

Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare 2010 Semi-Annual Performance Report

Wisconsin Department of Children and Families
Office of Performance and Quality Assurance
Bureau of Performance Management
Performance Review and Evaluation Section

Please note this information is embargoed from public release or publication until 2:00 p.m. on September 17, 2010.

The Wisconsin Department of Children and Families (DCF) and the Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare (BMCW) work with families to ensure the safety, permanence, and well-being of children. To achieve this goal, DCF manages BMCW performance through a variety of data-based approaches and information based decision making. These approaches identify process and outcome measures related to safety, permanence and well-being and use data to understand whether progress is being made. The measures used to monitor and report BMCW performance are wide-ranging and include provisions and process indicators in the Jeanine B. Settlement Agreement.

As part of its commitment to performance management, DCF created the Performance Review and Evaluation Section (PRES) within the Bureau of Performance Management as part of the Office of Performance and Quality Assurance in the spring of 2009. This Section was created to ensure objectivity and neutrality allowing BMCW to focus on improving services and outcomes for children and families. It produces regular and ad hoc performance reports for the Department, the Division of Safety and Permanence (DSP) and BMCW's executive teams in order to inform management decisions. Since PRES is independent from DSP and BMCW which represent program interests, it is best positioned to objectively analyze and report program performance without bias.

The qualitative and quantitative information collected and reported is used to understand BMCW performance on key measures, which are the focus of KidStat, a Department-wide approach to performance management. KidStat is a local adaptation of "PerformanceStat" programs that are successfully used across the country. KidStat began in July 2009 establishing a monthly forum for DCF Executive Management to engage each Division in a monthly discussion focused on improving outcomes and areas of persistent challenge. Nine BMCW KidStat measures are included in this report.

Lastly, this semi-annual BMCW Performance Report includes data that describe the families served by BMCW in the first six months of 2010.

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SECTION I. FAMILIES AND CHILDREN IN OUT-OF-HOME CARE

This section provides a snapshot of the families and children served by BMCW during the first six months of 2010. There is a headline that summarizes the content of the table below it along with brief analytical bullets for further consideration.

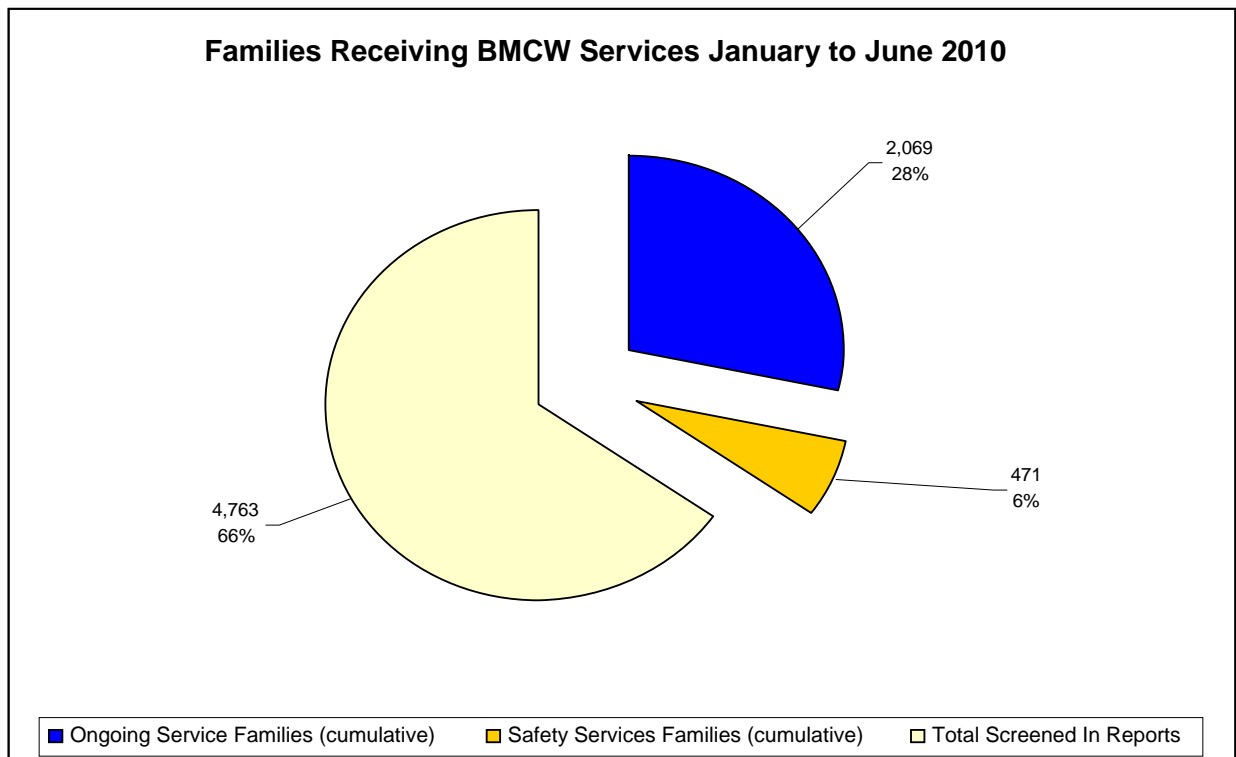
In the first six months of 2010, BMCW Access unit received 15,990 calls. Of these:

1. 7,759 (49 percent) were information and referral requests, and
2. 8,231 (51 percent) were an allegation of child maltreatment or a child welfare request.

Chart 1.0 displays a total of 7,303 families received a service in the first six months of 2010.

1. 4,763 (58 percent) of 8,231 calls regarding an allegation of maltreatment or child welfare request, were screened in for investigation or services:
 - a. 4,170 (88 percent) of the 4,763 were protective service reports¹
 - b. 504 (11 percent) of the 4,763 were service intake reports
 - c. 89 (2 percent) of the 4,763 were reports for independent investigations
2. 2,069 families were involved with the Ongoing program.²
3. 471 families received services in the Safety Services program.

Chart 1.0: Cumulative distribution of BMCW families receiving services January to June 2010



¹These data are preliminary and the 4,763 reports screened in for investigation do not equal 4,763 unique families since families may be involved in multiple, but different, investigations throughout any period.

² The Ongoing and Safety Service family numbers are unduplicated service episodes, which mean if a family exited either program, then entered at a later date, the family would be counted twice because they represent separate service episodes.

The number of children in out-of-home care continues to decline.

As Charts 1.1 and 1.2 display

1. There was a 2.2 percent decrease in the number of children in out-of-home care as of June 30, 2010 compared to December 31, 2009.
2. While six more children exited care than entered care during the first six months of 2010, the pace of children exiting care is much slower than in 2009.

Chart 1.1: Families and Children in Out-of-Home Care as of June 30, 2010 and December 31 of each year

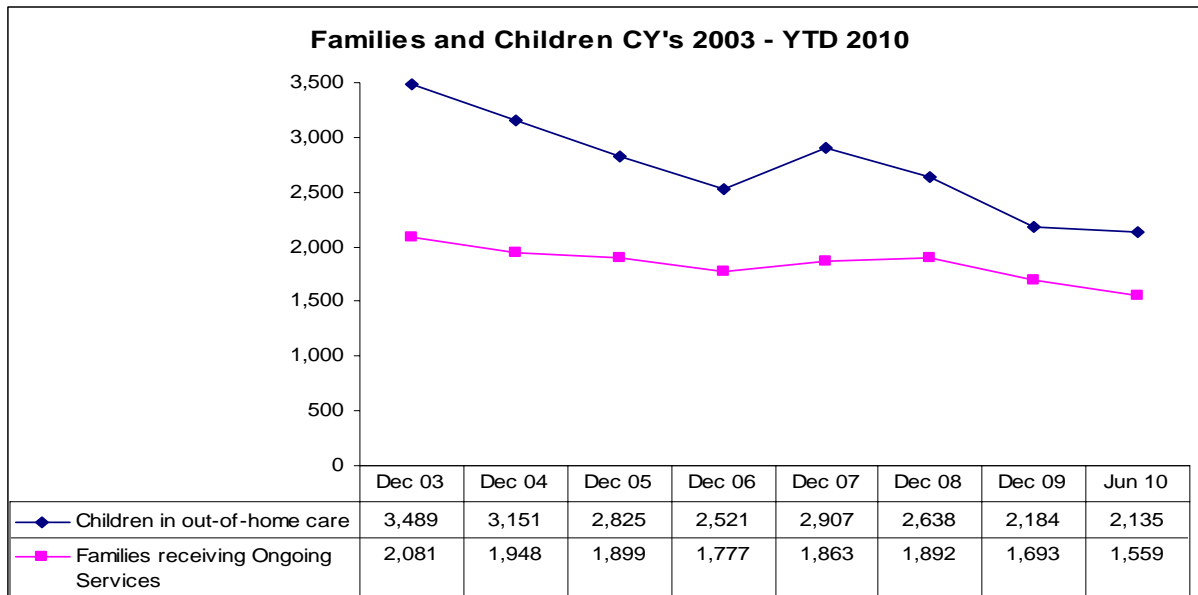
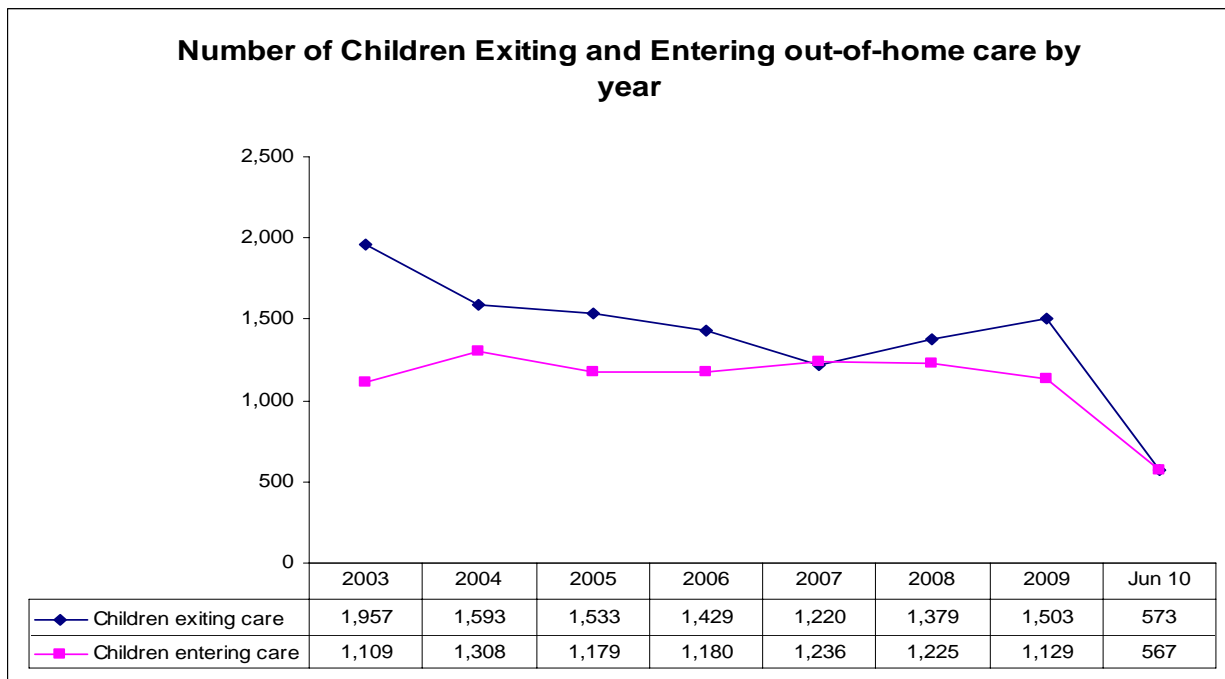


Chart 1.2: Number of Children Exiting (select exit types) and Entering Out-of-Home Care by year



Ages of children entering care remain consistent across years.

As Table 1.3 displays

1. The majority of children entering care are consistently four years old and younger (46 percent).
2. The percentage of children entering care 16 years or older increased from 9 percent in 2009 to 12 percent in the first six months of 2010.

Table 1.3: Age of children at time of removal CY 2003 through YTD 2010

Age at removal (years)	CY 2003	CY 2004	CY 2005	CY 2006	CY 2007	CY 2008	CY 2009	YTD 2010
Birth to 4	44%	40%	41%	53%	47%	45%	46%	46% (260)
5 to 11	32%	32%	29%	26%	30%	29%	26%	24% (133)
12 to 15	17%	20%	20%	10%	15%	18%	19%	18% (104)
16+	7%	8%	10%	11%	8%	8%	9%	12% (70)
Total number of children removed	1,109	1,308	1,179	1,180	1,236	1,225	1,129	567

Fewer children are staying in out-of-home care longer than 24 months

As Table 1.4 displays

1. The number of children in care 24 or more months continues to decrease and is at its lowest level since January 2003 with 755 children.
2. For the first time since 2006, both the absolute number and relative percentage of children in care 24 or more months have declined.

Table 1.4: Children in care 24 or more months

	Jan 03	Dec 03	Dec 04	Dec 05	Dec 06	Dec 07	Dec 08	Dec 09	Jun 10
Children LOS greater than 24 months	2,810	1,967	1,534	1,073	948	977	969	875	755
Number of children in out-of-home care	4,472	3,489	3,151	2,825	2,521	2,907	2,638	2,184	2,135
Percent of children in out-of-home care 24 months or more	62.8%	56.4%	48.7%	38.0%	37.6%	33.6%	36.7%	40.1%	35.4%

SECTION II. KIDSTAT PERFORMANCE MEASURES

KidStat is a Department-wide performance management approach that uses data to improve performance across key outcomes. The design is based on “PerformanceStat” approaches adopted in other public service delivery settings across the country. KidStat furthers the Department’s mission of promoting the economic and social well-being of Wisconsin children and families. The Secretary’s Office leads the effort by engaging Division leadership in monthly discussions about policy and program achievements using available data. Through KidStat the Department measures, understands and improves performance in each Division over time. KidStat summary performance reports are available on the Department’s website.

DCF Management identified key process and outcome measures for BMCW and began concentrating on them in July 2009. Through KidStat, DCF Management focuses relentlessly on ten critical measures, including the three remaining enforceable provisions in the Settlement Agreement. During the monthly KidStat meetings, leadership across the Department, the Division and BMCW hold each other accountable by following up until problems are resolved and results are improved. KidStat is not simply another layer of reporting but it is the way the Department manages its work so that BMCW achieves results.

Improvements and results are noted in several KidStat measures as presented in this Report. These include:

1. a 43 percent increase in the percentage of initial contacts that are made in a timely manner to its highest level since KidStat began: 28 percent June 2009 up to 71 percent June 2010.
2. a 13 percent reduction in the percentage of Protective Services reports screened in during an open assignment to Initial Assessment: 29 percent in June 2009, down to 16 percent in June 2010.
3. a 20 percent improvement of children receiving timely initial health screens, which peaked at 91 percent in March 2010.

The following pages show BMCW performance for nine measures tracked in KidStat.



Initial Contact Timeliness

The objective of this measure is to increase the timeliness of making initial contact. This measure is important because BMCW is expected to assure the timely safety assessment of an alleged child victim.

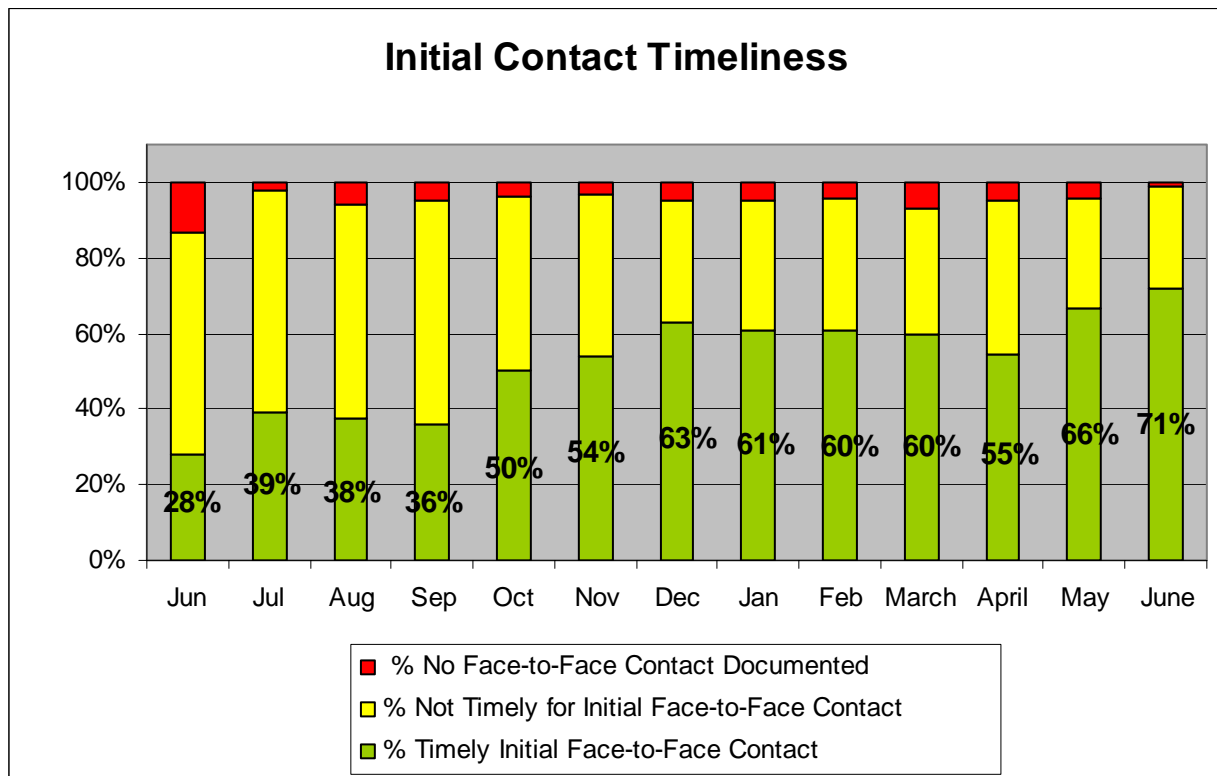
BMCW is working to complete 100 percent of initial contacts in a timely manner (green bar). The definition of “timely” for this measure is “relative to response time.”

Since June 2009, performance has steadily improved reaching 71 percent in June 2010.

Strategies that BMCW is implementing to support the continued increase in making initial contacts in a timely manner include:

1. posting scorecard data for each worker, team and region;
2. holding individual workers accountable via performance evaluations and consideration of disciplinary measures;
3. developing and implementing a case tracking tool for supervisors; and
4. assigning cases to staff using a different methodology.

Chart 2.0 Timeliness of Initial Contact Relative to Response Time



Initial Assessment Timeliness

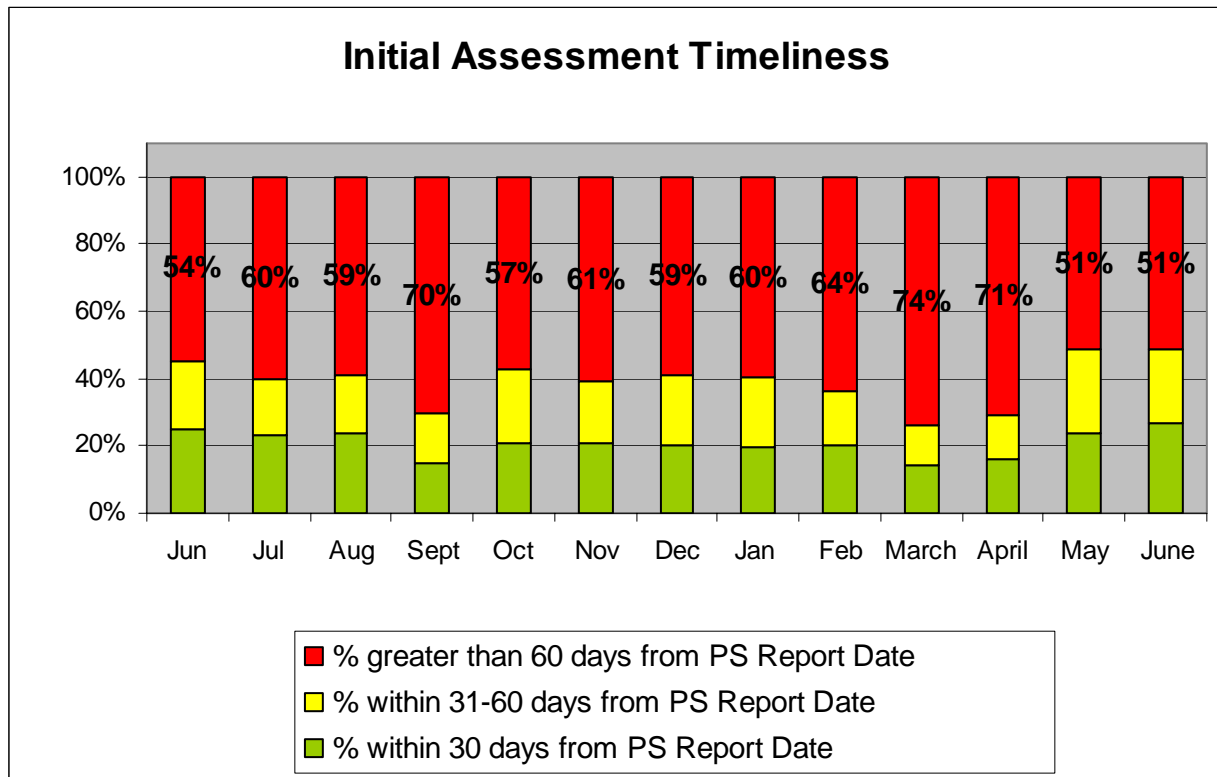
The objective of this measure is to increase the number of initial assessments or investigations that are completed in a timely manner. This measure is important because BMCW is expected to conduct a comprehensive assessment to assess, analyze and, when necessary, control for threats to child safety, determine whether maltreatment occurred, determine the need for Child Protective Services ongoing services, and assist families in identifying community resources.

BMCW is working to complete 100 percent of all initial investigations within 60 days (green and yellow bars), which is the definition of “timely” for this measure. Beginning in May, performance improved to a high of 49 percent of all initial investigations completed within 60 days.

Strategies that BMCW is implementing to improve the proportion of assessments completed within 60 days include:

1. posting weekly scorecard data for each worker, team and region;
2. requiring each supervisor to submit monthly plans for each worker’s backlog;
3. implementing a 45-day supervisory conference to identify any barriers to case closure; and
4. holding individual workers accountable via performance evaluations and consideration of disciplinary measures.

Chart 2.1: Time to Complete Initial Assessments



Re-Reports

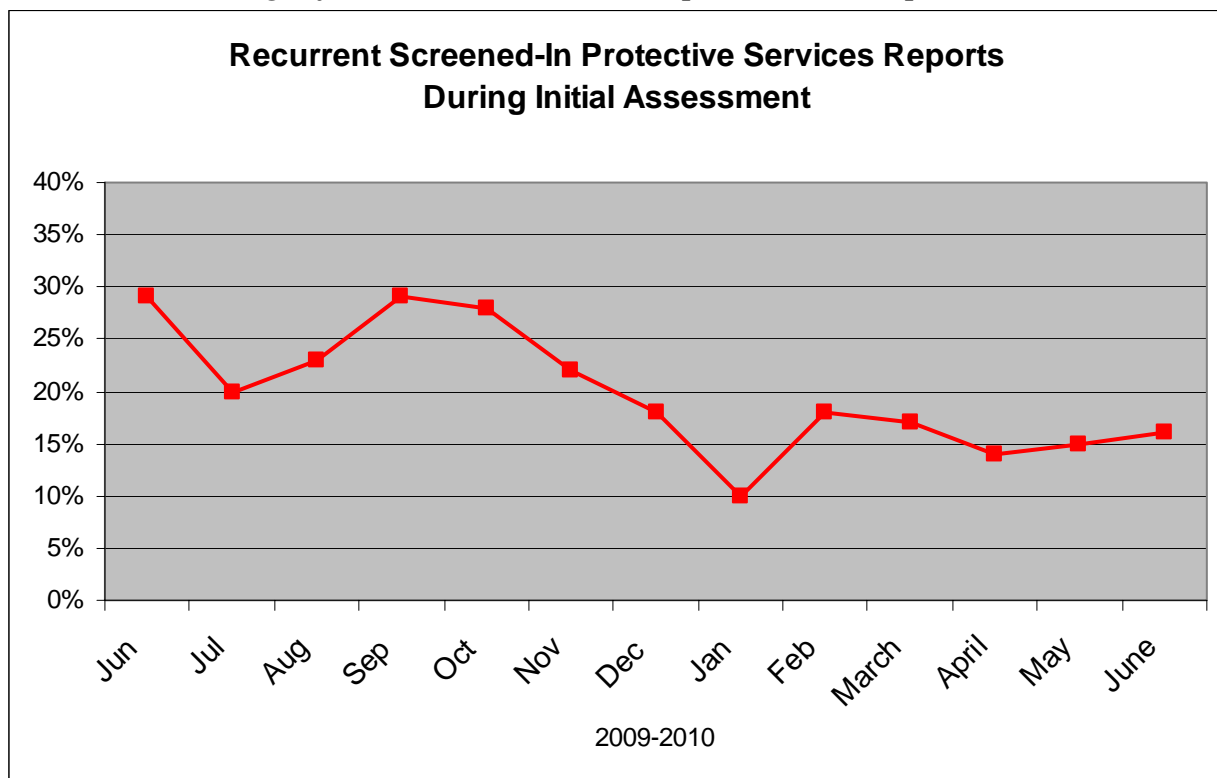
The objective of this measure is to reduce the number of Protective Service reports screened in during an open assignment to Initial Assessment. This measure is important because reports of new maltreatment allegations made on cases with open initial assessments threaten child safety.

BMCW Initial Assessment Workers engage the family and initiate plans to protect and ensure the safety of children. Re-reports (new maltreatment allegations) may be an indicator that the current safety assessment and interventions may not have been successful in preventing subsequent maltreatment. Performance steadily improved through January 2010 where the percentage of re-reports was at its lowest level, 10 percent. This low percentage of re-reports has not been sustained since January 2010 and performance has ranged between 14 and 19 percent.

Strategies that BMCW is implementing to support the continued decrease in the number of re-reports include:

1. strengthening the emphasis on information collection and safety planning;
2. requiring timely case closure; and
3. improving quality of assessments via training and consultation.

Chart 2.2: Percentage of New Protective Service Reports on Cases Open in Initial Assessment



Out-of-Home Care Maltreatment

The objective of this measure is to reduce the number of children who are victims of abuse while in BMCW out-of-home care. This measure is important because it reports BMCW's ability to protect the safety and well-being of children while in out-of-home care, which is a fundamental measure of effectiveness for any child welfare system.

BMCW is working to prevent any child from being a victim of abuse while in out-of-home care.

Strategies that BMCW is implementing to reduce the number of children who are victims of abuse while in out-of-home care include:

1. requiring ongoing case managers to participate in advanced safety training;
2. requiring twice monthly visits to children three years old and under and medically fragile children;
3. adding one full-time equivalent staff person to consult with Treatment Foster Homes and Group Homes to identify potential areas of concern and follow-up on substantiated maltreatment; and
4. adding nurses to ongoing case management services for children three years old and under and medically fragile children.

Table 2.3: Maltreatment in out-of-home care

Including COK Provider as Maltreater		NOT including COK Providers as Maltreators			
YTD 2010	CY 2009	Settlement Standard	CY 2009	CY 2008	CY 2007
0.22%	0.53%	< = .60%	0.40%	0.39%	0.93%

All Victims of Maltreatment While in Out-Of-Home Care YTD 2010	
January to March	4 Children
April to June	2 Children
YTD 2010 Total	6 children

Subsequent Referrals

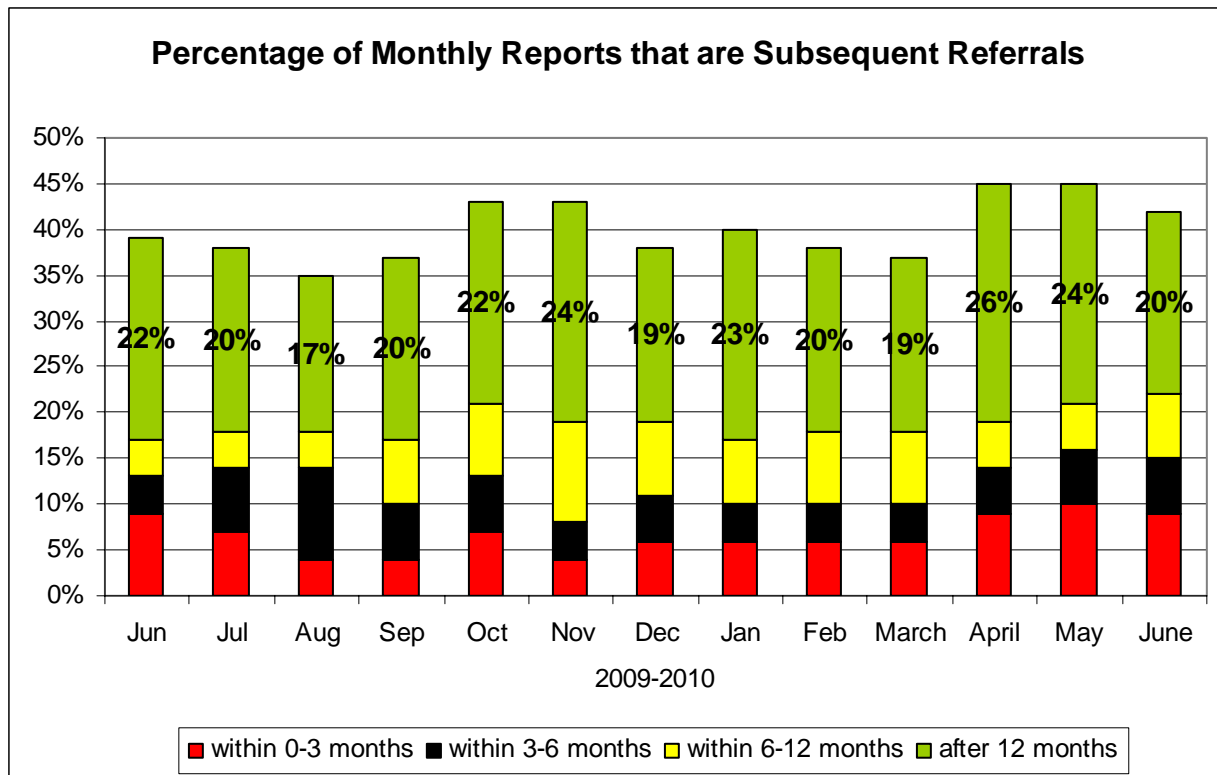
This measure monitors subsequent referrals alleging threats to child safety after completion of the assessment process to determine whether maltreatment occurred. The objective of this measure is to reduce the number of subsequent referrals, particularly referrals occurring within 0-3 and 3-6 months (red and black bars).

BMCW is working to ensure that initial assessments are done effectively so that children are not left in unsafe circumstances, and the number of subsequent referrals is a measure of that. Performance continues to vary month to month in the first six months of 2010. The percentage of subsequent referrals within six months increased in May and June to 16 percent and 15 percent respectively, which is the highest in the period between June 2009 and June 2010.

Strategies that BMCW is implementing to decrease the overall number of subsequent referrals and especially those within six months after an assessment include:

1. consulting with ACTION for Child Protection and the National Resource Center to assist in training for Access and Initial Assessment supervisors;
2. improving consistency in screening decisions via consultation and training; and
3. improving assessment quality via consultation and training.

Chart 2.4: Subsequent Protective Service Referrals



Post-Safety Services Maltreatment

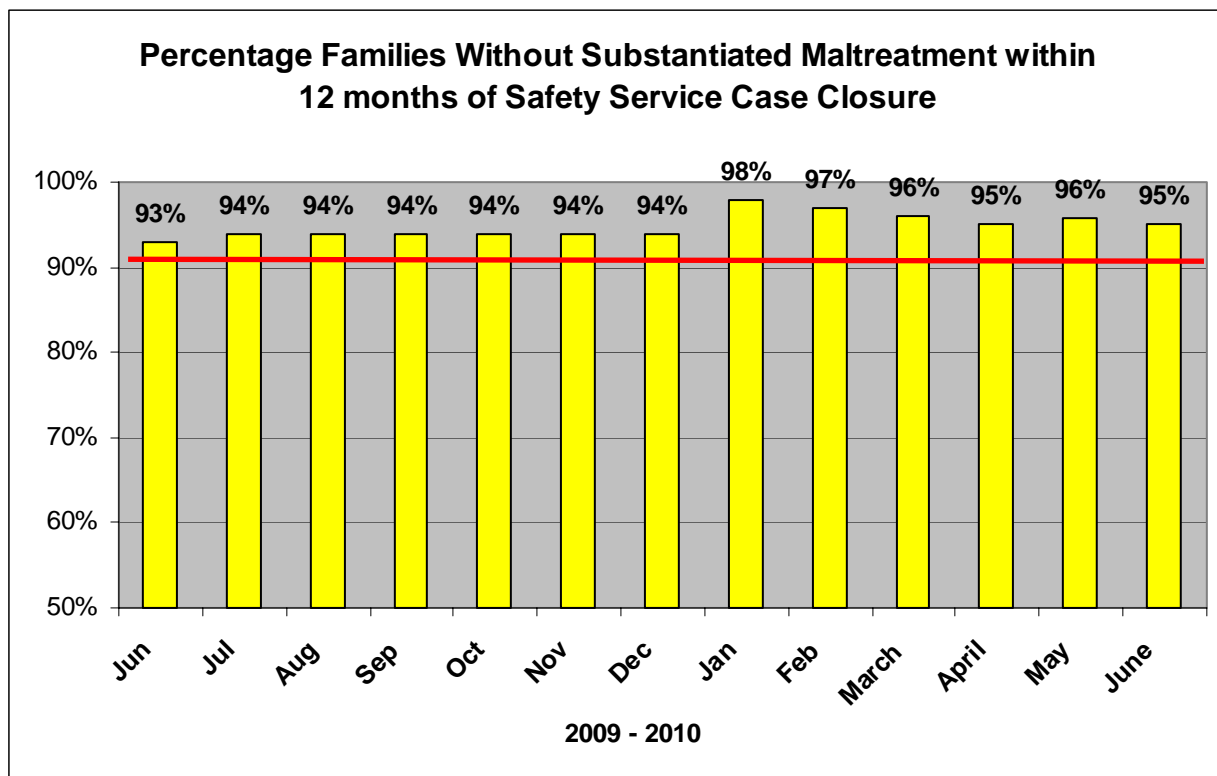
The objective of this measure is to increase the number of children who are not the victim of substantiated maltreatment within 12 months of Safety Service case closure. This measure is important because BMCW is expected to minimize the likelihood that children will be maltreated after Safety Service case closure.

BMCW is working to prevent any child from ever being a victim of abuse after Safety Services case closure. The target for this measure is that 91 percent or more of children will not experience maltreatment by a primary caretaker within 12 months of case closure. Performance averaged 96 percent for the past six months, and 95 percent over the past 12 months.

Strategies that BMCW is implementing to increase the number of children who do not experience maltreatment within 12 months of Safety Service case closure include:

1. holding agencies contractually accountable to this measure and as a result, the agencies are developing strategies to ensure successful case closure;
2. lengthening the amount of time a case may be kept open in Safety Services; and
3. piloting an informal disposition process for certain types of cases open in Safety Services.

Chart 2.5: Post-Safety Services Maltreatment



Timely Health Screens

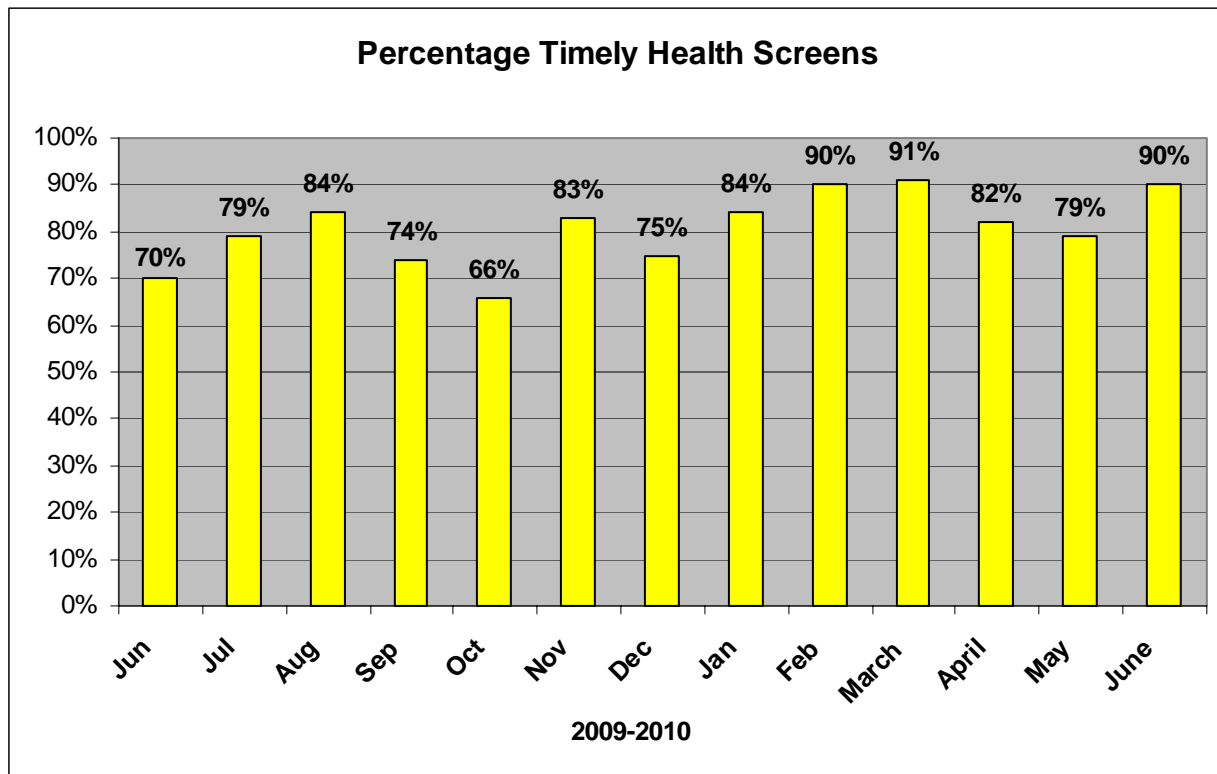
The objective of this measure is to increase the number of health screens that are completed within five business days. This measure is important because BMCW is expected to ensure all children entering out-of-home care have a health screen completed in order to determine their health needs.

BMCW is working to ensure that 100 percent of all children have completed a health screen within five business days of removal from their home. Performance dipped to 66 percent in October 2009 and peaked at 91 percent in March 2010. Average performance increased to 86 percent for January through June 2010, compared to 77 percent for June through December 2009.

Strategies that BMCW is implementing to increase the number of children with a completed health screen include:

1. posting scorecard data per worker, team and region on a weekly basis;
2. running bi-weekly eWiSACWIS reports to identify children requiring a health screen early;
3. BMCW staff following up with responsible workers regarding all missed appointments; and
4. working with the Child Protection Center to manage timeliness of appointments.

Chart 2.6: Timely Health Screens



Reunifications

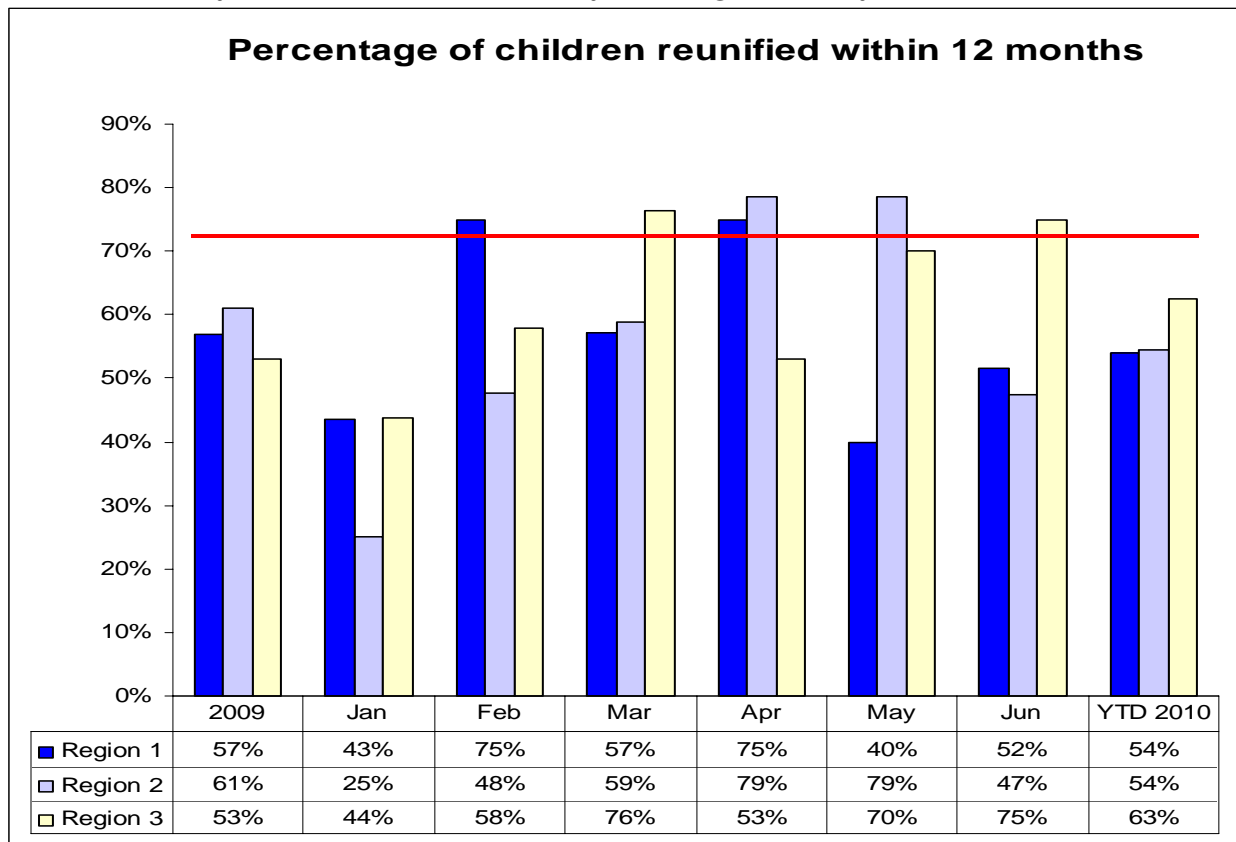
This is one of the three remaining enforceable provisions in the Settlement Agreement. The objective of this measure is to increase the number of children who are reunified with their families within 12 months. This measure is important because BMCW is expected to strengthen family safety and connections, provide permanent living situations and limit the time children reside in an out-of-home care placement.

BMCW is working to ensure that at least 71 percent of all children reunified are reunified within 12 or fewer months of entering care.

Strategies that BMCW is implementing to increase the number of children who achieve timely permanence through reunification include:

1. introducing the permanency consultation protocol at 5, 10 and 15 months of care;
2. redesigning the teaming model to promote early family engagement;
3. moving to a therapeutic team-based visitation model with most visitation services delivered by the ongoing agency team; and
4. establishing a community workgroup to develop father engagement strategies.

Chart 2.7: Reunification Within 12 Months of Entering an Out-Of-Home Care Placement



Placement Stability

This is one of the three remaining enforceable provisions in the Settlement Agreement. The objective of this measure is to minimize the number of placements children experience while in out-of-home care. Minimizing placement disruptions provides a stable environment where children can grow, learn and live while placed outside of their family home.

BMCW is working to ensure that at least 90 percent of children experience three or fewer placements while residing in out-of-home care.

Strategies that BMCW is implementing to minimize the number of placements children experience while in out-of-home care include:

1. introducing the Caregiver Support Plan which brings together the licensing worker and ongoing case manager with the foster family at placement and at regular intervals;
2. implementing the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths tool (CANS) to assess for mental health needs and placement disruption potential; and
3. redesigning the process for matching at higher levels of care.

Chart 2.8: Placement Stability – Percentage of Children with Three or Fewer Placements

