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Changing Times: CFSR, Families, Caseworkers and Courts- What Now?

**Fostering Change: a New Visions for
Family Engagement- Michigan
September 23, 2010**



GOALS

- **Set the stage**
- **The history**
- **Changing landscape of child welfare**
- **CFSR and beyond**
- **Child Welfare and the Courts**
- **Where from here**



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MY TRIP HERE

YOU' LL NEVER
GET TO WORK
ON TIME
HAHA!!





History of Child Welfare: Understanding the Responses



History

- 1st reported case of abuse in US
- 18th century - Children were indentured to work and learn a trade
- 1832 Cholera epidemic- orphan asylums
- 1853 response to them was NY Children's Aid Society– 1853-1890 moved 92,000 kids to Midwest
- 1886- Charles Birtwell of Boston Champions **return home**
- 1909- White House Conference adopts Birtwell and **temp foster care payments**



History p 2

- 1923- 34 states had Children's Aid Societies- kids exploited- **criticism of placing kids out and multiple placements**
- 1959- Maas and Engler study- Children in Need of Parents- **kids spent 3 years in care**- neglect, abandonment and poverty reasons for placement
- The 60's- Fleming Rule- can't refuse AFDC for bad homes- keep AFDC & reasonable efforts to improve
 - **AND SO THE FEDS STEPPED IN!!**



1974 Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA)

- **Child abuse prevention- Children's trust funds**
- **National Standards for child protection**
- **Coordinated community response for investigation and prosecution**
- **GAL/CASA for every child**
- **Research and other grants**



1978 Indian Child Welfare Act

- **Set out for children of native American heritage**
- **Process to address problems**
- **Different standards**
- **Choice of tribe**



1980

Public Law 96-272

- **The Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act of 1980**
- **To get Federal funds (IV-E), States must:**
 1. **implement services,**
 2. **provide protections for families,**
 3. **develop mandates and timetables**
- **Policy- END FOSTER CARE DRIFT**
- **TRUST IN STATE JUDICIARY- juvenile and family courts to monitor**



Federal Requirements of 96-272

- Evaluation of reasonableness of services to preserve families
- **Periodic review** hearings in foster care cases
- **Adherence to deadlines** for permanency planning decision
- Procedural safeguards concerning placement and visitation



1993 Court Improvement Act

- **Review Court data to improve practice**
- **\$\$ to Supreme Courts for surveys**
- **Revelations from those reports- opinions of stakeholders, time frames, permanency issues, etc**
- **Flexible funding for ID'd programs**



1994

Multi-Ethnic Placement Act

- **MEPA**
- **Response to some state policy initiatives delaying permanency**
- **Some limits on placement standards**
- **Has severe penalties- total loss of IV-E funding**



1995 Block Grants

- **Just what it says**
- **Feds provide \$\$ for states to use as best they saw it with limited regulations- WAIVERS**

Adoption & Safe Families Act

Nov 19, 1997



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- Promotes health & safety of the child
- Continues Family Preservation Program
- Promote **TIMELY** decision making
- Clarifies “reasonable efforts”
- Foster care is **TEMPORARY- AGAIN!!**
- Permanency planning begins immediately
- Requires TPR in certain situations
- Need for innovation- where do new ideas come from, typically?



1999 Foster Care Independence Act

- **Provides resources for kids aging out of the system**



2001 Strengthening Abuse and Neglect Courts Act

- **SANCA**
- **Helping Courts fulfill the mission of ASFA**
- **Brings \$\$ to the Courts**
- **But not enough**



2008

Fostering Connections Act

- **Education stability- attend/achieve**
- **Health care- Medicaid- EPSDT**
- **Can extend foster care to 21**
- **Can us subsidized guardianship**
- **Kinship care- ID relatives- training**
- **Over time- delinks to 1996 AFDC**
- **Training support**
- **Tribal issues- again**



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**DOES
IT
SOUND
LIKE
THE
SYSTEM
DIDN'T
GET
IT?**

ILLITERATE?

WRITE FOR FREE HELP.

ILLITERACY FOUNDATION
806 MAIN STREET

EXIT

www.StrangeCosmos.com



Recent Changes Effecting Child Welfare

CHANGING LANDSCAPE OF CHILD WELFARE SERVICES



- **Tighter Time-Lines and Higher Level of Accountability to:**
 - Ensure the safety and well-being of children– health & safety
 - Assess the **willingness and ability** of parents/caregivers
 - Mobilize services for the child and family
 - Expedite the achievement of the permanency goal within unless there are “Compelling Reasons

CHANGING LANDSCAPE OF CHILD WELFARE SERVICES



- **Greater Emphasis on Collaboration and Partnerships**
 - **Community-Neighborhood Responses, Systems and Services - Keeping the services as close and as accessible to the child and family as possible**
 - **Partnerships - Emphasize Partnerships within the system families, the family's natural supports, service providers, **court participants** and foster families**

CHANGING LANDSCAPE OF CHILD WELFARE SERVICES



- **Accountability of all:**
 - **parents** **providers**
 - **system** **funders**
- **Three targets:**
 - **Youth Partnerships Tribes**
- **Measurements:**
 - **Composites, not measures**
- **0 to 3 Initiatives: best practice**



CHANGING LANDSCAPE OF CHILD WELFARE SERVICES

- **Outcomes:**
- **Measurable and real- agency, Court and programs**
- **Examples- ACE, CFTM, **case manger visits**, education, health issues, grandparents, aging out, time in care**
- **Philosophy and Practice:**
- **Will change with outcomes and accountability- the CFSSR**



Initiatives



The Children

- **Ensure early appropriate placement**
- **Provide personal items for security**
- **Work on school consistency**
- **Provide neighborhood placement-
avoid out of county- education,
etc**
- **Visitation with parents**
- **Sibling placement and/or visits**
- **Inform of status regularly**



Help for Individual Children and Families

Advise families and others in the case and community about rules & timetables

- **Make sure families are engaged in assessing, planning and decision making**
- **Develop case plan that really responds to the child and family needs- services, accessible, available, timely & culturally competent**
- **Explore relative placements early**
- **Help & force families to watch the clock**



Community

- **Involve all stakeholders**
- **Expand the network of informal and formal supports**
- **Establish prevention, reunification and permanency options**
- **Assist the community to have financial resources to “do the job”- Judges get out & advocate**
- **Support the efforts of those who take care of those least capable of taking care of themselves**



Heightened Need for Partnerships

- **Give priority to child safety**
- **Keep focus on individual children and families & case by case decision making**
- **Increase attention to prevention and early support**
- **Engage families in shared decision making from the beginning**
- **Focus on strengths of family and community**



Doing Things Early



Early

- **Find absent parent//father/family**
- **Extended family involvement**
- **Establish paternity**
- **Good assessments-reassessments**
- **Concurrent planning**
- **30-30-30**
- **Reward families for changes and active positive participation**
- **Ensure frequent, quality CW visits**



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Who Likes Change Anyway?



RED

YELLOW

GREEN

BLUE

RED

BLUE

YELLOW

GREEN

BLUE

RED



Statements of Change

- **If you want to make enemies, try to change something** Woodrow Wilson
- **The main changers in this life are the people who want to change everything- or nothing** Lady Astor
- **If you don't like change, you're going to like irrelevance even less.**
Gen. Eric Shinseki, Former Army Chief of Staff
- **Change is the law of life. Those who look only to the past or present are certain to miss the future**
John F. Kennedy



Things to Look At

- **Kids aging out**
- **CW frequent visits**
- **Cases open too long**
- **Filing per statute and timelines**
- **Family structure and abuse Nos.**
- **Educational advocates**
- **Health care initiatives**
- **Kids in home- Parents out**
- **DATA, DATA, DATA,**



The CFSR and the PIP



Things You Know

- **CFSRs are mandated by law**
- **CFSRs have changed the focus of our reviews from process to outcomes**
- **CFSRs have required States to**
 - **Develop program improvement plans**
 - **Focus on self-evaluating their systems**
- **CFSRs review the entire State system not just the Child Welfare Agency**



CFSR Accomplishments

- **Common language & outcomes established- state to state**
- **Continuous Quality Assurance institutionalized by all States**
- **Dialogue and collaboration ongoing in States where this was not occurring**
- **Opportunities for reviewers to “step back” and examine other State policies**
- **Results are driving the Children’s Bureau research and demonstration grant agendas**



Key Changes for Round 2 CFSRs

- **Larger sample – 65 cases instead of 50**
- **Stratification of sample to ensure minimum number of cases in key program areas**
- **Changes in criteria- composites**
- **Automation of CFRS Onsite Review Instrument and Stakeholder Interview Guide**
- **Four permanency related National Standards revised to include composite measures**

What is Being Learned



- **First round of reviews showed relationship between certain practice and achievement of outcomes- CW visits**
- **Mix of results across States from Round 1 to Round 2 in meeting outcomes**
- **See a focus on particular areas of practice to improve outcomes**
- **Recognize challenge States face in moving practice at the field level**

Permanency Challenges



Achieving timely permanence continues to be a struggle in Round 2

- **Sequential planning rather than concurrent planning**
- **Permanency goals that fit the case circumstances rather than child's needs**
- **Courts refusing to terminate parental rights without an adoptive family identified**
- **Long attempts at reunification despite minimal, if any, progress by parents**

Well-Being Challenges



- **States struggle with performance regarding assessment of needs, engagement in case planning and worker contacts**
- **Ongoing issues**
 - **Assessments that focus on presenting problem but don't identify the underlying needs**
 - **Need to engage non-custodial parents**
 - **Lack of father involvement continues to impact ratings across permanency and well-being outcomes.**



What It Takes To Make Significant Improvements

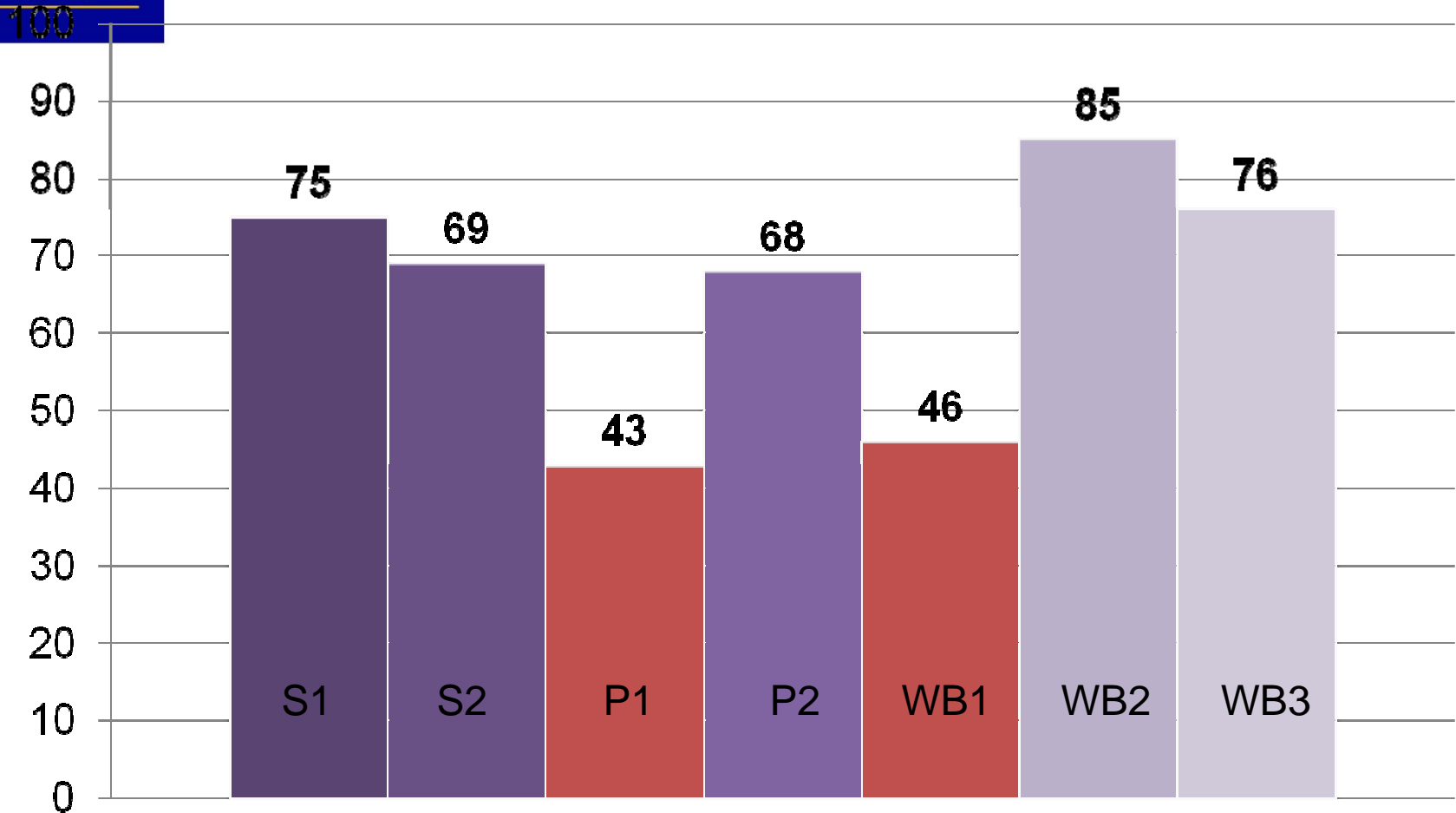
Involve all levels within the State, from the Governor to the front-line workers

- **Make collaboration a priority among partner State agencies**
- **Need “consumer” input in the process**
- **Connect PIPs to the overall agency vision**
- **Use data, and encourage workers to use data, to monitor improvement**
- **Need accountability at all levels of the organization**
- **May need a culture change within the org.**



Preliminary Results: Initial 18 Reviews Outcomes

Average "Percent Achieved" Across States





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Safety

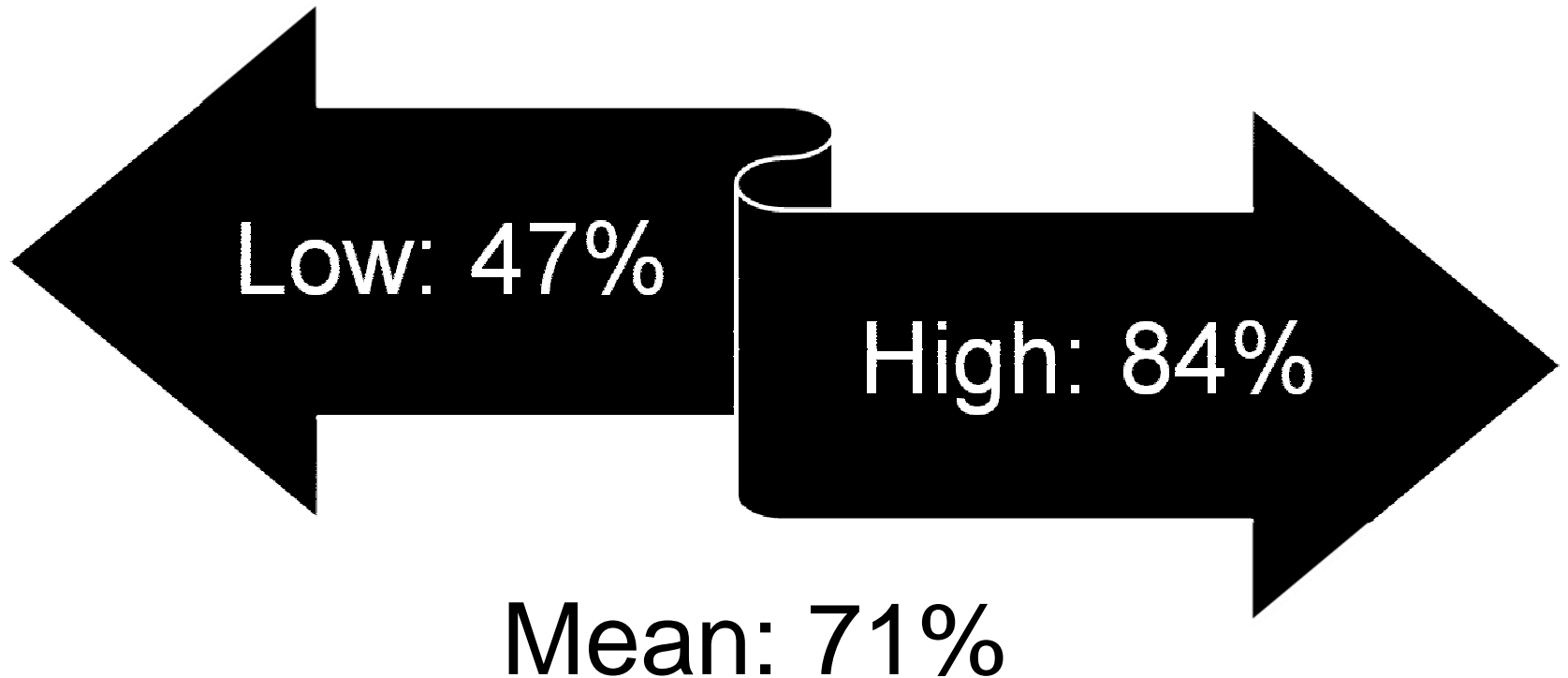


Preliminary Findings: Initial 18 Reviews

Safety Outcome 2

Item 4

Risk assessment and safety management



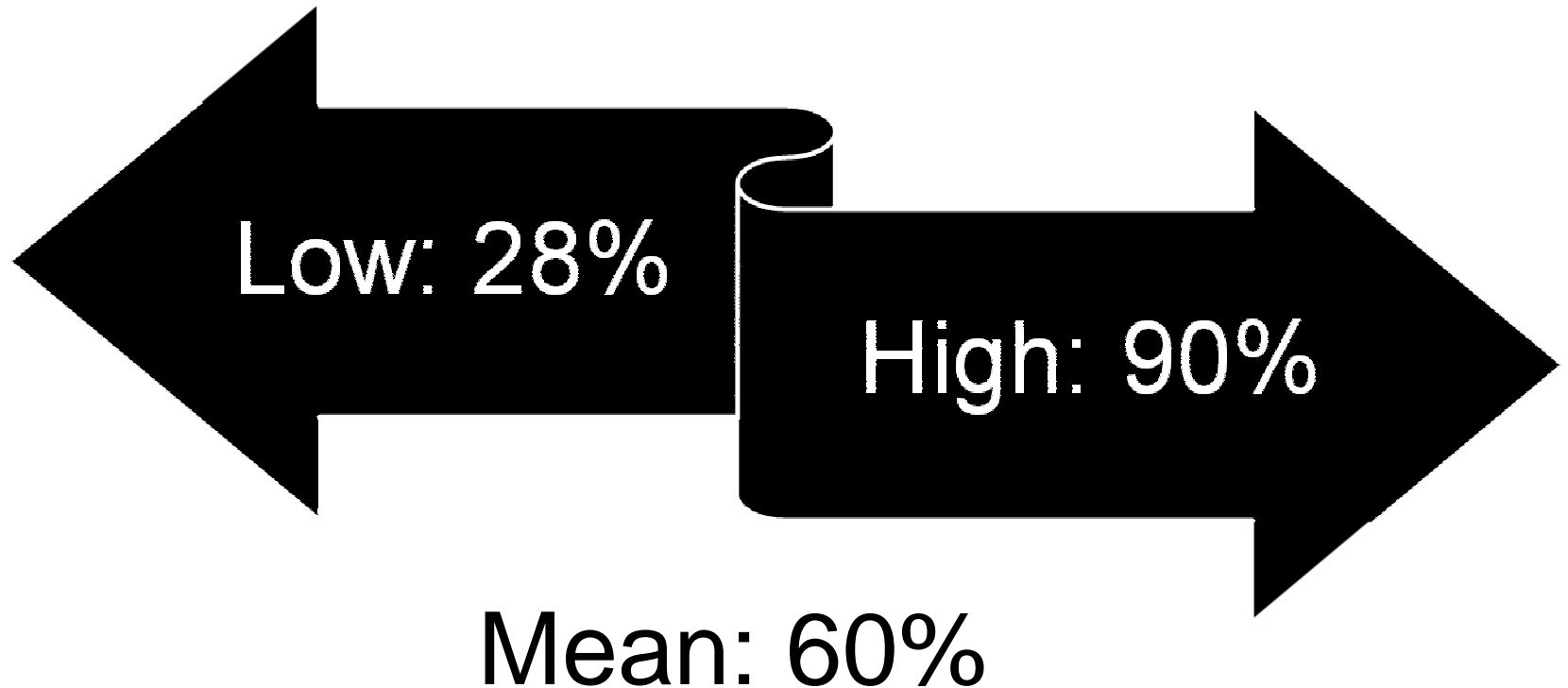


Permanency



Preliminary Findings: Initial 18 Reviews Permanency Outcome 2 Item 16

**Making concerted efforts to promote, support,
and/or maintain positive relationships between
child(ren) in foster care and their parents**





Preliminary Findings: Initial 18 Reviews Relationship with Parents

Concerted agency efforts to promote, support, and maintain a positive and nurturing relationship between the child in foster care and his/her parents (through means other than visitation)

Mother

74% of
applicable
cases

Father

53% of
applicable
cases

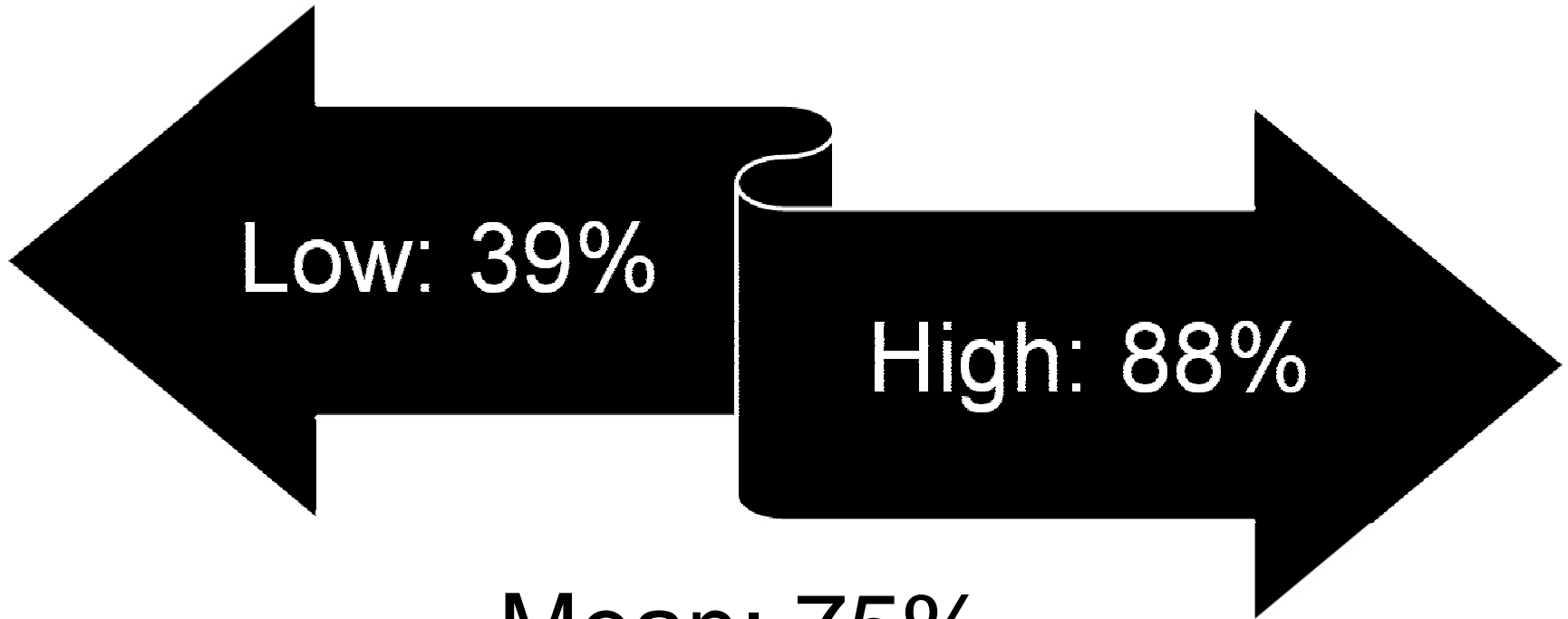


Well-Being



**Preliminary Findings: Initial 18 Reviews
Well-Being Outcome 1
Item 19**

**Caseworker visits
with child**



Mean: 75%



Preliminary Findings: Initial 18 Reviews Items 19 and 20: Comparison of Frequency and Quality of Visits

The frequency and quality of visits between the caseworker and the parents, and the caseworker and child, were sufficient in:

Mother

Frequency: 70% of applicable cases
Quality: 69% of applicable cases

Father

Frequency: 44% of applicable cases
Quality: 46% of applicable cases

Child

Frequency: 83% of applicable cases
Quality: 79% of applicable cases

**Preliminary Findings: Initial 18
Reviews
Well-Being Outcome 2
Item 21**



Educational needs of the child

Low: 71%

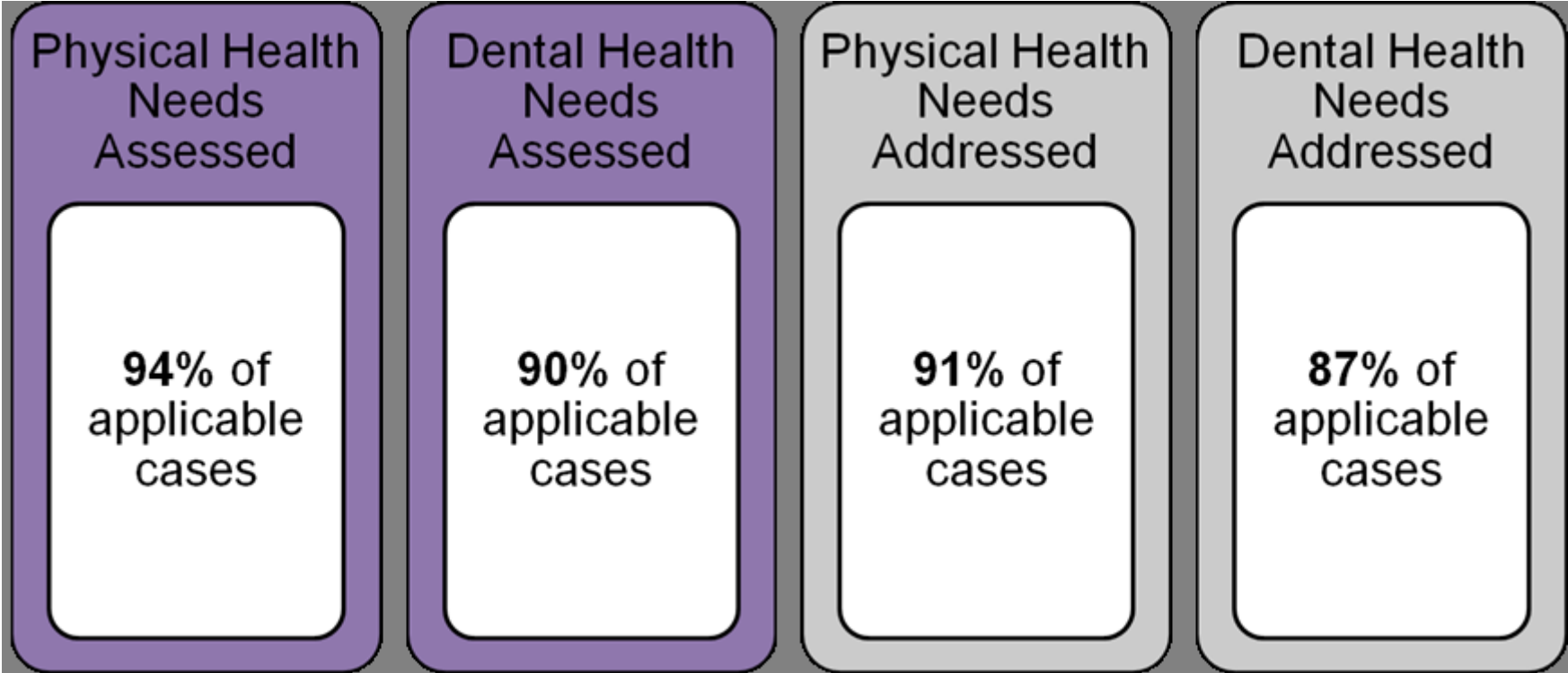
High: 96%

Mean: 85%



Preliminary Findings: Initial 18 Reviews Physical and Dental Health Needs of the Child Assessed & Addressed

The physical and dental health needs of the child were assessed and addressed in:





Preliminary Findings: Initial 18 Reviews Overall Challenges Across Lowest- Performing Items within Outcome Areas

**Risk and safety assessments
must be completed in all cases.**

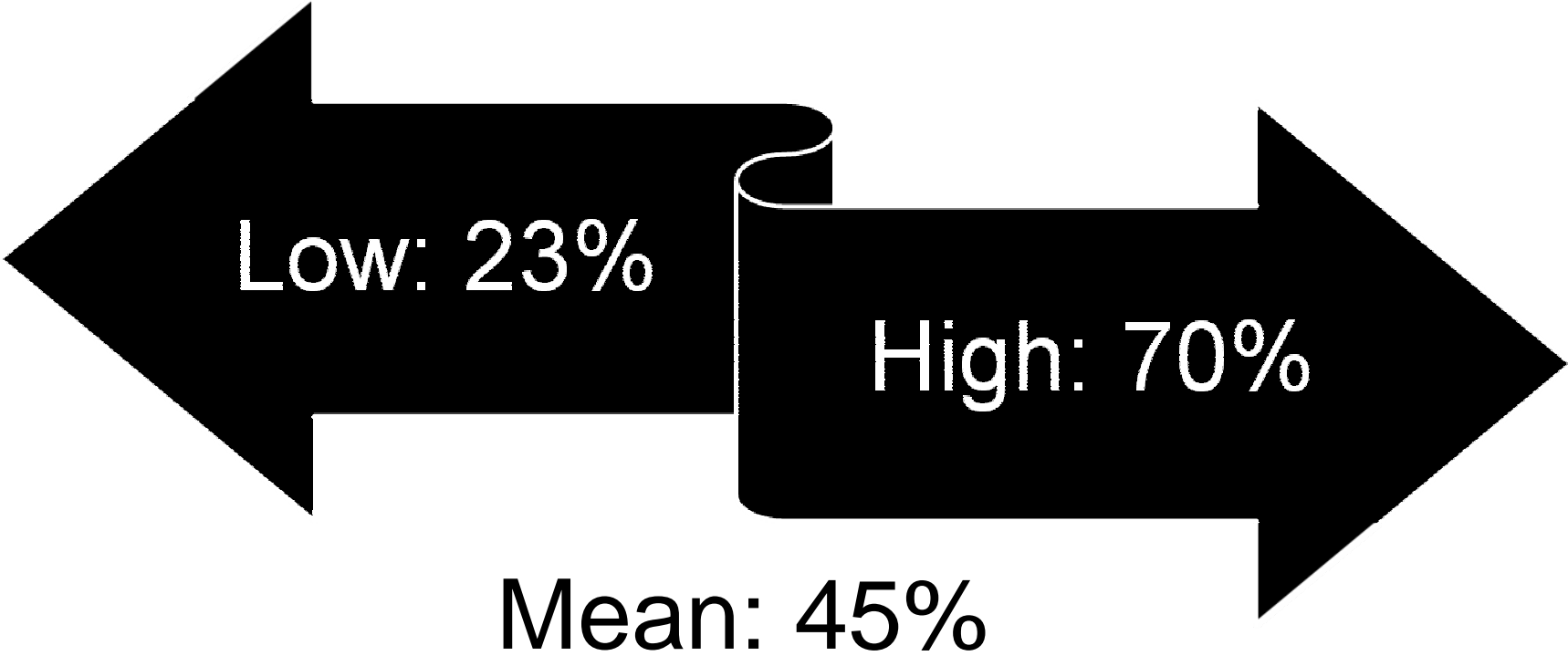
**Renewed focus on addressing
identified risk and safety needs.**

**Renewed focus on agency and
court efforts to achieve
permanency goals (specifically
adoption) in a timely manner.**



**Preliminary Findings: Initial 18 Reviews
Well-Being Outcome 1
Item 20**

Caseworker visits with parents





Preliminary Findings: Initial 18 Reviews Overall Challenges Across Lowest- Performing Items within Outcome Areas

Renewed efforts to engage mothers and fathers in assessment, service provision and case planning.

Renewed efforts to engage fathers when appropriate.

Improve frequency and quality of visits between caseworkers and parents.



Program Improvement Plans (PIPs)

- **States required to outline action steps for all outcomes or systemic factors for which they are not in compliance**
 - **PIP in every State in Round 1 as well as States reviewed thus far in Round 2**
- **Focus in Round 2 PIPs on interconnectivity**
 - **Encourage States to look at PIPs in a thematic way rather than simply listing out tasks by each item**
- **Ongoing Support from CB Staff and our Training and Technical Assistance Network**
 - **(New) Regional Implementation Centers**
- **Engagement of Stakeholders**



Characteristics of Successful PIPs

Strong & consistent leadership with a long-term plan and vision

– Ongoing monitoring of State improvement in PIP areas

- **Addressing supervision issues as a key to making change at the practice level**
- **Identified practice model that also includes addressing agency change**
- **Supporting PIP implementation through funding or a shift in resources**
- **Inclusion of stakeholders at all levels**
- **Good use of Training and Technical Assistance in program and practice change**



Where Does It Go From Here?

BACK TO THE BASICS

- **Grounding the Workforce in Good Practice**
- **Bolstering the Workforce**
- **Addressing Disproportionality**
- **CFSR as a Strategic Tool**



**WE CANNOT
LET THE
WRECK
HAPPEN TO
CHILDREN
& FAMILIES**



3

Temporary Insanity II



Things I Have Learned



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**If the agency isn't
working well, the
system won't
either**



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**Caseloads are
important!!**



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**The whole system
tends to keep
doing things the
same way**



**Change comes
from few and
threatens many**



**Courts are
important and a
Judge can fix a
little but not the
whole thing**



**Money is
important**



**The only way to
fix it is to....**



In These Times

- **Look at the next year, plan the next 5**
- **The theory of small wins-
incremental**
- **Be innovative- find a bottleneck: FIX
IT**
- **Be out front and open**
- **Find new partners and cultivate**
- **Understand the local finances**
- **Focus on staff**



Focus on Staff

- **This CHANGE is when people in the field believe in what being done**
- **Understand resistance to change**
- **Know organizational behavior**
- **Understand your role is to influence people**
- **Understand the new worker mentality**
- **Understand how to motivate**



This really is About Workforce

- **Can't work on margins- out front**
- **External relationships**
- **Follow the data**
- **Know the Caseload, outcomes, CFSTR**
- **Be visible, available, approachable**
- **Work with distance communication**
- **Travel, travel, travel**
- **Teach, motivate, guide, show, instill, reward**



REDEFINE:

- **Who we serve**
- **Who we support**
- **Who we include**
- **Who must include**
- **What we insist on**
- **Who the team is**
- **How we work with**
- **Success**
- **Failure**