

New Jersey Qualitative Review

The Qualitative Review (QR) is one of the Department of Children and Families' (DCF) essential continuous quality improvement activities. Utilizing the QR, DCF seeks to understand and evaluate its' work with the children and families it serves. The QR assesses how well children and families are doing and how well their needs are being met by the child welfare system. The QR identifies practice strengths and areas for improvement in helping families reach and sustain independence from DCF supervision, as well as provide safety, well-being and permanency for children. The results from the QR are used to improve DCF's work, enhance the quality of services provided, and ultimately increase positive outcomes for children and families.

QR examines two areas of practice:

- **Child (youth) and family indicators** focus on the critical mission of DCF:

Safety <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Safety at Home ➤ Safety in Other Settings 	Stability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Stability at Home ➤ Stability at School
Permanency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Living Arrangement ➤ Family Functioning and Resourcefulness ➤ Prospects for Permanence 	Well-Being <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Physical Health ➤ Emotional Well-Being ➤ Learning and Development

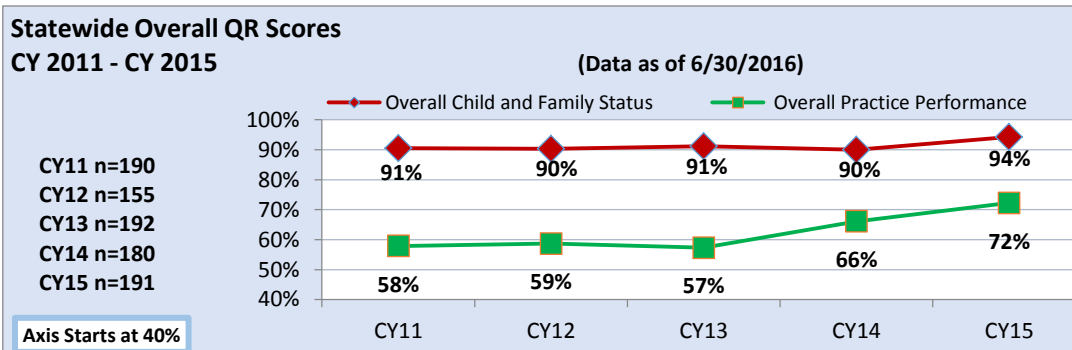
- **Practice performance indicators** focus on the use of strategies to achieve positive outcomes:

Engagement	Plan Implementation
Teamwork & Coordination	Tracking & Adjustment
Ongoing Assessment Process	Provisions of Health Care Services
Long Term View	Resource Availability
Child & Family Planning Process	Family & Community Connections
Successful Transitions	

- A critical element of the QR includes reading case records as well as interviews with parents, children, caseworkers, and others who are important to the family, e.g. schools, service providers, teachers, counselors, law guardians, caregivers, and other stakeholders.
- Final Reports are issued, which outline key themes identified in the review process. An improvement plan is developed by each county and subsequently tracked for implementation. The Annual Qualitative Review reports, 2011-2014, can be found at <http://nj.gov/dcf/about/divisions/opma/>
- To learn more about the QR Protocol and Instrument visit: <http://nj.gov/dcf/about/divisions/opma/QualitativeReviewProtocolandInstrument.pdf>

QR Quick Facts: As of December 2015

- Qualitative Reviews are conducted in sixteen (16) out of New Jersey's twenty-one (21) counties annually.
- Since 2011, DCF has held over 76 QRs and has conducted over 8,123 interviews with key people in the lives of children and their families.
- DCF has 152 trained QR reviewers.



Starting from CY16, Qualitative Reviews are conducted out of New Jersey's twenty-one counties over a two year period. The result of the 2016-2017 cycle will be available in 2018.