



Florida Department of Children and Families

# Community-Based Care Child Welfare Lead Agencies

Performance Report  
for Child Welfare Services

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## Executive Summary

The report is submitted pursuant to section 409.997(3) (g), Florida Statutes relating to new statutory requirements for implementation of a child Welfare Results Oriented Accountability System. Although implementation is not anticipated to occur until 2015, this report provides an update of the status of the Results Oriented Accountability System and a statewide summary of community-based care lead agency performance in the areas of safety, permanency, and well-being. If implemented, the program will ensure the Department has the capacity to monitor and measure the use of resources, the quality and amount of services provided, and child and family outcomes.

Community-based care (CBC) performance is currently monitored using a Scorecard that includes data measures for safety, permanency, and well-being and qualitative case reviews conducted by lead agency quality assurance staff that focuses on child welfare practice.

Performance on key outcome measures is obtained using data extractions from the Florida Safe Families Network (FSFN). Performance measures indicate that CBCs exceed current standards in the area of placement stability of children by reducing the number of moves a child has during their first year in out-of-home care. Data also indicates that CBCs exceed the current standard for reducing re-abuse following termination of services. CBCs also exceed the current standard of ensuring of foster youth ages 19-22 had a high school diploma or GED. Although current performance is slightly below the current standard, CBCs have increased the number of children placed in licensed family foster homes. Improvement is needed in the area of achieving permanency within twelve months of entering care and after twelve or more months in care. Additionally, case file reviews using the Rapid Safety Feedback standards indicate case managers need training and technical assistance with safety planning and safety related practice. Of the nine items reviewed, all but one fell under 80%. See page 4 for information on Rapid Safety Feedback.

On June 30, 2014, CBC lead agencies were serving 3, 644 children through family support services, 12,116 children with in-home services and 19, 401 children in out-of-home care. This report focuses on the performance of CBC related to in-home and out-of-home care services. Scorecard measures document that on June 30, 2014, the following statewide performance for CBCs:

- 96.5% of the children served with in-home services did not have a verified maltreatment during in-home services. This is slightly below the current standard of 97%.
- 96.2% of the children served with in-home services did not have a verified maltreatment within 6 months of termination of in-home services or out-of-home care. This exceeds the current standard of 95%.
- 87.3% of children in out-of-home care had two or less placements between the first eight days through twelve months in out-of-home care. This exceeds the current standard of 86%.
- 47.1% of the children in out-of-home care achieved permanency within twelve months of entering care. This is below the current standard of 75%.

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- 51% of the children in out-of-home care achieved permanency after twelve or more months in care. This is slightly below the current standard of 55%.
  - 92.3% of the children served in out-of-home care did not re-enter out-of-home care within twelve months of achieving permanency. This exceeds the current standard of 92%.
  - 93.2% of children under twelve years of age and younger in out-of-home care were placed in a licensed family foster home. This is slightly below the current standard of 95%.
  - 67.4% of former foster youth ages 19-22 had a high school diploma or GED. This exceeds the current standard of 65%.
  - 59.2% of the cases reviewed had sufficient safety planning.

CBC performance in achieving permanency for children has led to Florida receiving the National Adoption Award for five consecutive years. As part of the Federal Adoption Award, the Department received five million dollars to provide services to special needs children who have been adopted. The awards are given to states that exceed baseline standards for adoptions and work to find homes for harder to place children, like teens, sibling groups, and those with special needs

During the next twelve months the Department will continue to work with a vendor who has expertise in child welfare to develop a legislative report that that will fully outline the development of a Results Oriented Accountability system that will include a comprehensive approach to monitoring and measuring the use of resources, the quality and amount of services provided, and child and family outcomes.

# 1. Introduction

Community-Based Care (CBC) combines the outsourcing of foster care and related services to local service agencies with an increased local community ownership of service delivery and design. These nonprofit organizations contract with the state to handle all prevention, foster care, adoption and Independent Living services to children and families in the child welfare system. There are eighteen CBC lead agencies operating throughout the state.

- **Licensure:** Lead agencies are licensed as a child-caring or child-placing agency by the department and each foster home, therapeutic foster home, emergency shelter, or other placement facility operated by the lead agency is licensed by the department.
- **Title IV E Waiver:** Community-Based Care operates under the Title IV-E Waiver Demonstration Project that was implemented statewide in October 2006 and extended for an additional five years in 2014. The Waiver is allowed under Title IV-E of the Social Security Act and authorized by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Children and Families (ACF). The Waiver authorization allows Florida to use IV-E funding flexibly to promote child safety, prevent out-of-home placement into foster care, and expedite permanency.
- **Accreditation:** Fifteen lead agencies are currently accredited by the Council on Accreditation (COA); one lead agency is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitative Facilities (CARF); one lead agency is in the application process; and one lead agency is assessing the accreditation process (Appendix 1).

It is the goal of the department and CBC lead agencies to protect the best interest of children by achieving the following:

- (a) Children are first and foremost protected from abuse and neglect.
- (b) Children are safely maintained in their homes, if possible and appropriate.
- (c) Services are provided to protect children and prevent their removal from their home.
- (d) Children have permanency and stability in their living arrangements.
- (e) Family relationships and connections are preserved for children.
- (f) Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs.
- (g) Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs.
- (h) Children receive services to meet their physical and mental health needs.
- (i) Children develop the capacity for independent living and competence as an adult.

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## 2. Results Oriented Accountability

The 2014 Legislature passed several accountability provisions for DCF and Florida's CBC lead agencies. This legislation, outlined in Section 409.997, Florida Statutes, sets the stage for the development of a comprehensive approach to monitor and measure the use of resources, the quality and amount of services provided, and child and family outcomes.

If funding is appropriated and the program is implemented the Department will have the capacity to produce an assessment of individual entities' performance, as well as the performance of groups of entities working together on a local, regional, and statewide basis to provide an integrated system of care. Data analyzed and communicated through the accountability system will inform the department's development and maintenance of an evidence-supported approach to quality improvement that promotes individual skill building as well as organizational learning.

In July 2014 the Department issued a Request for Information from vendors on the Department of Management Services' state term contract to prepare a plan for the development and implementation of a comprehensive, results-oriented accountability system. A vendor has been selected and development of the plan is on target for submission to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House by February 1, 2015

Pursuant to statute, the accountability program will incorporate, at a minimum:

- (a) Valid and reliable outcome measures for each of the goals listed on page 2.
- (b) Regular and periodic monitoring activities that track the identified outcome measures on a statewide, regional, and provider-specific basis.
- (c) An analytical framework that builds on the results of the outcomes monitoring procedures and assesses the statistical validity of observed associations between child welfare interventions and the measured outcomes.
- (d) A program of research review to identify interventions that are supported by evidence as causally linked to improved outcomes.
- (e) An ongoing process of evaluation to determine the efficacy and effectiveness of various interventions.
- (f) Procedures for making the results of the accountability system transparent for all parties involved in the child welfare system as well as policymakers and the public.
- (g) An annual performance report that is provided to interested parties including the dependency judge or judges in the community-based care service area.

### 3. Trends and Conditions

CBC lead agencies serve all children referred as a result of a report of abuse, neglect, or abandonment to the department’s central abuse hotline, including, but not limited to, children who are the subject of verified reports and children who are not the subject of verified reports but who are at moderate to extremely high risk of abuse, neglect, or abandonment, as determined using the department’s risk assessment instrument, regardless of the level of funding allocated to the lead agency by the state if all related funding is transferred.

CBC lead agencies also provide community-based family support services to prevent child maltreatment among families at risk through the provision of supportive family services. On June 30, 2014, there were 3,664 children being served through family support services.

CBC lead agencies have worked diligently to reduce the number of children in out-of-home care. Nationally, the number of children in foster care on the last day of the federal fiscal year (FY) declined by 23.7% between 2002 and 2012, from 523,616 to 399,546. California, New York, and **Florida** accounted for over 50 percent of the decline (see Figure 1).<sup>1</sup>

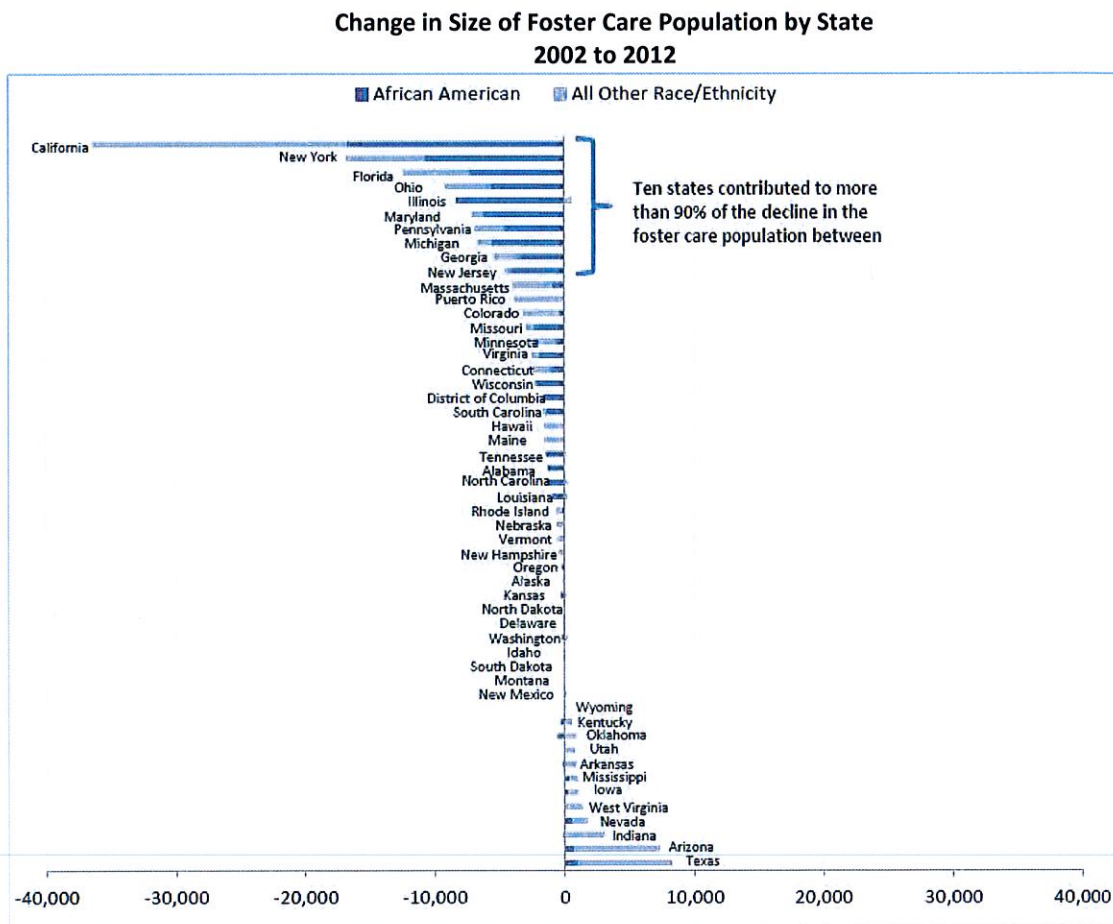


Figure 1

<sup>1</sup> Department of Health and Human Services, Data Brief 2013-1



The tables and graphs below depict trends for children receiving in-home services and out-of-home care at a point in time in 2011, 2012, 2013, and 2014. In-home services and out-of-home care are up slightly from 2011.

**Children Receiving Family Support Services**  
Point in Time  
By Year

	04/30/11	06/30/12	06/30/13	06/30/14
Family Support Services	1*	296*	4,615	3,664
<b>Total Family Support Services</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4,615</b>	<b>3,664</b>

Source: Florida Safe Families Network

Table 1

\* CBCs were not documenting Family Support Services in FSN

**Children Receiving In-Home Services**  
(Court ordered and non-court ordered)  
Point in Time  
By Year

	04/30/11	06/30/12	06/30/13	06/30/14
In Home Services	7,509	8,005	6,825	7,417
Post Placement Supervision	4,490	5,091	5,242	4,699
<b>Total In-Home Services</b>	<b>11,999</b>	<b>13,096</b>	<b>12,067</b>	<b>12,116</b>

Source: Florida Safe Families Network

Table 2

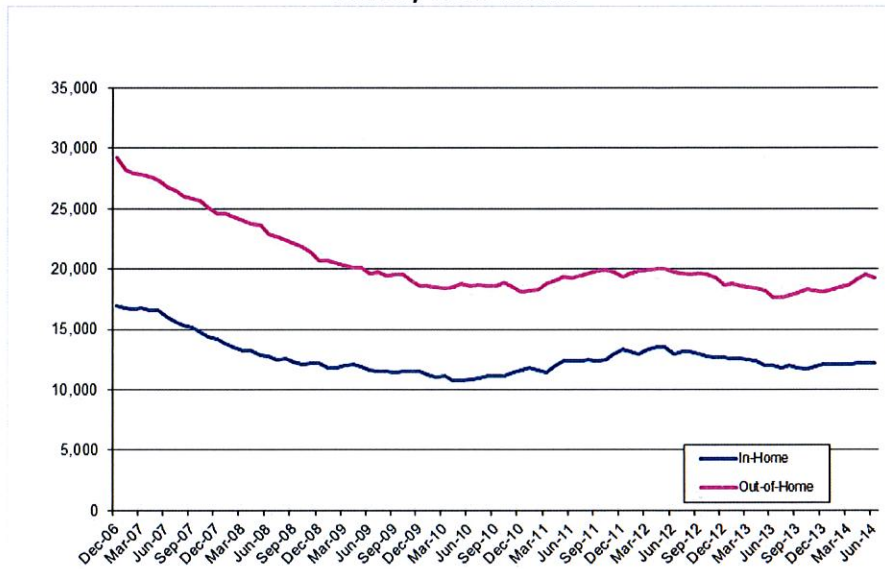
**Children in Out-of-Home Care**  
Point in Time  
By Year

	04/30/11	06/30/12	06/30/13	06/30/14
Licensed Foster Care	6,364	5,817	5,464	6,123
Residential Group Care	2,268	2,271	2,023	2,168
Relative/Non-Relative Placement	9,818	10,674	9,391	10,114
Other	640	995	840	996
<b>Total Out-of-Home Care</b>	<b>19,090</b>	<b>19,757</b>	<b>17,718</b>	<b>19,401</b>

Source: Florida Safe Families Network

Table 3

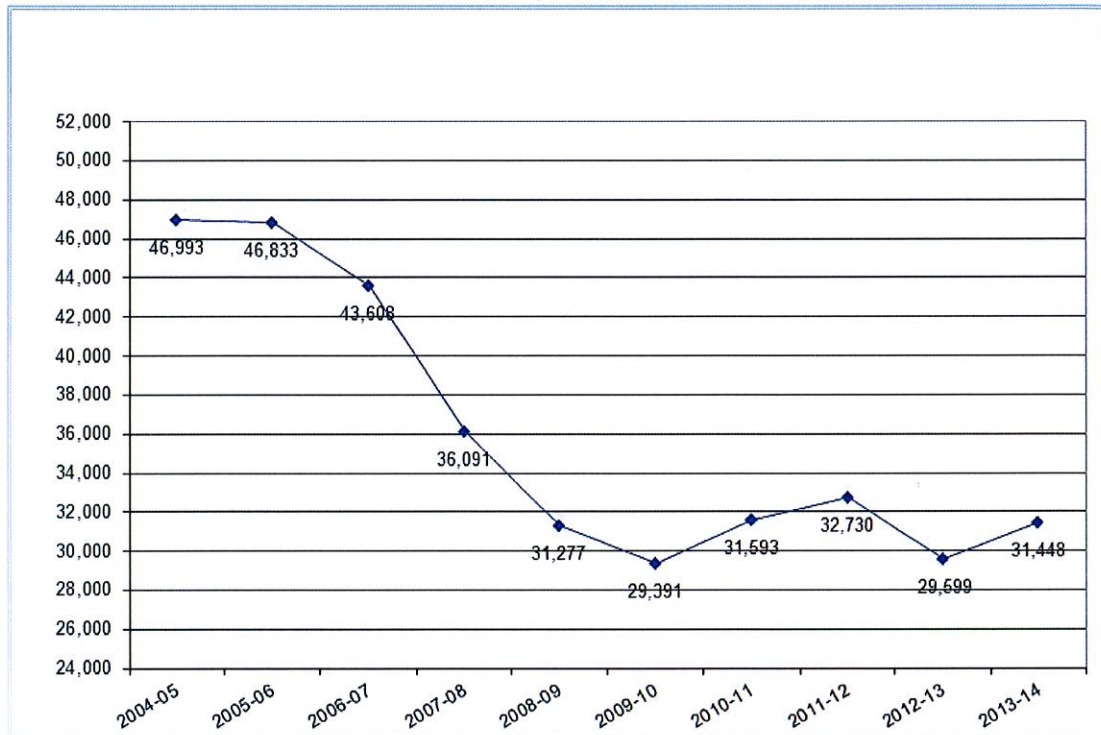
**Number of Children Receiving In-Home Services and Out-of-Home Care Last Day of the Month**



Source: Florida Safe Families Network

Figure 2

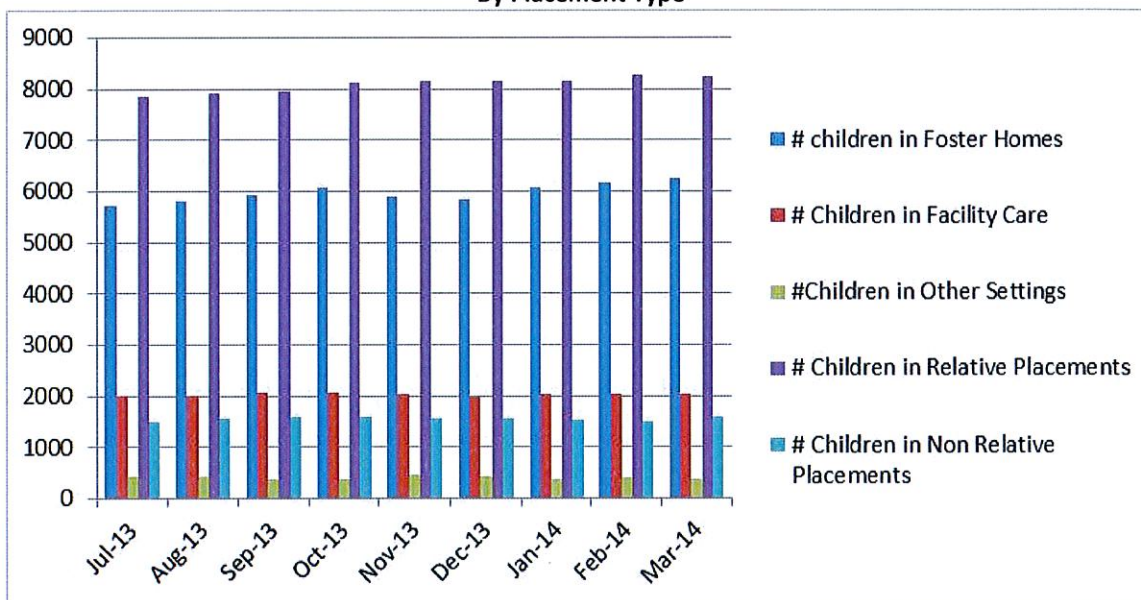
**Number of Children under Supervision (In-Home and Out-of-Home Care) on Last Day of Fiscal Year**



Source: Florida Safe Families Network

Figure 3

**Children Active in Out-of-Home Care  
By Placement Type**



Source: Florida Safe Families Network

Figure 4

## 4. Scorecard

The CBC Lead Agency Monthly Scorecard focuses on some of the important indicators related to Florida’s community-based approach to child welfare. The Scorecard’s indicators were selected, among the many indicators available, to provide balance among the goals of safety, permanency, well-being. The Scorecard is intended to track a set of indicators over time, but will also be modified as issues emerge and priorities change. The CBC Scorecard was developed in conjunction with the CBC lead agencies and continues to be refined through the Performance Measures Workgroup, a Department and CBC collaborative effort facilitated by Casey Family Programs. The scorecard depicts lead agency performance on 8 key measures and is used to determine how well CBC lead agencies are meeting the most critical needs of children served. These are quantitative measure derived from data extracted from the Florida Safe Families Network (FSFN).

**SAFETY  
CHILDREN ARE, FIRST AND FOREMOST, PROTECTED FROM ABUSE AND NEGLECT**

	Standard	2013						2914					
		July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June
No Verified Maltreatment During In-Home Services	97%	96.3	96.2	96.4	95.9	95.7	95.8	96.1	96.5	96.6	96.8	96.5	96.5
No Verified Maltreatment within 6 Months Termination of In-Home & Out-of-Home Services	95%	94.2	94.7	94.7	94.7	94.5	96.4	96.1	96.1	96.4	96.4	96.3	96.2

Source: Florida Safe Families Network (FSFN)

Table 4

**PERMANENCY  
CHILDREN HAVE PERMANENCY AND STABILITY IN THEIR LIVING ARRANGEMENT**

	Standard	2013						2014					
		July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June
Children in Care 8 Days-12 Months with No More than Two Placements	86%	85.1	86.8	87.2	87.4	87.9	87.8	87.6	87.7	87.5	88	88.2	87.3
Children Achieving Permanency within 12 Months of Entering Care	75%	50.5	51.3	51.7	52.9	52.7	51.1	48.6	47.5	48.8	49.9	48.8	47.1
Children Achieving Permanency after 12 or More Months in Care	55%	52.7	52.4	52.7	52.3	52.4	52.1	52.3	52.4	52.3	51.9	51.8	51
Children Not Re-entering Out-of-Home Care within 12 Months of Achieving Permanency	92%	91.5	90.5	90.5	90.4	91.6	91.9	91.6	90.5	90.3	90.8	91.9	92.3

Source: Florida Safe Families Network (FSFN)

Table 5

CBC lead agencies continue to be a national leader in achieving permanency for children. In FY 2013/2014, 12,187 children achieved permanency through adoption (3,218), reunification (5,973), and guardianship (2,996).

**WELL-BEING<sup>2</sup>  
FLORIDA SPECIFIC SCORECARD MEASURES**

	Standard	2013						2014					
		July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June
Children in Licensed Out-of-Home Care Age 12 and under in DCF licensed Family Foster Homes	95%	91.8	92.1	92.6	91.9	92.2	92.6	92.9	92.8	93.5	93.2	93.1	93.2
Former Foster Youth Ages 19-22 with Diploma or GED	65%	65.7	64.6	65	65.2	64.7	64.7	65.5	66.1	66.3	67.1	66.9	67.4

Source: Florida Safe Families Network (FSFN)

Table 6

## 5. Rapid Safety Feedback

As assessment of safety practice is best performed by child welfare professionals, reading case records and conducting a qualitative assessment of practice. In FY 2012/2013 the Department made substantial changes to the child welfare quality assurance system that substantially impacted the methods used by CBC lead agencies to conduct case reviews. The Rapid Safety Feedback process was developed by the Eckerd Community Alternatives as a method to prevent child fatalities and re-abuse of children in Hillsborough County. The method was universally adopted by all CBCs and DCF. It demonstrates the power of collaboration between CBC agencies that are generally competitive in nature.

Rapid Safety Feedback is a process designed to flag key risk factors in open child welfare cases that could gravely impact a child's safety. These factors have been determined based on reviews of other cases where child injuries or severe maltreatment have occurred. Factors include but are not

<sup>2</sup> The Administration on Children, Youth and Families (ACYF) has identified four domains of child well-being: cognitive functioning; physical health and development; emotional/behavioral functioning and social functioning.

limited to the parents' ages, the presence of a boyfriend in the home, evidence of substance abuse, or previous criminal records. The critical component of the process is the case consultation in which the reviewer engages the case manager and the supervisor to discuss the case. This discussion focuses on safety practices and helps build critical thinking skills for the case manager and supervisor. Case reviews focus on nine (9) questions:

1. Is the case plan individualized for the family's needs and related to known dangers?
2. Is safety planning sufficient?
3. Is the parents' behavior change monitored as it relates to danger threats and safety concerns?
4. Is the case manager aware of any emerging dangers and, if so, are they followed up on urgently?
5. Is the quality of contacts sufficient to ascertain and respond to known threats and emerging dangers?
6. Is the frequency of contacts with the child and family sufficient to ascertain and respond to known threats and emerging dangers?
7. Are background checks and home studies sufficient and responded to appropriately?
8. Is communication with the case stakeholders sufficient to assess emerging dangers and parent behavioral changes?
9. Is there evidence the case management supervisor is regularly consulting with the case manager, recommending actions when concerns are identified, and ensuring recommended actions followed up on urgently?

Results of the qualitative case reviews are reflected in table 6. In cases where the QA reviewer had critical child safety concerns, a Request for Action alert was submitted through FSFN to the case manager, supervisor, and second level supervisor. Very few cases rose to this level during the review period.

**Rapid Safety Feedback  
Case Management Services**

STATEWIDE	Q3 FY 2013-2014		April 2014		May 2014		June 2014	
	Appl Cases	% Strength	Appl Cases	% Strength	Appl Cases	% Strength	Appl Cases	% Strength
1 Is the case plan individualized for the family's needs and related to known dangers?	1086	74.9%	391	74.2%	334	77.5%	363	79.3%
2 Is safety planning sufficient?	1086	60.9%	391	57.3%	334	59.6%	363	59.2%
3 Is the parent's behavior change monitored as it relates to danger threats and safety concerns?	1086	74.8%	391	73.9%	334	78.4%	363	82.9%
4 Is the case manager aware of any emerging dangers and, if so, are they followed up on urgently?	576	64.6%	185	60.5%	169	67.5%	154	72.1%
5 Is the quality of contacts sufficient to ascertain and respond to known threats and emerging dangers?	1086	66.7%	390	66.2%	333	75.1%	363	70.8%

**Rapid Safety Feedback  
Case Management Services continued**

STATEWIDE	Q3 FY 2013-2014		April 2014		May 2014		June 2014	
	Appl Cases	% Strength	Appl Cases	% Strength	Appl Cases	% Strength	Appl Cases	% Strength
6 Is the frequency of contacts with the child and family sufficient to ascertain and respond to known threats and emerging dangers?	1086	69.3%	391	69.6%	334	73.7%	363	67.5%
7 Are background checks and home studies sufficient and responded to appropriately?	1086	66.1%	391	67.8%	334	72.5%	363	65.6%
8 Is communication with the case stakeholders sufficient to assess emerging dangers and parent behavioral changes?	1086	61.5%	391	58.8%	334	70.7%	363	70.8%
9 Is there evidence the case management supervisor is regularly consulting with the case manager, recommending actions when concerns are identified, and ensuring recommended actions followed up on urgently?	1086	53.8%	391	54.0%	334	66.2%	363	61.2%

Source: QA Case File Reviews Documented in the QA Web Portal

Table 7

**Child Safety Concerns  
Request for Action Referrals  
by Review Period**

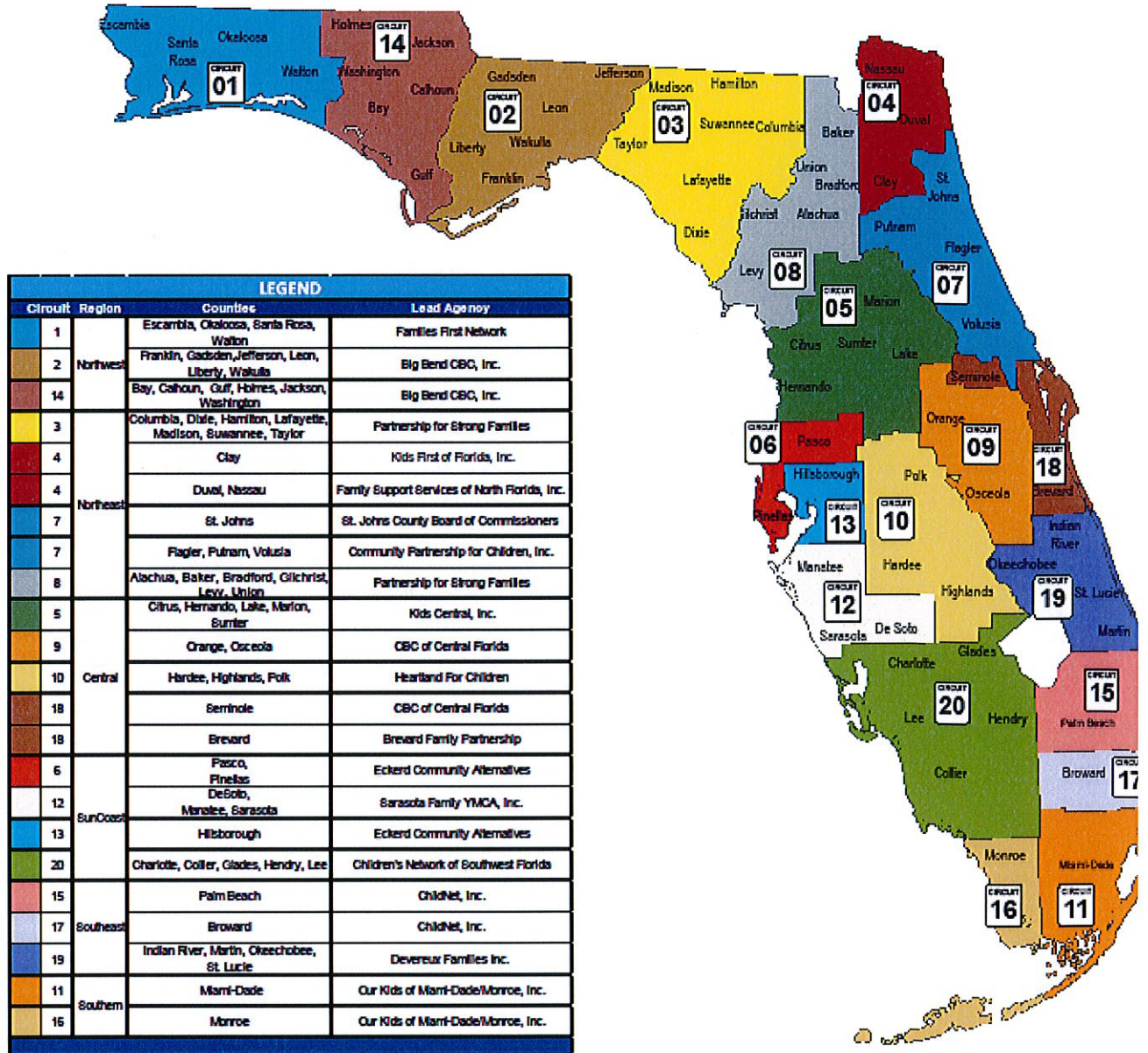
	Q3 FY 2013-2014		April 2014		May 2014		June 2014	
A Request for Action was completed in FSFN for to address immediate child safety concerns.	751	8.0%	391	8.7%	334	9.9%	363	9.1%

Source: QA Case File Reviews Documented in the QA Web Portal

Table 8

### CBC Lead Agency Map

The map below displays the eighteen (18) lead agencies and the counties served.



## Appendix 2

### CBC Lead Agency Accreditation Status

Lead Agency	Accreditation Organization	Expiration Date
Big Bend CBC	Council on Accreditation	12/31/17
Brevard Family Partnership	Council on Accreditation	7/31/17
CBC Central Florida Orange / Osceola	Council on Accreditation	2/28/15
CBC Central Florida Seminole	Council on Accreditation	2/28/15
ChildNet Broward	Council on Accreditation	2/28/15
ChildNet Palm Beach	Council on Accreditation	2/28/15
Children's Network of SW Florida	Council on Accreditation	8/31/17
Community Partnership for Children	None	Not Accredited
Eckerd Pinellas/Pasco	Council on Accreditation	6/30/15
Eckerd Hillsborough	Council on Accreditation	6/30/15
Families First Network	Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitative Facilities (CARF)	1/31/16
Family Integrity Program	Council on Accreditation	1/30/16
Family Support Services North Florida	Council on Accreditation	12/31/16
Heartland for Children	Council on Accreditation	3/31/17
Kids Central Inc.	Council on Accreditation	7/31/15
Kids First of Florida	Council on Accreditation	10/31/14
Our Kids	Council on Accreditation	4/30/17
Partnership for Strong Families	Council on Accreditation	6/30/17
Sarasota Y Safe Children's Coalition	Council on Accreditation	6/30/17
Devereux	None Yet: Awarded contract 11/1/13.	