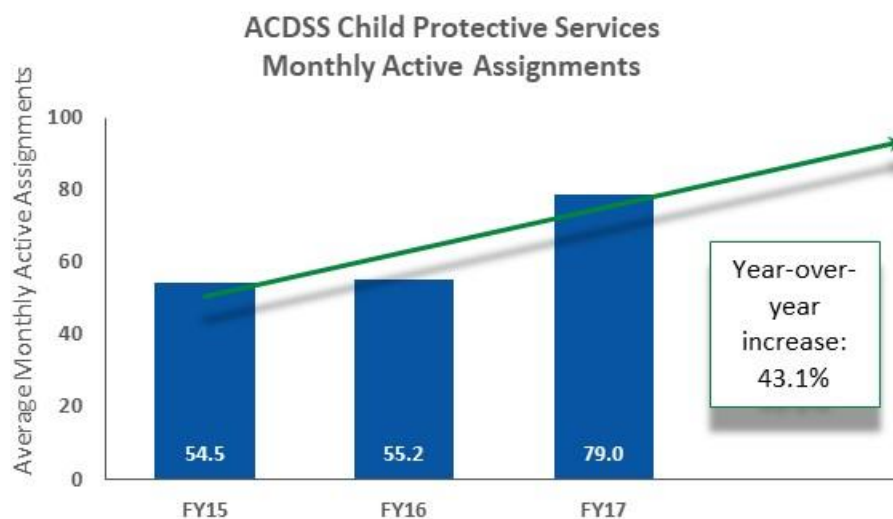


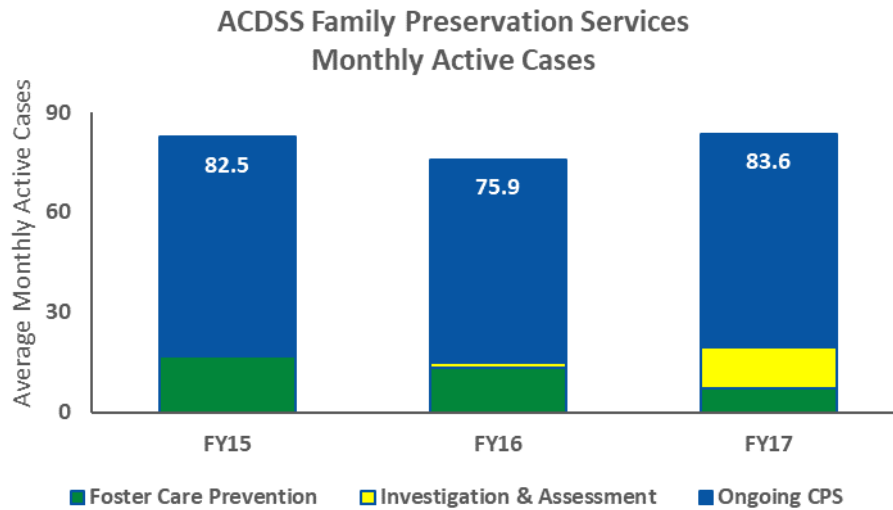
ATTACHMENT A

Child Protective Services (CPS) Investigations and Family Preservation Services – Workload Considerations

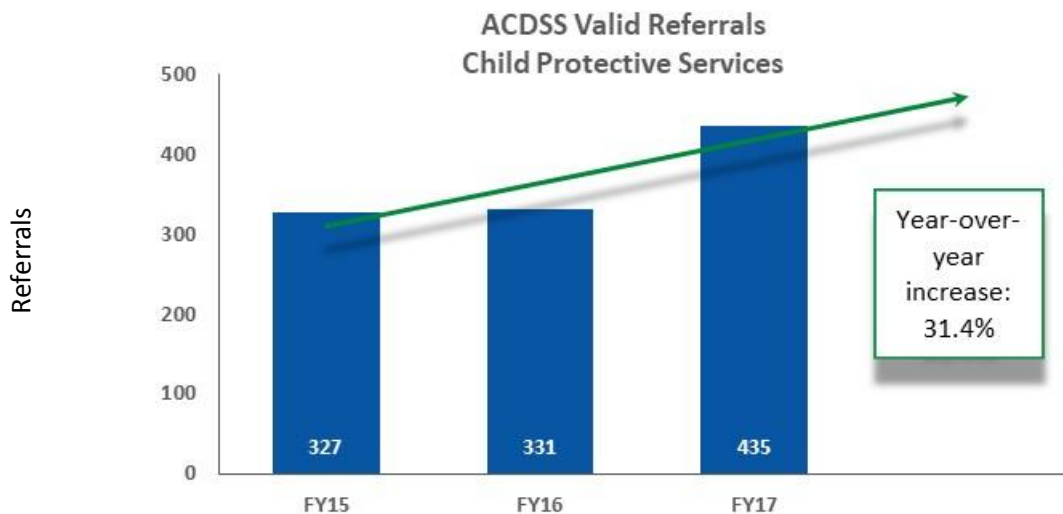
Local departments of social services are responsible for receiving reports of child abuse and neglect, conducting investigations to determine the validity of CPS reports, and providing services that enhance child safety and prevent further abuse and neglect to families and children. Additionally, Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) policy mandates that local departments provide ongoing child protective services for families in which children are determined to be at High or Very High Risk of future abuse and/or neglect. The Code of Virginia §§ 63.2-1505 and 63.2-1506 also provides statutory authority to provide or arrange for services to families at the conclusion of a family assessment or investigation. Child Protective Services carries significant liability for the department, as the most severe risk is a child fatality due to abuse and/or neglect. Inadequate staffing jeopardizes child safety and diminishes the quality of ACDSS' Child Protective Services. Child Welfare cases that receive national attention because of negative outcomes often reflect understaffing, overwhelming caseloads, and inadequate supervision. One need only read the much-publicized tragedy involving children served by the Rockbridge County, VA, Department of Social Services to realize the high stakes associated with child welfare. In this instance, the failure of staff to provide Child Protective Services as mandated by policy resulted in a Grand Jury proceeding.

The two charts below reflect the average number of referrals actively worked by CPS each month and the number of cases and family assessments actively worked by Family Preservation Services (Albemarle County Department of Social Services CPS Ongoing Unit) each month. The charts below demonstrate the increase in both new CPS referrals and ongoing FPS cases for Albemarle County Department of Social Services (ACDSS).





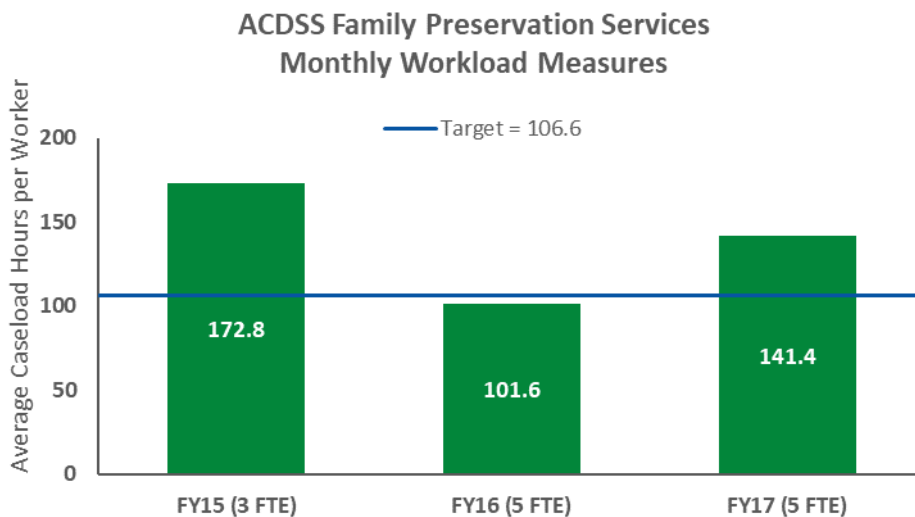
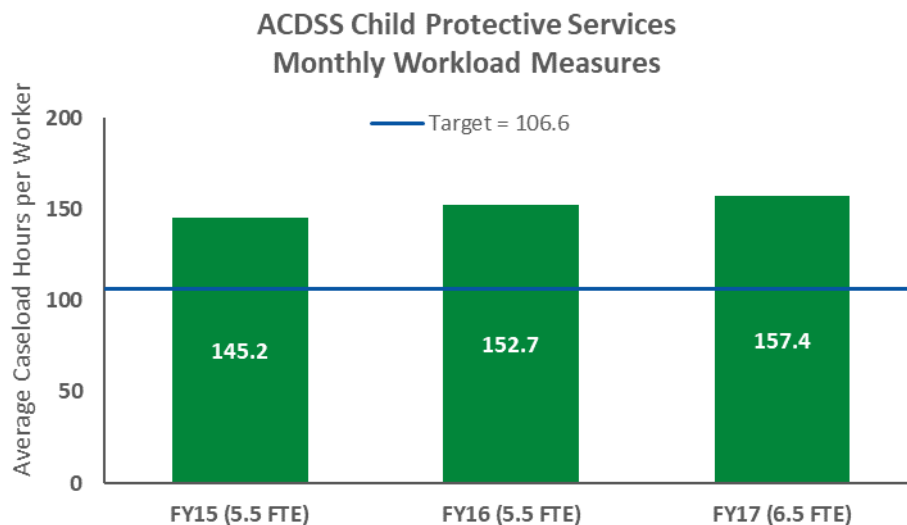
As of June 16, 2017, ACDSS has received 435 valid CPS referrals in FY2017. This is a 31.4% increase over the 331 valid CPS referrals received by ACDSS in FY2016.



The 2008 Hornby Zeller Workload Measures Study provides another method of measuring of the increasing volume of work in CPS and FPS. The study “provided standards, expressed in terms of the number of hours required to handle a case, for cases in all programs, and then applied those standards to the existing caseloads to estimate the need for additional staff.”¹ The charts below reflect the workload measures in CPS and FPS over the past three fiscal years. The targeted workload measure total case weight for each caseworker on each team is 106.6 hours. It is important to understand that cases vary in weight depending on the case type. Workers may carry a variety of case types, each having its own weight. As of May 31, 2017, the

¹ Hornby Zeller Associates, Inc., *Workload Measures Study Final Report*, 2008.

average workload per CPS worker was 157.4 hours, reflecting a shortfall of 2.3 positions, and the average workload per FPS worker was 141.4 hours, reflecting a shortfall of 1.6 positions.



Program Mandates

Since the Hornby Zeller Workload Measures study was completed in 2008 and resulted in the current case weights, there have been significant changes in the policies and procedures that guide the work in CPS and FPS. An increasing number of mandates now required of CPS and FPS staff are not accounted for in these numbers.

New ongoing policy requires workers to complete updated Risk Assessments and Service Plans every 90 days, Child Adolescent Needs and Strengths assessments every 90 days, Reasonable Candidacy Assessments every 6 months, and funding renewal requests for on-going services every 3 to 6 months. This year the state imposed a new mandate, which requires every worker

complete each training module within his or her program area regardless of the worker's existing expertise and knowledge. The state also mandates that every worker complete an additional 24 hours of continuing education each year.

These State policies and mandates increase the time needed for each CPS and FPS to handle each case and for each worker to meet State training requirements.

As of 2010, VDSS requires the ACDSS to conduct Family Partnership Meetings (FPMs) at certain critical decision points in the life of a case, such as at the end of a Family Assessment or Investigation, which is determined High or Very High Risk. FPMs are one illustration of the increased demand on a CPS and FPS worker's time. Between July 1, 2016 and June 16, 2017 ACDSS has conducted 145 Family Partnership Meetings. Of these 145, 72 were FPMs involving either or both CPS and FPS. These meetings lasted an average of 1.78 hours with an average of 3.7 staff participating in the meeting. When preparation time is added to the meeting time, these 72 family meetings represent 774 staff hours were expended in FPMs during 2016-17.

July 1, 2016 to June 16, 2017

Family Partnership Meetings (FPMs)	72 meetings
Average Meeting Length (hours)	1.78
Average # of staff participating in each meeting	3.7 staff
Average Preparation Time for each meeting (hours)	4.15
Total # of Staff hours spent on FPMs	774 staff hours

New Reports of Child Abuse and Neglect

State policy mandates require CPS workers to respond to all new reports of child abuse and neglect within designated response priorities in 90% of cases. At ACDSS, our CPS unit is responsible for handling new reports; however, FPS staff has had to take on CPS assessments when the workload demanded it. In Virginia, the response priorities include R1s, which require a response within 24 hours, R2s within 2 days, and R3s within 5 days. ACDSS' CPS Unit has struggled to meet this mandate. During October-December of 2016 (CY16 Q4), the CPS Unit responded to 84.3% of new referrals within the recommended timeframe. With the hiring of temporary help, as of May 11, 2017, we are meeting response priorities 88% of the time. Effective July 1, 2017, a revision to state CPS policy will require an R1 (24 hour) response to all new reports of child abuse/neglect of a child under two years of age. This change will increase the demand on CPS staff for urgent responses as well as for on-call staff who will need to make in-person responses outside of business hours more often than ever before.

State Mandated Response Times to New Reports of Child Abuse/Neglect

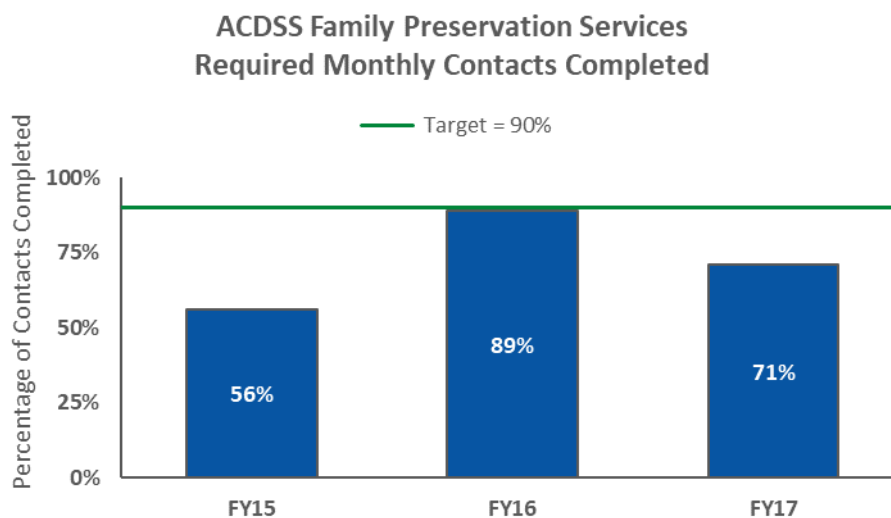
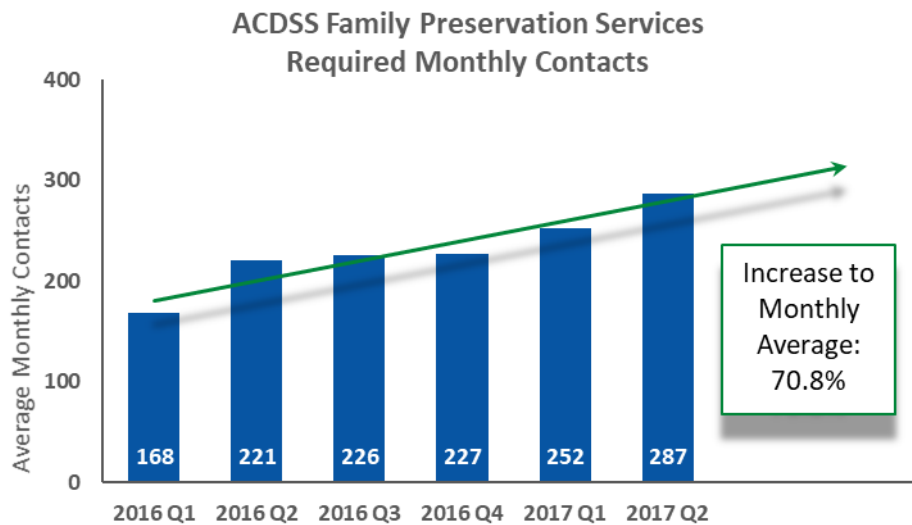
July 1, 2016 thru June 16, 2017

Response Priority	Maximum Required Response Time After Receipt of Report	# of Cases
R1 *	24 hours	57
R2	2 days	26
R3	5 days	326

** Effective July 1, 2017 this load will increase due to State mandate to respond to all new reports of child abuse/neglect of children under 2 years.*

Ongoing Child Protective Services Cases

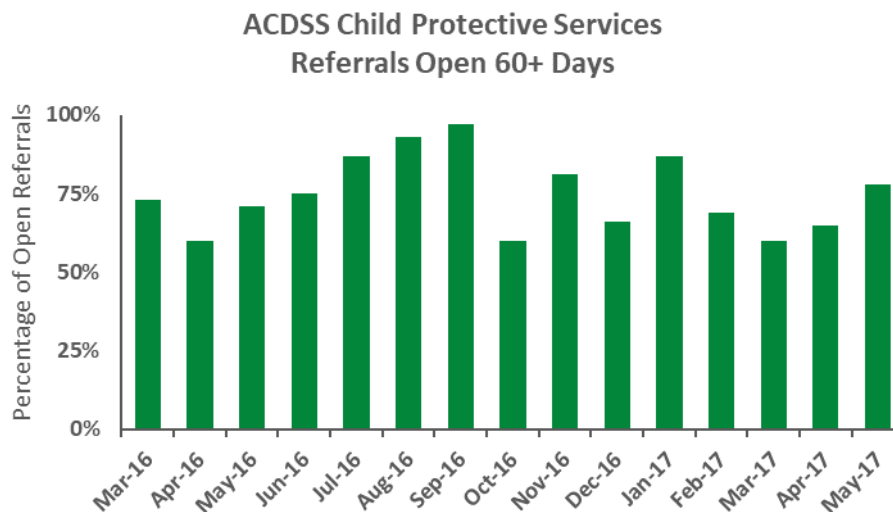
Federal mandates require ongoing CPS caseworkers to make a monthly face-to-face visit with all identified clients in each open case. It is the VDSS expectation that these meetings occur at least 90% of the time. ACDSS has struggled to meet this required performance standard as caseload volume/number of required contacts has increased. In 2016, the FPS unit was required to visit an average of 210 clients per month in CPS ongoing cases. As of June 2017, the average number of required client monthly visits for the FPS unit is 287 a month. From 2016 Q1 to 2017 Q2, there was a 70.8% increase in the number of clients requiring a face-to-face monthly contact. When the monthly contact standard is not met, child safety is compromised and liability to the agency increases. In many respects, the cost to a community when a child is not safe is incalculable.



The Code of Virginia requires CPS to complete and document:

- Family Assessments within 45 calendar days of receipt of the complaint or report with written justification, this can be extended for 15 calendar days.
- Investigations within 45 days, this can be extended for 15 calendar days or, in cases under joint CPS and Law Enforcement investigation, an additional 45-day extension.

While the occasional joint investigation may extend beyond the 90-day timeframe, policy mandates, state and federal reviews, in part, measure the success of CPS units on timely case closures. Due to heavy caseloads, understaffing, and increased efforts to ensure child safety and prevent abuse/neglect and foster care, ACDSS' CPS unit has consistently underperformed in timely case closures. On average, between 60-90% of all CPS investigations/assessments since March of 2016 have been extended beyond 60 days. As of June 20, 2017, 75 of 189 active cases have been open for more than 90 days with 63 going beyond 100 days and 28 beyond 200 days. An important aspect of effective Child Protective Services is a worker's ability to address the safety concerns and assess risk and service needs within policy-driven timelines. When worker's and supervisors are unable to respond to and conclude CPS cases in the time designated, these cases create a backlog for staff and which reflects poorly on the locality when the local Department is under state or federal review. The state is implementing strict oversight and efforts to ensure compliance.

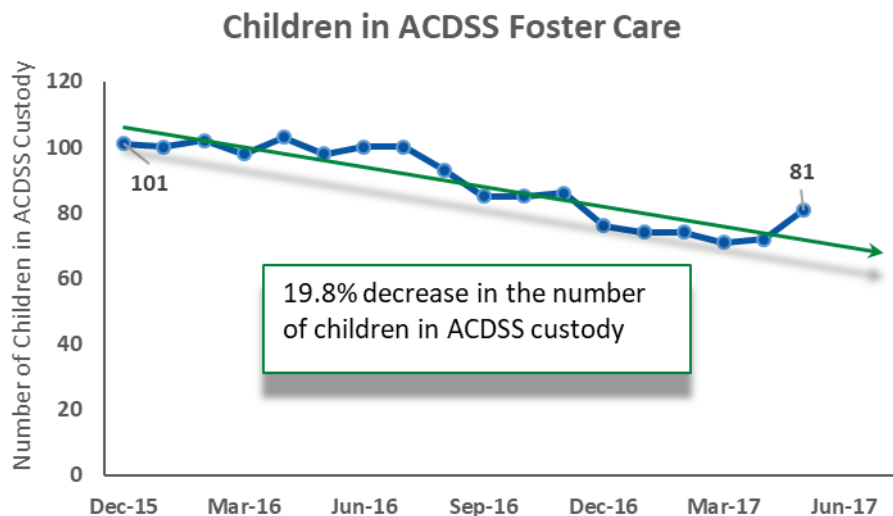


Foster Care Prevention

Preventing children from entering foster care is a critical factor in containing ACDSS' Children's Services Act (CSA) funding. Local costs rise as the number of children in foster care increases. While CSA funding is also utilized to provide services through foster care prevention, the total cost to the county is lower given that these services are provided at the lower local match rate. Without adequate staffing to complete thorough CPS investigations/assessments and to provide comprehensive case management services through Ongoing CPS, there is a greater likelihood of having to petition the court for removal or conduct emergency removals to keep children safe. Furthermore, the more often ACDSS staff can engage with families, as opposed to simply respond in crisis situations, the less likely the agency will have to bring children into foster care.

In 2016, ACDSS developed a protocol for emergency family finding when a child is at imminent risk of foster care. This protocol involves an Emergency Family Finding Response Team, EFFRT, which consists of 5-6 senior workers who make extensive efforts to locate family and natural supports who are willing to serve as placements for the children. These seniors support their co-workers who are handling the CPS investigation/assessment or ongoing case. This endeavor involves utilizing national search engines, interviewing family, making cold calls, completing criminal background checks and CPS background checks, and conducting home visits. While labor-intensive, this has been a highly successful initiative. While the one-year Family Finder position will definitely assist ACDSS in further refining this initiative, one of the main things staff has learned from this initiative is that one person cannot do all of it. To be effective it take a team effort and when there are not adequate resources to devote to front end family finding then the required tasks do not get done. While there has been some success with existing staff, their availability cannot always be relied upon to get the work done. Court, training, and scheduled team meetings that cannot be moved have at times limited staff availability and without adequate resources the family finding cannot be accomplished, children will come into care and CSA costs will increase. Having a larger staff pool to draw from will help offset that that risk.

EFFRT 2016	EFFRT 2017
• We served 30 kids • 17 or 56% stayed out of foster care • Of the ones who entered foster care, 4 or 30% were placed with family as kinship foster parents • At the outset we knew of 65 family members • As a result of EFFRT, we identified 133 additional family members for a total of 198 family members	• 42 kids served so far • 30 or 71% stayed out of foster care • Of the 12 who came in care, 1 had been in a diversionary placement that broke down at disposition, 1 is in a kinship home, and 4 will likely be transferred to Fauquier DSS FC kinship homes identified by ACDSS • At the outset we knew of 63 family members • As a result of EFFRT, we identified an additional 156 family members for a total of 219



Impact if not Funded

The primary impact of not funding this initiative is the risk for negative outcomes for children whose safety and welfare is the responsibility of the Department and the County. Continued heavy workloads and overload of existing child welfare caseworkers, supervisors and support staff with insufficient time to provide needed case management and oversight increases that risk. This continued overload also leads to worker burnout and staff turnover. In order to manage during the periods of vacancy or high workload demands, ACDSS has had to hire temporary staff. In FY17, the department spent \$29,276 for temporary workers. This is less than ideal as these staff are limited as to the duties they can assume. In FY17 ACDSS paid \$23,421 in overtime costs in CPS and \$11,545 in FPS. Given the difficulty of the job, having to work overtime causes significant emotional stress in addition to the added financial burden to the department. Finally, turnover creates challenges when new workers have to be trained. Given the new state training mandates, the department is not able to assign cases to new workers until they complete certain mandated training. While the unit “waits” for the training to be completed, existing staff have to carry the workload.

Given ACDSS’ challenges with vacancies and insufficient numbers of workers, ACDSS staff is relentlessly providing crisis intervention; conducting home and school visits; participating in multidisciplinary teams with families and community partners; completing funding paperwork; completing assessment tools; referring clients to services; responding to emails and phone calls; preparing for and attending court hearings; convening and participating in team meetings; and, fulfilling state mandated training requirements. Despite their best efforts, CPS and FPS workers are not completing the required tasks in a timely fashion as described above. Not only does this compromise child safety, it also has a significant fiscal impact if more children are required to enter foster care.