



Child and Family Services Reviews



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Administration for Children and Families
Administration on Children, Youth and Families
Children's Bureau





Welcome to the Pennsylvania Child and Family Services Review Exit Conference



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Today we will be discussing:

- Information about the Child and Family Services Reviews (CFSRs) and the CFSR process
- Findings from the previous round of reviews
- The case sample and preliminary findings from the current round of reviews
- Pennsylvania's strengths and areas of concern
- Comparing Pennsylvania's results to the national standards
- Next steps

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The CFSRs:

- Are a collaborative effort between Federal and State Governments
- Promote continuous quality improvement in child welfare systems nationally
- Evaluate State performance relative to the State Child and Family Services Plan
- Identify both the strengths and areas needing improvement in State child welfare programs

The CFSRs analyze strengths and areas needing improvement with respect to seven outcomes and seven systemic factors.

The *outcomes*, which concern safety, permanency, and well-being, include:

Safety Outcome 1: Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect.

Safety Outcome 2: Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate.

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Permanency Outcome 1: Children have permanency and stability in their living situations.

Permanency Outcome 2: The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children.

Well-Being Outcome 1: Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs.

Well-Being Outcome 2: Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs.

Well-Being Outcome 3: Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs.

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The *systemic factors* include:

Statewide Information System

Case Review System

Quality Assurance System

Staff and Provider Training

Service Array

Agency Responsiveness to the Community

Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention

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- We completed the initial review of all 50 States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico between 2001-2004.
- All entered into Program Improvement Plans (PIPs) to correct some areas of their programs, and all had clearly identifiable strengths in their programs upon which to build improvement strategies.
- Although a few States are still completing their PIP implementation, the second round of reviews in those States that have completed their PIPs is now underway.

The CFSRs include:

- Statewide Assessment
- Case-level onsite reviews conducted by a team of Federal and State reviewers
- Interviews with key State and local stakeholders
- State data from AFCARS and NCANDS

Initial CFSR and PIP



- The first CFSR in Pennsylvania was conducted in 2002.
- As a result, the State entered into a PIP to make improvements in six outcomes and one systemic factor.
- The State was successful in completing PIP activities and reaching PIP goals, and was released from its PIP on March 24, 2006.

Current Review: Case Sample



In the current CFSR, we reviewed 65 cases statewide, including:

- 25 in-home services cases
- 40 foster care cases

Current Review: Locations



We reviewed cases and spoke to community stakeholders in three locations in the State, including:

- Philadelphia County
- Allegheny County
- Northumberland County



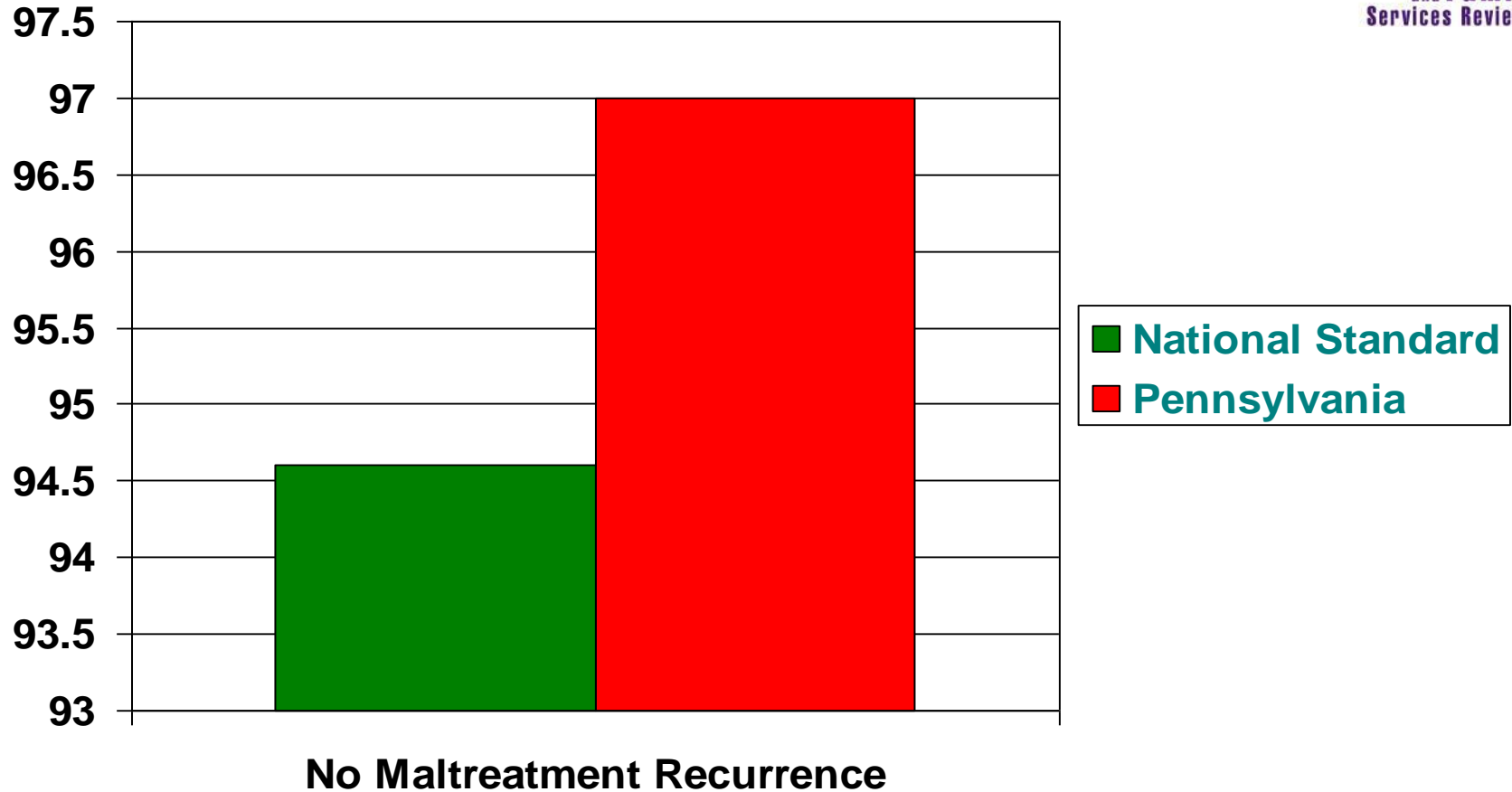
Preliminary Findings: CFSR Data Indicators



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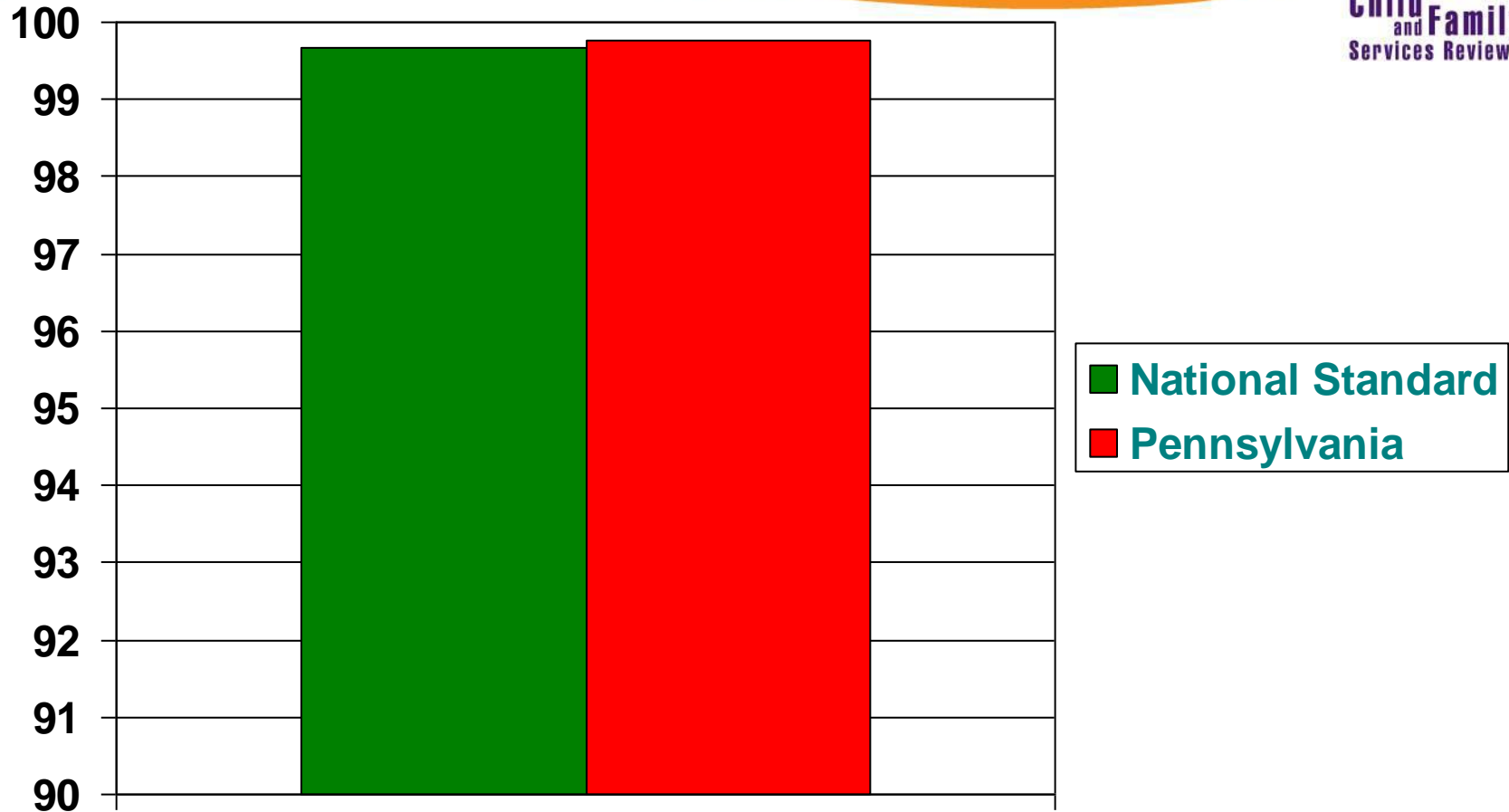


Comparison to National Standards: Safety



Of all children who were victims of a substantiated or indicated maltreatment allegation during the first 6 months of the reporting period, what percent were not victims of another substantiated or indicated maltreatment allegation during a 6-month period? National standard = 94.6%. Pennsylvania = 97%.

Comparison to National Standards: Safety

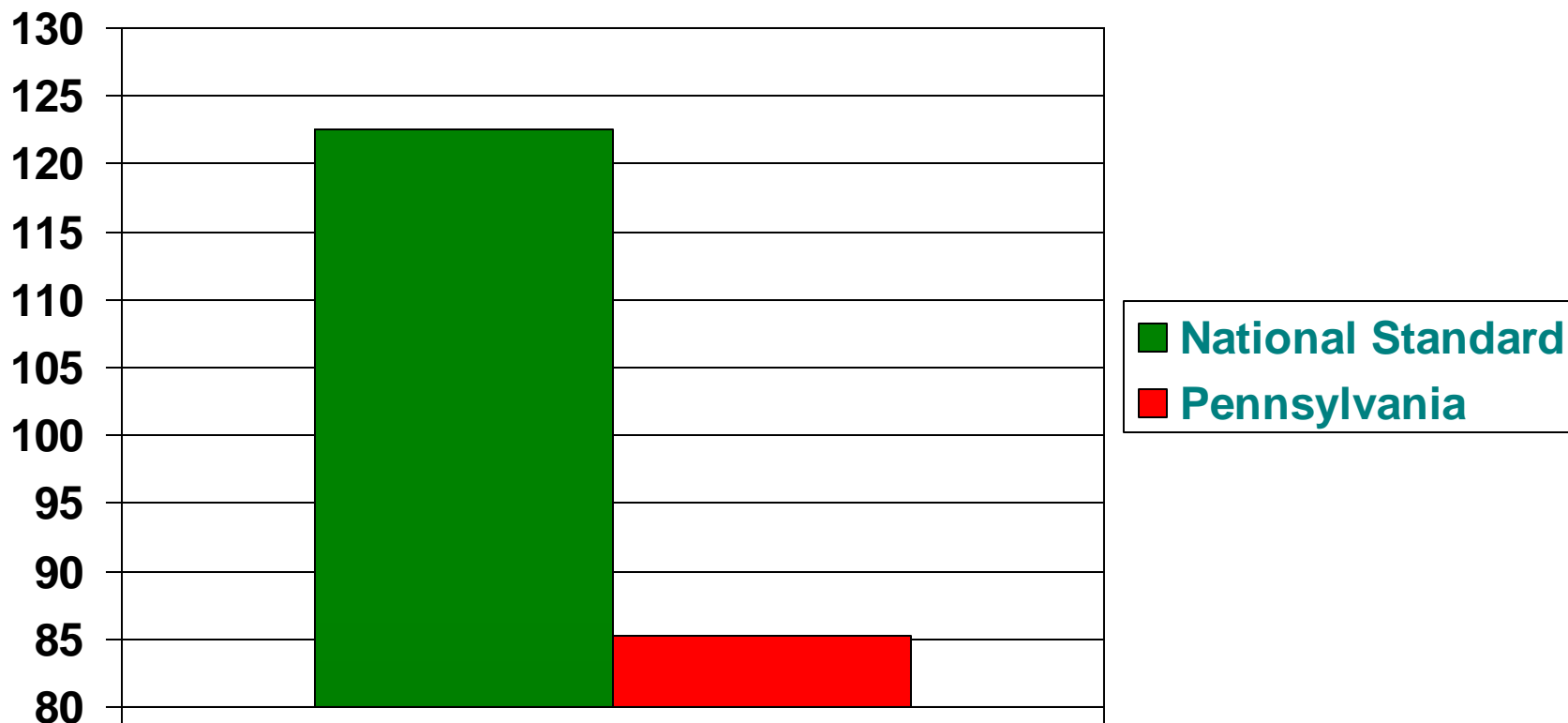


No Maltreatment in Foster Care

Of all children in foster care during the reporting period, what percent were not victims of a substantiated or indicated maltreatment by a foster parent or facility staff member?

National standard = 99.68%. Pennsylvania = 99.76%.

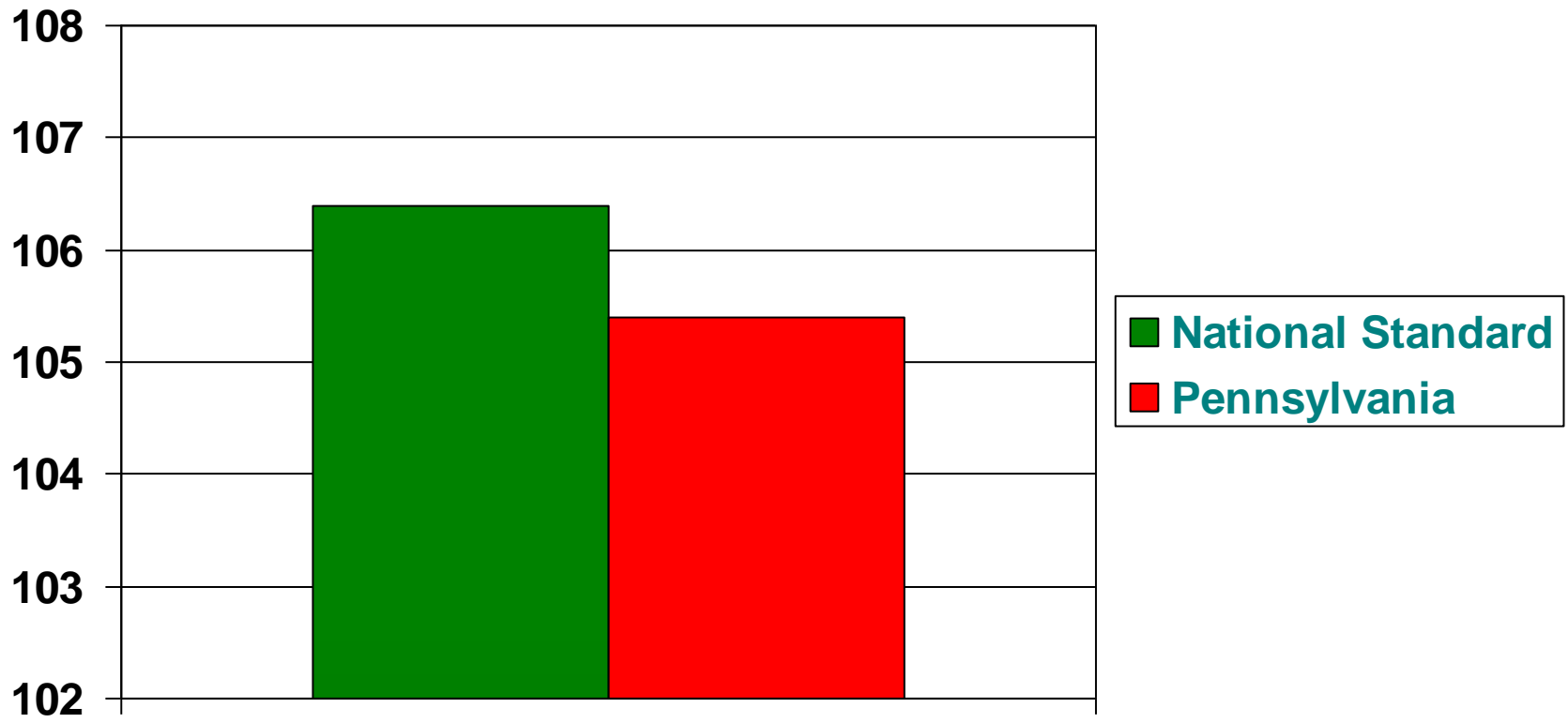
Comparison to National Standards: Permanency



Reunification Timeliness & Permanency

The national standard for the timeliness and permanency of reunification composite is 122.6.
Pennsylvania = 85.2.

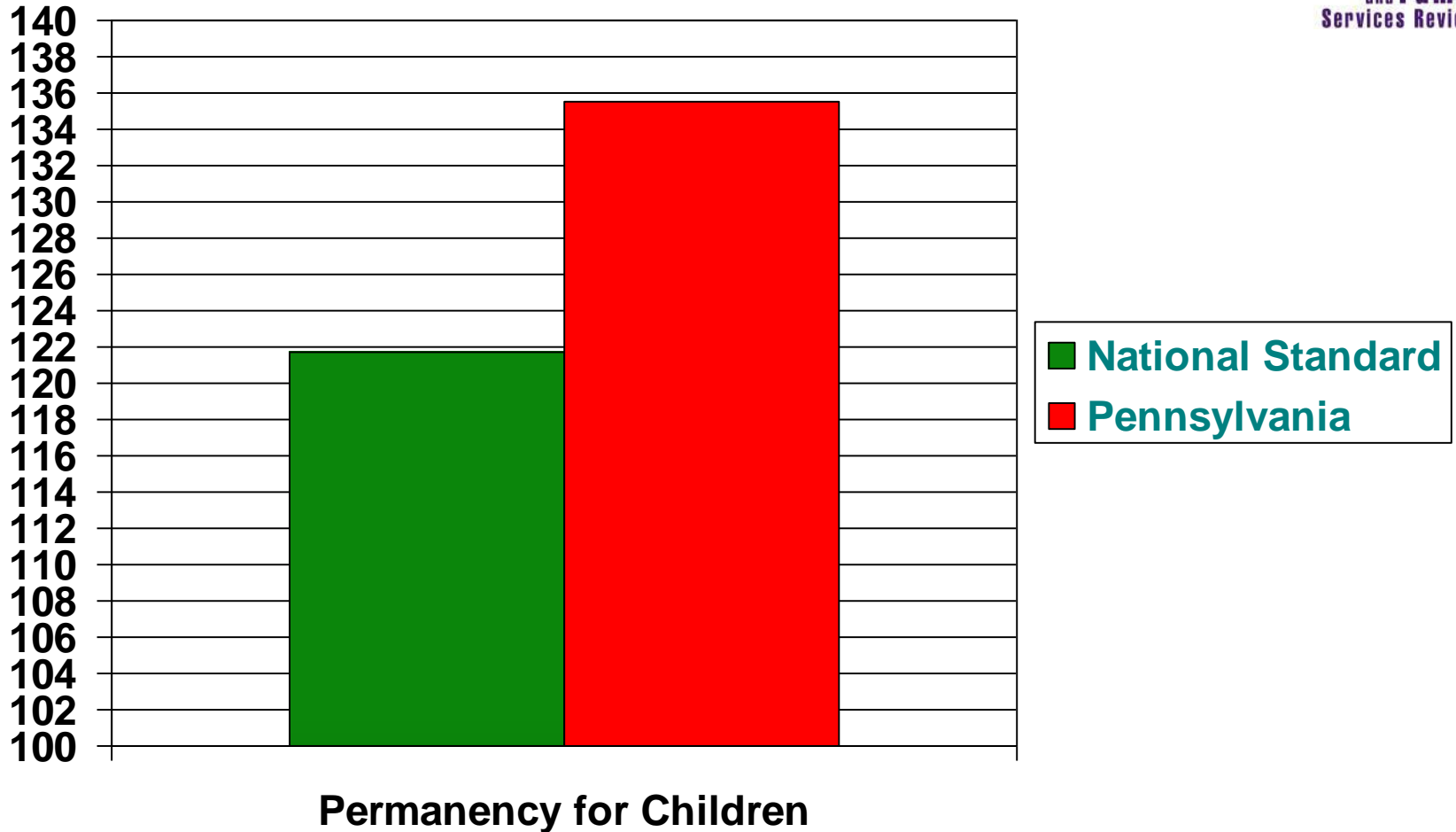
Comparison to National Standards: Permanency



Adoption Timeliness

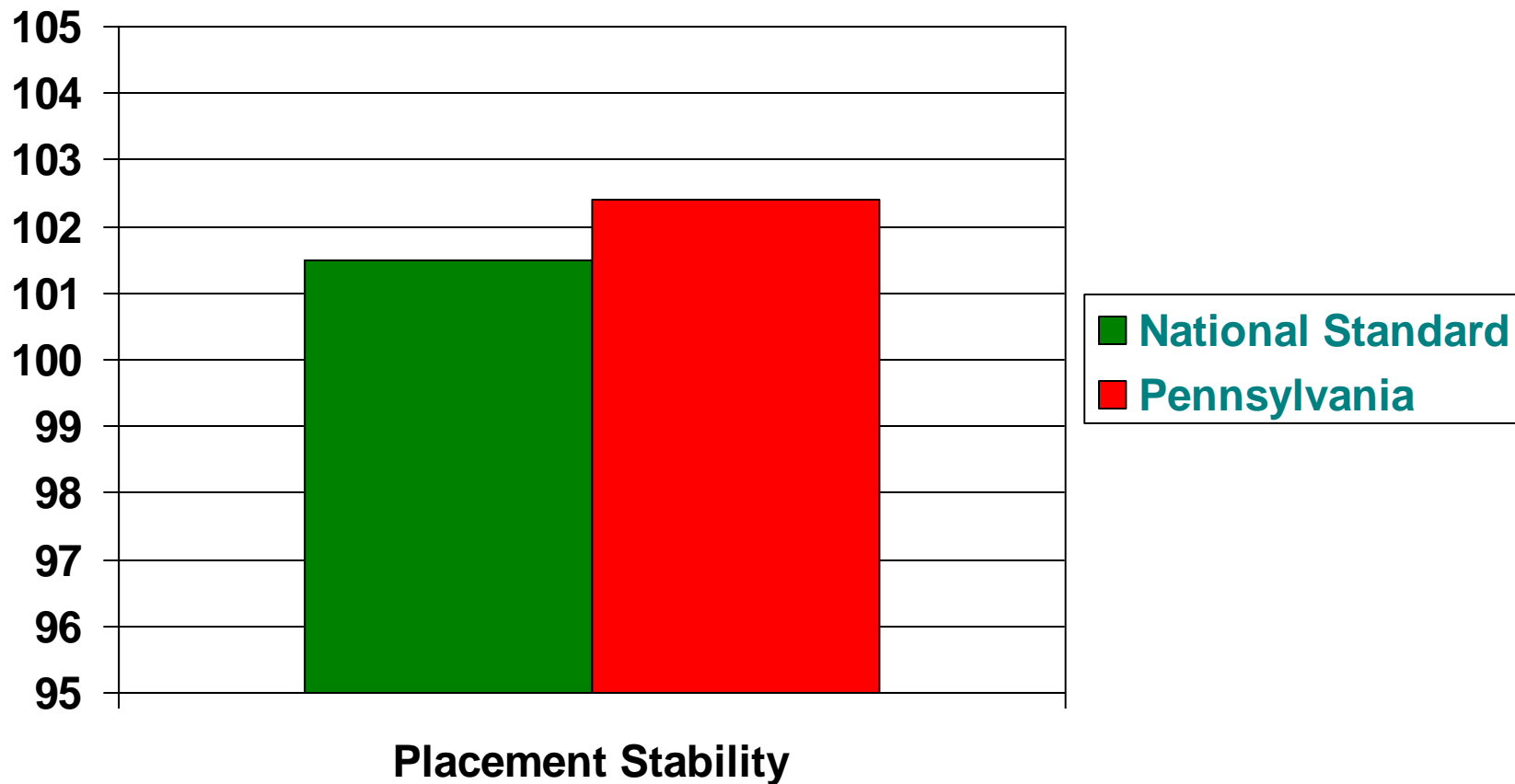
The national standard for the timeliness of adoptions composite is 106.4. Pennsylvania = 105.4.

Comparison to National Standards: Permanency



The national standard for achieving permanency is 121.7. Pennsylvania = 135.5.

Comparison to National Standards: Permanency



The national standard for placement stability is 101.5. Pennsylvania = 102.4.



Preliminary Findings: Outcomes



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- PA is now CAPTA-compliant
- Integrated Children's Services Initiative is striving to achieve cross-agency/cross-system collaboration at the State and local levels
- Child Welfare Training Program, including CWEB and CWEL, transfer-of-learning initiatives, and Organizational Effectiveness

Foundations for Program Improvement



- Youth Advisory Boards (both State and local) and Youth Ambassadors are improving outreach and engagement of youth
- Implementation of evidence-based programs, including Functional Family Therapy, Multi-systemic therapy, and Multi-dimensional treatment foster care
- Investment in providing a broad array of services

Foundations for Program Improvement



- Standards for child welfare practice, Quality Improvement efforts, and engagement of stakeholders in CFSR and PIP
- Improved relationships and collaborations with courts; many permanency initiatives in areas of the State
- The work of the Statewide Adoption and Permanency Network and the numerous awards received in the areas of adoption

The terms “strength” and “area needing improvement” at this preliminary stage do not necessarily equate to substantial conformity or nonconformity with an outcome or systemic factor. Final determinations are made at a later time in the process (more about this later).

SAFETY STRENGTHS

- Overall, timely response to reports of abuse and neglect and timely face-to-face contacts
- Philadelphia: 2 units for expedited response for children 5 and under
- Strong array of services to meet families' needs and prevent placement and facilitate reunification
- Risk and safety assessments done regularly – both informal and formal risk assessments

SAFETY CONCERNS

- Reports taken as GPS vs. CPS, and not always a timely change to CPS when warranted
- Results of reports on foster homes (handled by Regions) not always communicated back to counties
- In one site, had 8 GPS reports on foster homes during PUR
- Risk and safety assessments often focus on presenting problem and not underlying issues, resulting in multiple reports
- In JJ cases, single focus on the identified youth and not the entire family

PERMANENCY STRENGTHS

- Strong efforts – both services and casework – to reunify children and prevent re-entry
- Good work to keep children stable
- Permanency goals established timely
- Good work to keep siblings together or keep in close proximity
- Relative placements helped keep siblings together, in their communities, and in frequent contact with parents
- Strong services to youth to achieve independence and go on to post-secondary education

PERMANENCY CONCERNS

- Permanency is the biggest challenge for PA
- Lack of engaging fathers impacted ratings on Permanency Outcome 2
- Visitation between siblings positive at first but dropped off or stopped when TPR/adoption pursued

PERMANENCY CONCERNS

- Lack of timely achievement of adoption (adoption lowest rated item in entire review)
 - * Concurrent planning is not occurring
 - * Long reunification attempts – sometimes by agency, sometimes by court
 - * Various reasons for not filing TPR – disputes with court over permanency goal, court won't agree to TPR unless an adoptive home is identified, agency and courts working on opposite permanency goals

WELL BEING STRENGTHS

- Initial, comprehensive assessments to identify needs and target services
- Frequency of worker contacts generally a strength, but issues of quality of those contacts a concern in some sites
- Education outcome was highest rated outcome for this review – good work by agency to assess and advocate
- Examples of good work to meet physical and mental health needs of children

WELL BEING CONCERNS

- ✓ Process in place to engage families in case planning but not being utilized in practice
- ✓ Lack of engaging non-custodial parents, typically fathers, in assessment, case planning, and worker contacts
- ✓ Need to focus on quality of worker contacts and what is expected of them when they visit children and parents
- ✓ Need to ensure that assessments identify underlying issues and that assessments are done ongoing through the life of the case



Preliminary Findings: Systemic Factors



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TRAINING

- Charting The Course (120 hours; interactional and skills-based)
- Ongoing training requirements are tracked
- Leadership Academy
- CWEB and CWEL
- Supervisory training is under revision

AGENCY RESPONSIVENESS

- Cross-systems collaboration at the State level and working to bring that down to the local/county level
- Quality service committee and engaging stakeholders in CFSR and PIP, including youth; working to improve parent representation
- Regional and local roundtables convened by the courts and emphasis of courts' leadership role
- Many excellent examples of collaboration and coordination by the counties

Preliminary Findings – Systemic Factors - General Strengths (*cont'd*)



SERVICE ARRAY

- State and counties make a big investment to ensure services to children and families
- Independent Living and Aftercare services to youth have greatly improved
- 56 Family Support Centers throughout the State
- Evidence-based services being implemented in the counties
- Innovative programs at the local level, such as ARC (Achieving Reunification Center)
- Developing a common assessment tool for CW, JJ, Behavioral Health ; Integrated Children's Services Plan Initiative
- SWAN and services through the Network

SERVICE ARRAY AREAS FOR ATTENTION

- Housing
- Challenges finding dental care in some areas of the State
- Transportation barriers in some areas
- Resource Homes and supports to resource families
- Wait lists for services in some areas, e.g. IL and mental health
- Quality of services
- Need to better align and target services to meet the needs of the population, and work on accessibility

INFORMATION SYSTEM

- Various systems throughout the State used by the local counties does not give PA the ability to consistently track the information required. The State only knows this information, e.g. where children are placed, at a specific point-in-time
- Inability to always track information when children move from county-to-county or homes within private agencies
- Inability to track GPS history could compromise ability to assess safety and risk of children

CASE REVIEW SYSTEM

- Have requirements and processes in place to engage parents and children in case planning but not consistently utilized in practice
- Periodic reviews and permanency hearings are generally held timely but the quality is not effective in moving children forward to permanency
- Many children in care 15/22 months and TPR has not been filed and compelling reasons not always noted
- Notice and opportunity to be heard is inconsistent



Next Steps



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The Final Report for Pennsylvania will be issued after the onsite review with final determinations of substantial conformity.

- The Children's Bureau Regional Office will provide a courtesy copy in advance to the State to review for accuracy.
- The State requests technical assistance from National Resource Centers (NRCs) as needed.

Next Steps (*cont'd*)



- State begins/continues work on the PIP, including stakeholders in the process.
- State plans with Regional Office for training on PIP development through the NRC for Organizational Improvement.
- Final PIP is due to the Regional Office 90 days from receipt of Final Report. Due dates for drafts will be negotiated.

Next Steps (*cont'd*)



Important: The State need not wait for the Final Report to begin developing the PIP!

Next Steps (*cont'd*)



The Children's Bureau offers Training and Technical Assistance (T/TA) through:

- TA for State Legislators through JBS International, Inc., and the National Conference of State Legislatures
- The Children's Bureau-funded NRCs
- The Child Welfare Information Gateway (www.childwelfare.gov/) for information and resources

National Resource Centers



NRC for Organizational Improvement

NRC for Child Protective Services

NRC on Legal and Judicial Issues

NRC for Family-Centered Practice and Permanency Planning

NRC for Community Based Child Abuse Prevention Programs

NRC for Child Welfare Data and Technology

NRC for Adoption

NRC for Youth Development

NRC for Abandoned Infants Assistance Resource Center

The Collaboration to AdoptUSKids

NRC on Substance Abuse and Child Welfare

Questions?



THANK YOU!



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