**The Georgia**

**Division of Family and Children Services**



STRATEGIC PLAN

STATE FISCAL YEAR 2020-2024

**Director’s Letter**

The Georgia Division of Family and Children Services is committed to the safety, self-sufficiency and well-being of Georgia’s most vulnerable citizens. To implement this commitment, we have created a strategic plan to hold us accountable in achieving best outcomes that will benefit Georgia’s families. The Division’s strategic plan is captured in six over-arching goals: safety, self-sufficiency, permanency, well-being, workforce and stakeholders.

Each goal includes measurable objectives and corresponding strategies to meet these objectives. All of these objectives are considered major agency initiatives and are already in progress. We use the strategic plan as a quarterly check in on our progress, and to be transparent and accountable to those that we serve.

A key priority linked to our workforce goal is the creation of a just culture. Just culture is a model of shared accountability. It holds agencies accountable for the systems they design and for how they respond to staff behaviors fairly and justly. Our goal is to create a workplace where everyone has a voice and where each person feels he or she can openly voice opinions without fear of retribution. Just culture allows us to focus on our number one priority – child safety – and will allow us to strengthen and retain our workforce.

As we work to meet our goals, we hope that our partners and stakeholders will join us in practicing just culture by holding us accountable. It is through this culture of shared accountability and servant leadership that we will be most successful in meeting these milestones.

We appreciate all the thought and input that has gone into the plan and are confident that its effective implementation will support us in achieving our goals of keeping children safe and strengthening families.

Sincerely,

Tom C. Rawlings

Division Director

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**Division Vision, Mission and Guiding Principles4**

**Division Goals5**

**Goal One – Safety6**

Safety Objectives7

Safety Strategies8

**Goal Two – Self-Sufficiency9**

Self-Sufficiency Objectives10

Self-Sufficiency Strategies13

**Goal Three – Permanency14**

Permanency Objectives15

Permanency Strategies18

**Goal Four – Well-Being19**

Well-Being Objectives20

Well-Being Strategies22

**Goal Five – Workforce23**

Workforce Objectives24

Workforce Strategies25

**Goal Six – Stakeholders26**

Stakeholder Objectives27

Stakeholder Strategies29

**VISION**

Safe children. Strengthened families. Stronger Georgia.

**MISSION**

We commit to the safety of Georgia’s children in the decisions we make and the actions we take. We strengthen families toward independence and build stronger communities through caring, effective and responsive service.

**GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

1. Commit to the safety of our children in the decisions we make and the actions we take.
2. Empower, strengthen and support families on their path to independence.
3. Embrace a servant’s heart with compassion.
4. Provide caring, responsive and effective service.
5. Listen and respond to our constituents, communities and each other.
6. Collaborate with our communities to create systems of support.
7. Develop a professional and efficient workforce that never stops learning and growing.

**DFCS DIVISION GOALS**

***Safety*** Children are protected from abuse and neglect.

***Self-sufficiency***Families and individuals have support services to better enable them to reach sustainable financial independence.

***Permanency*** Families are intact, safe and stable.

***Well-being*** Families and individuals have enhanced capacity to meet their physical, cognitive and educational needs.

***Workforce***The Division’s workforce is empowered, professional, effective and has the tools necessary to do the work.

***Stakeholders***The Division is fully engaged with its stakeholders and responsive to the needs of the community.

Goal One – Safety

***Children are protected from abuse and neglect.***



**SAFETY OBJECTIVES**

**Objective 1:** Recurrence of maltreatment in care shall not exceed 5% through July 2024.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Month/Year** | **Target Measure** |
| July 2020 | ≤ 5% |
| July 2021 | ≤ 5% |
| July 2022 | ≤ 5% |
| July 2023 | ≤ 5% |
| July 2024 | ≤ 5% |

***Data Source****: The Division’s Child Welfare Quality Assurance Data compiled for the Federal Child and Family Services Review (CFSR)*

***National Standard****: The Federal Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) Standard is 9.1%*

**Objective 2:** Foster care re-entries shall not exceed 5% through July 2024.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Month/Year** | **Target Measure** |
| July 2020 | ≤ 5% |
| July 2021 | ≤ 5% |
| July 2022 | ≤ 5% |
| July 2023 | ≤ 5% |
| July 2024 | ≤ 5% |

***Data Source****: The Division’s Child Welfare Quality Assurance Data compiled for the Federal Child and Family Services Review*

***National Standard****: The Federal Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) Standard is 8.3%*

**Objective 3:** Maltreatment of children in care shall not exceed five victimizations per 100,000 days in care by July 2024.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Month/Year** | **Target Measure** |
| July 2020 | ≤ 5 |
| July 2021 | ≤ 5 |
| July 2022 | ≤ 5 |
| July 2023 | ≤ 5 |
| July 2024 | ≤ 5 |

***Data Source****: The Division’s Child Welfare Quality Assurance Data compiled for the Federal Child and Family Services Review (CFSR)*

***National Standard****: The Federal Child and Family Services Review (CFSR)*

*Standard is 8.5 victimizations per 100,000 days in care*

**SAFETY STRATEGIES**

1. Disseminate funding to community-based organizations that provide primary and secondary prevention services to families in order to prevent child abuse and neglect.
2. Develop and implement a tracking procedure, tool and guidance for current transfer of cases practice.
3. Develop staff competencies around investigations and safety decisions, ensuring that case managers have the knowledge and skill to effectively identify safety concerns and determine steps needed to create safety for children now and in the future.
4. Increase awareness and training around the role and impact of timely case transfers upon service provision.

*Adheres to Governor’s Goals of: Safe and Healthy*

Goal Two – Self-Sufficiency

***Families and individuals have support services to better enable them to reach sustainable financial independence.***



**SELF-SUFFICIENCY OBJECTIVES**

**Objective 1:** Increase and sustain the percent of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) participants engaged in a countable work activity from 31% to 60% by July 2024.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Month/Year** | **Target Measure** |
| July 2020 | 50% |
| July 2021 | 52% |
| July 2022 | 55% |
| July 2023 | 58% |
| July 2024 | 60% |

***Data Source****: The Office of Family Independence Planning, Performance and Reporting Monthly Files*

***National Standard****: The federal standard rate set by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) for Work Participation is 50%*

**Objective 2:** Decrease the SNAP Quality Control positive error rate from 9.05% in FFY18 to below 6.5% by July 2020, with decreased error rate to 4.5% by July 2024.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Month/Year** | **Target Measure** |
| July 2020 | 6.5% |
| July 2021 | 6% |
| July 2022 | 5.5% |
| July 2023 | 5% |
| July 2024 | 4.5% |

***Data Source****: The Office of Family Independence Planning, Performance and Evaluation FNS reports.*

**Objective 3:** Increase the SNAP Application standard of promptness from 93.44% to 95% by July 2020, with sustained timeliness of 95% through July 2024.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Month/Year** | **Target Measure** |
| July 2020 | 95% |
| July 2021 | 95% |
| July 2022 | 95% |
| July 2023 | 95% |
| July 2024 | 95% |

***Data Source****: The Office of Family Independence Planning, Performance and Reporting Monthly Files*

**Objective 4:** Improve the Family Medical Assistance standard of promptness from 88.40% to 95% by July 2021, with sustained timeliness of 95% through July 2024.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Month/Year** | **Target Measure** |
| July 2020 | 90% |
| July 2021 | 95% |
| July 2022 | 95% |
| July 2023 | 95% |
| July 2024 | 95% |

***Data Source****: The Office of Family Independence Planning, Performance and Reporting Monthly Files*

**Objective 5:** Improve the Aged, Blind & Disabled Medical Assistance standard of promptness from 61.76% to 95% by July 2024.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Month/Year** | **Target Measure** |
| July 2020 | 75% |
| July 2021 | 80% |
| July 2022 | 85% |
| July 2023 | 90% |
| July 2024 | 95% |

***Data Source****: The Office of Family Independence Planning, Performance and Reporting Monthly Files*

**Objective 6:** Increase family and individual participation in Child Welfare Case Planning from 51% to 75% by July 2024.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Month/Year** | **Target Measure** |
| July 2020 | 55% |
| July 2021 | 60% |
| July 2022 | 65% |
| July 2023 | 70% |
| July 2024 | 75% |

***Data Source****: The Division’s Child Welfare Quality Assurance Data compiled for the Federal Child and Family Services Review (CFSR)*

***National Standard****: The Federal Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) Standard is 95%*

**SELF-SUFFICIENCY STRATEGIES**

1. Increase OFI case manager and Supervisor staffing to adequately support the OFI caseloads.

* *Contingent upon funding*

1. Continue to solicit feedback from all levels of staff and act on improvements in the new OFI statewide eligibility processing system (Georgia Gateway).
2. Provide learning opportunities and support for all levels of OFI staff to enhance policy and process knowledge.
3. Implement the Connected by 21 initiative, the extension of Foster Care for youth ages 18-21, to ensure that those youth in transition are supported and self-sufficient.

*Adheres to Governor’s Goals of: Safe, Healthy and Educated*

Goal Three – Permanency

***Families are intact, safe and stable.***

******

***PERMANENCY OBJECTIVES***

**Objective 1:** Increase the stability of placement for youth in Foster Care by reducing the rate of placement moves from 4.64 moves per 1,000 days in care to no more than 4.12 moves per 1,000 days in care by July 2024.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Month/Year** | **Target Measure**  **\*Per 1,000 days in care** |
| July 2020 | 4.35 |
| July 2021 | 4.1 |
| July 2022 | 4.1 |
| July 2023 | 4.1 |
| July 2024 | 4.1 |

***Data Source****: This is a federal data indicator for the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) pulled from Georgia’s Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System*

***National Standard****: The Federal Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) Standard is 4.12 moves per 1,000 days in care*

**Objective 2:** Increase the percentage of quality parent visits in Child Protective Services, Family Support Services and Foster Care from 21% to 50% by July 2024.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Month/Year** | **Target Measure for Parents** |
| July 2020 | 27% |
| July 2021 | 35% |
| July 2022 | 40% |
| July 2023 | 45% |
| July 2024 | 50% |

***Data Source****: The monthly Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) published by Knowledge Management*

**Objective 3:** Increase the percentage of quality child visits in Child

Protective Services, Family Support Services and Foster Care

from 47% to 70% by July 2024.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Month/Year** | **Target Measure for Children** |
| July 2020 | 52% |
| July 2021 | 56% |
| July 2022 | 60% |
| July 2023 | 65% |
| July 2024 | 70% |

***Data Source****: The monthly Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) published by Knowledge Management*

**Objective 4:** Increase the percentage of relative placement for children from 28.7% to 50% by July 2024.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Month/Year** | **Target Measure** |
| July 2020 | 30% |
| July 2021 | 35% |
| July 2022 | 40% |
| July 2023 | 45% |
| July 2024 | 50% |

***Data Source****: The State’s Automated Child Welfare Information System (SHINES)*

**Objective 5:** Increase the percentage of children in Foster Care with adoptions that finalize (within 24 months of entering care) from 22% to 45% by July 2024.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Month/Year** | **Target Measure** |
| July 2020 | 25% |
| July 2021 | 30% |
| July 2022 | 35% |
| July 2023 | 40% |
| July 2024 | 45% |

***Data Source****: The State’s Automated Child Welfare Information System (SHINES)*

**Objective 6:** Increase the total number of approved Foster Caregiver

resources (foster and relative) by 15% by July 2024.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Month/Year** | **Target Measure** |
| July 2020 | 7,688 |
| July 2021 | 7,912 |
| July 2022 | 8,136 |
| July 2023 | 8,360 |
| July 2024 | 8,584 |

***Data Source****: The State’s Automated Child Welfare Information System (SHINES)*

**Objective 7:** Increase the percentage of children in Foster Care who achieve permanency within the first 12 months of entering care from 36% to 45% by July 2024.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Month/Year** | **Target Measure** |
| July 2020 | 36% |
| July 2021 | 38% |
| July 2022 | 40% |
| July 2023 | 42% |
| July 2024 | 45% |

***Data Source****: This is a federal data indicator for the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) pulled from Georgia’s Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System*

***National Standard****: The Federal Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) Standard is 40.5%.*

**PERMANENCY STRATEGIES**

1. Implement the Connected by 21 Initiative to allow older Foster Care youth additional time to prepare for a safe and stable transition into adulthood.
2. Implement the Partnership Parenting Model to provide support to both resource and birth Parents.
3. Implement a Kinship Care Continuum – to ensure that relatives caring for children and youth in foster care are provided the necessary services and supports to maintain placement stability, including continuation of benefits such as TANF and Medicaid.
4. Develop and implement processes that ensure timely filing of Termination of Parental Rights in accordance with the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) in order to prevent barriers to permanency achievement.
5. Implement a statewide Foster Care Recruitment campaign to provide information about Foster Care to prospective foster parents and build awareness about the need.

*Adheres to Governor’s Goals of: Safe, Healthy and Educated*

Goal Four – Well-Being

***Families and individuals have enhanced capacity to meet their physical, cognitive and educational needs.***



**WELL-BEING OBJECTIVES**

**Objective 1:** Maintain the percentage of current and former foster care

youth in the Independent Living Program (ILP) receiving

Medicaid or health insurance within six months of their 18th

Birthday, at 95% through July 2024.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Month/Year** | **Target Measure** |
| July 2020 | 94% |
| July 2021 | 95% |
| July 2022 | 95% |
| July 2023 | 95% |
| July 2024 | 95% |

***Data Source****: The Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (SHINES)*

**Objective 2:** Increase the percentage of physical and mental health services provided for youth in Foster Care from 16% to 40% by July 2024.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Month/Year** | **Target Measure** |
| July 2020 | 20% |
| July 2021 | 25% |
| July 2022 | 30% |
| July 2023 | 35% |
| July 2024 | 40% |

***Data Source****: The State’s Automated Child Welfare Information System (SHINES)*

**Objective 3:** Increase the percentage of appropriate services to meet the educational needs for youth in Foster Care from 48% to 80% by July 2024.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Month/Year** | **Target Measure** |
| July 2020 | 54% |
| July 2021 | 60% |
| July 2022 | 66% |
| July 2023 | 72% |
| July 2024 | 80% |

***Data Source****: The Child and Family Services (CFSR) trend report published by Knowledge Management*

**Objective 4:** Support the development of executive functioning for children in foster care by increasing the number of these children (ages 0–5) who are enrolled in: Early Head Start/Head Start, Pre-K, or any other Quality Rated Childcare Program, from 73% to 90% by July 2024.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Month/Year** | **Target Measure** |
| July 2020 | 73% |
| July 2021 | 79% |
| July 2022 | 82% |
| July 2023 | 86% |
| July 2024 | 90% |

***Data Source****: The State’s Automated Child Welfare Information System (SHINES)*

**WELL-BEING STRATEGIES**

1. Implement quality assurance monitoring protocol that ensures quality tutoring services are being provided by contracted Education Support Specialists. For those youth engaged in intensive educational support services, their academic performance will be tracked and monitored (when appropriate) from the initial education assessment through their exit from care.
2. Provide continuous Educational Academies to train DFCS staff, caregivers, and partners on the Division’s educational policies, procedures and entitlements to promote successful educational outcomes for youth in Foster Care.
3. Train and educate Child Welfare case managers on the Medicaid referral and enrollment process for former and current Foster Care youth (ages 18-21 years old) so that these youth can successfully access healthcare.
4. Develop and implement innovative strategies with the Department of Community Health (DCH), Amerigroup and other stakeholders to facilitate youth access to medical, physical and behavioral health services.
5. Provide education and support to caregivers regarding the importance of health and wellness screenings for children in care to promote access to the appropriate medical, physical and behavioral health services for children and youth served by the Division.

*Adheres to Governor’s Goals of: Safe, Healthy and Educated*

Goal Five – Workforce

***The Division’s workforce is empowered, professional, effective and has the tools necessary to do the work.***



**WORKFORCE OBJECTIVES**

**Objective 1:** Increase positive retention rate for Child Welfare from 70% to 85%, and OFI from 82% to 87% by June 30, 2024.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Month/Year** | **OFI Target Measure** | **Child Welfare Target Measure** |
| July 2020 | 83% | 74% |
| July 2021 | 85% | 78% |
| July 2022 | 87% | 82% |
| July 2023 | 87% | 86% |
| July 2024 | 87% | 90% |

***Data Source****: The Office of Human Resources*

**Objective 2:** Increase the percentage of satisfied employees from 71%\* to 90% by June 30, 2024.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Month/Year** | **OFI Target Measure** | **Child Welfare Target Measure** |
| July 2020 | 74% | 74% |
| July 2021 | 78% | 78% |
| July 2022 | 82% | 82% |
| July 2023 | 86% | 86% |
| July 2024 | 90% | 90% |

***Data Source****: National Child Welfare Workforce Institute (NCWWI)*

**WORKFORCE STRATEGIES**

1. OFI Operational Reality Project, a collaboration of all OFI sections to identify resolutions for People, Process and Technology issues.
2. Implement Employee Selection Protocol in order to ensure that only candidates with requisite aptitude, skills, knowledge and values are selected to serve families.
3. Implement Solution Based Casework (phase 2) in order to leverage and utilize knowledge acquired in phase 1 (training and certification).
4. Develop ‘Practice Standards’ Guide in order to most fully and effectively communicate the Division’s practice standards, inclusive of Guiding Principles, Solution Based Casework, Trauma Response, Safety Focus and Quality Caregiving.
5. Execute NCWWI Workforce Excellence Project.
   1. Complete Comprehensive Organizational Health Assessment (COHA)
   2. Integrate Leadership Academy for Middle Managers
   3. Integrate Leadership Academy for Supervisors
   4. Develop innovative approaches to implementation of workforce strategies
   5. Enhance IV-E Education Program
6. Develop Career Path (contingent upon funding) in order to provide advancement opportunities beyond standard leadership track.
7. Build “Just Culture” to promote safe, open and honest feedback loops necessary for continuous quality improvement.
8. Annual (each June 1st) Satisfaction Survey (GSU or NCWWI).

*Adheres to Governor’s Goals of: Responsible Government, Educated and Growing*

Goal Six – Stakeholders

***The Division is fully engaged with its stakeholders and responsive to the needs of the community. ***

**STAKEHOLDER OBJECTIVES**

**Objective 1:** Increase the number of stakeholder groups actively engaged with the Division by July 2024.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Month/Year** | **Target Measure** |
| July 2020 | 135 |
| July 2021 | 175 |
| July 2022 | 200 |
| July 2023 | 225 |
| July 2024 | 250 |

***Data Source****: State of Hope Ecosystem member sites*

*Data represents the number of Ecosystem member sites added each year.*

**Objective 2:** Increase the number of multidisciplinary and/or interagency

partnerships (at the state and local level) by July 2024.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Month/Year** | **Target Measure** |
| July 2020 | 5 |
| July 2021 | 10 |
| July 2022 | 15 |
| July 2023 | 20 |
| July 2024 | 25 |

***Data Source****: The Office of Strategy, Innovation and Engagement*

**Objective 3:** Reduce the total number of valid complaints received by the Division from 3,687 to 1,796 by July 2024.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Month/Year** | **Target Measure** |
| July 2020 | 3309 |
| July 2021 | 2931 |
| July 2022 | 2553 |
| July 2023 | 2175 |
| July 2024 | 1,797 |

***Data Source****: The Office of Communications and Constituent Services*

**Objective 4:** Increase the number of cash match relationships/agreements from 33 to 60 by July 2024.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Month/Year** | **Target Measure** |
| July 2020 | 40 |
| July 2021 | 45 |
| July 2022 | 50 |
| July 2023 | 55 |
| July 2024 | 60 |

***Data Source****: The Office of Family Independence UAS Budget Report*

**STAKEHOLDER STRATEGIES**

1. Implement regular community “Road Shows” at the regional, district and state levels in order to provide consistent and ongoing stakeholder engagement throughout the State.
2. Continue implementation of the State of Hope initiative. The State of Hope seeks to activate nonprofits, philanthropies, government, businesses and other community members to collaborate closely to build local safety nets that will prevent conditions that contribute to disparities in education, threaten a family’s self-sufficiency and could lead to child abuse and neglect.
3. Develop and implement a plan to consistently engage and partner with philanthropic organizations, faith-based entities and culturally specific groups in support of the Division and its priorities.
4. Utilize the statewide Child Welfare Training Collaborative – a partnership between the Division and Georgia State University – in order to provide stakeholders with regular opportunities for consistent and ongoing training.

*Adheres to Governor’s Goals of: Safe, Educated and Responsible Government*