department is a state run, state administered agency, which allows for consistent use of the same policies, procedures, checklists, job aides, etc. across the state. Additionally, 12 FCCs provide services statewide which creates a small unit of experts who communicate and support each other regularly. The Department has one Foster Care Program Manager while FCCs are supervised locally by a District Manager.

Detailed standards, and how they are applied to all licensed foster family homes are outlined in Department policy.

- Family Foster Home Application and Certification
- Family Foster Home Recertification
- Family Foster Home Background Checks
- Family Foster Home Department Responsibilities and Problem Solving
- Family Foster Home Foster Parent Responsibilities and Core Competencies
- Family Foster Home Foster Care Rates and Foster Home Records
- Multi-Ethnic Placement Act (MEPA)

The Department's three Substitute Care Licensors who perform inspections of CCIs communicate regularly. The standards used and applied to all CCIs can be located here <https://rules.wyo.gov> by searching under Family Services, Providers of Substitute Care.

Differences in standards are best captured in the above linked policies.

In summary, the main differences between non-relative/kinship foster care and relative foster care are regarding training. Training requirements may be waived for relative providers. Kinship and non-relative provider training requirements cannot be waived but can be adjusted based on certain criteria.

Background Check requirements are the same for all three types of foster homes.

Foster Care: This is outlined in the above linked policies.

The standards used and applied to all CCIs can be located <https://rules.wyo.gov/> by searching under Family Services, Providers of Substitute Care.

Training requirements are outlined and described in [Item 28](#).

Annually, each FCC submits a recruitment and retention plan for their District(s). The plan is submitted to the FCCs District Manager and Foster Care Program Manager. Plans are reviewed by the Foster Care Program Manager and to justify expenditures the FCCs have regarding recruitment and retention purposes and to identify similarities and differences in the plans, how each identifies specific needs to their community and gathers relevant data. District Managers use the plans in performance evaluations of the FCCs, to identify needs in their areas and to advocate for the foster care program in their area. These plans include action steps to achieve district wide recruitment and retention goals. Although similar, there is some variance as needed by each FCC, District, and local communities.

Goals specific to recruitment and retention include but are not limited to:

- General recruitment of new foster homes
- Recruiting foster homes which will
  - Take and successfully care for older youth/teens.
  - Are racially/ethnically diverse to match the race/ethnicity of children in care;
    - Will take and successfully care for hard to place children (this may include children with significant behavioral issues, large sibling groups, and/or children needing specialized medical care)
  - Providing and exchanging information and facilitating training so prospective foster parents can mutually decide with the Department if fostering is appropriate for their family and to gain the preliminary knowledge and skills needed to foster.
- Increasing the number of relative/kinship caregivers.
- Assuring positive working relationships between the Department and caregivers.
  - Providing and/or arranging for on-going education and support to caregivers (including foster parents, relative/kinship caregivers, adoptive parents, and

- guardians).
- Establishing and/or maintaining office and community partnerships to support the foster care program including supporting caregivers, youth in care and birth parents.
  - Ensuring timely recertification for foster homes which are recertifying

Again, action steps vary but generally include word of mouth opportunities, participation in local events, fairs, farmers markets, and bazaars, etc., appreciation events/activities for foster families, social media advertising, flyers and brochure distribution, and mentoring, among many other steps.

In conjunction with National Foster Care Month, in May of each year, the Department funds local Foster Care Appreciation events in which FCCs hold events/activities to show support and appreciation to foster families. Because May weather is sometimes unpredictable, some events/activities are held in other months throughout the year to coincide with local celebrations or Holidays. In May each year, the Governor holds a Governor's Proclamation Ceremony and proclaims May of each year "Foster Care Awareness and Appreciation Month". This is attended by foster parents, foster children Department staff and others.

Recruitment and Retention in Wyoming is a collaborative approach shared by not only the FCCs. Current foster parents and Department staff are also involved in the process. Various Districts around the State have implemented incentives for foster parents and staff for successful recruitment of new foster parents.

An added contribution to the Foster Care Program is the First Lady is using her platform to help recruitment and retention efforts across the state by hosting an appreciation BBQ at the Governor's residence in Cheyenne in June 2023 for all former or current foster families. The First Lady will also be attending the June 2023 Wyoming Youth Advisory Council Meeting to engage directly with current and former foster youth about their individual experiences in Wyoming's child welfare and/or juvenile justice systems and plans to attend various events put on by the FCCs as her schedule permits.

In 2022 Wyoming Foster Care worked with two consultants and Casey Family Programs to improve local recruitment plans and develop strategies to recruit and support homes for older youth including youth with behavioral health needs. Consultation with Casey included:

- Assisting to define and refine the overall approach to recruitment;
- Meeting individually with each Foster Care Coordinator to learn about the recruitment needs of their areas, their current efforts, successful strategies, and barriers to recruitment and licensing of those who inquire;
- Consultation with Foster Care Coordinators to support the development of plans for local recruitment efforts;
- Assisting with creation of customized strategies for each local area such as: social media strategies, identification of target audiences, talking points, use of electronic/print media, public awareness events, a "bounty" program, etc;

- Reviewing and providing feedback on local recruitment plans;
- Development of a Wyoming-centric messaging focused on homes for older youth
  - Assisting the Department with identifying opportunities and framework for collaboration with partners, which may include behavioral health, juvenile justice, substitute care providers, Tribes, and others.

A recruitment video was developed and widely distributed in May 2023. This video was created at minimal cost by the Foster Care Coordinators and featured Wyoming families and children in Wyoming locations in hopes to appeal to Wyoming families.

Recertification requirements are reviewed by Foster Care Coordinators prior to recertification. Foster Care Coordinators complete a file checklist of certification requirements prior to issuing the foster home certificate. District Managers periodically review resource family files to ensure that compliance with the certification requirements is met. In addition, in 2022 a 100% foster home file review was completed and ongoing reviews of 25% of foster home files are reviewed each year. Those reviews, along with the ongoing reviews by the District Managers and the Foster Care Coordinators, certification requirements are consistently audited for quality control purposes. These types of in-person reviews contain a small amount of human error so several reviews help to catch any errors missed by previous reviews. WYOSAFE processes mandate that all necessary steps are sequential and completed prior to certification or recertification, guaranteeing all certified homes have met foster care standards completely, eliminating the need for in-person review and any potential human error.

Corrective action plans for lower-level concerns are administered locally by the Foster Care Coordinator and the District Manager. For higher levels of concern, such as a foster parent deliberately furnishes or makes a misleading or false statement or report to the Department, a foster parent fails to maintain standards as required by the Department, a foster parent fails to complete all required training as specified, a foster parent refuses to cooperate with the Department during the course of an investigation, or review of the foster home, substantiated finding of abuse or neglect or other reasons identified by the District Manager the Department follows policies and procedures specific to these situations. Those policies are Foster Family Home Application & Certification, Family Foster Home Department Responsibilities and Problem Solving and Child Protection Investigation Track.

All CCIs have a 10-day period to dispute any findings by licensing. Once the time has elapsed, the corrective action is either agreed upon by the facility or is assigned by the Department, depending on the level of the infraction and multiple infractions by the same facility. Corrective action for rule violations is addressed in a compliance letter. Most compliances are given a 30-day corrective action plan however any rule violations that are of a safety concern will be required in a time frame to assure safety of youth is priority.

Compliances that are found through investigations, renewal of certification process, or by unannounced visits are subjected to the same process. Repeat of the same violation or concerns for youth safety can lead to suspension of license or denial of renewal.

In lieu of delaying certification or recertification if they were unable to complete an



in-person walk-through of the home, Foster Care Coordinators were allowed to conduct the homestay/walk-through portion with virtual technology. Other required walkthroughs or in-home visits were allowed to be done virtually as well. All requirements were allowed to be delayed but were required for certification or prior to recertification.

For State certified foster homes, the Department has several levels of review in place to ensure that standards and requirements are applied equally to all foster homes. The primary source of contact for foster homes are Foster Care Coordinators. These individuals work with foster families to ensure that their needs are being met and that foster homes are following State and federal requirements.

One of the most important services that Foster Care Coordinators oversee is the certification and recertification of foster homes. Foster Care Coordinators ensure that all required documentation is present and correct in the individual file before issuing certificates. Documentation that demonstrates State standards are applied equally to all certified foster homes is the completion of a file checklist of certification requirements, and the issuance of the foster home certificate. The exceptions to this are relative and kinship foster homes which have separate requirements for certification. Relative and kinship foster homes may have some non-safety requirements waived. All safety requirements for certification are applicable to all foster homes.

**Substitute Care Providers:** Rules for substitute care programs, which are licensed to operate foster homes or approve adoptive homes, have similar standards and requirements as State certified foster homes. The Support Services Division licenses these programs, as well as childcare institutions (crisis centers, group homes, residential treatment centers, qualified residential treatment programs), and reviews program, agency, personnel, and child files following standardized policies and procedures during regularly scheduled reviews and also during announced and unannounced on-site visits between formal reviews.

Substitute Care Licensors are required to conduct three unannounced visits at each facility annually; a complete facility inspection is done during one of these visits wherein all health and safety requirements are checked and documented on the Facility Inspection Form. In addition, recertification visits every one or two years require complete facility inspections.

A team approach is used in licensing. Two licensers will conduct the on-site visit and findings are reviewed as a team prior to the license being issued. The three staff who perform inspections communicate regularly and have checklists and reviews in place to assure standards are applied equally to all childcare institutions licensed by the division. Additionally, documents submitted to approve licensure are reviewed by the supervisor prior to licensure.

**Data Sources:** Department policies regarding foster care are:

- Family Foster Home Application and Certification
- Family Foster Home Recertification

- Family Foster Home-Background Checks
- Family Foster Care-Department Responsibilities and Problem Solving
- Family Foster Home Foster Parent Responsibilities and Core Competencies
- Family Foster Home Foster Care Rates and Foster Home Records
- Multi-Ethnic Placement Act (MEPA)

An exact number of waivers granted is not tracked by the current Department data system. A new system (WYOSAFE) is being developed that will have the capability to track this, and other data. Waivers include Training waivers for relatives, training waivers for foster parents who have received approved training in other States and waivers for relatives who care for children that they are already familiar with.

Currently there are 719 foster parents and 475 certified non-relative, relative and kinship foster homes throughout the State. The Department does not have a separate certification process for adoptive homes, and potentially any of our foster homes could become an adoptive home. While the Department is not an adoption agency, approximately 100 adoptions per year are with the child's foster parent.

- CFSR Round 3 and Practice Round case review information
- CFSR Round 4 Stakeholder survey and focus group information

**Strengths:** The evidence identifies that the foster and adoptive parent licensing, recruitment, and retention system functioning statewide ensures that state standards are applied to all certified approved foster family homes because:

Department Foster Care Policies applies to every Foster Care Coordinator, other Department Staff and District. This provides that the Department foster care standards are applied consistently throughout the State. Per policy, timelines for certification and recertification are consistent in each District and criteria for any waivers granted to foster homes are consistent for each District. Foster Care Coordinators submit annual Recruitment and Retention plans with similar goals that are consistent across the State. Foster Care Coordinators complete a file checklist of certification requirements prior to issuing the foster home certificate. Foster Care Coordinators complete a file checklist of recertification requirements prior to recertifying the foster home. Any additional foster care forms are Department approved and are consistent Statewide. The quality assurance process for monitoring the standards for certification and recertification, and for other foster care related purposes are consistent Statewide. In addition, in 2022 a 100% foster home file review was completed and annual reviews of 25% of foster home files were completed. Any waivers applicable to foster parents are outlined in policy and any that are granted are required to be documented in the foster care file and in WYCAPS. Foster Care worked with Casey Family Programs to improve local recruitment plans and develop strategies to recruit and support homes for older youth including youth with behavioral health needs. A recruitment video was developed in May 2023 and featured Wyoming families and children in Wyoming locations in hopes to appeal to Wyoming families. Foster Care Coordinators have organized monthly Statewide Foster Parent Support

Meetings for foster parents This provides an opportunity to interact with fellow foster parents and provides a sense of consistency and unity for foster parents who are from all different areas of the State. The Department does not deny any individual the opportunity to become a foster parent on the basis of the race, color, or national origin of the individual, or of the child, as required by the federal Multiethnic Placement Act (MEPA), and Title IV-E of the Social Security Act. Furthermore, the Department does not discriminate about the application or certification of a foster family on the basis of age, disability, gender, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or marital status.

**Opportunities for Improvement:** Currently the Foster Care Program is unable to track when waivers are given to foster parents. Other data specific to foster care is not tracked by the current system. WYOSAFE will enable waivers and other data for foster parents to be tracked and provide more consistency to the Foster Care Program.

Currently, the quality assurance process is conducted by various in-person file reviews. WYOSAFE will provide a quality assurance process and eliminate potential human error associated with in-person file reviews.

**Promising Practices:** From consultation with Casey Family Programs, various new recruitment and retention strategies have been implemented by the Foster Care Coordinators. A recruitment video was developed by the Foster Care Coordinators and has been widely distributed. Numerous foster care appreciation activities occur throughout the year.

**Conclusion and Key Findings:** The Department believes the foster and adoptive parent licensing, recruitment, and retention system functioning statewide to ensure that state standards are applied to all licensed or approved foster family homes or childcare institutions receiving title IV-B or IV-E funds is a strength because our foster care policy and practice is ensures that foster and adoptive care are standards apply to every home and equally to every home.

- Department foster care policy outlines our standards for foster care certification and recertification.
- Department foster care policy includes how our standards differ by foster home type. and identifies waivers applied to specific foster homes.
- Department foster care policy includes our processes used to monitor foster and adoptive parent certification and recertification.
- Department foster care policy identifies waivers applied to specific foster homes and the process for applying waivers.
- The Department describes a thorough and robust recruitment and retention process.
- The Department employs a comprehensive quality assurance process for monitoring the standards for certification and recertification of foster homes.
- The Department has processes for corrective action plans.

- Modifications during COVID-19 for certification and recertification were adopted.

### **Opportunities for improvement:**

- Improved tracking of waivers provided to foster homes. WYOSAFE will have the capability to track this information.
- Quality assurance relies on in-person file reviews that can potentially have human error. WYOSAFE will provide a fail-safe for quality assurance purposes.

- **ITEM 34: REQUIREMENTS FOR CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS**

The Department has several policies to ensure federal requirements for criminal background checks are met as well as methods to ensure they are followed. This includes foster and adoptive parents as well as placements in childcare institutions licensed by the Department. The applicable policies include Family Foster Home Application and Certification, Family Foster Home Recertification, Relative/Kinship Placement, and Background Checks.

The Department’s above-mentioned policies describe the certification of prospective foster and adoptive parents and any other adult household member include the criminal record check requirements for:

- Fingerprint-based checks of national crime information databases
- Checks of the child abuse and neglect central registry in Wyoming and any other state resided in the preceding 5 years
- State and national sex offender registries

The criminal background checks are completed, regardless of whether foster care maintenance payments, adoption assistance payments, or kinship guardianship assistance payments are being made on behalf of the child.

Background check results with a satisfactory disposition must be received by Department staff prior to a foster or adoptive home having a child placed in their home. Receipt of results is monitored by local Foster Care Coordinators (FCC) as well as District Managers.

Administrative Rules for “Providers of Substitute Care” establish the same federal background requirements for childcare institutions licensed by the Department for employees prior to the start of their employment.

The Substitute Care licensers utilize a data system to track compliance with staff’s background check results. Facility directors of CCIs complete a Staff Facility Record Summary submit to their respective Substitute Care licenser on an annual basis. The Substitute Care Licensors conduct three unannounced visits at each facility per year; staff files are reviewed to verify information provided on the Staff Facility Record Summary

during at least one of these unannounced visits.

The Department utilizes the IV-E Eligibility Team to conduct regular, ongoing Quality Assurance regarding the completion of background checks for foster care and adoptive parents to ensure compliance with federal background check requirements. The Department reviews compliance of completion of background checks for CCI staff during an annual IV-E Eligibility review which includes a Department cross-functional and interagency review partners. Both reviews are limited to children who are IV-E eligible.

Non-compliance for foster care and adoptive parent resources that is identified in the regular, ongoing Quality Assurance process results in feedback to the licensing FCC for the purposes of correcting the non-compliant issue. When a non-compliant issue is identified and cannot be corrected, the Department ensures no IV-E payments are claimed during periods of non-compliance.

For all foster and adoptive homes, the Foster Care Review Team, which includes statewide FCCs, meet annually to review compliance with various policies to include completion of background checks. A standardized foster home safety checklist is completed for foster and adoptive providers' licensing records, as selected by a random sample. Review results are tracked by some FCCs in a data sheet.

The Department has policies to ensure federal requirements for recurring criminal background checks for foster and adoptive parents licensed by the Department. The applicable policies include Family Foster Home Application and Certification, Family Foster Home Recertification, Relative/Kinship Placement, and Background Checks.

Department policy requires that background checks be completed prior to each annual/biennial recertification. Like the initial certification process, the Department's policies related to the certification of prospective foster and adoptive parents and any other adult household member include the criminal record check requirements for:

- Fingerprint-based checks of national crime information databases every 5 years
  - Annual checks of the child abuse and neglect central registry in Wyoming and any other state resided in the preceding five years
- State and national sex offender registries

The Department requires immediate notification of changes in family circumstances, such as a new adult family member entering the household or children reaching the age of 18. All background checks must be completed on those individuals. Receipt of results is monitored by local Foster Care Coordinators as well as District Managers.

Administrative Rules for “Providers of Substitute Care” establish the same federal background requirements for childcare institutions licensed by the Department for employees throughout the duration of their employment.

The standards used to ensure new or existing staff's compliance requires that “All

employees, volunteers, interns, foster parents, or adult household members shall complete:

- Fingerprint-based checks of national crime information databases every 5 years
- Annual checks of the child abuse and neglect central registry in Wyoming and any other state resided in the preceding 5 years

The DFS Certifying Authority may require a new child abuse/neglect Central Registry background check at any time for employees, volunteers, interns, foster parents, or adult household members.”

The Substitute Care licensers utilize a data system to track compliance with staff's background check results. Facility directors of CCIs complete a Staff Facility Record Summary submit to their respective Substitute Care licensor on an annual basis. The Substitute Care Licensing conducts three (3) unannounced visits at each facility per year; staff files are reviewed to verify information provided on the Staff Facility Record Summary during at least one of these unannounced visits.

The SACWIS system provides scheduled alerts to the Foster Care Coordinators prior to the expiration of existing foster care and adoptive provider certifications.

For IV-E eligible children, the Department utilizes the IV-E Eligibility Team to conduct regular, ongoing Quality Assurance regarding the completion of background checks for foster care and adoptive parents to ensure compliance with federal background check requirements. In comparison, the Department reviews compliance of completion of background checks for CCI staff during an annual IV-E Eligibility review.

Non-compliance for foster care and adoptive parent resources that is identified in the regular, ongoing Quality Assurance process results in feedback to the licensing FCC for the purposes of correcting the non-compliant issue. When a non-compliant issue is identified and cannot be corrected, the Department ensures IV-E payments are not claimed during periods of non-compliance.

For all foster and adoptive homes, the Foster Care Review Team, which includes all statewide FCCs meet annually to review compliance with various policies which includes completion of background checks. A standardized foster home safety checklist is completed for foster and adoptive providers' licensing records as selected by a random sample. Review results are tracked by some FCCs in a data sheet.

The Substitute Care Licensers maintain a database to track compliance with staff's background check results. The Licensors review the annually submitted Staff Facility Record Summary which includes the date the staff completed the background check requirements and employment begin date.

Each FCC maintains a provider file for each foster and adoptive parent and all certifications and recertifications of a foster or adoptive parent are reviewed by the licensing FCC and their DM. Additionally, the Department's IV-E Eligibility Team routinely gathers data by the IV-E OSRI for IV-E eligible children. This data is used to

inform areas needing improvement in a multitude of areas, including policy and procedure to successfully ensure background check requirements are being met for current and prospective foster and adoptive parents. As non-compliant issues are identified, the root cause is further examined, and any needed training is facilitated in addition to policy and procedure updates.

When a non-compliant issue is identified and cannot be corrected, the Department ensures IV-E payments are not claimed during periods of non-compliance.

For all foster and adoptive homes, the Foster Care Review Team, which includes all statewide FCCs meet annually to review compliance with various policies which includes completion of background checks. A standardized foster home safety checklist is completed for each foster and adoptive provider's licensing record. Review results are tracked by some FCCs in a data sheet.

The Substitute Care Licensors maintain a database to track compliance with staff's background check results. The Licensors review the annually submitted Staff Facility Record Summary which includes the date the staff completed the background check requirements and employment begin date.

The Department does not currently have children placed by child placement agencies.

The above-mentioned Department policies contain the list of requirements for compliance, including several checklists for use and application to individual foster care and adoptive placement resources. The Foster Care Program Manager convenes monthly meetings with the Foster Care Coordinators to discuss the equitable application of these requirements, among other appropriate topics. These meetings were used to inform revisions of above-described updates to policies and procedures related to meeting background check requirements of foster care and adoptive placement resources.

If potential foster and adoptive parents do not comply with background check requirements, the application is denied, and the home may not be certified and may not provide care to foster children. For recertification of homes, if there is noncompliance with the background checks requirements, the home is not recertified.

Any staff of CCIs identified during any process without proof of completed initial background checks or ongoing compliance required checks is considered a violation of standards. This violation requires immediate corrective action that will include removal of staff from duties that involve youth supervision. Additional compliance may include policy reform to assure no future staff is allowed supervision of youth without providing documentation of background checks. A facility may be denied recertification of license or possible suspension or revocation of license if safety violations such as background checks are identified as an ongoing compliance issue.

Due to frequent staff turnover, the private CCIs in Wyoming struggle to maintain staff-to-resident ratios while simultaneously complying with this requirement. Several CCIs operate in this manner most of the time and are granted a "variance" by the licensor. The Substitute Care Licensors are granting variances to staff of CCIs regarding

background check requirements in all CCIs licensed by the Department. It is the general practice that, if a new employee is hired and their background checks are not completed but they begin employment, they are not left unsupervised with any youth. The Department recognizes that this is non-compliance with federal requirements and title IV-E is not claimed for otherwise IV-E eligible children in CCIs.

Non-compliance for foster care and adoptive parent resources that is identified in the regular, ongoing IV-E Quality Assurance process results in feedback to the licensing FCC for the purposes of correcting the non-compliant issue. When a non-compliant issue is identified and cannot be corrected, the Department ensures no IV-E payments are claimed during periods of non-compliance. This data is used to inform areas needing improvement in a multitude of areas, including policy and procedure to successfully ensure background check requirements are being met for current and prospective foster and adoptive parents. As non-compliant issues are identified, the root cause is further examined, and any needed training is facilitated in addition to policy and procedure updates.

Although the previously described Department Policies prohibit children from being placed in a foster or adoptive home before the required background checks are completed, the Department does not have a consistent statewide process to identify instances when a child is placed in a foster or adoptive home before the required background checks are completed. Local FCCs and DMs track the frequency with which this happens.

The Substitute Care Licensors frequently allow CCIs to request a variance for employees who begin employment prior to the successful completion of the background check process. The Substitute Care Licensors grant variances to staff of CCIs regarding background check requirements in all CCIs licensed by the Department. If a new employee is hired and their background checks are not completed but they begin employment, they are not left unsupervised with any youth.

Currently, a majority of CCIs in Wyoming have had at least one background check related variance in the past 12 months. The variances are tracked and monitored by the Substitute Care Licensors and include information on the date the variance request was made by the CCI, if it was approved or denied, the expiration date, and the staff person's name.

The Department's IV-E Eligibility Team's annual IV-E Eligibility Review, which uses the IV-E OSRI for IV-E eligible children, reviews background check requirement compliance. Consistent, regular reviews of foster care and adoptive placements for IV-E eligible children result in the IV-E Eligibility Team Identifying, after the fact, if a placement was made prior to background check completion. CCI background checks data, as provided by the Substitute Care Licensors, is reviewed by the IV-E Eligibility Team, annually.

Non-compliance for foster care and adoptive parent resources that is identified in the regular, ongoing Quality Assurance process results in feedback to the licensing FCC for the purposes of correcting the non-compliant issue. When a non-compliant issue is identified and cannot be corrected, the only current recourse for the Department is to ensure that IV-E payments are not claimed during periods of non-compliance.



IV-E reimbursement has not been claimed on children placed in CCIs since October 1, 2021.

For all foster and adoptive homes, the Foster Care Review Team, which includes all statewide FCCs meet annually to review compliance with various policies which includes completion of background checks. A standardized foster home safety checklist is completed for each foster and adoptive provider's licensing record. Review results are tracked by some FCCs in a data sheet.

The Department policies to ensure federal requirements for criminal background checks are met as well as methods to ensure they are followed. This includes foster and adoptive parents as well as placements in childcare institutions licensed by the Department.

**Re-running criminal background checks:** The Department has policies, as previously described, to ensure ongoing completion of criminal background for foster and adoptive parents. Fingerprint based background checks are required for all foster and adoptive parents at least every 5 years and checks of the central registry are required annually. The same review processes occur as detailed above by the IV-E Eligibility and Foster Care Review Teams.

**Assessing child safety while in placement or while on trial home visits:** The Department policies and procedures require that caseworkers completed face to face contact be made with all children at least monthly. The policies require that the majority of face to face contact take place in the home in which the child resides. Department caseworkers are required to physically see the children during the monthly visit and shall include alone time to discuss the children's safety concerns. This alone time provides Department caseworkers an opportunity to discuss with the children rules in the foster home as well as how each is doing in other areas. If the children report any safety concerns or allegations of abuse or neglect in the foster home, the Department has policy and procedures in handling these situations. Formal safety assessments are required regarding children's primary caregivers prior to a trial home placement. Additional requirements include informal assessments of safety in foster care and adoptive placements be documented in case narrative.

When children are placed in a CCI, caseworkers are required to conduct at least one face to face visit with the child in the facility to discuss safety and treatment.

**Responding to allegations of child maltreatment in out-of-home placements:** The Department policies and procedures require Department response to allegations of children maltreatment in foster care and adoptive placements and placements in CCIs. These allegations would constitute a need for a Special Investigation.

**Responding to allegations of policy violations in out-of-home placements:** Administrative Rules for "Providers of Substitute Care" establish the health and safety requirements of any licensed CCI. The Substitute Care Licensors conduct three (3) unannounced visits at each facility per year. During these visits, the Licensors utilize a checklist to verify that all of the requirements outlined in the Administrative Rules are

met by the CCI. A facility may be denied recertification of license or possible suspension or revocation of license if safety violations are identified as an ongoing compliance issue.

Staff of state licensed CCIs are observed by Substitute Care Licensors during regular visits to CCIs throughout the year. If concerns are observed, otherwise reported, or is requested by the facility, licensing staff respond when applicable to assess the safety of children placed in the CCI.

**Response to children on runaway status:** When a child is reported as a Runaway, Department policies and procedures require that the Department report the runaway to law enforcement, that the child be entered into the National Crime Information Center system and inform the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children with all pertinent information, and that the members of the child's juvenile court team be informed. The change to runaway status must also be entered into the SACWIS case management system, which triggers alerts to ensure that the Human & Sex Trafficking screening be completed upon locating the child. It also ensures that the State Office level of the Department is aware of the runaway child and can directly support the local level at complying with all policy and procedural requirements.

The Department requires that any allegations of abuse or neglect occurring in licensed foster homes, pre adoptive home or childcare institutions shall enter a new intake into the WYCAPS system. The intake is then screened by a supervisor to determine if a new incident is assigned or if the report does not meet criteria for abuse or neglect and should be handled by the foster care coordinator or licensing division. The WYCAPS system however does not have a mechanism to track intakes or incidents regarding the above mentioned placements making it difficult to track when this is occurring. The Department does take note based upon the state data profile there is an increase regarding maltreatment in care which could be linked to issues with background checks, however a deeper dive into this data would need to be conducted.

The Department does track when a licensed foster home, pre adoptive home or child care institution has assigned a case for investigation. These investigations are usually handled by one of the special investigators in the state. The following chart shows how many special investigations were assigned regarding these placements and if the allegation was substantiated or unsubstantiated:

In developing WYOSAFE we have made it possible to identify when an intake involves a licensed foster home, pre adoptive home or child care institution allowing the Department to better track this data.

The Department's Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Team has resumed regular, ongoing review of cases statewide using the CFSR OSRI and will continue immediately concluding the CFSR. Through the CQI process, it's anticipated the Department will be able to demonstrate positive change over time which demonstrates a consistent case planning process to address safety of children in foster care and adoptive placements.

The Department does not contract with providers to recruit and manage foster family homes.

- ITEM 35: DILIGENT RECRUITMENT OF FOSTER AND ADOPTIVE HOMES

FCCs in each area around the State submit their Recruitment and Retention plans to their District Manager and to the Foster Care Program Manager. These plans include similar goals but the action steps to achieve these goals vary by each FCC, District, and even local communities each FCC is responsible for.

Goals specific to recruitment and retention include but are not limited to:

- General recruitment of new foster homes
- Recruiting foster homes which will
  - Take and successfully care for older youth/teens.
  - Are racially/ethnically diverse to match the race/ethnicity of children in care;
  - Will take and successfully care for hard to place children (this may include children with significant behavioral issues, large sibling groups, and/or children needing specialized medical care)
- Providing and exchanging information and facilitating training so prospective foster parents can mutually decide with the Department if fostering is appropriate for their family and to gain the preliminary knowledge and skills needed to foster.
- Increasing the number of relative/kinship caregivers (whether or not the caregiver chooses to become certified).
- Assuring positive working relationships between the Department and caregivers.
- Providing and/or arranging for on-going education and support to caregivers (including foster parents, relative/kinship caregivers, adoptive parents, and guardians).
- Establishing and/or maintaining office and community partnerships to support the foster care program including supporting caregivers, youth in care and birth parents.
- Ensuring timely recertification for foster homes which are recertifying

Again, action steps vary but generally include word of mouth opportunities, participation in local events, fairs, farmers markets, bazaars, etc., appreciation events/activities for foster families, social media advertising, flyers and brochure distribution, and mentoring, among many other steps too numerous to mention.

In conjunction with National Foster Care Month, in May of each year, the Department funds local Foster Care Appreciation events in which FCCs hold events/activities to show support and appreciation to foster families. Because May weather is sometimes unpredictable, some events/activities are held in other months throughout the year to coincide with local celebrations or Holidays. In May each year, the Governor holds a Governor's Proclamation Ceremony and proclaims May of each year "Foster Care Awareness and Appreciation Month". This is attended by foster parents, foster children Department staff and others. An added contribution to the Foster Care Program is the

First Lady is using her platform to help recruitment and retention efforts across the state.

Recruitment and Retention in Wyoming is not only done by the Foster Care Coordinators. Current foster parents and Department staff are also involved in the process. Various Districts around the State have implemented incentives for foster parents and staff for successful recruitment of new foster parents.

In 2022 Wyoming Foster Care worked with two consultants and Casey Family Programs to improve local recruitment plans and develop strategies to recruit and support homes for older youth including youth with behavioral health needs. Consultation with Casey included:

- Assisting to define and refine the overall approach to recruitment;
- Meeting individually with each Foster Care Coordinator to learn about the recruitment needs of their areas, their current efforts, successful strategies, and barriers to recruitment and licensing of those who inquire;
- Consultation with Foster Care Coordinators to support the development of plans for local recruitment efforts;
- Assisting with creation of customized strategies for each local area such as: social media strategies, identification of target audiences, talking points, use of electronic/print media, public awareness events, a “bounty” program, etc;
- Reviewing and providing feedback on local recruitment plans;
- Development of a Wyoming-centric messaging focused on homes for older youth
- Assisting the Department with identifying opportunities and framework for collaboration with partners, which may include behavioral health, juvenile justice, substitute care providers, Tribes, and others.

A recruitment video was developed and widely distributed in May 2023. This video was created at minimal cost by the Foster Care Coordinators and featured Wyoming families and children in Wyoming locations in hopes to appeal to Wyoming families.

WYCAPS is not able to produce some of the data that the Department requires. To gather the data needed, a google sheet was developed that collects specific data points from the FCCs individual sheets and compiles that information into one document. This along with child specific data from WYCAPS is used to track foster care data and inform the Department on trends helps to identify needs and gaps in the foster care system. This will be improved with WYOSAFE and will make tracking of foster care data easier and will be more accurate. Monthly meetings occur with the FCCs to review recruitment efforts, identify trends around recruitment, share ideas and potential recruitment strategies, track progress on their plans, and identify needs seen with the foster care program. From these meetings, plans are updated as needed.

The need for diverse foster homes which reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of children and youth who need foster homes is a priority for the Department. Due to the lack of racial and ethnic diversity in most Wyoming communities, reaching out to relatives and kin of

specific children through family finding and other family search and engagement strategies is the most effective means of finding appropriate connections and placements for most children and especially for children and youth who are members of minority groups. Activities designed to increase cultural and racial diversity in foster homes identified by the focus groups and survey results include:

- Certification and recertification materials specific to prospective foster parents who are Hispanic/Latino in both English and Spanish;
- The Department collaborates with the tribes in foster home recruitment and retention; and
- The Department utilizes web-based PRIDE training for Spanish speaking families via Foster Parent College.

Again, considering the lack of racial diversity in the State, this type of situation rarely occurs. Reaching out to relatives and kin of specific children through family finding and other family search and engagement strategies is the most effective means of finding appropriate connections and placements for most children and especially for children and youth who are members of minority groups. On the few occasions it has happened, members of that ethnicity or race are consulted and provide direct support to the foster parent. This situation is more likely to happen with cases involving Tribal members from either the Northern Arapaho or Eastern Shoshone Tribes. To help with that, the Department works with Tribal partners from the Wind River Reservation in those situations to either assume case management or provide consultation. The Department is also responsible for Tribal notification in accordance with ICWA regulations on a case by case basis. In March 2023, in cooperation with the Northern Arapaho or Eastern Shoshone Tribes, Wyoming codified ICWA as state law, helping to ensure child welfare protections of ICWA.

Foster Care Coordinators' Recruitment and Retention Plans reflect their individualized strategies for identifying homes that will take more challenging types of placements. One of the most successful means of recruitment is word of mouth. This is cited by FCCs time and time again as being the most successful recruitment resource and most beneficial to an interested party deciding to apply to be a foster parent. Other examples used by FCCs in their efforts include social media efforts, utilizing current foster families for support/mentoring, recruiting activities that focus on people who currently care for or work with challenging or difficult children, recruiting within existing foster homes and locating relative or kinship homes of the same race or ethnic group of the children, just to name a few. Another factor the FCCs consider is the experience of the foster home. Successful foster homes for more challenging type behaviors are generally more experienced and more seasoned homes. Most homes that are brand new to fostering are not prepared to take on children that have more challenges. Placing a child with special needs or with challenges with a newly recruited and certified home is not usually a successful strategy and sets both the child and the foster home up for failure. More veteran type homes have more skills and are better equipped to handle a more challenging placement.

The Department uses data from WYCAPS to provide information on the status, demographic characteristics, location, needs and goals for children in foster care. Various surveys by the Department and the WYCRP are conducted. On a more personal level, monthly Statewide Foster Parent Support Meetings provide great information to FCCs. Personal contact with foster parents also provides a wealth of information and needs of individual foster parents.

The identification of relative, kinship, and other important connections as potential placements at the beginning of the case is essential, as is the ability to engage these connections throughout the life of the case. Although the identification of these connections is primarily a caseworker function, it is also a critical recruitment strategy as these placements are usually the most successful long term. The Department has identified the need to provide training and support, so placements are successful and important connections are maintained. Local strategies supporting the engagement and support of relatives and kinship foster families are included in the local foster care recruitment and retention plans. Development of a kinship specific training curriculum that decreases the hourly commitment for training from the commitment required for non-relative foster care. Surveys of all foster care types, including kinship providers are conducted each year by the Wyoming Citizens Review Panel. Feedback is also gathered from kinship providers by the FCCs on an ongoing basis on strengths, areas needing improvement, and support that the FCC can provide. Kinship providers are also included in the monthly Statewide Foster Parent Support Meetings facilitated by the FCCs.

It is important for the Department to ensure that high quality parenting support, consultation, and mental health services are available for foster families and children, to allow for successful placement and maintenance in the least restrictive setting. To achieve these goals, the Department does the following:

- Review of utilization of existing mental health services which accept Medicaid and use evidence-based/informed practices for trauma assessments and treatment, when available, or work with the clinical services division and Wyoming Department of Health to locate appropriate services.
- Ensure applications and/or referrals has been made for Children’s Mental Health Waiver, Children’s Developmental Disabilities Waiver, Care Management Entity, Maternal and Children’s Health/Children’s Special Health, WYhealth, Supplemental Security Income, Vocational Rehabilitation, Individual Educational Plans and any other services or programs which can help address any social, emotional, behavioral, physical, or developmental concerns of the child.
- Pay for mental health services related to the case for foster parents and their families;
- Consult with clinical services division staff of needs for foster homes;
- Work with experts to provide one-on-one training and consultation, in collaboration with clinical services division staff, to foster parents.

After initial PRIDE, or other CWLA approved training, the Department does not mandate

specific training. Foster Care Coordinators in each community work with each foster family in determining opportunities which will increase their skills and knowledge to care for the special needs of children placed in their home and further develop their competencies as foster parents. Foster parents are encouraged to seek training that addresses identified needs and to assist in handling specific behaviors that they have encountered. Reactive Attachment Disorder (RAD) is offered to foster parents and provides information on understanding and recognizing reactive attachment disorder behaviors as well as how to work with those who have this complex diagnosis. These trainings are held throughout the state at the request of the FCC. TBRI (Trust-Based Relational Intervention) is also offered to foster parents through periodic sessions throughout the State. TBRI is an attachment-based, trauma-informed intervention that is designed to meet the complex needs of vulnerable children. Foster Parent College is also available to foster parents and the curriculum covers a wide variety of foster care related topics. The Department pays for these and other training opportunities.

Currently the Department contracts with DocuSign to enable potential homes to complete our foster care application packet and necessary recertification documents online. This helps decrease certification times and paperwork required. It's been used as a sort of "stop gap" until WYOSAFE becomes available. With WYOSAFE, application and recertification will be a much more user-friendly experience. The Department has also contracted with Wyoming 211 to establish a Kinship Navigator Program, Kinship Connections of Wyoming (KCW) to serve relatives and kin statewide. KCW is currently participating in a program evaluation in partnership with Montana. The program evaluation will measure outcomes of access to services, child permanency, child stability, and caregiver well-being to the standards that are required by the Prevention Services Clearinghouse.

The Wyoming Citizens Review Panel held two focus groups with foster care youth and alumni. While much of the feedback was related to case management in general, there were some discussions around foster care that were beneficial to the FCCs.

Below is a summary from WYCRP on the two groups:

*"Youths were also specifically asked questions related to their experiences in foster care. Not all the participants had lived in traditional foster care. However, those with this experience provided a lot of input. Many stated their foster families did not have enough background information about their specific needs to properly care for them. They cited information about their birth families, mental health diagnoses and treatment needs, educational history, and dietary restrictions as examples of vital information needed by foster parents. One respondent wished his foster family had asked about triggers for his anger and other behaviors. Several youth stated they lacked a basic understanding of how foster care works, while the majority stated they felt birth children were treated better than foster children. A majority reported feeling safe in their foster homes, but also expressed concern for not being placed together with their siblings. The questions asked during the focus group were related to how much the youth felt they were included in decisions related to their experiences and time in foster care/ DFS involvement. Youths were asked which part of the state they represented, and attendees were spread*

throughout the state. The next two questions were related to how well DFS caseworkers worked with the youths on their caseloads. Depending on the nature of the youth's involvement with DFS, they either had experience with child protection workers or probation officers. Some youth stated they did not feel they had enough interaction with their caseworkers, but when they did interact, their workers genuinely cared and attempted to be helpful. 29% of respondents stated they were very satisfied with how their caseworkers worked with them, while 14% were not at all satisfied. Some respondents stated they felt their caseworkers met with them regularly. During these interactions, caseworkers reportedly asked youths if they had any safety concerns 86% of the time. 71% of youths were asked about their school attendance and performance, while 57% were asked about the counseling services they received. Others felt they saw their workers enough but did not feel their workers were engaged and listening to their input and needs. 22% of the respondents felt their caseworkers were very prepared to work with them, while 11% rated their caseworkers as not being prepared. An example given of this was the fact youths did not feel they received timely or accurate information regarding their cases. In fact, lack of communication was cited as a concern throughout the discussion, and not just in relation to [DFS] caseworkers, but all members of the child protection system. Next the participants were asked if they had been included in the development of their Case Plan. To ensure clarity, the first few pages of the document were included in the presentation, so the youths understood the document being referenced. Of the total number of respondents, 33% had been included in preparing their case plans. Interestingly, 22% stated they weren't sure if they had been included, while others stated they had never seen the case plan document before. Interestingly, 44% felt they were included in their MDT meetings, while an equal 44% stated they were not included. At this point in the discussion, many of the youths acknowledged they felt decisions regarding their physical placement, education and access to services were largely made by other team members. Access to needed services was discussed at length. Many respondents realized that depending on their placement, the services they need may not exist in close proximity to their physical placement. Family team meetings were also discussed, with 29% stating they weren't sure they had been included, and 71% stating they had not been included.

Older youth foster group -

*Two attendees commented about their experience living in a foster home setting. One respondent stated she was disappointed her relationship with a foster family did not continue in some form after leaving their home for residential treatment. The other respondent felt one of the foster families she had lived with was very prepared, while the other foster family favored their biological children instead.*

FCCs met with the Wyoming Youth Alumni Council to discuss matters pertaining to their foster care in general, recruitment, experiences in foster care, unmet needs relating to foster care and suggestions for improvement. This was a fantastic discussion and provided excellent feedback that was influential in the development of local plans. WYAC members have also participated in Statewide Foster Parent Support Meetings to provide the opportunity to interact directly with foster parents. Attempts to involve



parents in recruitment and retention of foster homes have been largely unsuccessful as parents are generally reluctant to provide feedback on foster care.

FCCs regularly communicate with their foster homes to identify needs they have seen with the youth they have fostered. Recruitment and retention plans are drafted each year and reflect the needs identified. FCCs met with the Wyoming Youth Alumni Council to discuss matters pertaining to their foster care in general, recruitment, experiences in foster care, unmet needs relating to foster care and suggestions for improvement. Feedback was influential in the development of local plans. Attempts to involve parents in recruitment and retention of foster homes have been largely unsuccessful as parents are generally reluctant to provide feedback on foster care.

FCCs communicate regularly with their foster parents to gather feedback from foster parents. If they resign or their certification expires, informal exit surveys of foster parents are conducted individually by the FCCs. FCCs have received feedback from youth through the Wyoming Youth Alumni Council and through focus groups with the Wyoming Citizens Review Panel. Feedback is also provided to FCCs on foster parents and youth by communications with the caseworker and others involved in the child's case.

During the initial certification process, FCCs meet with potential foster parents and complete a Family and Home Assessment that helps identify biases the applicant may have. Applicants are also asked to use their own belief systems and world view to self-identify potential biases. Prior to placement, when conditions/time constraints allow, the Department works with the child's family to identify needs related to background, diversity, culture, etc to find the most appropriate home for the child. Appropriate planning works to identify potential biases of the home prior to the placement happening. Per policy discrimination based on race, color, disability, gender, religion, sexual orientation, or gender identity is not allowed. Regardless of the RCNO of the child and the family the child is placed with, the Department provides the foster home with on-going support and training to meet the needs of the foster child in their care. FCCs and caseworkers support and encourage the child and family to promote a sense of racial and cultural pride in the child by facilitating participation in appropriate cultural and educational events, enabling the child to explore their racial identity and to interact with other children who are experiencing similar placement situations, providing for the child's personal needs, such as hair grooming and skin care, developing knowledge of the significant role that people of the child's race have played in the history of this country and of the child's country of origin, modeling healthy attitudes about race, developing positive connections with individuals of the child's race, developing strategies to discuss race, the dynamics of racism, and cultural myths, generalizations and stereotypes, etc.

Recruiting and retaining diverse resource homes with the skills and resources needed to meet the needs of youth placed in care and which reflect the cultural, ethnic, and racial diversity of children and youth in care is a priority for the Department.

Identifying and reaching out to relatives and kin of specific children through family finding and other family search and engagement strategies is not only the most effective

means of finding appropriate connections and placements for children but is also the most effective strategy for increasing cultural, racial, and ethnic diversity among resource families, particularly due to the lack of racial and ethnic diversity in most Wyoming communities.

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Identifying and reaching out to relatives and kin of specific children through family finding and other family search and engagement strategies is not only the most effective means of finding appropriate connections and placements for children but is also the most effective strategy for increasing cultural, racial, and ethnic diversity among resource families, particularly due to the lack of racial and ethnic diversity in most Wyoming communities.

The table below outlines the race and ethnicity of children in foster homes for the previous two federal fiscal years (FFY 2021 and FFY 2022). The table illustrates the breakdown of race and ethnicity of children in non-relative placement, in relative placement, and of adoptive children and adoptive parents. The table on race and ethnicity for Rel and Non Relative foster children shows only kids supported on new cases during the FFY 2021 and 2022. The table on adoptive children shows all adopted children who received subsidy support between FFY 2021 and FFY 2022. As most adoptive parents are also certified as foster parents when adoptions are finalized, the adoption tables illustrate that the Department is effective in recruiting homes which reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of children available for adoption.

The metric of Multi Race is determined based on multiple racial profiles being selected in The Departments Case Management System.

Table 49. **Racial and Ethnic Profile 2021-2022 Federal Fiscal Year**

	Not Hispanic	Hispanic	Unidentified	Total
<b>Non-Relative Placement</b>				
AMER IND-AK NATV	22	5	0	27
ARAPAHO	20	1	0	21
ASIAN	1	2	0	3
BLACK-AFR AMER	26	2	0	28
NTW HWN/PCFC ISL	1	4	0	5
WHITE	472	104	6	582
MULTI RACE	16	1	0	17
Declined or Unknown	0	1	0	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>558</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>684</b>
<b>Relative Placement</b>				
AMER IND-AK NATV	6	3	0	9
ARAPAHO	13	2	0	15
ASIAN	1	0	0	1

	Not Hispanic	Hispanic	Unidentified	Total
BLACK-AFR AMER	14	4	0	18
NTW HWN/PCFC ISL	0	3	0	3
WHITE	388	81	0	469
MULTI RACE	10	3	0	13
Declined or Unknown	1	3	1	5
TOTAL	433	99	1	533
Adoptive Children				
AMER IND-AK NATV	8	4	0	12
ARAPAHO	5	1	0	6
BLACK-AFR AMER	49	8	2	59
WHITE	666	130	35	831
MULTI RACE	33	0	0	33
ASIAN	0	2	0	2
NTV HWN/PCFC ISL	1	1	0	2
DECLINED TO ANSWER/UNKNOWN	1	2	9	12
TOTAL	763	148	46	957
Adoptive Parents				
AMER IND-AK NATV	1	1	0	2
ARAPAHO	1	0	0	1
BLACK-AFR AMER	5	0	0	5
WHITE	585	36	1	622
MULTI RACE	2	0	0	2
ASIAN	2	0	0	2
NTV HWN/PCFC ISL	2	0	0	2
DECLINED TO ANSWER/UNKNOWN	0	1	1	1
TOTAL	598	38	1	637

Data Source: WYCAPS AIP Data Warehouse (6/8/23)

**Statewide Recruitment and Retention Strategy:** The Department also acknowledges that the recruitment and retention of foster homes is an ongoing need. In 2022 Wyoming Foster Care worked with two consultants and Casey Family Programs to improve local recruitment plans and develop strategies to recruit and support homes for older youth including youth with behavioral health needs. Consultation with Casey included:

- Assisting to define and refine the overall approach to recruitment;
- Meeting individually with each Foster Care Coordinator to learn about the recruitment needs of their areas, their current efforts, successful strategies, and barriers to recruitment and licensing of those who inquire;
- Consultation with Foster Care Coordinators to support the development of plans

for local recruitment efforts;

- Assisting with creation of customized strategies for each local area such as: social media strategies, identification of target audiences, talking points, use of electronic/print media, public awareness events, a “bounty” program, etc;
- Reviewing and providing feedback on local recruitment plans;
- Development of a Wyoming-centric messaging focused on homes for older youth
- Assisting the Department with identifying opportunities and framework for collaboration with partners, which may include behavioral health, juvenile justice, substitute care providers, Tribes, and others.

The local plans are updated annually as needs change. Based on the consultation with Casey, several new strategies have been implemented.

A recruitment video was developed and widely distributed in May 2023. This video was created at minimal cost by the Foster Care Coordinators and featured Wyoming families and children in Wyoming locations in hopes to appeal to Wyoming families.

Although it is too early to determine which strategies have been most effective, Foster Care Coordinators regularly meet with new foster parents to gather information to determine if the local recruitment and retention plans impacted their decision to become foster parents. Additionally, information was collected via a survey of Department caseworkers, Supervisors, and Managers. While the number of responses is relatively small, this information can provide some insight into the early effects of the campaign.

**Annual Recruitment and Retention Plans:** Foster Care Coordinators and state staff have monthly phone calls and discuss statewide and local recruitment strategies, successes, and challenges. In addition to statewide recruitment efforts, each Foster Care Coordinator develops an annual recruitment and retention plan which utilize strategies and resources developed for statewide use but are tailored to meet the needs of children and families in their areas and the communities they serve. Most areas of the state are recruiting foster homes from the Latino community reaching out to children’s relatives and kin, current resource parents, churches, and leaders in the Latino community. While there is an on-going need for recruitment and recruitment efforts, this is an area which can be rated as a Strength.

**Data Sources:** Policies and regulations around recruitment of foster and adoptive families. Recruitment and retention are an ongoing agenda item during monthly Foster Care checks ins and in person meetings. Foster Care Coordinators are required to submit annual Recruitment and Retention plans to their District Manager and the Foster Care Program Manager. A specific policy for recruitment and retention will be considered.

- WY-CAPS data:
  - How many families were recruited?
  - What are the attributes of recruited families? This varies greatly.
  - How long have the recruited families stayed active? This varies from family to family. Some for less than a year, some long term-20 years or more.

- How many placements do recruited families have?
- When placements leave, what are the reasons? Most placements end with reunification or to change foster homes. Some leave to a more restrictive placement.
- CFSP/APSR
- FCCs communicate regularly with their foster parents to gather feedback from foster parents. If they resign or their certification expires, informal exit surveys of foster parents are conducted individually by the FCCs. FCCs have received feedback from youth through the Wyoming Youth Alumni Council and through focus groups with the Wyoming Citizens Review Panel. Feedback is also provided to FCCs on foster parents and youth by communications with the caseworker and others involved in the child's case.
- CFSR Round 3 and Practice Round case review information
- CFSR Round 4 Stakeholder survey and focus group information (PK)

**Strengths:** The Department is continuously evaluating the recruitment process for foster and adoptive homes as stated above. The First Lady of Wyoming is working closely and participating in efforts to recruit foster and adoptive homes.

**Opportunities for Improvement:** Data specific to recruitment and retention is not available in WYCAPS. WYOSAFE will help with that.

**Promising Practices:** The Department is working on a Gender Affirmation and Sexual Orientation Policy to support the idea that children are to be provided a safe, loving and affirming foster care placement, regardless of the young person's sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression.

**Conclusion and Findings:** This item is a strength because the Department has active and robust recruitment and retention efforts. FCC in their areas are employing proven to work strategies for recruitment and retention and are open to new ideas. FCCs worked with Casey and their consultants to gain new ideas and put those ideas into practice with their efforts locally. Understanding the true rural nature of Wyoming affects how recruitment and retention efforts are employed from District to District and even from town to town within those Districts. FCC's are able to tailor their individual recruitment and retention efforts to meet the needs of the specific community they are working with. FCC's share their ideas with each other in regular emails, phone calls and monthly FCC meetings.

- ITEM 36: STATE USE OF CROSS-JURISDICTIONAL RESOURCES FOR PERMANENT PLACEMENTS

**Policy and Procedure and State Statute:** Reunification with parents is the first priority of the Department. If reunification is not safe or appropriate, then the policy is to seek permanency through adoption, guardianship, or permanent placement with a relative or kinship placement. If these options are not available, foster parent adoption may be considered. The Department works to facilitate adoptions either in-state or out-of-state through a variety of strategies; however, standardized Interstate Compact

on the Placement of Children (ICPC) and fingerprint procedures and forms were put in place for Foster Care Coordinators to assist field offices for the ICPC and fingerprint procedure to work smoothly and consistently.

When children in custody are placed out of state or when children in another state's custody are placed in Wyoming, caseworkers receive technical assistance from the State Office for ICPC through a variety of methods, such as direct contact and in-person training. Additionally, resources such as check sheets are made available to workers, which include tips for workers such as calling the out-of-state family in advance to explain the home study process and the payment process. Caseworkers are also provided with financial and medical plan checklists for advance use to avoid delays in the home study process.

In 2023, the Department is working on updating its Adoption Confidential Intermediary Rules, which includes updated procedures for children adopted from the foster care system and finding their birth families, since WY is a closed adoption state. This rule update was the first since 1992 and reflects considerable effort on behalf of the State, as it benefits the adoption process.

It should also be noted that the Department will continue to make improvements by training caseworkers, including new caseworkers, new probation officers, Supervisors, attorneys, and community leaders. The Department will likely train at the GAL conference regarding adoption efforts in 2024, this includes training members of the court. The Department continues to make the ICPC process as standardized and easy as possible, and to stress the importance of timeliness of each ICPC home study request.

**Functioning of Resources for Permanent Placement:** Wyoming has five (5) certified adoption agencies. The Department is fortunate to have positive relationships with those agencies and contracts with them on an ad-hoc basis. Wyoming is also a member of Raise the Future (formerly the Adoption Exchange), which assists in the search for matches in cases where a match may be difficult.

**Reel Hope:** Another recent resource available is Reel Hope. The agency makes an electronic story about a child, and it is published and added to the Department's website and other websites, like "Raise the Future", previously known as "The Adoption Exchange." The focus is on a child waiting for adoption in foster care. The biography of a youth who is free for adoption with the goal of the broadcast is to match a unique, individual family with the youth. The segment lays the foundation for the broadcast by educating the viewing area on the Department and its foster care program with a goal to gain an increase in families willing and able to foster youth in the juvenile system. Those youth can be in the system through child abuse and neglect petitions filed against their parent(s) or youth on juvenile probation. It is always our goal to increase the pool of foster families in order to better match the needs of youth with the strength of the foster family.

**Additional Partnerships:** Wendy's Wonderful Kids has been present in Wyoming for years, and assists in finding matches for children.

**Adoption Subsidies:** The Department also has resources specifically earmarked for

supporting adoptions such as adoption subsidies, adoption incentive funds, and pre- and post-adoption services.

**Data Findings/Home Study Data:** Data gathered from this database was analyzed to determine what number of home studies were completed within the required timeframes as well as any rationale for home studies not being completed in a timely manner. These results are outlined below.

Table 50. **Timely Home Studies Reporting and Data for CY 2020, CY 2021, CY 2022**

	CY 2020 Home Study Requests Received	CY 2021 Home Study Requests Received	CY 2022 Home study requests Received
Wyoming as the sending state	103	122	103
Wyoming As the receiving State	102	85	106

Data Source: NEICE

This information is from State Data Reports on The National Electronic Interstate Compact Enterprise System (NEICE). NEICE is a national electronic system for quickly and securely exchanging all the data and documents required by the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) to place children across state lines. In a review of our ICPC data, it appears that when WY is the receiving state or sending state, home studies are completed timely approximately 50% of the time.

The data shown does not include (approximately 80 to 100 more cases per year) of residential requests in and out, and private adoption requests in and out.

The Department needed an extension period approximately 50% of the time. Reasons why the extension was needed varied, and included times whereby the delays were beyond the control of the Wyoming Department of Family Services. This included: fingerprint delays, placement resource family not able to schedule home study timely or uncertain if they want to follow through, and the local office unable to complete the home study in a timely fashion, case cannot move forward until certain legal requirements are met (reunification rules out, searching for absent parent, termination of parental rights delayed). Generally, the extension allowed for the resolution of the circumstances, i.e., fingerprint results came in, family decided they wanted a home study or decided against it. It should be noted that most of the time, there was a resolution, but not necessarily within the allowable extension period. The actions taken by the Department or relevant federal agency to resolve the need for an extended period include the following:

1. When Wyoming receives an ICPC request from another state, in one to 10 days, an email goes out to the corresponding county field office so the county field

office can begin processing the referral by calling the resource family for an appointment, get signatures to check background information, get an assigned caseworker, etc.

2. Standardized procedures and forms in regards to fingerprints were put in place so that foster care coordinators can assist the Department's county field offices for the fingerprint procedure to work smoothly and consistently.
3. When children in the Wyoming Department of Family Services custody go to an out-of-state placement or when children in another state's custody are placed in Wyoming, caseworkers can easily get technical assistance from their supervision and / or the Department's state office for ICPC by telephone; google meet; in-person training. Further, check sheets are made available, that include tips like calling the out of state family in advance to explain the home study process and how they will be paid, Medicaid coverage, etc. Also, caseworkers are provided with a financial and medical plan check sheet they can use in advance, so delays do not happen and the home study request can get requested without further delays.
4. In regards to adoptions (and guardianships) and cross jurisdictional placements, Wyoming handles this the same as we do when all parties reside in Wyoming. If a child is available for adoption, first we make sure the child can no longer return home, all reasonable efforts have been exhausted to return the child home. Then we look for family members (out of state or in state), we find out if the current foster home or another Department foster home wants to adopt, we utilize our Wyoming Certified Adoption Agencies, then move to WWK, Raise the Future, Reel Hope, AdoptUSkids. Many times, these are cross jurisdictional placements, and require our Department workers to understand how to use ICPC. As far as safety, once the ICPC home is approved, a courtesy caseworker is usually assigned for supervision from the State's local field office.
5. In regards to relatives out of the country, we do not have those often, but make sure we work towards seeing if the relative is a possibility and find funds to do so if it is a good match or situation for the child.
6. In regards to tribal social services, we work with our own tribes, and often get asked by other states to do home studies for children subject to ICWA, and while this can be complicated, we work to move forward on the possible placements, like we do other ICPC requests.

**Strengths:** The Department considers Item 36 as an area of strength. The ICPC program within the Department effectively utilizes cross-jurisdictional resources through the development and maintenance of strong relationships between agencies. Wyoming has strong relationships nationwide and only utilizes out-of-state placements if they are deemed safe and appropriate by other ICPC offices. Additionally, strong working relationships between the Department and the Wyoming Attorney General's



Office, the GAL program, and other State agencies allows Wyoming to conduct timely and efficient home studies. Furthermore, support from the State Office ensures that the Department caseworkers, Supervisors, and Managers have the knowledge and resources they need in order to have effective use of the ICPC program.

**Opportunities for Improvement:** Wyoming would like to add a staff person to their ICPC and adoption archiving, so the records will be preserved as required.

**Promising Practices:** This information will be added to the Children’s Bureau report to Congress regarding implementing NEICE in Wyoming. When used as a platform to connect families to other required services, we can point to the partnership approach Wyoming Department of Family Services and Medicaid took when joining NEICE in March 2019 and what they now say: “The Department and WY Medicaid partnership regarding NEICE has worked great! We have always had to work closely for foster and adoptive children, and this is just one more way. WY Medicaid has been able to go into NEICE, determine if a WY family has been approved by the WY ICPC office and issue Medicaid for a child avoiding delays when staff are out of the office.”

# APPENDIX: CFSR STATE DATA PROFILE

The state data profile can be requested from the state or the Children's Bureau.

# APPENDIX: TRAINING

The following table includes topics of Core Training, modalities of the training and learning objectives:

Table 50. **Self Learning Modules**

Course Name	Course Description and Learning Objectives	Timeframe to Complete
Welcome to the Department of Family Services	Introduction to the Department Learning Objectives: Attendee will become familiar with the structure and operations of the Department of Family Services (DFS). To acquire basic information about Child Protection, Adult Protection, Juvenile Probation, and other programs within DFS. Introduction to leadership team, and agency's organizational structure.	30 minutes
Child Protection History	History of the child protection program in the state and the United States Learning Objectives: Understand how key historical events have shaped and defined child protection work.	1 hour
Child Protection and Casework Values	Introduction to child protection and casework values. Learning Objectives: Assess your personal beliefs and values and the effects of these beliefs/values on your behavior. Identify Child Protection casework values. Develop self-awareness concerning potential sources of conflict between personal values and casework values and how to effectively resolve conflict.	1 hour
Juvenile Justice Values and Ethics	Introduction to juvenile justice values and ethics. Learning Objectives Assess your personal beliefs and values and the effects of these beliefs/values on your behavior. Identify Juvenile Justice values. Develop self-awareness concerning potential sources of conflict between personal values and Juvenile Justice values and how to effectively resolve conflict.	1 hour

Course Name	Course Description and Learning Objectives	Timeframe to Complete
Intake	<p>Provide Knowledge and skills to effectively carry out responsibilities in the intake process.</p> <p>Learning Objectives:            Develop knowledge of intake procedures and protocols            Gain knowledge on how receive and screen reports, gather relevant information, assess risks, and determine appropriate actions            Develop communication skills, active listening, effective questioning techniques and establishing rapport with individuals involved in the intake process            Familiarize trainees with record-keeping skills, accurately and comprehensively document information, observations, and assessments. Understanding the importance of confidential records</p>	2 hours
Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children (ICPC), Interstate Compact for Juveniles (ICJ), Multi-Ethnic Placement Act (MEPA)	<p>Introduction and history of ICPC, ICJ, and MEPA            Debrief and more detailed information on the requirements of ICPC, ICJ, MEPA Learning Objectives:            Gain knowledge of what the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children is Gain knowledge of placement and placement options            Gain knowledge and understanding of MEPA</p>	2 Hours
Family Team Meeting	<p>Familiarize trainees with the family team process            Learning Objectives:            Familiarize attendees with policy and procedure            Understanding the importance of involving families in decision making, respecting their strengths and cultural values, and promoting shared responsibility            Understanding roles of different participants</p>	1 hour

Course Name	Course Description and Learning Objectives	Timeframe to Complete
	<p>Understanding documentation and record keeping practices</p> <p>Understanding collaboration with other professionals</p>	
Family Team meeting facilitation	<p>Familiarize trainees with how to facilitate team meetings</p> <p>Learning Objectives:</p> <p>Understand how to set a non-judgmental space for participants to express thoughts, concerns, and perspectives</p> <p>Familiarize with setting grounds rules, ensuring that everyone has an opportunity to be heard</p> <p>Familiarize with actively engaging families in decision making, and managing conflict</p> <p>Understanding documentation requirements and how to set up meetings</p>	1 hour
Child Development	<p>Detailed information on child and human development.</p> <p>Learning Objectives:</p> <p>Equip attendees with knowledge about typical developmental milestones in areas of physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development</p> <p>Equip attendees with knowledge of signs of abuse or neglect that can affect milestones and implementing appropriate safety measures</p>	1.5 hours
Narrative Writing	<p>Introduction and detailed information on narrative writing and the requirements of narratives.</p> <p>Learning Objectives:</p> <p>Attendees learn the fundamental elements of correct narrative writing</p> <p>Attendees will gain knowledge to craft engaging and impactful narratives</p> <p>Enhance skills in documentation</p> <p>Gain knowledge on how to incorporate key information in narratives</p>	2 hours

Course Name	Course Description and Learning Objectives	Timeframe to Complete
Case Worker Safety	<p>Information on safety awareness regarding case work.</p> <p>Learning Objectives:</p> <p>Gain knowledge on the importance of following safety protocols during home visits to ensure own safety</p> <p>Knowledge on assessing potential safety risks</p> <p>Educate attendees to quickly recognize and respond to immediate dangers or emergencies, such as being in immediate harm</p> <p>Knowledge on safe transportation practices, provide guidance on personal safety measures attendees should take during home and office visits</p> <p>Understand personal safety protocols and strategies</p>	2 hours
Foster Care	<p>Information on the foster care program and how to navigate the foster care system for case workers.</p> <p>Learning Objectives:</p> <p>Attendees gain knowledge and overview of what Foster Care is</p> <p>Gain knowledge on the emergency placement packet</p> <p>Attendees will gain knowledge in understanding the roles of the foster care coordinator and the case worker role and recognize the importance of effective collaboration between the roles in supporting foster children and families</p>	2 hours

Table 51. **Virtual Learning Content**

Course Name	Course Description and Learning Objectives	Timeframe to Complete
Introduction to the AG's Roles and Responsibilities	<p>Introduction on the AG's office and their roles and responsibilities when it comes to child/adult protection.</p> <p>Familiarize attendees with role and functions of the Attorney General's office</p> <p>Promoting collaboration with the AG's office and providing guidance on how to contact and work with the AG's office</p>	2.5 hours
Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children (ICPC), Interstate	<p>Introduction and history of ICPC, ICJ, and MEPA</p> <p>Learning Objectives:</p>	1 hour
Compact for Juveniles (ICJ), Multi-Ethnic Placement Act (MEPA)	<p>Detailed information on the requirements of ICPC, ICJ, MEPA</p> <p>Understand placement process and procedures</p> <p>Be able to understand what the placement and placement options mean.</p> <p>Familiarize trainees with the correct forms for ICPC/ICJ</p>	
Court System Overview	<p>Introduction to the structure and functioning of the court system in child welfare cases. This includes learning about the specific courts and legal processes involved.</p> <p>Learning Objectives:</p> <p>Attendees will become familiar with statutes, and legal framework of court proceedings such, termination of parental rights, adoptions, and other relevant proceedings</p> <p>Knowledge of monitoring court orders, compliance reviews, and familiarize the ongoing role with court cases</p>	2.5 hours

Course Name	Course Description and Learning Objectives	Timeframe to Complete
Multi-Disciplinary Team Meetings (MDT's)	<p>Familiarize trainees with the knowledge, skills and understanding necessary to effectively participate and contribute to MDT meetings</p> <p>Learning Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Familiarize attendees with policy and procedure</li> <li>Understanding roles of different participants</li> <li>Understanding documentation and record keeping practices</li> <li>Gain understanding of the purpose, and benefits of MDT meetings in promoting collaboration with clients and professionals</li> </ul>	2 hours
Confidentiality	<p>Information regarding the importance of maintaining confidentiality.</p> <p>Identifying types of information that is considered confidential; attorney client privilege, documents and what information can be shared and with whom Equip attendees with the knowledge to deal with confidential information</p>	2.5 hours
Diligent Search	<p>AG's information on Diligent Search requirements and caseworker responsibilities.</p> <p>Learning Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendees will gain knowledge of legal framework surrounding diligent search requirements in child welfare cases</li> <li>Gain knowledge of what constitutes a diligent search in child welfare.</li> <li>Attendees learn about key components and steps involved in conducting a thorough and comprehensive search to locate missing parents, relatives, or other individuals important to the child's wellbeing</li> <li>Gain knowledge on how to maintain detailed records of search efforts</li> </ul>	2.5 hours



Course Name	Course Description and Learning Objectives	Timeframe to Complete
Safety Planning	<p>Detailed information on safety planning with children and families.</p> <p>Learning Objectives:</p> <p>Attendees will gain understanding of the critical role safety planning plays in child welfare</p> <p>Attendees will learn how to conduct a safety plan, assess family for risk and safety issues and monitor ongoing progress or lack of progress to ensure the child's safety</p> <p>Gain knowledge on how to develop clear and actionable steps, and setting achievable goals</p>	2 hours
Court Preparation and Testifying	<p>Information on court preparation and testifying.</p> <p>Learning Objectives:</p> <p>Familiarize attendees with the court process.</p> <p>The attendees will understand his/her role in court proceedings</p> <p>Attendees will gain the knowledge on proper court etiquette, and proper dress attire</p>	2.5 hours
Court Preparation and Testifying-skill practice	<p>Practical skills practice for testifying in court</p> <p>Learning Objectives:</p> <p>Equip attendees with the necessary knowledge, skills, and confidence to effectively testify in legal proceedings</p> <p>Familiarizing attendees that by enhancing their communication skills, being prepared, understanding the legal framework they can be better at providing credible testimony in court such as mental health issues, substance abuse, self-harm, and delinquency by equipping individuals with coping skills, social networks, and a sense of purpose</p> <p>Gain knowledge on promoting protective factors at the community levels</p>	2.5 hours

Course Name	Course Description and Learning Objectives	Timeframe to Complete
State and Federal Legislation	<p>AG's information on State and Federal Legislation that affects children and families.</p> <p>Learning Objectives:  Attendees will gain knowledge with policies, procedures and guidelines that govern child welfare practices  Ensure attendees are aware of their legal obligations and responsibilities as child welfare professionals  Gain an understanding of the state and federal legislation related to child welfare</p>	2.5 hours
Permanency Options	<p>AG's information on permanency options (Reunification, Adoption, Guardianship and Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA))</p> <p>Learning Objectives:  Attendees will gain knowledge about the importance of permanency for children  Gain knowledge of legal, agency requirements and timelines for achieving permanency for children in care</p>	2.5 hours
Case Planning	<p>Detailed information on how to conduct safety planning with children and families.</p> <p>Learning Objectives:  Attendees will become familiar with policy and case planning procedure  Attendees will learn the importance of engaging and collaborating with families during case planning process and involving families in decision making  Gain knowledge on using assessment tools to guide how to develop individualized plans tailored to the needs of the family with measurable goals  Gain knowledge on monitoring progress or barriers in case planning</p>	3 hours

Course Name	Course Description and Learning Objectives	Timeframe to Complete
Adult Protection Services	<p>Information on Adult Protection Services regarding State statutes and policy and procedures</p> <p>Learning Objectives:</p> <p>Attendees gain knowledge of statutes and policy of adult protection</p> <p>Attendees gain knowledge of legal responsibilities involved in adult protection</p> <p>Attendees gain knowledge of what constitutes adult abuse and neglect</p> <p>responsibilities of adult protection</p> <p>Documentation requirements</p> <p>Collaboration efforts law enforcement, healthcare professionals and community members</p>	2 hours
Child Protection Investigations	<p>Information on policy and procedure, signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect and how to conduct a CPS investigation</p> <p>Learning Objectives:</p> <p>Attendees gain understanding of agency policy and procedure and legal framework surrounding CPS investigations</p> <p>Attendees learn to recognize signs and indicators of child abuse and neglect</p> <p>Equip attendees with the skills and techniques necessary to conduct comprehensive child protection investigations. This includes knowledge of investigative strategies, interviewing techniques, evidence collection, documentation and report writing</p> <p>Gain knowledge of how to gather relevant information from alleged perpetrators, family, child, and other professionals</p> <p>Gain knowledge of collaboration with law enforcement</p> <p>Gain knowledge on required documentation and timelines for the agency</p>	4 hours

Table 52. **In-Person Content**

Course Name	Course Description and Learning Objectives	Timeframe to Complete
Drug Identification	<p>Information on drug identification and safety procedures.</p> <p>Learning Objectives:            Attendees gain knowledge and skills needed to identify, address, and respond effectively to substance abuse issues within the families they serve            Gain knowledge about commonly abused drugs, including illicit substances such as cocaine, marijuana, methamphetamine, and prescription medications. They will learn appearance, street names and methods of ingestion for each drug            Gain Knowledge of the effects of drugs, recognize substance abuse such as physical, behavioral, and emotional signs            Gain knowledge on the impacts of drug abuse on parenting</p>	4 hours
Car Seat Safety and Installation	<p>Information on proper car seat selection, installation, and maintenance.</p> <p>Learning Objectives:            Attendees will gain the necessary knowledge, skills, and confidence to ensure the proper use and installation of car seats, ultimately reducing the risk of injuries to children in vehicle accidents.            Gain knowledge of car seat laws and regulations for different age groups, heights, and weights of children            Gain the skill of proper installation techniques for car seats in different types of vehicles and including using seat belts and the LATCH systems</p>	3 hours

Course Name	Course Description and Learning Objectives	Timeframe to Complete
Secondary Trauma	<p>Detailed information on secondary trauma and how to deal with secondary trauma in co-workers and clients.</p> <p>Learning Objectives:  Attendees gain understanding of secondary trauma, definition, causes and symptoms  Attendees will learn skills to recognize symptoms in themselves and others  Learn effective coping strategies to manage and mitigate the impact of secondary trauma</p>	2 hours
Mental Health/Substance Abuse	<p>Detailed information on mental health and substance abuse and how to work with clients who may fall in this category.</p> <p>Learning Objectives:  Attendees will gain understanding of mental health and substance abuse, including their causes, risk factors and impact on individuals and communities  Attendees will gain knowledge on the importance of appropriate referral and collaboration with mental health and substance abuse professionals</p>	2 hours
Motivational Interviewing	<p>Detailed practice in motivational interviewing and how to use these skills to help children and families.</p> <p>Learning Objectives:  Attendees gain the understanding of the principles and Spirit of MI  Attendees will learn skills to improve the ability to engage clients and build rapport using MI techniques  Gain skills and techniques for eliciting and strengthening motivation for change in clients  Gain skills to effectively address resistance and sustain talk that may arise during conversations with clients  Enhance attendees' knowledge, skills, and confidence in applying MI techniques to effectively engage clients, elicit motivation for change and support positive behavior change in clients</p>	20 hours

Course Name	Course Description and Learning Objectives	Timeframe to Complete
Wyoming Practice Model	<p>Information on the Wyoming Practice Model and how to use it in casework.</p> <p>Learning Objectives:</p> <p>Familiarize attendees with various components of practice, such as assessments process, case planning, case decision making, engagement with families and collaboration with partners</p> <p>Enhance skills in engaging families and building relationships, in respectful, collaborative, and culturally sensitive manner</p> <p>Enhance skills in documentation and case management</p>	6.5 hours
Adult Protection Investigations	<p>Information on policy and procedure and how to conduct an APS investigation</p> <p>Learning Objectives:</p> <p>Attendees gain knowledge of policy and procedure and legal framework for adult protection investigations</p> <p>Knowledge of recognizing the signs and indicators of abuse, neglect, and exploitation in vulnerable adults</p> <p>Knowledge of investigative strategies: interviewing, evidence collection, documentation effective report writing, maintaining accurate records</p> <p>Knowledge of conducting risk and safety assessments to vulnerable adults and ensuring safety</p>	4 hours

Table 53. **Statewide Assessment Survey Results regarding Training for Staff**

Group	Key Themes
Biological Parents	Many are prepared.
Foster Parents	Case workers are prepared and great to work with, but there are also caseworkers that are new who struggle with basic job duties. There is a range of caseworker skills and abilities, some very prepared and others not at all.
Youth	Mixed feelings regarding if caseworkers were prepared.

Group	Key Themes
Legal	<p>Consistent training is needed so caseworkers in each office do the job consistently. Some counties are slowly working caseworkers into cases and giving them individual pieces to complete before getting a full case on their own. In other counties caseworkers are given a full caseload before they are fully trained. These have good support from their supervisors and are not afraid to answer questions.</p> <p>Caseworkers are doing well and are well trained. Depends on caseworker mentorship and training received by new caseworkers. Lots of turnover causes issues with proper training.</p>
Caseworkers	<p>Trainings that are in place are not administered early enough in the pre-service timeline and many skills have to be developed through learned experience.</p> <p>Long times before CORE and already have full case loads. CORE doesn't really prepare – but good to know policies. All feel there is a need for DEIB related trainings and resources in order to best serve families. The opportunity for hands on learning and shadowing prepares workers the best to work with families.</p> <p>Virtual core has not been as beneficial as in person was. NEED LGBTQ+ related trainings – cultural competency, particularly for transgender youth. Social workers already have caseloads assigned by the time they get their pre-service training. Would be helpful to get pre-service training prior to getting assigned caseloads. There is not adequate training to address cultural diversity needs.</p> <p>LGBTQ+ and other cultural trainings not of high need in their areas</p>
Supervisors	<p>Case workers are not prepared to work with families because they are not receiving enough skills practice through the current pre-service training model and have to learn necessary skills through direct work.</p> <p>Workers are prepared more through direct work and shadowing, than they are through the current training models in place (core).</p>
District Managers	<p>CORE is not great. It's a new method but staff are not coming out as prepared as they used to and the scheduling The Department around them has been bad. The new format for this core has caused a great deal of confusion and frustration with managing schedules and lack of communication.</p> <p>It is difficult to discern the difference between mandatory and optional tools.</p>

Table 54. **Lunch and Learn Webinars**

Topic	Course Description	Month & Training Hours
<b>2020</b>		
Case planning	Training provided an understanding of the policy and procedure (expectations) and the use of WPM skills and tools in engaging children/youth, parents, and foster parents in identifying needs and interventions/services to achieve permanency goals.	February 2 Hours
Family Meeting Policy & Procedure AND MDT Policy & and Procedure	Training provided review of the draft policy and procedures which provides skills and tools in engaging children and families to identify on-going needs and interventions/services to assist them in their permanency plan.	March 3 Hours
Visitation planning (Lunch & Learn)	Training provided an understanding of the policy and procedure (expectations) and the use of WPM skills and tools in engaging children/youth, parents, and foster parents in identifying the best visitation plan (frequency, length of visit, location of visit and quality (activities, structure, etc.))	April 1 Hour
CCWIS (Lunch & Learn)	Updated information on the upcoming CCWIS.	April 30 min
Plans of Safe Care (Posca) (Lunch & Learn)	Update on Posca, being a CAPTA requirement, and the progress of the Department’s partnership with WDH and other stakeholders in working towards supporting mothers/parents for infants prenatally substance exposed.	May 1 Hour
Prevention Mindset	The training began the beginning conversations about how Wyoming is going to implement the Family First Act, and also how Wyoming is already doing “Prevention” with families.	May & June 2 Hours



Topic	Course Description	Month & Training Hours
Adoption Policy and Procedure (Lunch & Learn)	Training provided an understanding of the policy and procedure as it relates to Title IV-E and the importance of it being the next best permanency option if reunification is not successful.	June 1 Hours
Family Assessment and Funding (Lunch & Learn)	Review of the Family Assessment policy and procedure as how to engage the family is assessing needs and interventions/services, which may include using flex funds.	July 1 Hour
	Social Security (Lunch and Learn)- Special Speakers to review how to apply for social security benefits, applying for SS cards, who to contact, etc. and adding the process into the policy and procedure.	August 1 Hour
Investigation Policy and Procedure	Training provided an understanding of the policy and procedure (expectations) and the use of WPM skills and tools in engaging children (alleged victim) and parents (alleged perpetrator) in the investigation process (gathering information/allegations of abuse). *Including Special Investigations	August & September 8 Hours
Youth Review (Lunch & Learn)	The Youth Involvement Review occurs annually in the spring (refer to Item # CQI for more information). This lunch and learn provided results and updates on any policy changes.	September 1 Hour
Guardianship Policy and Procedure	Training provided an understanding of the policy and procedure as it relates to Title IV-E and the importance of it being the next best permanency option if reunification or adoption is not successful.	September 4 Hours

Topic	Course Description	Month & Training Hours
Authority for Placement	Training provided an understanding of the policy and procedure as it relates to Title IV-E and providing Reasonable efforts to prevent an out-of-home placement.	October 2 Hours
Family First Prevention Services Act (Lunch and Learn)	The training being the continued conversations about how Wyoming is implementing the Family First Act, and already providing “Prevention” with families.	December 1 Hour
2021		
Wyoming Division of Victim Services	Special Speaker Director Cara Chambers discussed what the DVS does and how to partner to support families in Wyoming (with the Department).	January 1 Hour
Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) (Lunch & Learn)	Training provided review of the policy and procedures (expectations) which provided skills and tools in engaging children and families to identify any tribal affiliation and the process in moving ICWA forward.	February 1 Hour
Case Plan and case planning	Training provided review of the policy and procedures (expectations) and overview of the new Case Plan (document). It provided skills and tools in engaging children and parents (*and possible foster parents) in identifying needs and interventions/services to develop the Case Plan	February 4 Hour
Predisposition Reports Policy and Procedure	Training provided review of the policy and procedures (expectations) and overview of the PDR (document). It provided skills and tools in engaging children and parents in discussing the legal requirements for the PDR.	April 1.5 Hours

Topic	Course Description	Month & Training Hours
Assessment for Appropriate Placement in Residential Care Policy and Procedure	Training provided an understanding of the policy and procedure as it relates to Title IV-E and the Family First Act. It provided skills and tools in engaging children and parents (*and possible foster parents if the child is being placed into a family foster home as a step-down from the facility) in identifying treatment needs and interventions/treatment for the child AND needs and interventions/services for the parents (*foster parents).	May 2.5 hours
Adult Protection Services (Lunch & Learn)	Training provided review of the policy and procedures (expectations) and practice (WPM) of engaging the vulnerable adult and possibly the caregiver/guardian in discussing needs and interventions/ services to keep the vulnerable in the home.	June 1 Hour
Attorney General's office-All Legal (Lunch & Learn)	Training provided review of federal and state laws as it applies to child protection and juvenile justice.	July 1 Hour
Safe at Home Case Plan	Training provided review of the policy and procedures (expectations-used for in-home cases without involvement from the Juvenile Court/Wind River Tribal Court) and overview of the new Safe at Home Case Plan (document). It provided skills and tools in engaging children and parents (*and possible foster parents) in identifying needs and interventions/services to develop the Safe at Home Case Plan.	September 2 Hours
Juvenile Court Timelines, Reviews and Reports (Lunch & Learn)	Training provided review of the policy and procedures (expectations) and overview of the Juvenile Court requirements timelines and reports to use for different court hearings. It provided skills and tools in engaging children and parents in discussing the legal requirements and preparing them for different court events.	October 1 Hour

Topic	Course Description	Month & Training Hours
Human and Sex Trafficking (Lunch & Learn)	Training provided review of the policy and procedures (expectations) as well as to provide skills and tools in engaging child/youth in identifying whether they were a survivor of human or sex trafficking. The training provided skills in having the difficult conversations by using WPM and what interventions/services were needed to meet the child/youth's individual needs if they were a survivor.	November 1 Hour
Jeopardy-FAQ on Policy and Procedure (Lunch & Learn)	This training was the end of a year training to review what was trained in the last year. It was an FAQ session and full of fun facts/tips and tricks.	December 1 Hour
2022		
Back to Basics (Lunch & Learn)	Training was about basic casework-expectations: Safety- to assess safety and risk, visits with the child(ren), family and foster parents (when required)-what to assess during the visits); permanency- permanency planning, timelines, preserving connections, act. (CFSR requirements); Well-being-assessing needs and identifying interventions/services and case planning, face to face visits with the child and parents, etc. It provided skills and tools in engaging children and parents in assessing needs and identifying interventions.	January 1 Hour
Prevention Mindset (Series 1) (Lunch & Learn)	Title IV-E Prevention Plan- Training provided review of the Title IV-E Prevention plan and the upcoming policy and procedure changes staff coming soon. Training provided opportunities to have open conversations with staff. Training was facilitated with Special Speakers: Sara Serelson-WCTF, Joe Belcher-GAL, and Lisa Finkey-CJP.	February 1 Hour

Topic	Course Description	Month & Training Hours
Prevention Mindset (Series 2) (Lunch and Learn)	Candidate for Foster Care and Motivational Interviewing-Training provided review of the Title IV-E Prevention plan and the upcoming policy and procedure for Candidate for foster care and why MI was chosen as Wyoming's prevention service. Training provided opportunities to have open conversations with staff.	March 1 Hour
CFSR	Training provided information on Round 3 PIP and upcoming CFSR. Training provided information on the CFSR tool. Training provided opportunities to have open conversations with staff.	March 2 Hours
Prevention Mindset (Series 3) (Lunch & Learn)	Tools In WYCAPS-Training provided review of the Title IV-E Prevention plan and the upcoming changes in WYCAPS. Training provided opportunities to have open conversations with staff.	April 1 Hour
Narrative (Lunch & Learn)	Training provided review of the policy, procedures, and expectations of what should be in a narrative to ensure information is entered into WYCAPS. The training provided skills and tools/tips and tricks to gathering information and entering into the WYCAPS system. Training provided opportunities to have open conversations with staff.	May 1 Hour
Prevention Mindset (Series 3) (Lunch & Learn)	Ongoing support, training and technical assistance-Training provided review of the Title IV-E Prevention plan again, to include upcoming events. Training provided opportunities to have open conversations with staff to ask for support, identify training and technical support they would need, etc.	June 2 Hours
Attorney General's Office- Everything Legal (Lunch & Learn)	Training provided review of federal and state laws as it applies to child protection and juvenile justice.	July 1 Hour

Topic	Course Description	Month & Training Hours
Candidate for foster care (District specific training)	Training provided review of the policy and procedures. Training engaged staff in identifying how the use of WPM skills and tools could be used in engaging children/youth and parents in assessing their needs to identify their individual interventions/service to keep the child(ren) in the home. This training was provided to each District in an effort to allow opportunities to have open conversations with staff and identify barriers in their District so ongoing solutions could be identified and addressed.	August 2 Hours
National Youth Transitional Data (NYTD)	Training provided an understanding of the policy and procedure and the use of WPM skills and tools in engaging youth in identifying needs and independent living interventions/services to prepare the youth for adulthood. Procedures were mapped out on how to facilitate the NYTD survey for youth turning 17 years old for the NYTD cohort.	September 2 Hours
CFSR Series 1 (Safety)	Training was provided to review Safety Outcome 1 and 2 of the CFSR. Training was connected to the policy, procedures, and practice to meet Safety Outcome 1 and 2 as well as the use of WPM skills and tools in engaging children, youth, parents, and foster parents (when required) in assessing safety threats and risk factors and in identifying individual interventions/services.	October 2 Hours
CFSR Series 2 (Permanency)	Training was provided to review Permanency Outcome 1 and 2 of the CFSR. Training was connected to the policy, procedures, and practice to meet Permanency Outcome 1 and 2, as well as the use of WPM skills and tools in engaging children, youth, parents, and foster parents discussing: the permanency plan and court processes; placing siblings together and visitation planning; intensifying connections for the child(ren); searching for absent parents and relatives; etc.	November 2 Hours

Topic	Course Description	Month & Training Hours
CFSR Series 3 (Well-Being)	Training was provided to review Well-Being Outcome 1, 2 and 3 of the CFSR. Training was connected to the policy, procedures, and practice to meet the three (3) Outcomes as well as the use of WPM skills and tools in engaging children, youth, parents, and foster parents (when required) in case planning, face to face visits with the caseworker, etc.	December 2 Hours
2023		
CFSR On-Site Preparation (Lunch & Learn)	Training provided knowledge of what to do to prepare for the CFSR and an open conversation to ask questions about the CFSR after all of the training events occurred.	February 2 Hours
Melody of Topics (Lunch & Learn)	Exploited, Missing and Runaway Children (Human and Sex Trafficking): Training provided review of the policy and procedures when a child goes missing, runs away or a survivor of human or sex trafficking. It provided skills and tools in engaging child/youth in identifying needs/services if a survivor of human or sex trafficking. EA Eligibility: Training provided federal requirements in screening whether the family fit the criteria under TANF to meet EA eligibility for federal funding and the process to enter the data in WYCAPS. LYSSN: Training provided information on LYSSN (MI fidelity platform); how to get into LYSSN; the tools LYSSN provides (training modules and data); and MI Mondays-how they can help benefit all staff. It also provided the use of WPM skills and tools in engaging youth and/or parents in approving and signing consent to record MI and entering the recording into LYSSN. WYCAPS Placements:	April 1 Hour

Topic	Course Description	Month & Training Hours
QRTPs and QIAs (Lunch & Learn)	Training provided an understanding of the policy and procedure as it relates to Title IV-E and the Family First Act. It provided skills and tools in engaging children and parents (*and possible foster parents if the child is being placed into a family foster home as a step-down from the facility) in identifying treatment needs and interventions/treatment for the child AND needs and interventions/services for the parents (*foster parents). Training provided the QIA process and timelines.	May 1 Hour
CFSR Tips and Tricks (Lunch & Learn)	Training provided information on Round 4 CFSR and tips and tricks of how to prepare for the federal CFSR. Training provided opportunities to have open conversations with staff.	June 1 Hour

*\*January and March 2023 Training events were for CFSR Reviewers specifically therefore not identified in this table.*

### **Lunch and Learn Survey Results**

The Lunch and Learn surveys were sent to every SSD staff, to include caseworkers, supervisors, managers, foster care coordinators and state staff, annually to gather information about the training events. The surveys provided feedback on how well the training events were, what could be done differently to assist and improve practice and what training staff wanted during the Lunch and Learn training events. On average, 60% staff would complete the survey annually.

Table 55. **Lunch and Learn Survey Results**



Year	2020	2021	2022
Were the Policy Lunch and Learn webinars helpful?			
Yes	93.7%	93.5%	96.7%
No	6.3%	6.5%	3.3%
How were the Policy Lunch and Learn webinars helpful?			
Comments	<p>Provided information about policy changes and how to implement them.</p> <p>Updating me on policy that had changed and that have been confusing</p> <p>As a new employee, it gave me insight on what steps need to be taken</p> <p>The Diligent Search webinars gave me different ideas on how to find a parent training on multiple subjects that are pertinent to current policy and procedures.</p>	<p>They are a nice refresher and a good way to get updated info on policy.</p> <p>Good exposure to various things not covered in CORE or as reminders</p> <p>Improves knowledge/skill, helps things to be more uniform around the state</p> <p>They gave me insight into more of the duties of the caseworkers</p>	<p>Great refresher training on policy</p> <p>Opportunities to ask questions.</p> <p>It helps provide information to the field beyond having to re-read policy and procedure.</p> <p>Updates on most current information and tools is priceless</p> <p>The information about CFSR really let me understand more about the WHY we are supposed to do things the way we do. As a new caseworker, we hit the ground running and don't get to go in depth of that.</p>
Do you want the Policy Lunch and Learn webinars to continue?			
Yes	100%	93.5%	93.3%
No	6.5%	6.5%	6.7%
What policies do you want to be trained on?			

Policies or other information	CPS track assignments/how cases are assigned and what criteria need to be met for each track; case timelines Juvenile Probation policy would be helpful. Any and all policies. I enjoy learning about policies so I would find them all helpful!	Case plans, assessments, general policy  Maybe some additional how to's for WYCAPS  ICWA, Case Plans-CPS & Probation, APPLA, Reports-PDR  Best practices and how other people case work	Case Law updates and court testimony  Case planning is always helpful, we should do that one at least once a year  Safety plans  ICPC and ICJ Candidate for Foster Care
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### Lunch and Learn webinars 2023

The Division provided specific training on the Family First Prevention Services Act and meeting the Title IV-E Prevention as well as the CFSR, so a few other questions were asked to provide feedback from staff to evaluate the training needs of the staff as well as develop a training plan to meet the federal requirements. The following was provided

Table 56. **Lunch and Learn Survey Results**

Question	Answer (s)	Tell Us More
How helpful was the information provided in the Lunch and Learn webinars? On a scale of 1-5 (1 being "not very helpful" and 5 being "very helpful").	1-0% 2-12% 3-27% 4-50% 5-21%	Many commented that these are good refreshers on policy and helps to provide knowledge, skills, and tools to work in child welfare and juvenile justice.
Do the Lunch and Learn webinars help you better understand policy, procedures, and practice?	Yes-98% No-6% NA-2%	
How would you rate the Lunch and Learn webinars in helping you understand policy, procedures, and practice? On a scale of 1-5 (1 being "not very helpful" and 5 being "very helpful").	1-5% 2-4% 3-22% 4-47% 5-22%	
Did the Lunch and Learn training events (to include	Yes-69%	Some commented that this provided them with how the policy connects to the

Question	Answer (s)	Tell Us More
October, November, December 2022) prepare you for the upcoming Child and Family Services Review (CFSR)	No-7% NA-24%	review and what reviewers will be looking for. Many appreciated the opportunity to review the information and time to ask questions.
Did the Lunch and Learn webinars help you understand the practice in applying the Candidate for Foster Care policy and procedure?	Yes-56% No-20% NA-24%	Some commented that it provided clarification and have a better understanding of the policy and process.
Did the Lunch and Learn webinar help you understand the practice in applying the Qualified Residential Treatment Program (QRTP) policy and procedure?	Yes-62% No-18% NA-20%	Some commented the training was a good overview of the policy/procedure and how to enter the date into WYCAPS.

Table 57. **Motivational Interviewing (MI) Training**

Round	Dates	Attendees
1	8/3-5/2021 9/28-30/2021	District Managers, Supervisors, State Office Staff (Program Managers, Supervisors, Analysts), GAL Leadership and WCTF staff
2	11/29-12/1/2021	Caseworkers, Foster Care Coordinators, and other staff
3	12/14-16/2021	Caseworkers, Foster Care Coordinators, and other staff
4	1/11/-13/2022	Caseworkers, Foster Care Coordinators, and other staff
5	2/23/25/2022	Caseworkers, Foster Care Coordinators, and other staff
6	3/22-24/2022	Caseworkers, Foster Care Coordinators, and other staff
7 <sup>10</sup>	4/26-28/2022	Caseworkers, Foster Care Coordinators, and other staff
Core MI	5/16-18/2022	New Caseworkers
Core MI	9/7-9-2022	New Caseworkers
MI TNT	10/25-27-2022	MI TNT (MI Train the Trainers) Training
Core MI	3/21-23/2023	New Caseworkers-Trained by MI TNT
Core MI	4/25-27/2023	New Caseworkers-Trained by MI TNT

<sup>10</sup> Round 7 was the final MI training for seasoned staff.

### **MI Mondays**

The Department provides demonstrated use of MI in relation to work in every day case management approaches. As a resource for Department staff, a weekly email called "MI Mondays" serves as a training tool to connect MI to casework practice. A typical MI Monday contains information regarding casework, such as a WPM tool, and a short real-play (5-10 minutes) of how to use MI in conjunction with that particular tool. MI Mondays also serves as communication regarding MI implementation, such as strategies for fidelity monitoring. MI Mondays has gone through several "phases" aimed at identified needs, including, most recently, demonstrations of using MI to engage families more effectively within the framework of the CFSR Items.

**MI TNT**

In an effort to support MI statewide, field and state staff were identified to become “train the trainers.” The MI Training Team (MI TNT) consists of ten (10) field and five (5) state staff who went through three (3) days of training to facilitate MI training. The MI Trainers who provide the Core training twice a year (spring and fall), using the same training curriculum as trained statewide, also facilitate “refresher training” for their districts. The MI trainers meet monthly to discuss highlights and challenges in each district. The team has had one (1) full training event and the feedback provided has allowed changes in the training process. The MI TNT has also allowed for their own evaluation of the process and what needs they have to meet the requirements for MI training. The MI TNT will continue to meet monthly to support each other as well as the goals of the division.

Table 58. **IV-E Prevention Training Plan**

Round/Event	Training	Attendees and Dates
	Prevention Mindset - The beginning conversations about how Wyoming is going to implement the Family First Act	Department staff and GALs-May and June 2020
	Family First Prevention Services Act	Department staff and GALs-December 2020
Round 1	<p>The Theory Behind FFPSA &amp; QRTPs for DFS Field Office Staff</p> <p>Introduction to QRTP Clinical Lens QRTP Placement Intro to FFPSA</p> <p>Assessment For Appropriate Placement In Residential Care Policy and Procedure, Job Aides, and DFS Forms were all provided throughout the training series.</p>	<p>District 1 - 1/22/2021  District 2 - 1/14/2021  District 3 - 1/21/2021  District 4 - 1/27/2021  District 5 - 1/26/2021  District 6 - 1/6/2021  District 7 - 1/5/2021  District 8 - 1/25/2021  District 9 - 1/20/2021  Department Foster Care Coordinators - 1/13/2021  ESDFS - 2/1/2021  NADFS - offered training State Office Staff - 1/13/2021</p> <p>Governor’s Council on Juvenile Justice - 1/15/2021  CASA (Statewide) - 1/15/2021  Sweetwater County Probation - 6/8/2021  Campbell County Probation - 7/20/2021</p>

Round/Event	Training	Attendees and Dates
Round 2	DFS Process for QRTP Implementation for DFS Field Staff	All Sessions provided the same information, just at different times so all staff could attend pending their schedules. Session 1 - 5/18/2021 Session 2 - 5/19/2021 Session 3 - 5/24/2021 Session 4 - 5/26/2021 Session 5 - 5/27/2021
	*One-on-one consultations for support of field staff and stakeholders	Whenever requested
Joint Symposium on Children & Youth Training	Family Engagement in Case Planning During QRTP Treatment	Department field and state staff, other agencies, and stakeholders to include legal- 6/16/2021
	IV-E Processes for Eligibility and Reimbursability	IV-E Eligibility Group Training-5/11/2021 & 8/31/2021
Round 3	Follow up on DFS Implementation for DFS Field Staff	Lunch and Learn conducted 10/14/21
Round 4	Candidacy	February 2022
Round 5	MI as IV-E Prevention Service	March 2022
Round 6	WYCAPS-Candidate for Foster Care and Prevention Plan	April 2022
	External Stakeholder meetings	Starting 10/22

# APPENDIX: SERVICE ARRAY

## SURVEY RESULTS

The following sections contain results specific to array of services from the stakeholder survey.

### Biological Parents

**Total Biological Parent Respondents: 27**

Table 1. **Biological Parent Results**

What services currently exist in your community that help support children/youth? (Check all that apply)		
Choices	Frequency of Selection	Percentage
Family/Team Meetings	22	81.5%
Individual Counseling for Children/Youth	21	77.8%
Family Counseling	19	70.4%
Educational Services	19	70.4%
Treatment for Children	14	51.9%
Outpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Children/Youth	11	40.7%
Wrap Around Services	10	37.0%
Mentoring Services/Supports	9	33.3%
Inpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Children/Youth	9	33.3%
Independent Living Services	6	22.2%
Day Treatment Services	6	22.2%

Table 59. **Biological Parent Results**

What services exist in your community that help to support you? (Check all that apply)		
Choices	Frequency of Selection	Percentage
Individual Counseling for Adults	18	66.7%
Family/Team Meeting	18	66.7%
Parenting Support/Education	17	63.0%
Family Counseling	16	59.3%
Legal Assistance	14	51.9%
Educational Service	11	40.7%
Childcare	10	37.0%
Transportation	10	37.0%
Mentoring Services/Supports	9	33.3%
Wrap Around Services	7	25.9%
Foster Parent Training Through DFS	5	18.5%

\*The Department gathered the information on services available in communities from parents, foster parents, legal (AGs, judges, district/county attorneys, parent attorneys and GALs) as well as other statewide agencies.

### Caseworkers

**Total Field Staff Respondents: 78**

Table 60. **Caseworker Results**

If you answered yes to the previous question, please list the in-home services for families your community has.	
Choices	Frequency
Wrap Around Services	23
Parents as Teachers	9
Counseling/Mentoring	8
Public Health/Public Health Nursing	7
DFS/Family Team Meetings	5
Early Head Start	4
Children's Development Center	3
Wyoming Independent Living	2



Meals on Wheels/Food Banks	2
Respite Care	2
WIC	2
Stride, Wyoming Hand in Hand, Best Beginnings, Project Reach, PAL, National Suicide Prevention Hotline, Wyoming 2-1-1, CRC, EDDC	1

Table 61. **Caseworker Results**

What prevention services (services/supports to help children remain safely at home) currently exist in your community? (Check all that apply)		
Choices	Frequency of Selection	Percentage
Individual Counseling for Children/Youth	77	98.7%
Individual Counseling for Adults	75	96.2%
Family Counseling	74	94.9%
Childcare	74	94.9%
Educational Services	72	92.3%
Family/Team Meetings	71	91.0%
Outpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Adults	69	88.5%
Job Placement/Vocational Training	63	80.8%
Parenting Support/Education	61	78.2%
Housing Assistance	61	78.2%
Wrap Around Services	56	71.8%
Legal Assistance	53	67.9%
Transportation	49	62.8%
Outpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Children/Youth	43	55.1%
Mentoring Services/Supports	40	51.3%
Inpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Adults	33	42.3%
Inpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Children	14	17.9%

Table 62. **Supervisor Results**

If you answered yes to the previous question, please list the in-home services for families your community has.	
<b>Choices</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Wrap Around Services/Magellan	18
Counseling/Mentoring	11
Public Health Services	9
Parents as Teachers	8
Parent Education/In Home Parenting	5
Child Development Center	2
Circles	1
Food Programs	1
Head Start	1

## Supervisors

**Total Supervisor Respondents: 40**

Table 63. **Supervisor Results**

What prevention services (services/supports to help children remain safely at home) currently exist in your community? (Check all that apply)		
Choices	Frequency of Selection	Percentage
Individual Counseling for Children/Youth	39	97.5%
Family Counseling	39	97.5%
Individual Counseling for Adults	38	95.0%
Educational Services	38	95.0%
Outpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Adults	36	90.0%
Wrap Around Services	36	90.0%
Childcare	36	90.0%
Family/Team Meetings	36	90.0%
Parenting Support/Education	35	87.5%
Outpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Children/Youth	34	85.0%
Housing Assistance	34	85.0%
Job Placement/Vocational Training	34	85.0%
Legal Assistance	33	82.5%
Mentoring Services/Supports	29	72.5%
Transportation	27	67.5%
Inpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Adults	14	35.0%
Inpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Children	11	27.5%

Table 64. **Supervisor Results**

What services currently exist in your community that help support parents whose children are in foster care? (Check all that apply)		
Choices	Frequency of Selection	Percentage
Family Counseling	39	97.5%
Individual Counseling for Adults	38	95.0%
Family/Team Meeting	37	92.5%
Outpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Adults	35	87.5%
Wrap Around Service	35	87.5%
Childcare	35	87.5%
Job Placement/Vocational Training	34	85.0%

Parenting Support/Education	33	82.5%
Housing Assistance	33	82.5%
Educational Service	31	77.5%
Transportation	21	52.5%
Mentoring Services/Supports	20	50.0%
Inpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Adults	14	35.0%

Table 65. **Supervisor Results**

What services exist in your community that help to support foster parents? (Check all that apply)		
Choices	Frequency of Selection	Percentage
Foster Parent Training Through DFS	38	95.0%
Childcare	36	90.0%
Family Counseling	34	85.0%
Family/Team Meeting	34	85.0%
Individual Counseling for Adults	32	80.0%
Wrap Around Services	31	77.5%
Transportation	26	65.0%
Educational Service	24	60.0%
Parenting Support/Education	23	57.5%
Mentoring Services/Supports	20	50.0%
Legal Assistance	17	42.5%

## Youth

### Total Youth Respondents: 80

What services currently exist in your community that help or have helped support you? (Check all that apply)		
Choices	Frequency of Selection	Percentage
Individual Counseling for Children/Youth	61	76.3%
Independent Living Services	51	63.8%
Educational Services	42	52.5%
Family Counseling	40	50.0%
Treatment for Children	36	45.0%
Family/Team Meetings	36	45.0%
Inpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Children/Youth	17	21.3%
Mentoring Services/Supports	17	21.3%
Wrap Around Services	16	20.0%

Outpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Children/Youth	12	15.0%
Day Treatment Services	10	12.5%

What services do or did you wish were available to you?		
Choices	Frequency of Selection	Percentage
Family Counseling	19	23.8%
Treatment for Children	16	20.0%
Independent Living Services	15	18.8%
Individual Counseling for Children/Youth	14	17.5%
Educational Services	12	15.0%
Mentoring Services/Supports	12	15.0%
Outpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Children/Youth	11	13.8%
Family/Team Meetings	9	11.3%
Day Treatment Services	6	7.5%
Wrap Around Services	5	6.3%
Inpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Children/Youth	4	5.0%

## Foster Parents

**Total Foster Care Parent Respondents: 117**

Table 66. **Foster Parent Results**

What gaps in services that help support children/youth who are in foster care do you think currently exist in your community? (Check all that apply)		
Choices	Frequency of Selection	Percentage
Treatment for Children	45	38.5%
Mentoring Services/Supports	35	29.9%
Day Treatment Services	25	21.4%
Outpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Children/Youth	22	18.8%
Wrap Around Services	22	18.8%
Inpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Children/Youth	21	17.9%
Family/Team Meetings	21	17.9%
Family Counseling	20	17.1%
Educational Services	19	16.2%
Individual Counseling for Children/Youth	18	15.4%
Independent Living Services	17	14.5%

Table 67. **Foster Parent Results**

What services currently exist in your community that help support parents whose children are in foster care? (Check all that apply)		
Choices	Frequency of Selection	Percentage
Individual Counseling for Adults	77	98.7%
Family Counseling	73	93.6%
Outpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Adults	64	82.1%
Childcare	64	82.1%
Family/Team Meetings	63	80.8%
Job Placement/Vocational Training	60	76.9%
Housing Assistance	54	69.2%
Parenting Support/Education	52	66.7%
Wrap Around Service	46	59.0%
Educational Service	45	57.7%
Transportation	42	53.8%
Mentoring Services/Supports	33	42.3%
Inpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Adults	29	37.2%

Table 68. **Foster Parent Results**

What services exist in your community that help to support you as a foster or adoptive parent? (Check all that apply)		
Choices	Frequency of Selection	Percentage
Foster Parent Training Through DFS	86	73.5%
Childcare	58	49.6%
Family Counseling	57	48.7%
Individual Counseling for Adults	56	47.9%
Transportation	52	44.4%
Family/Team Meeting	50	42.7%
Parenting Support/Education	48	41.0%
Educational Service	45	38.5%
Wrap Around Services	31	26.5%
Legal Assistance	31	26.5%
Mentoring Services/Supports	25	21.4%

Table 69. **Foster Parent Results**

What services currently exist in your community that help support children/youth who are in foster care? (Check all that apply)		
Choices	Frequency of Selection	Percentage
Individual Counseling for Children/Youth	78	100.0%
Family Counseling	74	94.9%
Educational Services	69	88.5%
Family/Team Meetings	66	84.6%
Independent Living Services	60	76.9%
Wrap Around Services	58	74.4%
Treatment for Children	52	66.7%
Outpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Children/Youth	41	52.6%
Mentoring Services/Supports	41	52.6%
Day Treatment Services	20	25.6%
Inpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Children/Youth	11	14.1%

Table 70. **Foster Parent Results**

What services currently exist in your community that help support parents whose children are in foster care? (Check all that apply)		
Choices	Frequency of Selection	Percentage
Individual Counseling for Adults	77	98.7%
Family Counseling	73	93.6%
Outpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Adults	64	82.1%
Childcare	64	82.1%
Family/Team Meetings	63	80.8%
Job Placement/Vocational Training	60	76.9%
Housing Assistance	54	69.2%
Parenting Support/Education	52	66.7%
Wrap Around Service	46	59.0%
Educational Service	45	57.7%
Transportation	42	53.8%
Mentoring Services/Supports	33	42.3%
Inpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Adults	29	37.2%

Table 71. **Foster Parent Results**

What services exist in your community that help to support foster parents? (Check all that apply)		
<b>Choices</b>	<b>Frequency of Selection</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Foster Parent Training Through DFS	73	93.6%
Childcare	66	84.6%
Individual Counseling for Adults	63	80.8%
Family/Team Meeting	59	75.6%
Family Counseling	57	73.1%
Parenting Support/Education	51	65.4%
Transportation	47	60.3%
Wrap Around Services	40	51.3%
Educational Service	39	50.0%
Mentoring Services/Supports	30	38.5%
Legal Assistance	22	28.2%

### Gaps in Services

Table 72. **Biological Parent Results**

What gaps in services exist in your community that help to support you? (Check all that apply)		
<b>Choices</b>	<b>Frequency of Selection</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Legal Assistance	9	33.3%
Family/Team Meeting	8	29.6%
Parenting Support/Education	8	29.6%
Individual Counseling for Adults	6	22.2%
Childcare	6	22.2%
Transportation	5	18.5%
Mentoring Services/Supports	4	14.8%
Family Counseling	3	11.1%
Educational Service	3	11.1%
Wrap Around Services	3	11.1%
Foster Parent Training Through DFS	2	7.4%



Table 73. **Foster Parent Results**

What gaps in services that help support children/youth who are in foster care do you think currently exist in your community? (Check all that apply)		
Choices	Frequency of Selection	Percentage
Treatment for Children	45	38.5%
Mentoring Services/Supports	35	29.9%
Day Treatment Services	25	21.4%
Outpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Children/Youth	22	18.8%
Wrap Around Services	22	18.8%
Inpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Children/Youth	21	17.9%
Family/Team Meetings	21	17.9%
Family Counseling	20	17.1%
Educational Services	19	16.2%
Individual Counseling for Children/Youth	18	15.4%
Independent Living Services	17	14.5%

Table 74. **Foster Parent Results**

What gaps in services exist in your community that help to support you as a foster or adoptive parent? (Check all that apply)		
Choices	Frequency of Selection	Percentage
Legal Assistance	37	31.6%
Mentoring Services/Supports	34	29.1%
Childcare	32	27.4%
Parenting Support/Education	28	23.9%
Transportation	27	23.1%
Wrap Around Services	24	20.5%
Individual Counseling for Adults	23	19.7%
Family Counseling	21	17.9%
Educational Service	17	14.5%
Family/Team Meeting	16	13.7%
Foster Parent Training Through DFS	12	10.3%

Figure 25. **Field Staff Results**

What gaps in prevention services do you think currently exist in your community? (Check all that apply)		
<b>Choices</b>	<b>Frequency of Selection</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Inpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Children	56	71.8%
Transportation	39	50.0%
Inpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Adults	34	43.6%
Housing Assistance	29	37.2%
Mentoring Services/Supports	28	35.9%
Outpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Children/Youth	27	34.6%
Legal Assistance	26	33.3%
Childcare	25	32.1%
Parenting Support/Education	24	30.8%
Individual Counseling for Children/Youth	20	25.6%
Wrap Around Services	19	24.4%
Job Placement/Vocational Training	19	24.4%
Individual Counseling for Adults	17	21.8%
Family Counseling	17	21.8%
Educational Services	14	17.9%
Outpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Adults	10	12.8%
Family/Team Meetings	7	9.0%

Table 75. **Field Staff Results**

What gaps in services that help support children/youth who are in foster care do you think currently exist in your community? (Check all that apply)		
<b>Choices</b>	<b>Frequency of Selection</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Treatment for Children	63	80.8%
Inpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Children/Youth	54	69.2%
Day Treatment Services	48	61.5%
Outpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Children/Youth	39	50.0%
Mentoring Services/Supports	34	43.6%
Independent Living Services	27	34.6%
Wrap Around Services	25	32.1%
Individual Counseling for Children/Youth	19	24.4%
Family Counseling	18	23.1%
Educational Services	14	17.9%
Family/Team Meetings	7	9.0%

Table 76. **Field Staff Results**

What gaps in services that help support parents whose children are in foster care currently exist in your community? (Check all that apply)		
Choices	Frequency of Selection	Percentage
Inpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Adults	42	53.8%
Mentoring Services/Supports	41	52.6%
Transportation	40	51.3%
Parenting Support/Education	30	38.5%
Wrap Around Service	27	34.6%
Housing Assistance	26	33.3%
Job Placement/Vocational Training	24	30.8%
Outpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Adults	21	26.9%
Educational Service	21	26.9%
Childcare	20	25.6%
Individual Counseling for Adults	19	24.4%
Family Counseling	19	24.4%
Family/Team Meetings	6	7.7%

Table 77. **Field Staff Results**

What gaps in services that help to support foster parents exist in your community? (Check all that apply)		
Choices	Frequency of Selection	Percentage
Transportation	40	51.3%
Mentoring Services/Supports	38	48.7%
Wrap Around Services	31	39.7%
Legal Assistance	30	38.5%
Parenting Support/Education	25	32.1%
Family Counseling	24	30.8%
Individual Counseling for Adults	21	26.9%
Childcare	21	26.9%
Educational Service	18	23.1%
Foster Parent Training Through DFS	12	15.4%
Family/Team Meeting	5	6.4%

Table 78. **Supervisor Results**

What gaps in prevention services do you think currently exist in your community? (Check all that apply)		
Choices	Frequency of Selection	Percentage
Inpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Children	30	75.0%
Inpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Adults	25	62.5%
Transportation	21	52.5%
Mentoring Services/Supports	14	35.0%
Outpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Children/Youth	9	22.5%
Legal Assistance	9	22.5%
Wrap Around Services	8	20.0%
Parenting Support/Education	8	20.0%
Housing Assistance	8	20.0%
Childcare	7	17.5%
Outpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Adults	6	15.0%
Job Placement/Vocational Training	6	15.0%
Individual Counseling for Children/Youth	5	12.5%
Family Counseling	5	12.5%
Educational Services	4	10.0%
Family/Team Meetings	4	10.0%
Individual Counseling for Adults	3	7.5%

Table 79. **Supervisor Results**

What gaps in services that help support children/youth who are in foster care do you think currently exist in your community? (Check all that apply)		
Choices	Frequency of Selection	Percentage
Inpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Children/Youth	27	67.5%
Day Treatment Services	24	60.0%
Mentoring Services/Supports	12	30.0%
Independent Living Services	10	25.0%
Outpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Children/Youth	9	22.5%
Wrap Around Services	8	20.0%
Individual Counseling for Children/Youth	6	15.0%
Family Counseling	5	12.5%
Educational Services	5	12.5%
Family/Team Meetings	3	7.5%

Table 80. **Supervisor Results**

What gaps in services that help support parents whose children are in foster care currently exist in your community? (Check all that apply)		
Choices	Frequency of Selection	Percentage
Transportation	25	62.5%
Inpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Adults	24	60.0%
Mentoring Services/Supports	19	47.5%
Wrap Around Service	11	27.5%
Educational Service	10	25.0%
Parenting Support/Education	10	25.0%
Housing Assistance	10	25.0%
Childcare	10	25.0%
Job Placement/Vocational Training	9	22.5%
Family Counseling	6	15.0%
Outpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Adults	6	15.0%
Individual Counseling for Adults	5	12.5%
Family/Team Meetings	5	12.5%

Table 81. **Supervisor Results**

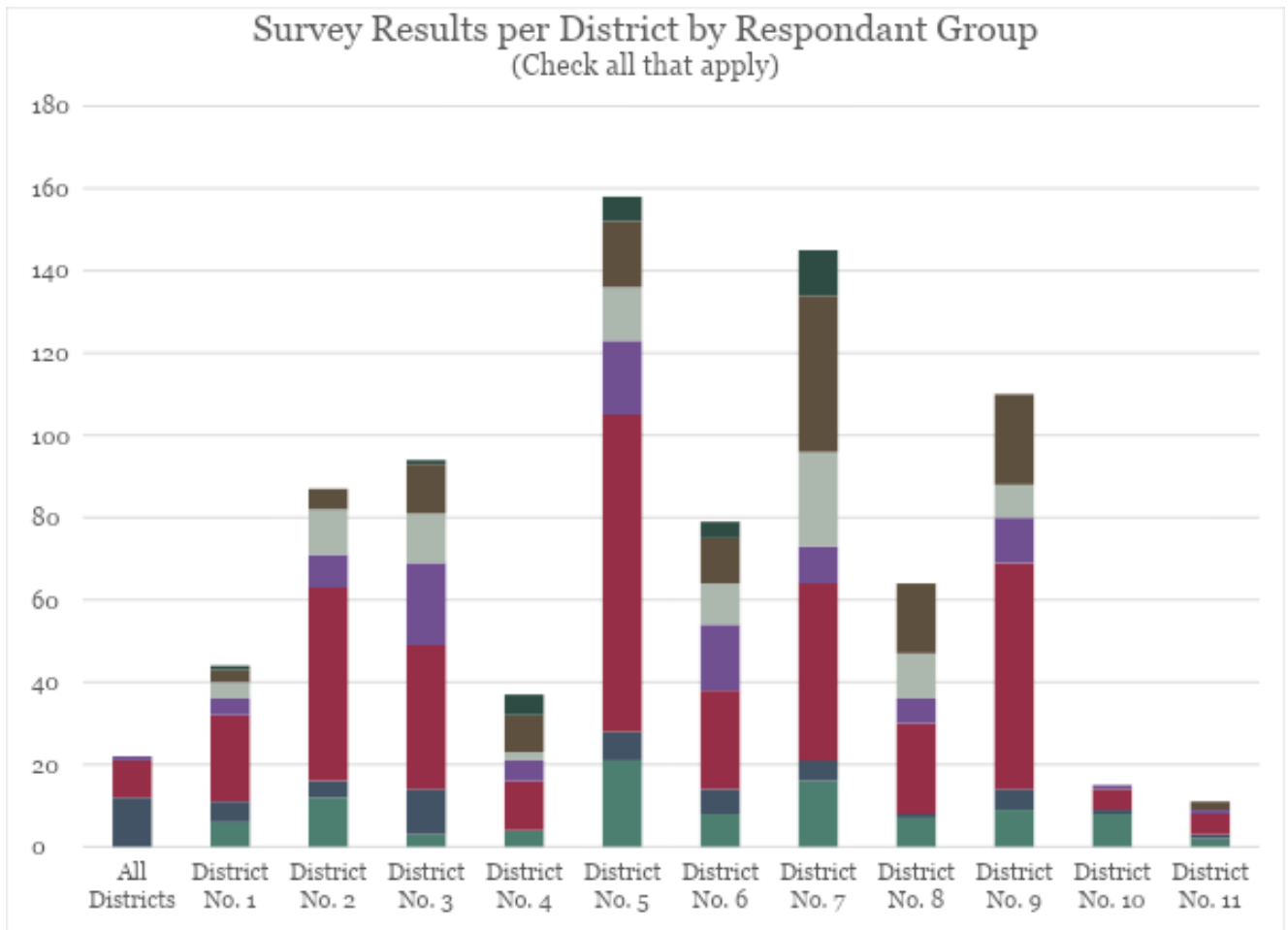
What gaps in services that help to support foster parents exist in your community? (Check all that apply)		
Choices	Frequency of Selection	Percentage
Transportation	21	52.5%
Mentoring Services/Supports	17	42.5%
Legal Assistance	14	35.0%
Educational Service	11	27.5%
Parenting Support/Education	11	27.5%
Childcare	11	27.5%
Wrap Around Services	10	25.0%
Family Counseling	7	17.5%
Individual Counseling for Adults	5	12.5%
Family/Team Meeting	4	10.0%
Foster Parent Training Through DFS	2	5.0%

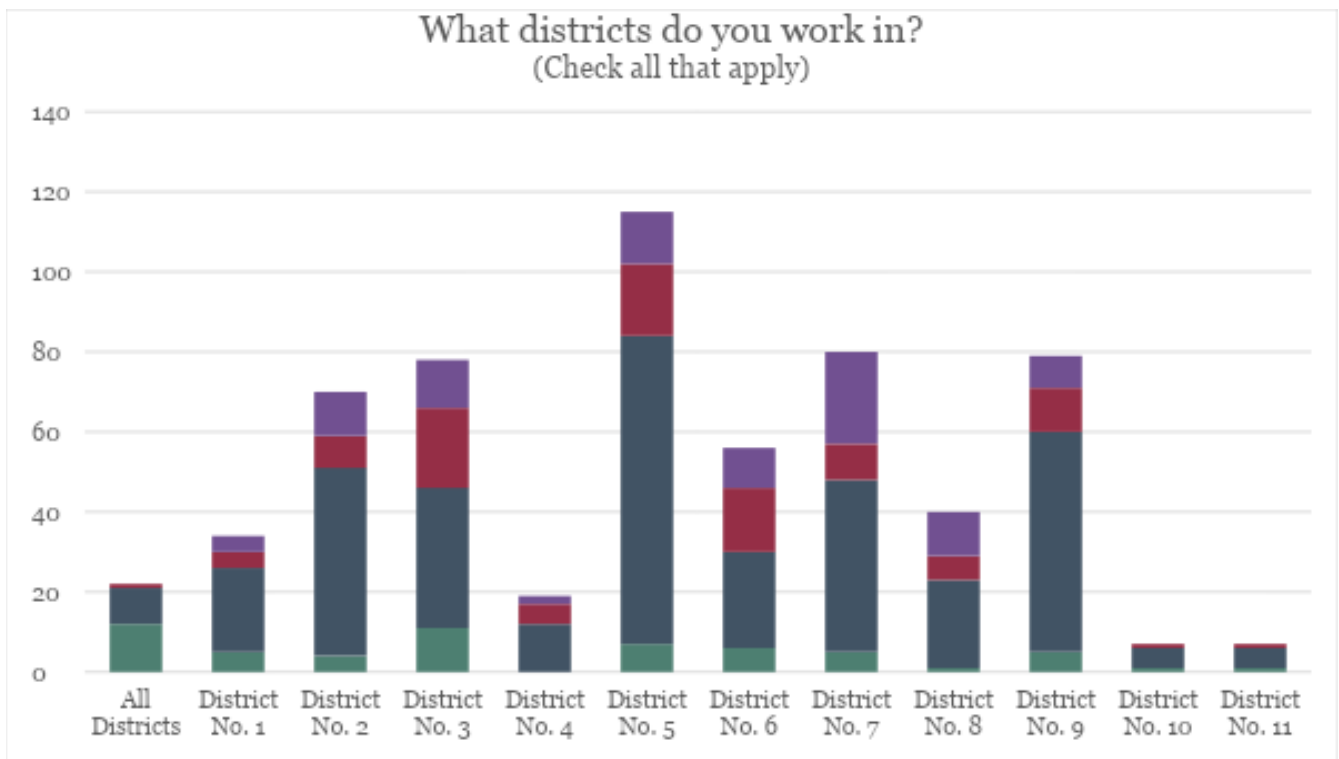
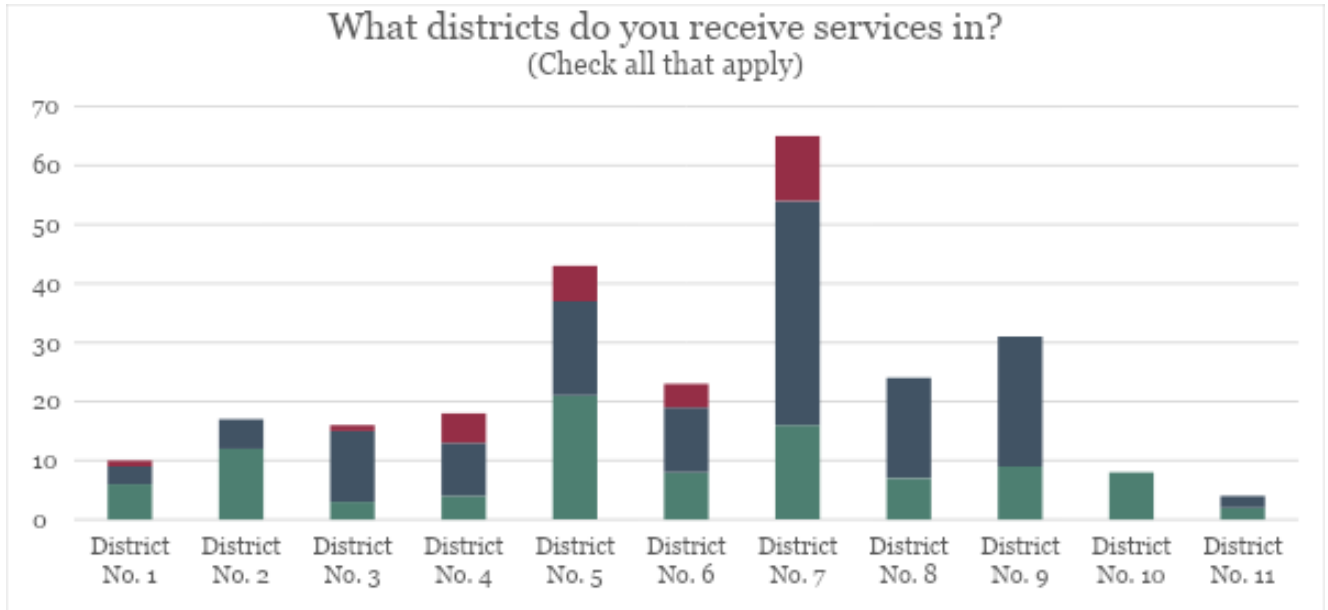
# APPENDIX: SURVEY RESULTS

## Survey Respondents

**Total Survey Respondents: 683**

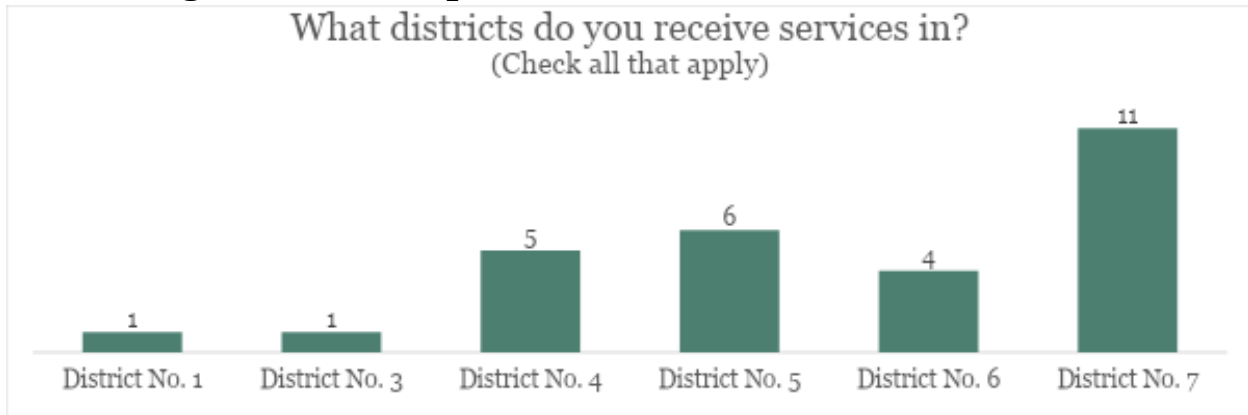
**Note:** For the survey questions which gave respondents an option for “other”, those answers are not yet captured within this analysis. If specific data points require further analysis, please make note. Furthermore, during the initial question of “Please select the type of agency, community, or organization you represent” some respondents indicated an “other” option which directed them to the partner survey, where they improperly took the wrong survey. Once the data points have been selected that will be used, we will do another final analysis to confirm any improperly taken surveys.





BIOLOGICAL PARENTS

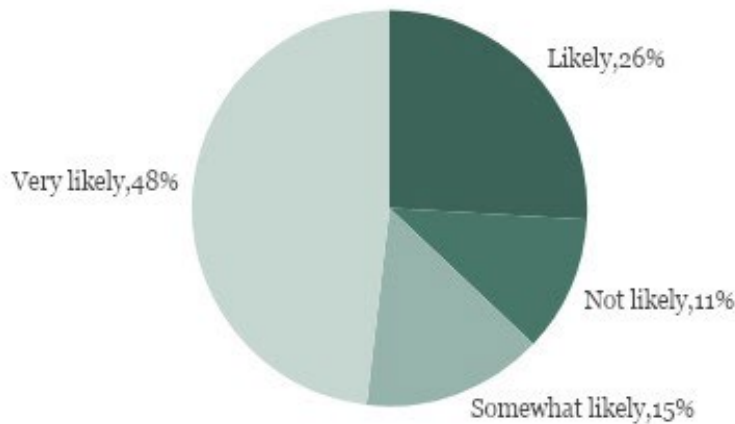
**Total Biological Parent Respondents: 27**



	Very Effective	Effective	Somewhat Effective	Not Effective	Don't Know
In your experience, how effective is your county in engaging the following in developing and implementing case plans? (Birth parents/guardians, Foster parents, Adoptive parents, Relative Caregivers, and Youth (as appropriate))	7, 25.9%	12, 44.4%	5, 18.5%	3, 11.1%	n/a
How effective is the Wyoming Department of Family Services in notifying you in a timely manner of upcoming court hearings and/or panel reviews?	13, 48.1%	6, 22.2%	6, 22.2%	2, 7.4%	n/a
How effective is the Wyoming Department of Family Services in allowing your input and opinions heard during court hearings and panel reviews?	10, 37.0%	9, 33.3%	6, 22.2%	2, 7.4%	n/a



To what extent does Wyoming Department of Family Services authentically involve you in the development of case plans?



How does Wyoming Department of Family Services engage you in case planning? (Select all that apply)

Choices	Frequency of Selection	Percentage
In Family Team Meetings	23	85.2%
During quality case visits	17	63.0%

What services currently exist in your community that help support children/youth? (Check all that apply)

Choices	Frequency of Selection	Percentage
Family/Team Meetings	22	81.5%
Individual Counseling for Children/Youth	21	77.8%
Family Counseling	19	70.4%
Educational Services	19	70.4%
Treatment for Children	14	51.9%
Outpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Children/Youth	11	40.7%
Wrap Around Services	10	37.0%
Mentoring Services/Supports	9	33.3%
Inpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Children/Youth	9	33.3%
Independent Living Services	6	22.2%
Day Treatment Services	6	22.2%

What gaps in services that help support children/youth do you think currently exist in your community? (Check all that apply)

Choices	Frequency of Selection	Percentage
Treatment for Children	12	44.4%
Family Counseling	8	29.6%
Family/Team Meetings	8	29.6%
Individual Counseling for Children/Youth	7	25.9%
Day Treatment Services	6	22.2%
Outpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Children/Youth	5	18.5%
Educational Services	5	18.5%
Independent Living Services	4	14.8%
Inpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Children/Youth	3	11.1%
Mentoring Services/Supports	3	11.1%
Wrap Around Services	1	3.7%

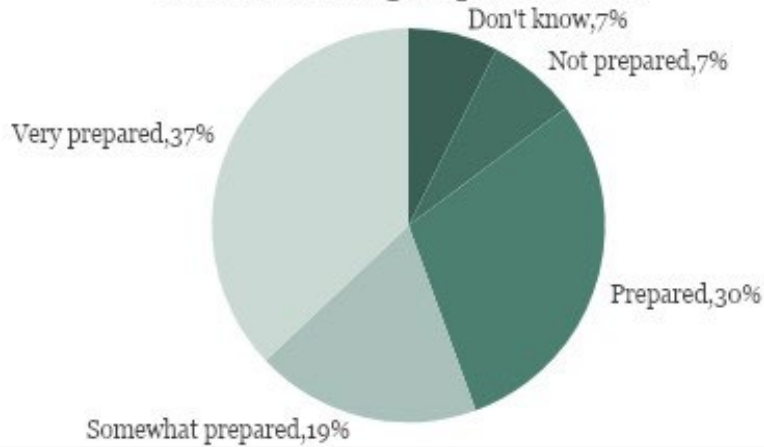
What services exist in your community that help to support you? (Check all that apply)

Choices	Frequency of Selection	Percentage
Individual Counseling for Adults	18	66.7%
Family/Team Meeting	18	66.7%
Parenting Support/Education	17	63.0%
Family Counseling	16	59.3%
Legal Assistance	14	51.9%
Educational Service	11	40.7%
Childcare	10	37.0%
Transportation	10	37.0%
Mentoring Services/Supports	9	33.3%
Wrap Around Services	7	25.9%
Foster Parent Training Through DFS	5	18.5%

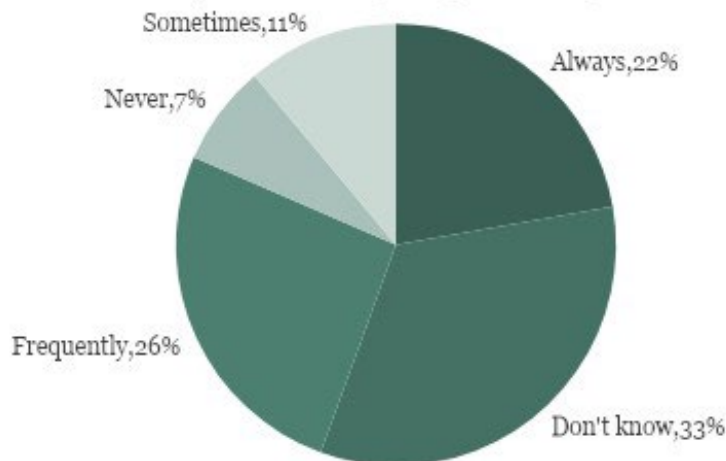
What gaps in services exist in your community that help to support you? (Check all that apply)

Choices	Frequency of Selection	Percentage
Legal Assistance	9	33.3%
Family/Team Meeting	8	29.6%
Parenting Support/Education	8	29.6%
Individual Counseling for Adults	6	22.2%
Childcare	6	22.2%
Transportation	5	18.5%
Mentoring Services/Supports	4	14.8%
Family Counseling	3	11.1%
Educational Service	3	11.1%
Wrap Around Services	3	11.1%
Foster Parent Training Through DFS	2	7.4%

To what extent are new Wyoming Department of Family Services staff prepared to deliver services after completing initial training requirements?



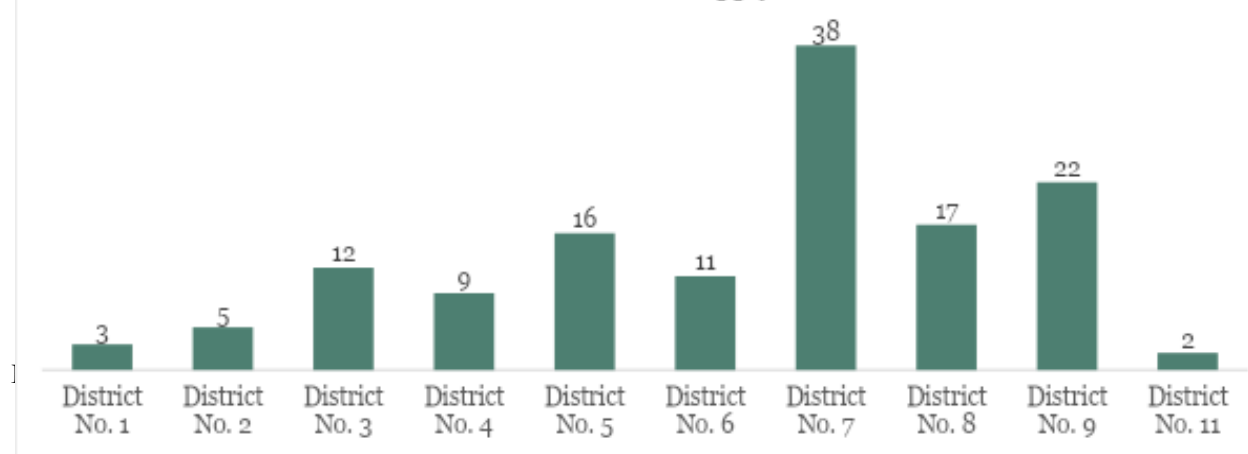
To what extent does the Wyoming Department of Family Services provide ongoing training to staff?



FOSTER CARE PARENT

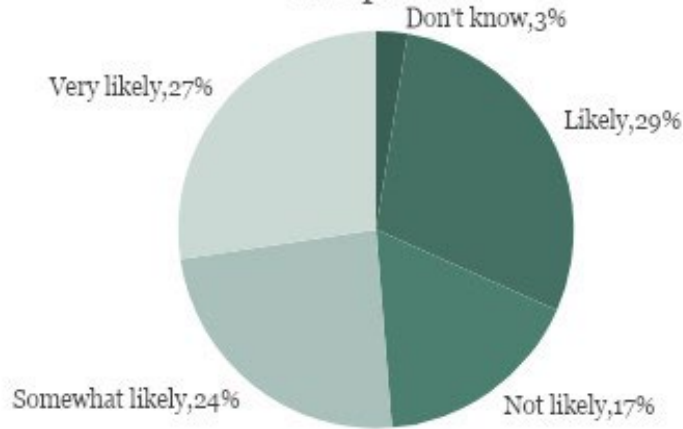
**Total Foster Care Parent Respondents: 117**

What districts do you receive services in?  
(Check all that apply)



	Very Effective	Effective	Somewhat Effective	Not Effective	Don't Know
In your experience, how effective is your county in engaging the following in developing and implementing Case Plans? (Birth parents/guardians, Foster parents, Adoptive parents, Relative Caregivers, and Youth (as appropriate))	29, 24.8%	44, 37.6%	33, 28.2%	5, 4.3%	6, 5.1%
To what extent does Wyoming achieve permanency for children in foster care in a timely manner?	10, 8.5%	33, 28.2%	33, 28.2%	28, 23.9%	13, 11.1%
How well does the Wyoming Department of Family Services support foster parents to foster older youth?	16, 13.7%	36, 30.8%	15, 12.8%	16, 13.7%	34, 29.1%
How effective is the Wyoming Department of Family Services in notifying you in a timely manner of upcoming court hearings and/or panel reviews?	40, 34.2%	37, 31.6%	22, 18.8%	14, 12.0%	4, 3.4%
How effective is the Wyoming Department of Family Services in allowing your input and opinions heard during court hearings and panel reviews?	31, 26.5%	38, 32.5%	19, 16.2%	17, 14.5%	12, 10.3%

To what extent does Wyoming Department of Family Services authentically involve you in the development of case plans?



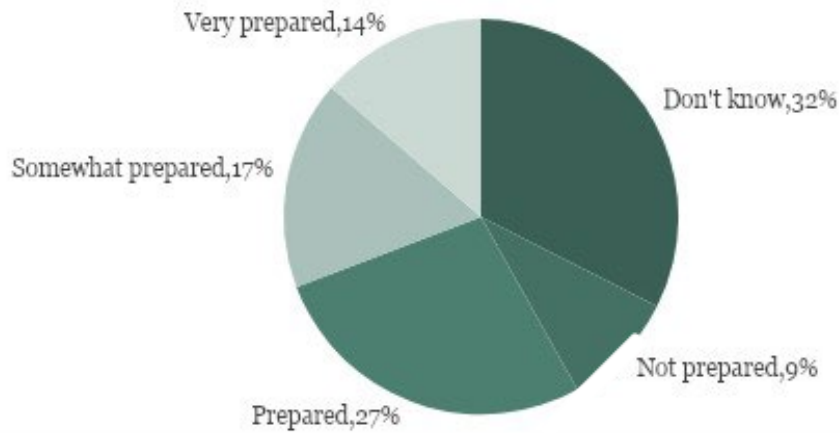
How does Wyoming Department of Family Services engage you in case planning?  
(Select all that apply)

Choices	Frequency of Selection	Percentage
In Family Team Meetings	61	52.1%
During quality case visits with your case manager	60	51.3%
I am not asked to engage in case planning	19	16.2%
I have not been involved in case planning	16	13.7%

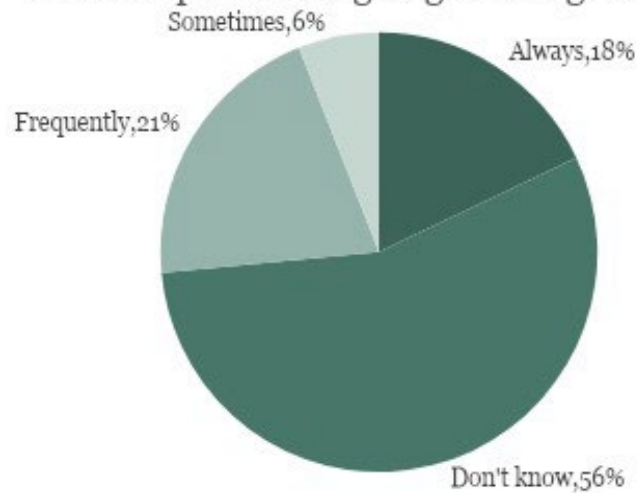
If you have not been involved in case planning, please describe why.

	Frequency	Percentage
I do not know/I haven't been asked	19	67.9%
I began fostering after the plan was already in place	4	14.3%
I provide respite care	2	7.1%
I'm involved but I don't feel it makes a difference	2	7.1%
I'm a new foster parent	1	3.6%

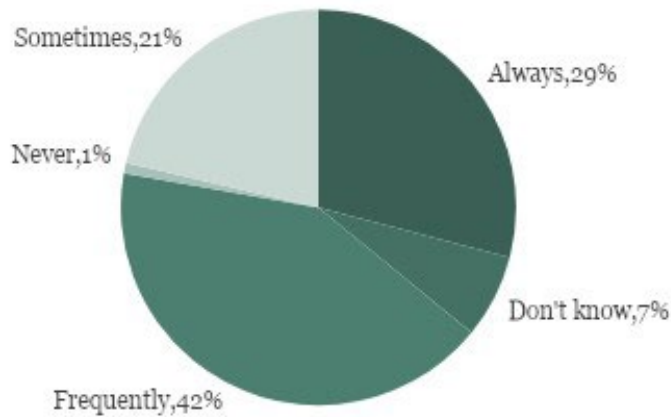
To what extent are new Wyoming Department of Family Services staff prepared to deliver services after completing initial training requirements?



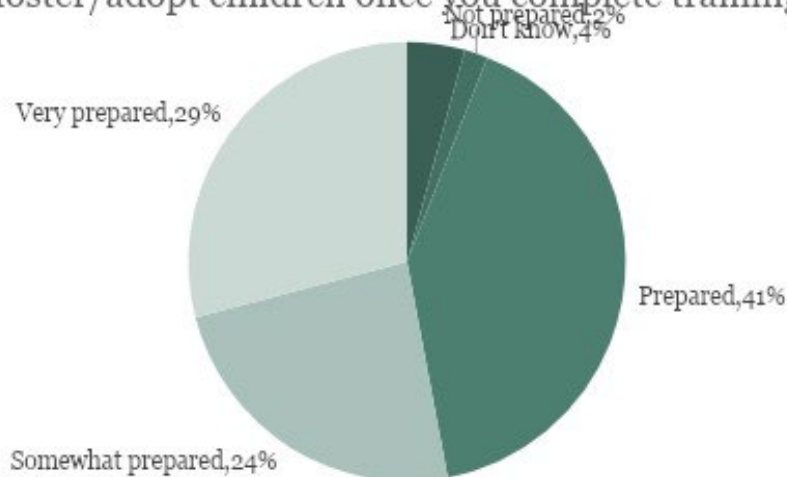
To what extent does the Wyoming Department of Family Services provide ongoing training to staff?



To what extent does Wyoming Department of Family Services provide initial or ongoing training in order for you to carry out your duties to foster/adopt children?



How prepared are you to carry out your duties to foster/adopt children once you complete training?



What services currently exist in your community that help support children/youth who are in foster care? (Check all that apply)

Choices	Frequency of Selection	Percentage
Individual Counseling for Children/Youth	104	88.9%
Family Counseling	90	76.9%
Family/Team Meetings	75	64.1%
Educational Services	74	63.2%
Treatment for Children	57	48.7%
Wrap Around Services	54	46.2%
Independent Living Services	53	45.3%

Mentoring Services/Supports	51	43.6%
Outpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Children/Youth	41	35.0%
Inpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Children/Youth	33	28.2%
Day Treatment Services	22	18.8%

What gaps in services that help support children/youth who are in foster care do you think currently exist in your community? (Check all that apply)		
Choices	Frequency of Selection	Percentage
Treatment for Children	45	38.5%
Mentoring Services/Supports	35	29.9%
Day Treatment Services	25	21.4%
Outpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Children/Youth	22	18.8%
Wrap Around Services	22	18.8%
Inpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Children/Youth	21	17.9%
Family/Team Meetings	21	17.9%
Family Counseling	20	17.1%
Educational Services	19	16.2%
Individual Counseling for Children/Youth	18	15.4%
Independent Living Services	17	14.5%

What services exist in your community that help to support you as a foster or adoptive parent? (Check all that apply)		
Choices	Frequency of Selection	Percentage
Foster Parent Training Through DFS	86	73.5%
Childcare	58	49.6%
Family Counseling	57	48.7%
Individual Counseling for Adults	56	47.9%
Transportation	52	44.4%
Family/Team Meeting	50	42.7%
Parenting Support/Education	48	41.0%
Educational Service	45	38.5%
Wrap Around Services	31	26.5%
Legal Assistance	31	26.5%
Mentoring Services/Supports	25	21.4%

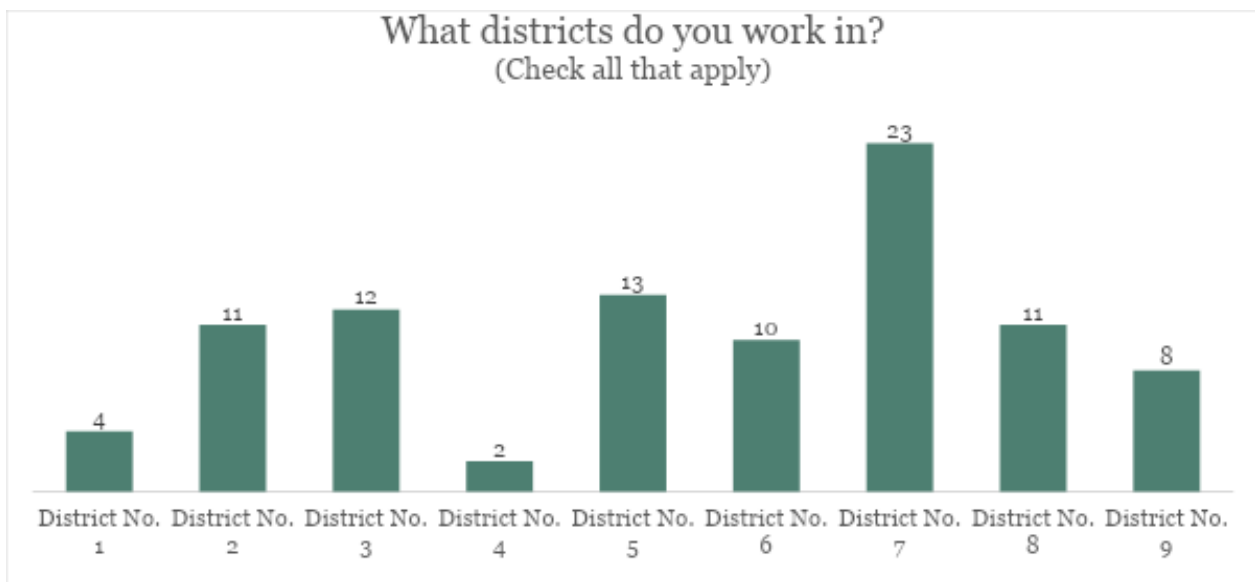
What gaps in services exist in your community that help to support you as a foster or adoptive parent? (Check all that apply)		
Choices	Frequency of Selection	Percentage
Legal Assistance	37	31.6%
Mentoring Services/Supports	34	29.1%
Childcare	32	27.4%



Parenting Support/Education	28	23.9%
Transportation	27	23.1%
Wrap Around Services	24	20.5%
Individual Counseling for Adults	23	19.7%
Family Counseling	21	17.9%
Educational Service	17	14.5%
Family/Team Meeting	16	13.7%
Foster Parent Training Through DFS	12	10.3%

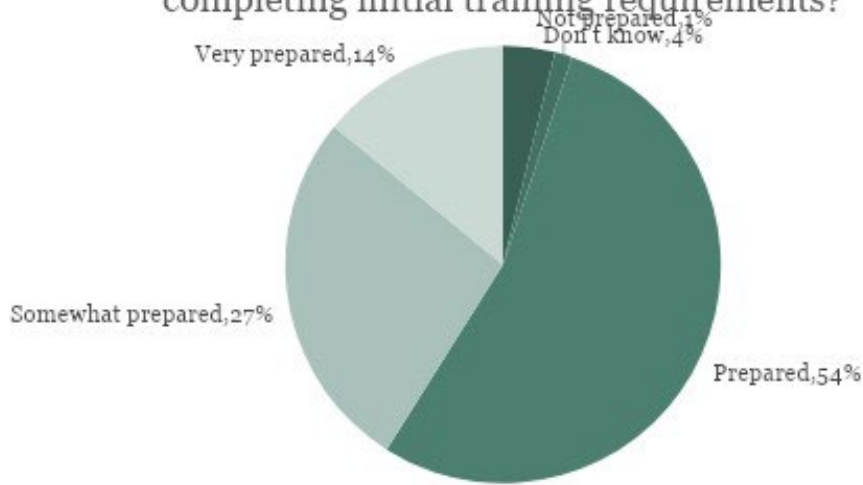
FIELD STAFF

**Total Field Staff Respondents: 78**

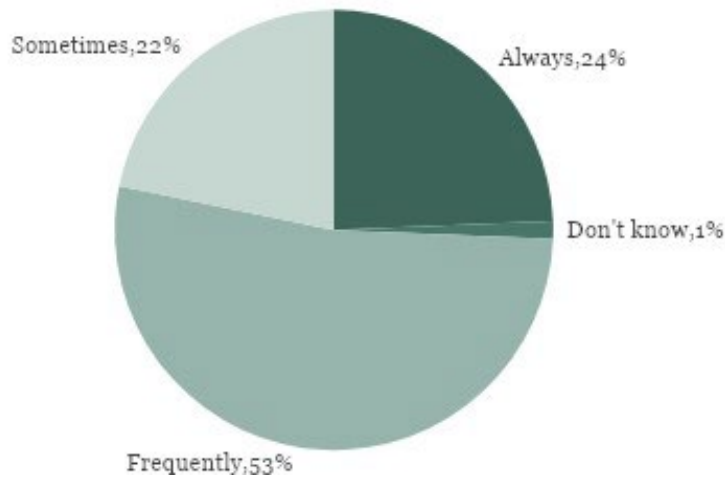


	Very Effective	Effective	Somewhat Effective	Not Effective	Don't Know
How effective is your county in meeting the needs of children you serve (in Foster Care, Child Welfare, and Juvenile Justice cases)?	9, 11.5%	46, 59.0%	22, 28.2%	1, 1.3%	n/a
In your experience, how effective is your county in engaging the following in developing and implementing Case Plans? (Birth parents/guardians, Foster parents, Adoptive parents, Relative Caregivers, and Youth (as appropriate))	21, 26.9%	38, 48.7%	16, 20.5%	1, 1.3%	2, 2.6%

To what extent are you prepared to deliver services after completing initial training requirements?



To what extent does the Wyoming Department of Family Services provide ongoing training to you?



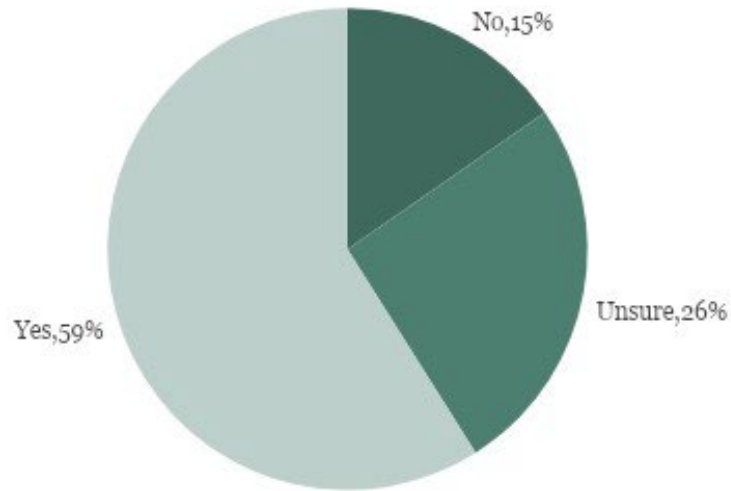
What prevention services (services/supports to help children remain safely at home) currently exist in your community? (Check all that apply)

Choices	Frequency of Selection	Percentage
Individual Counseling for Children/Youth	77	98.7%
Individual Counseling for Adults	75	96.2%
Family Counseling	74	94.9%
Childcare	74	94.9%
Educational Services	72	92.3%
Family/Team Meetings	71	91.0%
Outpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Adults	69	88.5%

Job Placement/Vocational Training	63	80.8%
Parenting Support/Education	61	78.2%
Housing Assistance	61	78.2%
Wrap Around Services	56	71.8%
Legal Assistance	53	67.9%
Transportation	49	62.8%
Outpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Children/Youth	43	55.1%
Mentoring Services/Supports	40	51.3%
Inpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Adults	33	42.3%
Inpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Children	14	17.9%

What gaps in prevention services do you think currently exist in your community? (Check all that apply)		
Choices	Frequency of Selection	Percentage
Inpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Children	56	71.8%
Transportation	39	50.0%
Inpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Adults	34	43.6%
Housing Assistance	29	37.2%
Mentoring Services/Supports	28	35.9%
Outpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Children/Youth	27	34.6%
Legal Assistance	26	33.3%
Childcare	25	32.1%
Parenting Support/Education	24	30.8%
Individual Counseling for Children/Youth	20	25.6%
Wrap Around Services	19	24.4%
Job Placement/Vocational Training	19	24.4%
Individual Counseling for Adults	17	21.8%
Family Counseling	17	21.8%
Educational Services	14	17.9%
Outpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Adults	10	12.8%
Family/Team Meetings	7	9.0%

Does your community have in-home services for families?



If you answered yes to the previous question, please list the in-home services for families your community has.

Choices	Frequency
Wrap Around Services	23
Parents as Teachers	9
Counseling/Mentoring	8
Public Health/Public Health Nursing	7
DFS/Family Team Meetings	5
Early Head Start	4
Children's Development Center	3
Wyoming Independent Living	2
Meals on Wheels/Food Banks	2
Respite Care	2
WIC	2
Stride, Wyoming Hand in Hand, Best Beginnings, Project Reach, PAL, National Suicide Prevention Hotline, Wyoming 2-1-1, CRC, EDDC	1

What services currently exist in your community that help support children/youth who are in foster care? (Check all that apply)		
Choices	Frequency of Selection	Percentage
Individual Counseling for Children/Youth	78	100.0%
Family Counseling	74	94.9%
Educational Services	69	88.5%
Family/Team Meetings	66	84.6%
Independent Living Services	60	76.9%
Wrap Around Services	58	74.4%
Treatment for Children	52	66.7%
Outpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Children/Youth	41	52.6%
Mentoring Services/Supports	41	52.6%
Day Treatment Services	20	25.6%
Inpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Children/Youth	11	14.1%

What gaps in services that help support children/youth who are in foster care do you think currently exist in your community? (Check all that apply)		
Choices	Frequency of Selection	Percentage
Treatment for Children	63	80.8%
Inpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Children/Youth	54	69.2%
Day Treatment Services	48	61.5%
Outpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Children/Youth	39	50.0%
Mentoring Services/Supports	34	43.6%
Independent Living Services	27	34.6%
Wrap Around Services	25	32.1%
Individual Counseling for Children/Youth	19	24.4%
Family Counseling	18	23.1%
Educational Services	14	17.9%
Family/Team Meetings	7	9.0%

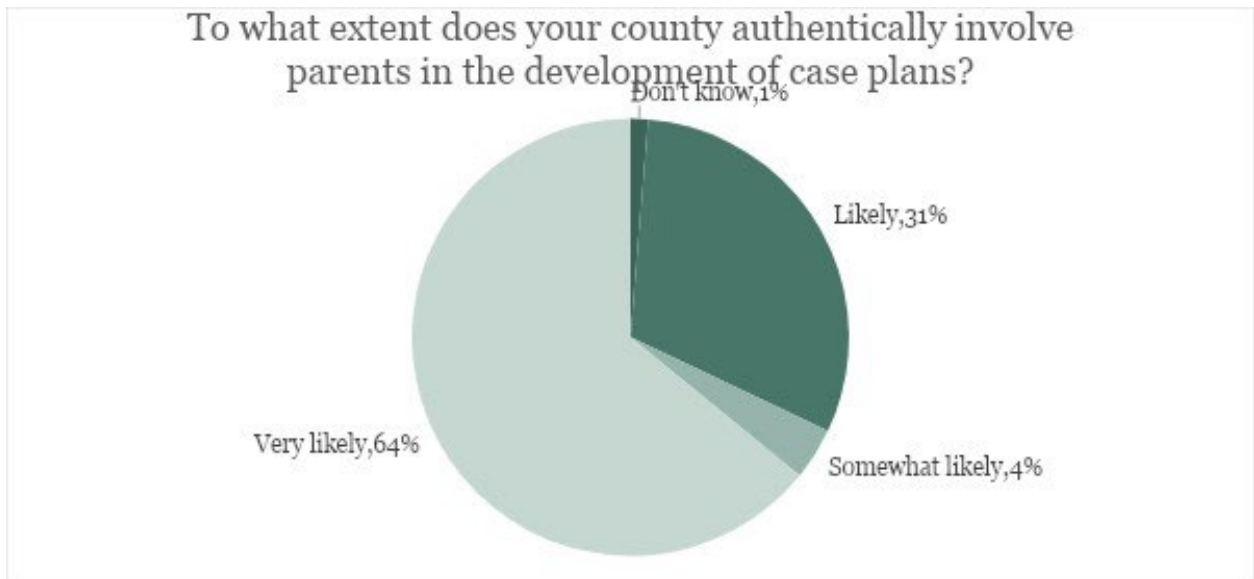
What services currently exist in your community that help support parents whose children are in foster care? (Check all that apply)		
Choices	Frequency of Selection	Percentage
Individual Counseling for Adults	77	98.7%
Family Counseling	73	93.6%
Outpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Adults	64	82.1%
Childcare	64	82.1%
Family/Team Meetings	63	80.8%
Job Placement/Vocational Training	60	76.9%
Housing Assistance	54	69.2%

Parenting Support/Education	52	66.7%
Wrap Around Service	46	59.0%
Educational Service	45	57.7%
Transportation	42	53.8%
Mentoring Services/Supports	33	42.3%
Inpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Adults	29	37.2%

What gaps in services that help support parents whose children are in foster care currently exist in your community? (Check all that apply)		
Choices	Frequency of Selection	Percentage
Inpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Adults	42	53.8%
Mentoring Services/Supports	41	52.6%
Transportation	40	51.3%
Parenting Support/Education	30	38.5%
Wrap Around Service	27	34.6%
Housing Assistance	26	33.3%
Job Placement/Vocational Training	24	30.8%
Outpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Adults	21	26.9%
Educational Service	21	26.9%
Childcare	20	25.6%
Individual Counseling for Adults	19	24.4%
Family Counseling	19	24.4%
Family/Team Meetings	6	7.7%

What services exist in your community that help to support foster parents? (Check all that apply)		
Choices	Frequency of Selection	Percentage
Foster Parent Training Through DFS	73	93.6%
Childcare	66	84.6%
Individual Counseling for Adults	63	80.8%
Family/Team Meeting	59	75.6%
Family Counseling	57	73.1%
Parenting Support/Education	51	65.4%
Transportation	47	60.3%
Wrap Around Services	40	51.3%
Educational Service	39	50.0%
Mentoring Services/Supports	30	38.5%
Legal Assistance	22	28.2%

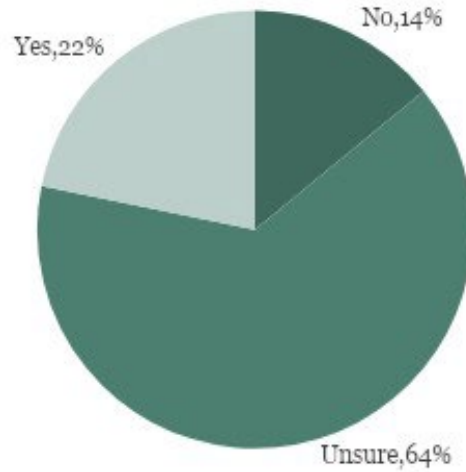
What gaps in services that help to support foster parents exist in your community? (Check all that apply)		
Choices	Frequency of Selection	Percentage
Transportation	40	51.3%
Mentoring Services/Supports	38	48.7%
Wrap Around Services	31	39.7%
Legal Assistance	30	38.5%
Parenting Support/Education	25	32.1%
Family Counseling	24	30.8%
Individual Counseling for Adults	21	26.9%
Childcare	21	26.9%
Educational Service	18	23.1%
Foster Parent Training Through DFS	12	15.4%
Family/Team Meeting	5	6.4%



How does your county engage birth parents/guardians, foster parents, and youth (as appropriate) in case planning? (Select all that apply)		
Choices	Frequency of Selection	Percentage
In Family Team Meetings	74	94.9%
Multi-Disciplinary Team Meeting	73	93.6%
During quality case visits	67	85.9%



My county has a process for understanding and documenting the concerns of the community?



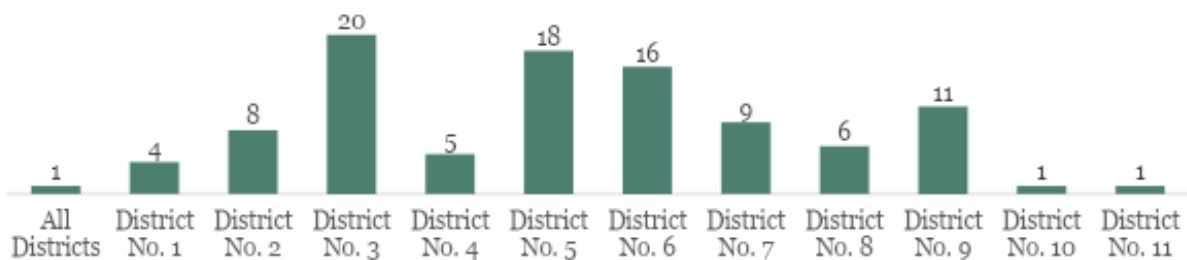
If you answered yes to the previous question, please describe the current process in place for understanding and documenting the concerns of the community.

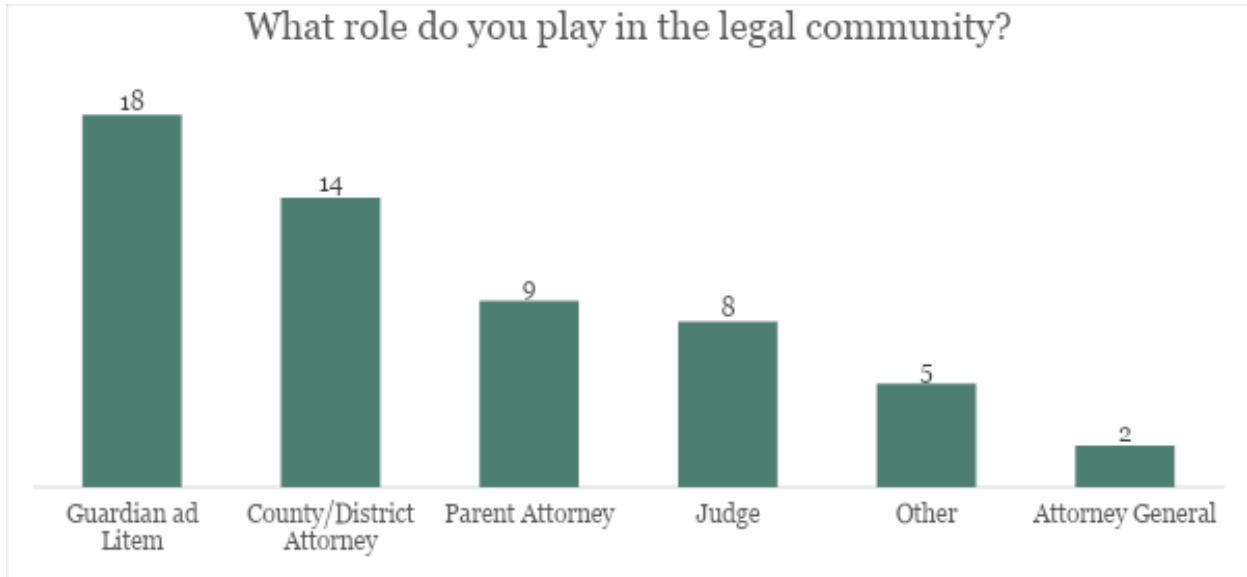
Choices	Frequency
CPT/APT Meetings	6
Other Meetings	5
Narratives/Reports	3
General Community Support	2

LEGAL

**Total Legal Respondents: 55**

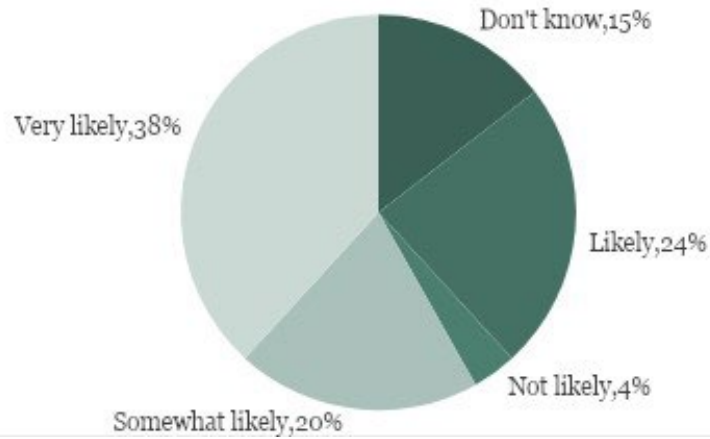
What districts do you work in?  
(Check all that apply)





	Very Effective	Effective	Somewhat Effective	Not Effective	Don't Know
In your experience, how effective is Wyoming Department of Family Services in engaging the following in developing and implementing case plans? (Birth parents/guardians, Foster parents, Adoptive parents, Relative Caregivers, and Youth (as appropriate))	17, 30.9%	26, 47.3%	10, 18.2%	1, 1.8%	1, 1.8%
How effective is Wyoming at achieving permanency in a timely manner for children in foster care?	5, 9.1%	28, 50.9%	19, 34.5%	3, 5.5%	n/a

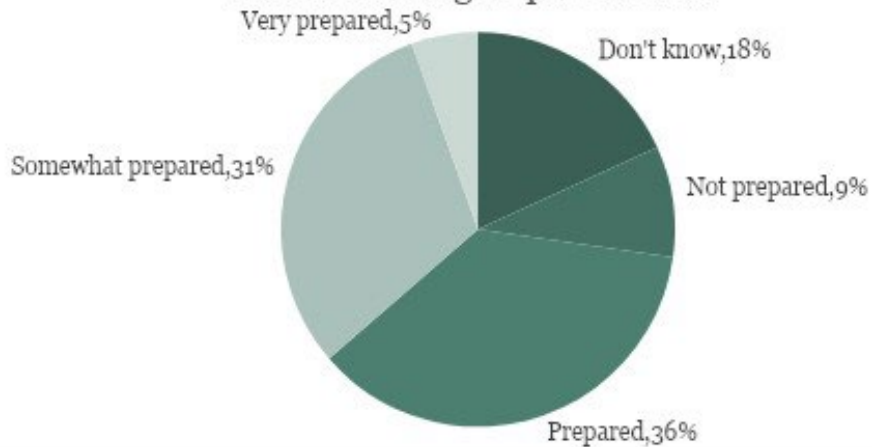
To what extent does Wyoming Department of Family Services authentically involve parents in the development of case plans?



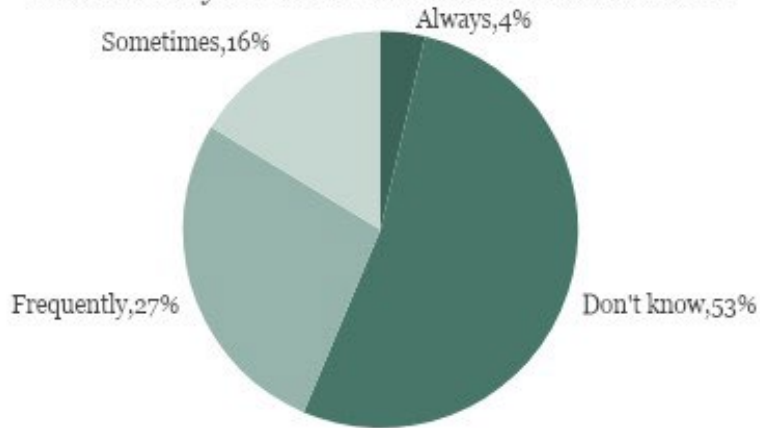
How does Wyoming Department of Family Services engage birth parents/guardians, foster parents, and youth (as appropriate) in case planning? (Check all that apply)

Choices	Frequency of Selection	Percentage
In Family Team Meetings	40	72.7%
During quality case visits	34	61.8%

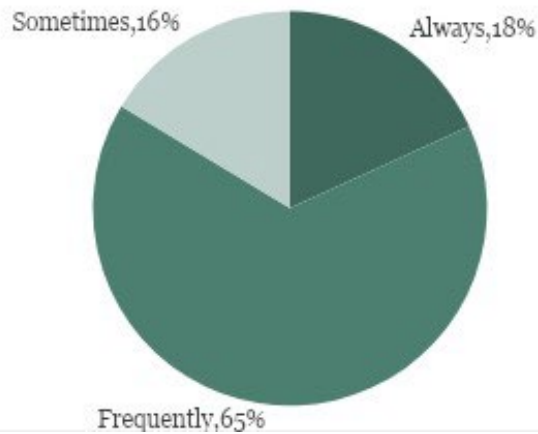
To what extent are new Wyoming Department of Family Services staff prepared to deliver services after completing initial training requirements?



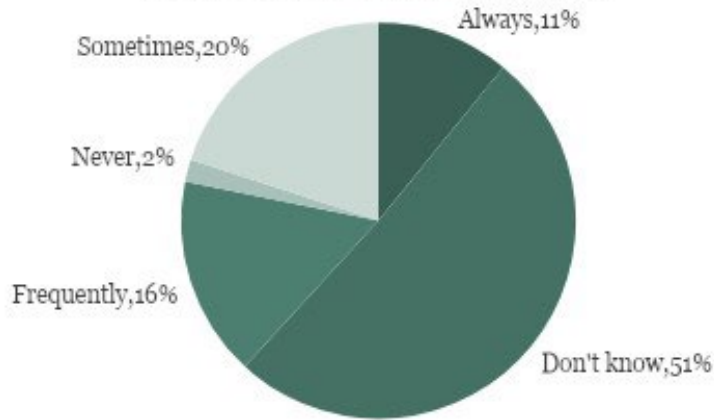
To what extent does the Wyoming Department of Family Services provide ongoing training to staff that strengthens their ability to serve children and families?



To what extent do Wyoming Department of Family Services staff and/or MDTs provide information needed to make sound legal decisions?



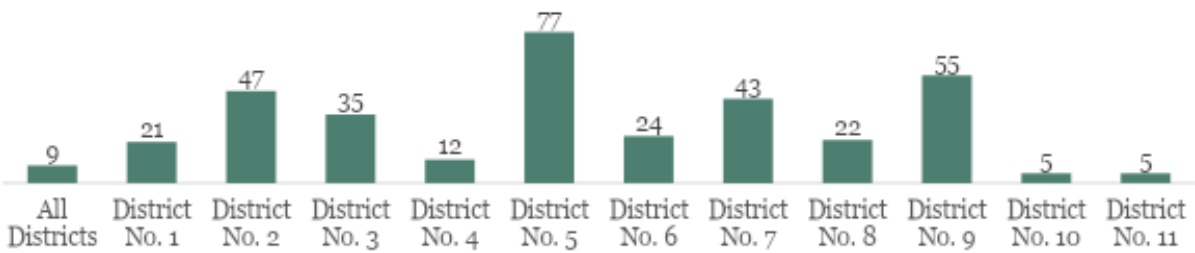
To what extent are foster or adoptive parents provided training to carry out their duties regarding the care for foster and adoptive children?



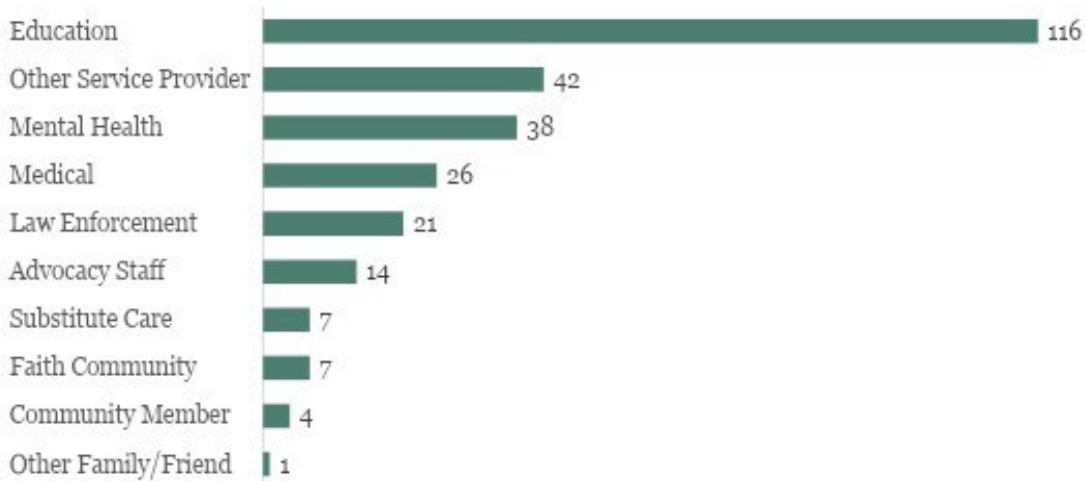
PARTNER

**Total Partner Respondents: 286**

What districts do you work in?  
(Check all that apply)



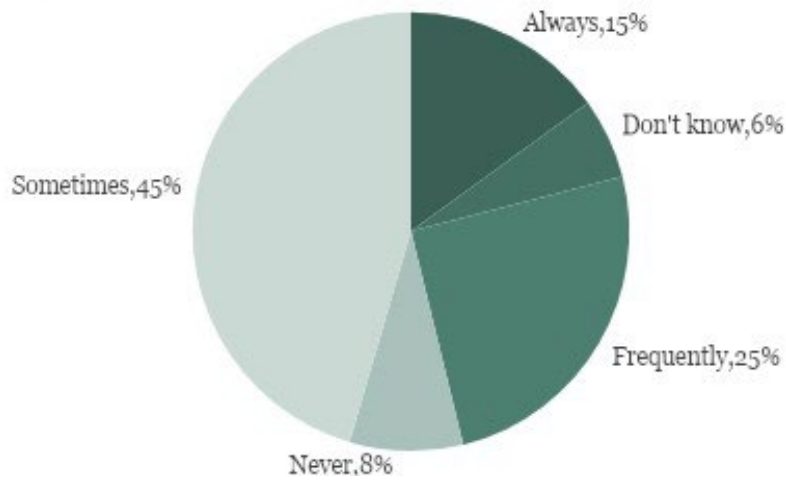
Please select the agency, or organization you represent.



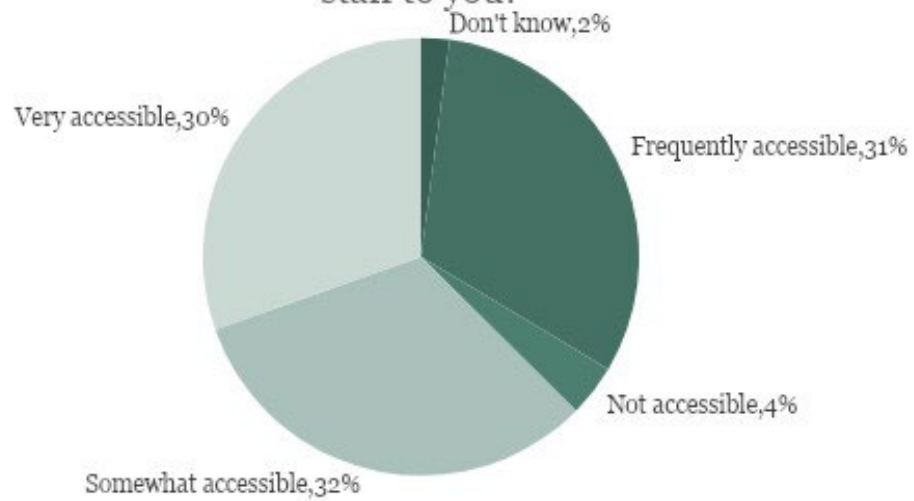
Additional Question: What agency and/or service provider do you represent?  
 We do have this information for further analysis if required.

	Very Effective	Effective	Somewhat Effective	Not Effective	Don't Know
In your experience, how effective is Wyoming Department of Family Services in responding to reports of child abuse or neglect?	40, 14.0%	91, 31.8%	97, 33.9%	43, 15.0%	15, 5.2%
Rate the Wyoming Department of Family Services effectiveness of partnership with my agency/organization.	56, 19.6%	91, 31.8%	82, 28.7%	50, 17.5%	7, 2.4%
How effective is the Wyoming Department of Family Services in providing services to children (and youth) to ensure they are safe and protected from child abuse and neglect?	33, 11.5%	88, 30.8%	99, 34.6%	46, 16.1%	20, 7.0%
How effective is the Wyoming Department of Family Services in serving children (and youth) to identify permanent families?	24, 8.4%	66, 23.1%	81, 28.3%	40, 15.0%	75, 26.2%

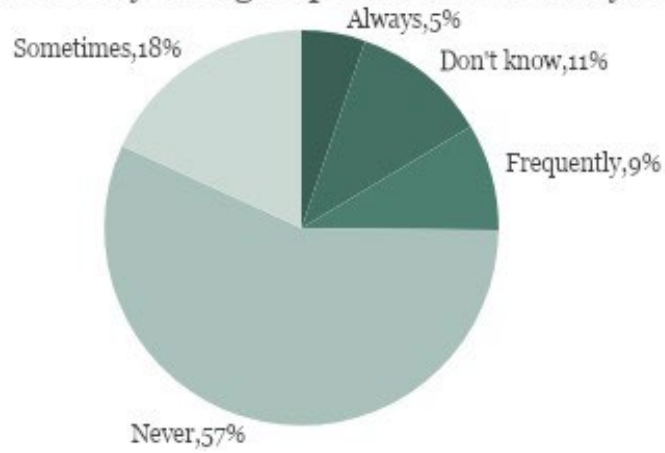
Are you provided with the information needed about a child/youth, and/or family in order to provide services?



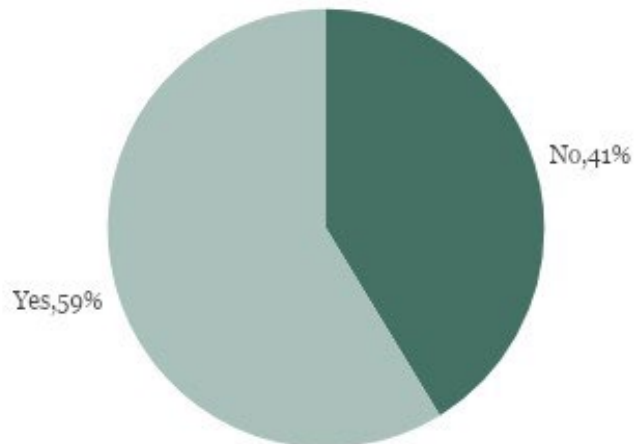
How accessible is Wyoming Department of Family Services staff to you?



I am involved in the strategic planning process for developing the Child and Family Services Plan (and annual updates) for the Wyoming Department of Family Services.



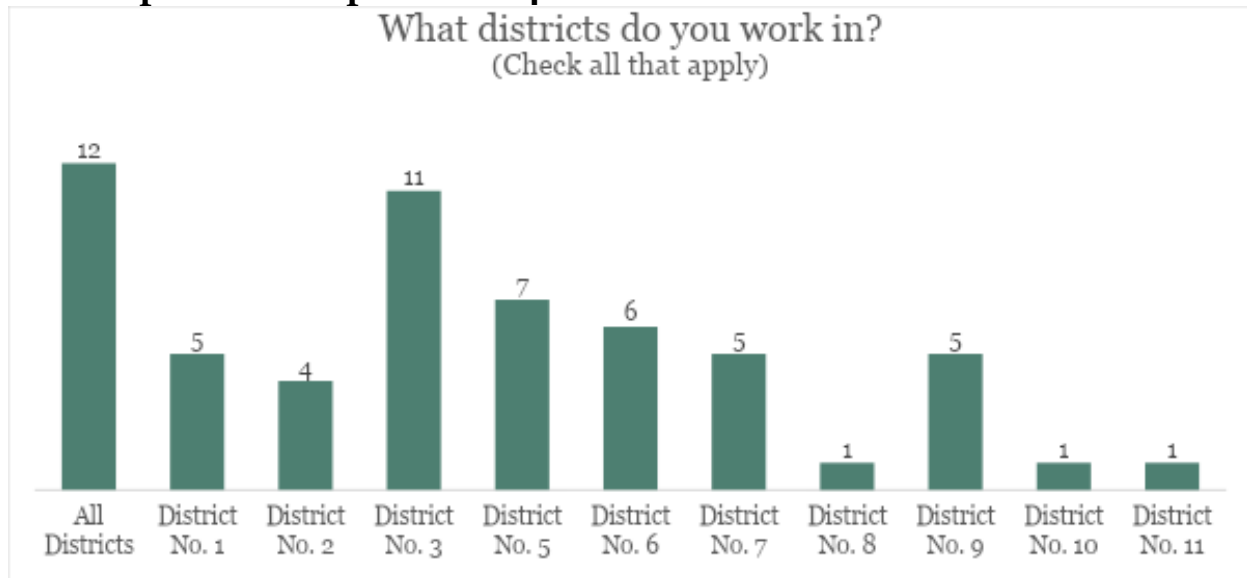
I know how to provide feedback to the Wyoming Department of Family Services.





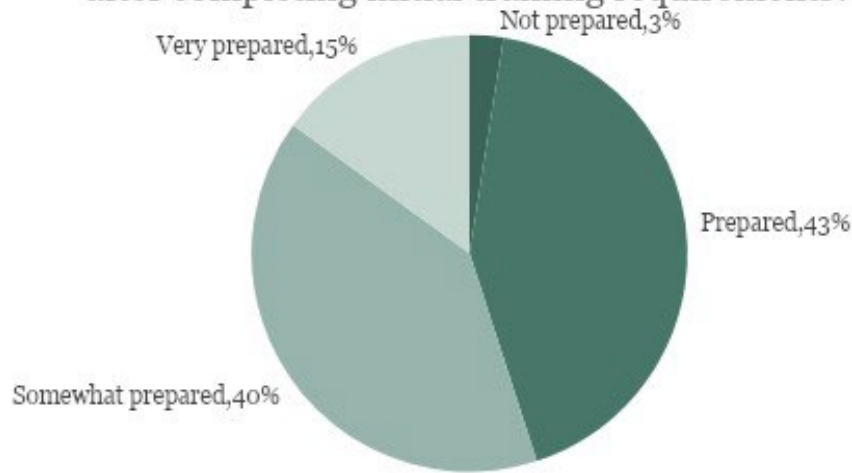
SUPERVISOR

**Total Supervisor Respondents: 40**

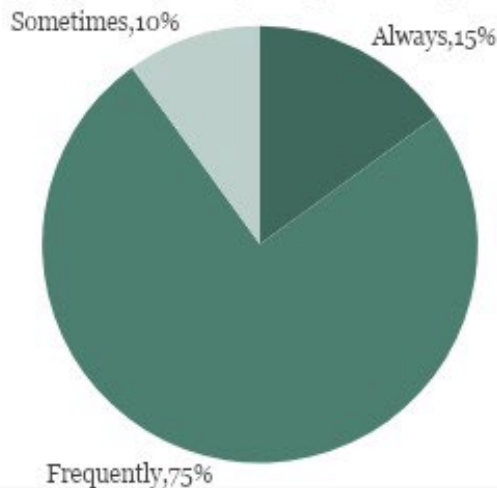


	Very Effective	Effective	Somewhat Effective	Not Effective	Don't Know
How effective is your county in meeting the needs of children you serve (in Foster Care, Child Welfare, and Juvenile Justice cases)?	6, 15.0%	21, 52.5%	13, 32.5%	n/a	n/a
In your experience, how effective is your county in engaging the following in developing and implementing Case Plans? (Birth parents/guardians, Foster parents, Adoptive parents, Relative Caregivers, and Youth (as appropriate))	7, 17.5%	25, 62.5%	6, 15.0%	1, 2.5%	1, 2.5%

To what extent are your staff prepared to deliver services after completing initial training requirements?



To what extent does the Wyoming Department of Family Services provide ongoing training to staff?



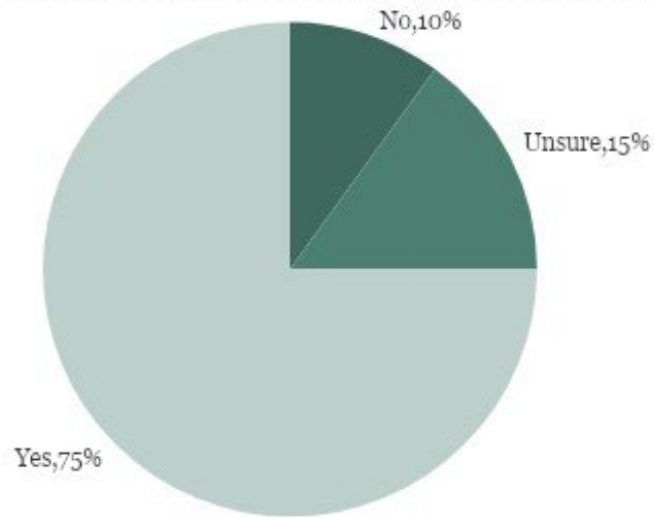
What prevention services (services/supports to help children remain safely at home) currently exist in your community? (Check all that apply)

Choices	Frequency of Selection	Percentage
Individual Counseling for Children/Youth	39	97.5%
Family Counseling	39	97.5%
Individual Counseling for Adults	38	95.0%
Educational Services	38	95.0%
Outpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Adults	36	90.0%
Wrap Around Services	36	90.0%
Childcare	36	90.0%
Family/Team Meetings	36	90.0%

Parenting Support/Education	35	87.5%
Outpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Children/Youth	34	85.0%
Housing Assistance	34	85.0%
Job Placement/Vocational Training	34	85.0%
Legal Assistance	33	82.5%
Mentoring Services/Supports	29	72.5%
Transportation	27	67.5%
Inpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Adults	14	35.0%
Inpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Children	11	27.5%

What gaps in prevention services do you think currently exist in your community? (Check all that apply)		
Choices	Frequency of Selection	Percentage
Inpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Children	30	75.0%
Inpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Adults	25	62.5%
Transportation	21	52.5%
Mentoring Services/Supports	14	35.0%
Outpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Children/Youth	9	22.5%
Legal Assistance	9	22.5%
Wrap Around Services	8	20.0%
Parenting Support/Education	8	20.0%
Housing Assistance	8	20.0%
Childcare	7	17.5%
Outpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Adults	6	15.0%
Job Placement/Vocational Training	6	15.0%
Individual Counseling for Children/Youth	5	12.5%
Family Counseling	5	12.5%
Educational Services	4	10.0%
Family/Team Meetings	4	10.0%
Individual Counseling for Adults	3	7.5%

Does your community have in-home services for families?



If you answered yes to the previous question, please list the in-home services for families your community has.

Choices	Frequency
Wrap Around Services/Magellan	18
Counseling/Mentoring	11
Public Health Services	9
Parents as Teachers	8
Parent Education/In Home Parenting	5
Child Development Center	2
Circles	1
Food Programs	1
Head Start	1

What services currently exist in your community that help support children/youth who are in foster care? (Check all that apply)		
Choices	Frequency of Selection	Percentage
Individual Counseling for Children/Youth	38	95.0%
Family Counseling	38	95.0%
Wrap Around Services	37	92.5%
Educational Services	37	92.5%
Family/Team Meetings	36	90.0%
Independent Living Services	35	87.5%
Outpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Children/Youth	34	85.0%
Mentoring Services/Supports	29	72.5%
Day Treatment Services	15	37.5%
Inpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Children/Youth	11	27.5%

What gaps in services that help support children/youth who are in foster care do you think currently exist in your community? (Check all that apply)		
Choices	Frequency of Selection	Percentage
Inpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Children/Youth	27	67.5%
Day Treatment Services	24	60.0%
Mentoring Services/Supports	12	30.0%
Independent Living Services	10	25.0%
Outpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Children/Youth	9	22.5%
Wrap Around Services	8	20.0%
Individual Counseling for Children/Youth	6	15.0%
Family Counseling	5	12.5%
Educational Services	5	12.5%
Family/Team Meetings	3	7.5%

What services currently exist in your community that help support parents whose children are in foster care? (Check all that apply)

Choices	Frequency of Selection	Percentage
Family Counseling	39	97.5%
Individual Counseling for Adults	38	95.0%
Family/Team Meeting	37	92.5%
Outpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Adults	35	87.5%
Wrap Around Service	35	87.5%
Childcare	35	87.5%
Job Placement/Vocational Training	34	85.0%
Parenting Support/Education	33	82.5%
Housing Assistance	33	82.5%
Educational Service	31	77.5%
Transportation	21	52.5%
Mentoring Services/Supports	20	50.0%
Inpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Adults	14	35.0%

What gaps in services that help support parents whose children are in foster care currently exist in your community? (Check all that apply)

Choices	Frequency of Selection	Percentage
Transportation	25	62.5%
Inpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Adults	24	60.0%
Mentoring Services/Supports	19	47.5%
Wrap Around Service	11	27.5%
Educational Service	10	25.0%
Parenting Support/Education	10	25.0%
Housing Assistance	10	25.0%
Childcare	10	25.0%
Job Placement/Vocational Training	9	22.5%
Family Counseling	6	15.0%
Outpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Adults	6	15.0%
Individual Counseling for Adults	5	12.5%
Family/Team Meetings	5	12.5%

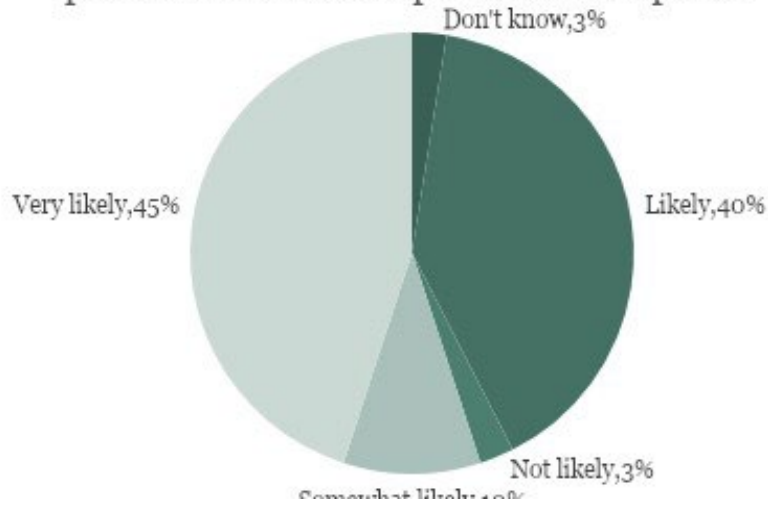
What services exist in your community that help to support foster parents? (Check all that apply)

Choices	Frequency of Selection	Percentage
Foster Parent Training Through DFS	38	95.0%
Childcare	36	90.0%
Family Counseling	34	85.0%
Family/Team Meeting	34	85.0%
Individual Counseling for Adults	32	80.0%

Wrap Around Services	31	77.5%
Transportation	26	65.0%
Educational Service	24	60.0%
Parenting Support/Education	23	57.5%
Mentoring Services/Supports	20	50.0%
Legal Assistance	17	42.5%

What gaps in services that help to support foster parents exist in your community? (Check all that apply)		
Choices	Frequency of Selection	Percentage
Transportation	21	52.5%
Mentoring Services/Supports	17	42.5%
Legal Assistance	14	35.0%
Educational Service	11	27.5%
Parenting Support/Education	11	27.5%
Childcare	11	27.5%
Wrap Around Services	10	25.0%
Family Counseling	7	17.5%
Individual Counseling for Adults	5	12.5%
Family/Team Meeting	4	10.0%
Foster Parent Training Through DFS	2	5.0%

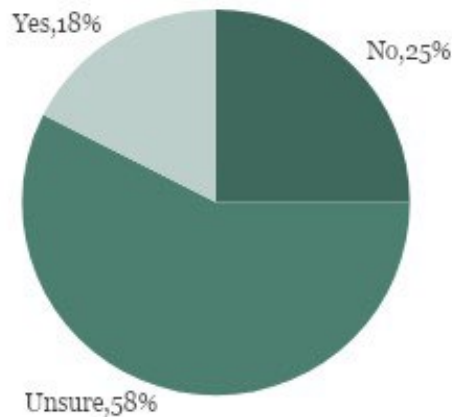
To what extent does your county authentically involve parents in the development of case plans?



How does your county engage birth parents/guardians, foster parents, and youth (as appropriate) in case planning? (Select all that apply)

Choices	Frequency of Selection	Percentage
Multi-Disciplinary Team Meeting	37	92.5%
In Family Team Meetings	36	90.0%
During quality case visits	35	87.5%

My county has a process for understanding and documenting the concerns of the community?



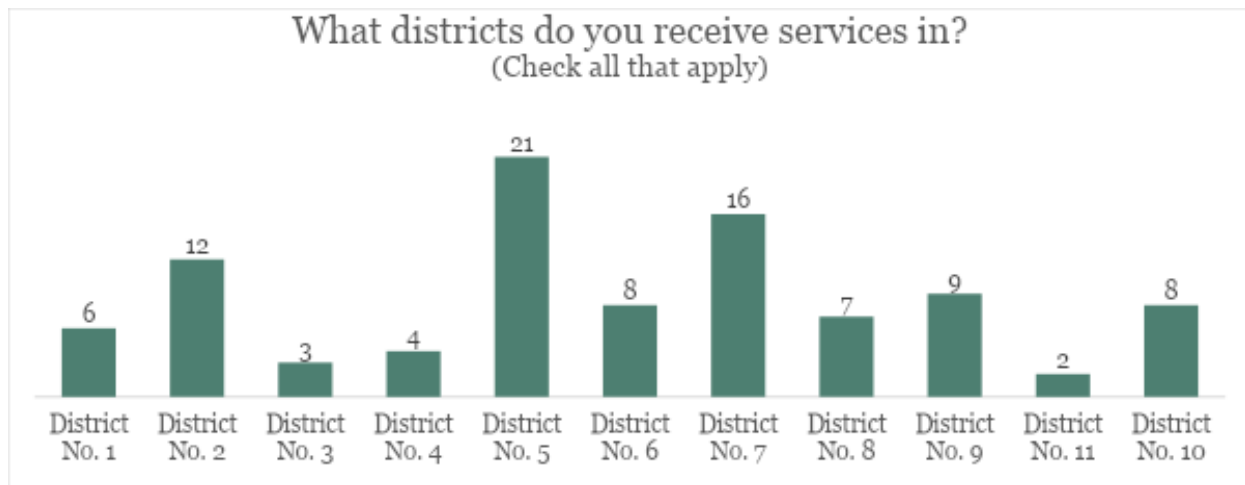


If you answered yes to the previous question, please describe the current process in place for understanding and documenting the concerns of the community.

Choices	Frequency
Child Protection Team Meetings	4
DFS Referrals/Discussions	2
Community Juvenile Service Boards	2
Narratives/Supervision	1

## YOUTH

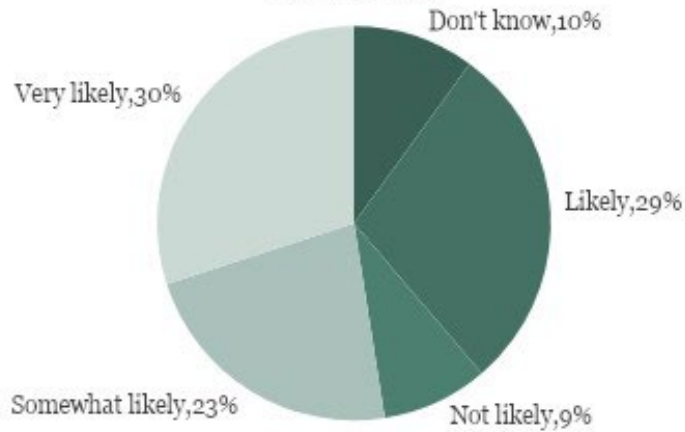
### Total Youth Respondents: 80



	Very Effective	Effective	Somewhat Effective	Not Effective	Don't Know
In your experience, how effective was Wyoming Department of Family Services when working with you during your child protection case?	6, 7.5%	31, 38.8%	21, 26.3%	9, 11.3%	13, 16.3%

<p>In your experience, how effective was the Department of Family Services with you during your probation case?</p>	<p>3, 3.8%</p>	<p>24, 30.0%</p>	<p>19, 23.8%</p>	<p>9, 11.3%</p>	<p>25,31.3%</p>
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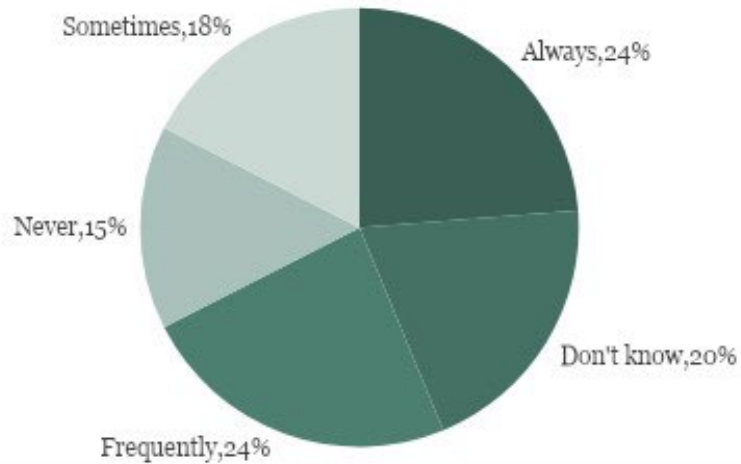
To what extent does Wyoming Department of Family Services authentically involve you in the development of case plans?



How does Wyoming Department of Family Services engage you in case planning? (Select all that apply)

Choices	Frequency of Selection	Percentage
In Family Team Meetings	55	68.8%
During quality case visits	47	58.8%

To what extent were your substitute caregivers provided training to carry out their duties regarding the care for you?



What services currently exist in your community that help or have helped support you? (Check all that apply)		
Choices	Frequency of Selection	Percentage
Individual Counseling for Children/Youth	61	76.3%
Independent Living Services	51	63.8%
Educational Services	42	52.5%
Family Counseling	40	50.0%
Treatment for Children	36	45.0%
Family/Team Meetings	36	45.0%
Inpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Children/Youth	17	21.3%
Mentoring Services/Supports	17	21.3%
Wrap Around Services	16	20.0%
Outpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Children/Youth	12	15.0%
Day Treatment Services	10	12.5%

What services do or did you wish were available to you?		
Choices	Frequency of Selection	Percentage
Family Counseling	19	23.8%
Treatment for Children	16	20.0%
Independent Living Services	15	18.8%
Individual Counseling for Children/Youth	14	17.5%
Educational Services	12	15.0%
Mentoring Services/Supports	12	15.0%
Outpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Children/Youth	11	13.8%
Family/Team Meetings	9	11.3%
Day Treatment Services	6	7.5%
Wrap Around Services	5	6.3%
Inpatient Substance Abuse Treatment for Children/Youth	4	5.0%