

Instructions and Tips for Running the CFSR Round 3 Statewide Data Indicators Syntax



Capacity Building
CENTER FOR STATES

Purpose

These step-by-step instructions provide detailed guidance for running the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) Round 3 SPSS syntax for specific statewide data indicators. Running the syntax allows users to calculate observed performance for an individual state on all or selected CFSR 3 statewide data indicators using data submissions from the [Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System \(AFCARS\)](#) and the [National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System \(NCANDS\)](#).

Intended to support child welfare data and IT staff, this publication provides:

- Detailed information on the key steps for establishing the file structure, preparing files and defining cohorts for analysis, and running the observed performance syntax for desired indicators (see Instructions below)
- Descriptions of folders, files, and syntax used to calculate data quality and observed performance (appendix A)
- Guidance for documenting data extraction files and executing syntax (appendix B)
- Information on the methodologies used for each of the seven CFSR 3 statewide data indicators (appendix C)

For additional information, please see the Capacity Building Center for States (Center for States) Statewide Data Indicator webpage at <https://capacity.childwelfare.gov/states/focus-areas/cqi/cfsr-data-syntax-toolkit/>

The Center for States is available to assist with running the syntax and any required troubleshooting.

Instructions

The Children's Bureau (CB) has provided a [zip file of folders and SPSS syntax files](#) that are needed to complete data quality checks and produce state observed values. CB does not provide the data for analysis. You will need your state's AFCARS and NCANDS data submissions or similarly structured state-generated files. The zip file includes syntax to convert the text data documents from state AFCARS and NCANDS submissions into SPSS files and combine multiple submissions together to create source data files needed to run the syntax.

There are five observed performance syntax files:

- Maltreatment in foster care
- Maltreatment recurrence
- Permanency entries and reentry
- Permanency first day
- Placement stability

The five syntax files produce outcomes for the seven CFSR statewide data indicators.

The SPSS syntax can only be used for generating a state's observed performance and performing data quality checks. The risk standardized performance (RSP), which is reported on the CFSR 3 Data Profile produced by CB, requires access to child-level data from all states and jurisdictions and therefore can only be calculated by CB. In addition, the Stata syntax included in the syntax package is used by CB to calculate RSP for each state and is not required to perform data quality checks and calculate observed performance for a single state.

Software Requirements:

- IBM® SPSS® Version 21.0 or higher
CFSR SPSS syntax also requires: Python Essentials for IBM® SPSS® Statistics
CFSR SPSS syntax also requires these extensions: SPSSINC Split Dataset, and SPSSINC Process Files (using the drop down - Extensions\Extension Hub available when running SPSS)
- Microsoft Excel 2007 or higher

Download and Set Up the CFSR3 Syntax Revised Zip Folder and Establish the Subfolder and File Structure

The CB syntax requires a specific folder, subfolder, and file structure to be in place on the computer where the analysis is run. The location of the folder and subfolders is called the "path."

Unzip and Save Files

The easiest way to create the folder and subfolder structure is by unzipping the CFSR_3_Indicator_Syntax.zip file available on the [Children's Bureau website](#).

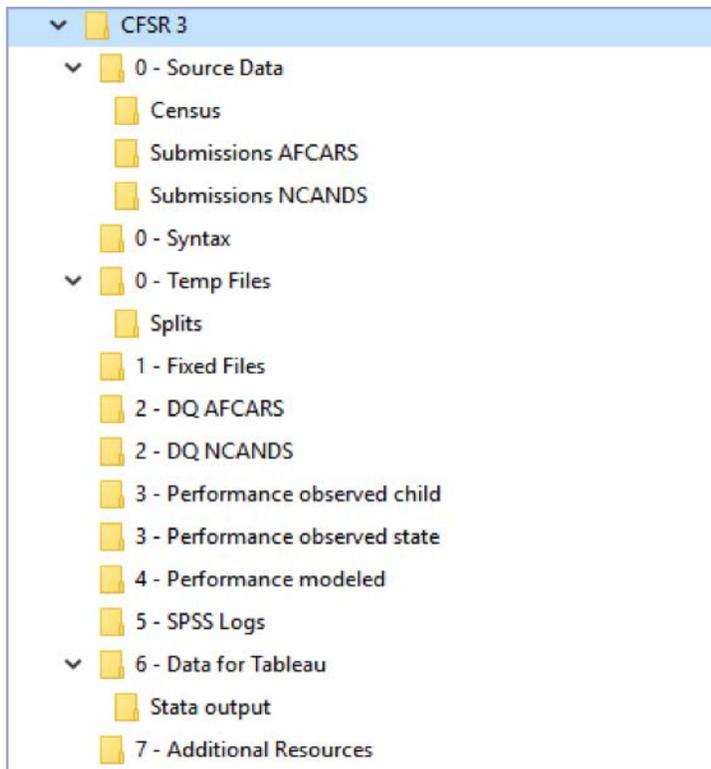
When the CFSR_3_Indicator_Syntax.zip file is unzipped, it will create two folders:

- One folder named "CFSR 3 Indicator Calculation Syntax" contains the syntax files with the primary code for completing data quality checks and calculating performance on the data indicators.
- One folder named "CFSR 3" contains the folders, subfolders, reference files, and auxiliary code called by the primary code.

For more information about this zip file, including a description of its contents, see appendix A.

The syntax contained in the zip folder is designed to work with this CFSR 3 folder structure and its contents saved on the C drive (i.e., C:\CFSR3). If you decide to save the CFSR 3 folders in a different location, be aware that you will need to manually change the path location in the syntax where it refers to C:\CFSR3. When saved, the folder structure will look like exhibit 1 (on the next page).

Exhibit 1. Folder Structure



Prepare Files

Each data indicator uses a specific set of data source files to compute the observed performance. Exhibit 2 describes the data submissions needed to calculate observed state performance. Some indicators use data submissions from earlier years than others because they require that sufficient time has passed in order to observe an outcome.

If you plan to run the syntax to produce observed performance for multiple time periods, then you will need to expand the range of AFCARS and NCANDS data submissions that are combined to create the source data files. We recommend that you combine all the files you expect to investigate when you create the source data files.

You can indicate the period of interest when you execute the syntax for a specific indicator, and the code will automatically ignore data outside of that timeframe. Combining many submissions into the source data files all at once can save time and effort later.

Exhibit 2: Cohorts and Corresponding State AFCARS and NCANDS Data Submissions

Data Indicator	AFCARS Semiannual Submissions Needed ¹	NCANDS Annual Submissions Needed ²	12-Month Cohort of Children Whose Outcome Is Evaluated	Special Considerations
Permanency in 12 months for children entering foster care	Six consecutive For example: 14A, 14B, 15A, 15B, 16A, 16B	N/A	First two AFCARS periods For example: 14A/14B (10/1/13– 9/30/14)	Consecutive files may begin with either the “A” period or the “B” period
Permanency in 12 months for children in care 12–23 months	Two consecutive For example: 16A, 16B	N/A	Same two AFCARS periods For example: 16A/16B (10/1/15– 9/30/16)	Consecutive files may begin with either the “A” period or the “B” period
Permanency in 12 months for children in care 24 months or more	Two consecutive For example: 16A, 16B	N/A	Same two AFCARS periods For example: 16A/16B (10/1/15– 9/30/16)	Consecutive files may begin with either the “A” period or the “B” period
Reentry to foster care in 12 months	Six consecutive For example: 14A, 14B, 15A, 15B, 16A, 16B	N/A	First two AFCARS periods ³ For example: 14A/14B (10/1/13– 9/30/14)	Consecutive files may begin with either the “A” period or the “B” period
Placement stability	Two consecutive For example: 16A, 16B	N/A	Same two AFCARS periods For example: 16A/16B (10/1/15– 9/30/16)	Consecutive files may begin with either the “A” period or the “B” period
Recurrence of maltreatment	N/A	Two consecutive For example: FY 2016, FY 2017	First NCANDS period For example: FY 2016 (10/1/15–9/30/16)	Children can be first reported in either file as long as the first report date occurred during the time period covered by the first FY included in analysis
Maltreatment in foster care	Two consecutive (same period of time as the NCANDS submission) For example: 16A, 16B	Two consecutive For example: FY 2016, FY 2017	Same two AFCARS periods and records from NCANDS period with a report date during the two AFCARS periods For example: AFCARS 16A/16B, NCANDS FY 2016–2017 with report dates between 10/1/15–9/30/16	AFCARS files must represent the beginning and end of a FY (i.e., must be A and B from the same FY, always in AB order) and must correspond with first annual NCANDS file

¹ AFCARS files are submitted twice during the FY. “A” refers to the 6-month report period October 1 through March 31. “B” refers to the 6-month report period April 1 through September 30.

² NCANDS data are submitted for federal FYs, October 1 through September 30.

³ This refers to children who had an initial entry in the period included in the first two AFCARS files and discharged to permanency within 12 months of entry. Depending on when a child discharged, reentries can occur in 14A to 16B in the example provided.

Define the Cohort of Interest

Each indicator represents a cohort of children that spans a 12-month period. The 12-month period differs across the indicators. For example, in the indicator “permanency in 12 months for children entering foster care,” the cohort is all children entering foster care during a 12-month period. See exhibit 3 for sample data periods for each indicator and corresponding state AFCARS and NCANDS submissions needed to calculate observed performance.

In addition, agencies may also be interested in using the syntax to monitor improvements over time. This requires running the syntax multiple times with different cohort years.

If you are using the syntax to replicate a value reported by CB, be sure to use the same files that were submitted through the AFCARS and NCANDS submission process for the indicated timeframe. Small updates to data may produce different observed values. The run date of the data file is needed to troubleshoot any discrepancies. The table in appendix B can be used to document the data submissions that are used in analysis for later reference.

*Note: Syntax for the “maltreatment in foster care” indicator can only calculate performance for children in foster care during a federal FY (e.g., 16A16B, 17A17B, etc.) and will not calculate performance for rolling 12-month periods (e.g., 16B17A). This is because the calculation for this indicator requires finding the same group of children in AFCARS and NCANDS data submissions for the same timeframe to identify whether they were victims of child maltreatment while in foster care, and NCANDS data is reported for a full FY.

Save the Data Files

Once you have identified the cohort(s) of interest and collected your state’s AFCARS and NCANDS data submission files, you will need to convert the text AFCARS and NCANDS data files to SPSS files and save them to the “0 – Source Data\Submissions AFCARS” and “0 – Source Data\Submissions NCANDS” folders before analysis. A syntax file is provided that will convert a 6-month AFCARS txt file to the same format as the SPSS file used by CB staff. SPSS versions of a state’s annual NCANDS submissions are sent to the state in the validation packet provided by the NCANDS contractor after a submission is accepted. If you do not have an SPSS version of the NCANDS file available, syntax is included that will convert a txt version of the NCANDS file to SPSS. These syntax files are located in the “Additional Resources” folder.

In appendix B, you will find a table that can be used to record the data submissions that are converted and saved in the subfolder. This documentation may assist in record keeping and aid any troubleshooting that may be needed. If you are trying to recreate the observed results that CB reported, make sure that the files used to calculate performance correspond with submissions that were made to CB.

Exhibit 3: Example of Data Periods and State AFCARS and NCANDS Submissions

This exhibit presents sample data periods and corresponding state AFCARS and NCANDS submissions needed to calculate performance on each statewide data indicator.

CFSR 3 Syntax File and Statewide Data Indicator	Data Periods * (periods in bold indicate the 12-month cohort of children whose outcome was evaluated)	Submission Date (date that the state submitted the file to CB)
CFSR 3 – 3 Observed perf for perm (first day).sps		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Permanency in 12 months for children in care 12–23 months Permanency in 12 months for children in care 24 months or more 	18A, 18B	12/10/18
CFSR 3 – 3 Observed perf for perm (entries) & reentry.sps		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reentry to foster care in 12 months Permanency in 12 months for children entering foster care 	16A, 16B , 17A, 17B, 18A, 18B	12/10/18
CFSR 3 – 3 Observed perf for maltx recurrence.sps		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recurrence of maltreatment 	FY 2016 , FY 2017	10/12/18
CFSR 3 – 3 Observed perf for placement stability.sps		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Placement stability 	18A, 18B	12/10/18
CFSR 3 – 3 Observed perf for maltx in care.sps		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maltreatment in foster care 	FY 2016 , FY 2017 and 16A, 16B	12/10/18 (AFCARS) and 10/12/18 (NCANDS)

* FY periods (e.g., FY 2017) refer to NCANDS data. All others refer to AFCARS data.

* NCANDS data are submitted for federal FYs, October 1 through September 30.

* "A" refers to the 6-month report period October 1 through March 31. Two-digit year refers to the calendar year in which the period ends.

* "B" refers to the 6-month report period April 1 through September 30. Two-digit year refers to the calendar year in which the period ends.

Prepare and Run Syntax

The syntax files needed to create the AFCARS and NCANDS source data files, run data quality checks, and compute observed performance are located in the “CFSR 3 Indicator Calculation Syntax” folder.

Confirm File Handle Path

The syntax files reference a directory to locate the data needed for analysis and produce new output files. The location of the directory is managed using a **file handle**. The file handle is identified at the start of the syntax and, once defined, allows the syntax to use the file structure downloaded in the zip file.

Open each syntax file and confirm that the file handle is directed to the correct path. This step will need to be repeated before each syntax file can be executed.

There are multiple file handle lines in the syntax file, but only the “Root_FH” needs to be examined. If the folders and subfolders extracted from the zip folder were saved to “C:\CFSR 3,” then no action is needed. If they are located elsewhere, then the “Root_FH” line must be changed to the correct path.

The syntax line that needs to be edited looks like this:

```
file handle Root_FH /name="C:\CFSR 3"
```

This step will need to be repeated before running the following syntax files located in the “CFSR 3 Indicator Calculation Syntax” folder:

- CFSR 3 - 1 Create AFCARS source data
- CFSR 3 - 1 Create NCANDS source data
- CFSR 3 - 2 Create AFCARS DQ files
- CFSR 3 - 2 Create NCANDS DQ files
- CFSR 3 - 3 Observed perf for maltx in care
- CFSR 3 - 3 Observed perf for maltx recurrence
- CFSR 3 - 3 Observed perf for perm (entries) & reentry
- CFSR 3 - 3 Observed perf for perm (first day)
- CFSR 3 - 3 Observed perf for placement stability

*Note: No changes are required to the syntax files located in the “CFSR 3/ 0 - Syntax” folder.

Create Source Data Files and Run the Data Quality Syntax

All the data indicator syntax files compute observed performance from a source data file. The source data syntax (i.e., “CFSR 3 - 1 Create AFCARS source data” and “CFSR 3 - 1 Create NCANDS source data”) combines the multiple AFCARS and NCANDS submissions into two SPSS source data files: one each for the two submission types. You will need to combine multiple AFCARS 6-month files and NCANDS annual files. You only need to run the source data syntax once per file type (AFCARS and NCANDS) to create the source data files for all the indicators. The process will only need to be repeated if you update the AFCARS or NCANDS data or add additional years.

There are two DQ syntax files (i.e., “CFSR 3 - 2 Create AFCARS DQ files” and “CFSR 3 - 2 Create NCANDS DQ files”) that must be executed to run necessary data quality tests. The AFCARS and NCANDS source data

files must be created before you can run the DQ files. These tests alert you to any data quality issues that may need to be resolved before the observed performance values can be computed. The output of the DQ analysis is stored in the “2 - DQ NCANDS” or the “2 - DQ AFCARS” file depending on the file being evaluated. Issues need to be resolved in order for the syntax to calculate performance on corresponding data indicators. CB encourages states to resubmit AFCARS and NCANDS files if data quality issues impact CB performance calculations in one or more CFSR state data profiles.

In order for CB to create a state data profile, there needs to be 11 consecutive AFCARS submissions, and 4 corresponding NCANDS submissions.

To review, the files to create the source data files and run AFCARS and NCANDS data quality checks should be run in this order:

1. CFSR 3 – 1 Create AFCARS source data.sps
2. CFSR 3 – 1 Create NCANDS source data.sps
3. CFSR 3 – 2 Create AFCARS DQ files.sps
4. CFSR 3 – 2 Create NCANDS DQ files.sps

Run the Observed Performance Syntax

Once you reach this step, the observed performance indicator syntax can be run in any order or only for specific indicators. There are five indicator syntax files used to compute the seven indicators. These files are located in the “CFSR 3 Indicator Calculation Syntax” folder. They are:

- CFSR 3 – 3 Observed perf for maltx in care.sps
- CFSR 3 – 3 Observed perf for maltx recurrence.sps
- CFSR 3 – 3 Observed perf for perm (entries) & reentry.sps ⁴
- CFSR 3 – 3 Observed perf for perm (first day).sps ⁵
- CFSR 3 – 3 Observed perf for placement stability.sps

In addition to updating the root file handle, you will need to update the period for which you are running the analysis in each observed performance syntax file. In each file, under the file handle syntax, the next section of syntax you will find begins with the line “***** START USER INPUT *****.” This indicates the portion of syntax that requires manual input related to the time period of interest. (See exhibit 4.)

⁴ CFSR 3 – 3 Observed perf for perm (entries) & reentry.sps runs both the permanency in 12 months for children entering foster care and reentry to foster care indicators.

⁵ CFSR 3 – 3 Observed perf for perm (first day).sps runs the permanency indicators for both the 12–23 month cohort and 24 month+ cohort.

Exhibit 4: Update Syntax With Time Periods of Interest

X placeholders represent where manual input will be entered. The number of Xs identifies the number of characters to enter.

Recurrence of Maltreatment	All Other Indicator Syntax
<pre>define YYYY () XXXX !enddefine. define YYstr () "XX" !enddefine. define YY2str () "XX" !enddefine. Example of updated syntax: define YYYY () 2016 !enddefine. define YYstr () "16" !enddefine. define YY2str () "17" !enddefine.</pre>	<pre>define PeriodType () "XX" !enddefine. define YYYY () XXXX !enddefine. define YYstr () "XX" !enddefine. Example of updated syntax: define PeriodType () "AB" !enddefine. define YYYY () 2016 !enddefine. define YYstr () "16" !enddefine.</pre>

Variable Definitions:

YYYY is the name of the variable that holds the year of interest.

YYstr is the name of the variable that holds the last two digits of the year of interest. It is a string variable and must have quotation marks around the value you enter for it.

YY2str is the name of the variable for the second year of interest when you are required to enter 2 years. It is a string variable and must have quotation marks around the value you enter for it.

PeriodType is the name of the variable that identifies whether you are running the analysis for an AB or BA period. It is a string variable and must have quotation marks around the value you enter for it.

Instructions to Update Time Periods of Interest for Recurrence of Maltreatment

For `define YYYY () XXXX`, you will need to replace XXXX with the primary year of analysis. Since recurrence requires two FYs, this is the first of those FYs. For example, if you are running maltreatment recurrence for FYs 2016–2017, you would put 2016 in this line.

For `define YYstr () "XX"` you will need to replace XX with the last two digits of the first FY. For FYs 2016–2017 you should put "16". The quotation marks must remain in the syntax.

For `define YY2str () "XX"` you will need to replace XX with the last two digits of the second fiscal year. For FYs 2016–2017 you would put "17". The quotation marks must remain in the syntax.

Instructions to Update Time Periods of Interest for All Other Indicator Syntax

Identify the 12-month cohort of interest (e.g., children in care during 16A16B) by entering "AB" or "BA" for `define PeriodType () "XX"`. For 16A16B you would enter "AB".

Identify the calendar year in which the 12-month period of interest ends. Enter the four-digit year for `define YYYY () XXXX`. For 16A16B you would enter 2016. Enter the two-digit year for `define YYstr () XX`. For 16A16B you would enter 16. See Additional Notes on Manual Input section below for further help.

Once you have made these changes, highlight the entire syntax file and hit run.

Additional Notes on Manual Input

- AB period (A file + B file) spans October 1 through September 30 of the following year. This is the same as a FY.
- BA period (B file + A file) spans April 1 through March 31 of the following year.
- As a general rule, the year entered for YYYY and YYstr always corresponds with the year associated with the A file in the period of interest. (See exhibit 5 for examples.)
- Maltreatment in care is only run for AB time periods. All permanency indicators, reentry to foster care, and placement stability are run for both AB and BA time periods.

Exhibit 5: Examples of Period Types to Use

Children in Care During	PeriodType	YYYY	YYstr
14A14B	AB	2014	14
14B15A	BA	2015	15
15A15B	AB	2015	15
15B16A	BA	2016	16
16A16B	AB	2016	16
16B17A	BA	2017	17
17A17B	AB	2017	17
17B18A	BA	2018	18
18A18B	AB	2018	18
18B19A	BA	2019	19

Viewing the Results, Next Steps, and Resources

The results of observed performance syntax are available in the “CFSR 3\3 - Performance observed state” folder as SPSS data files (.sav). Your state’s performance is found in the Perf_State variable. Alternatively, observed performance and more details can be found in the “CFSR 3\3 - Performance observed child” folder. Within the SPSS data files (.sav) in this folder, the following results can be found for each individual child variable:

- Perf_Child – Child-level performance
- Num_State – Numerator
- Den_State – Denominator
- Perf_State_MP – scaled version of child-level performance for placement stability and maltreatment in care

In order to better understand, share, and explain performance on the CFSR 3 statewide data indicators, the [CFSR Round 3 Statewide Data Indicator Series](#) provides both high-level and more detailed information on each data indicator. The Center for States is available to support public child welfare agencies in understanding the results of running the syntax as well as how to integrate this information with the existing continuous quality improvement (CQI) system.

For more information on available services related to CQI, please see the [Center for States CQI](#) page or contact the Center through the contact information below.

Additional resources for running the CFSR Round 3 Statewide Data Indicator Syntax include:

- [Center for States CFSR 3 Statewide Data Indicator page](#)
- [CFSR Round 3 Statewide Data Indicator Syntax Zip File](#)
- [CFSR Round 3 Statewide Data Indicator Data Dictionary 2020](#)

For Additional Support

State public child welfare agencies can contact the [Capacity Building Center for States](#) through their [State Liaison](#) or at capacityinfo@icfi.com for assistance with the following:

- Running the CFSR Round 3 SPSS Syntax
- Interpreting the results of observed performance calculations
- Addressing data quality
- Calculating observed performance by means other than SPSS
- Using the results to explore and monitor agency performance

State child welfare partner organizations, private agencies, and the public with questions about the CFSR Round 3 syntax and data indicators may contact the Children's Bureau, Office of Data Analysis, Research and Evaluation at CBDataTeam@acf.hhs.gov

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Appendix A: Descriptions of Folders, Files, and Syntax the Children’s Bureau Uses to Calculate Data Quality and Observed Performance for CFSR 3 Statewide Data Indicators

Available in the CFSR3IndicatorSyntax-Revised.zip file

.sav = SPSS data file • .sps = SPSS syntax • .dta = Stata data file ¹ • .do = Stata syntax

Folder \ File	Description
CFSR 3 Indicator Calculation Syntax Folder	
CFSR 3 - 0 Create census child populations.sps	Shows how the Children’s Bureau downloaded and prepared the child population data from the U.S. Census Bureau that is reflected in the child populations.sav data provided in the .zip file
CFSR 3 - 1 Create AFCARS source data.sps	Creates the source data file needed to calculate observed and risk-standardized performance on all indicators except recurrence of maltreatment
CFSR 3 - 1 Create NCANDS source data.sps	Creates the source data file needed to calculate observed and risk-standardized performance for maltreatment in foster care and recurrence of maltreatment
CFSR 3 - 2 Create AFCARS DQ files.sps	Creates the data quality files needed to examine state data quality results relative to the AFCARS data quality checks and limits to determine if a state should be excluded from the analysis for a particular indicator
CFSR 3 - 2 Create NCANDS DQ files.sps	Creates the data quality files needed to examine state’s data quality results relative to the NCANDS data quality checks and limits to determine if a state should be excluded from the analysis for a particular indicator
CFSR 3 - 3 Observed perf for maltx in care.sps	Calculates observed performance for maltreatment in foster care
CFSR 3 - 3 Observed perf for maltx recurrence.sps	Calculates observed performance for recurrence of maltreatment
CFSR 3 - 3 Observed perf for perm (entries) & reentry.sps	Calculates observed performance for permanency in 12 months for children entering foster care and reentry to foster care in 12 months
CFSR - 3 Observed perf for perm (first day).sps	Calculates observed performance for permanency in 12 months for children in foster care 12–23 months and permanency in 12 months for children in foster care 24 months or more

Folder \ File	Description
CFSR 3 - 3 Observed perf for placement stability.sps	Calculates observed performance for placement stability
CFSR 3 - 4 RSP for maltx in care.dta	Calculates risk-standardized performance for maltreatment in foster care
CFSR 3 - 4 RSP for maltx recurrence.dta	Calculates risk-standardized performance for recurrence of maltreatment
CFSR 3 - 4 RSP for perm (entries).dta	Calculates risk-standardized performance for permanency in 12 months for children entering foster care
CFSR 3 - 4 RSP for perm (FD 12-23).dta	Calculates risk-standardized performance for permanency in 12 months for children in foster care 12–23 months
CFSR 3 - 4 RSP for perm (FD 24 or more).dta	Calculates risk-standardized performance for permanency in 12 months for children in foster care 24 months or more
CFSR 3 - 4 RSP for placement stability.dta	Calculates risk-standardized performance for placement stability
CFSR 3 - 4 RSP for reentry.dta	Calculates risk-standardized performance for reentry to foster care in 12 months
CFSR 3 Folder	
0 - Source Data	Folder to store original source data files required to run the syntax
0 - Source Data\Census	Folder to store census data downloaded from the web
0 - Source Data\Submissions AFCARS	Folder to store state 6-month AFCARS submissions
0 - Source Data\Submissions NCANDS	Folder to store state 12-month NCANDS submissions
0 - Syntax	Folder to store additional program code required to run the data quality syntax
0 - Syntax\ CreateDQFiles.sps	Program used as part of CFSR 3 - 2 Create AFCARS DQ files. sps to calculate and tabulate the AFCARS DQ results
0 - Syntax\ NCANDS_ChildLevel_DQ.sps	Program used as part of CFSR 3 - 2 Create NCANDS DQ files.sps to calculate and tabulate the child-level NCANDS DQ results
0 - Syntax\ NCANDS_RecordLevel_DQ.sps	Program used as part of CFSR 3 - 2 Create NCANDS DQ files.sps to calculate and tabulate the record-level NCANDS DQ results

Folder \ File	Description
0 - Temp files	Syntax will save to this folder all SPSS data files (.sav) that are the result of temporary or intermediate steps in creating the analytic data files, calculating the data quality results, or calculating observed performance
0 - Temp files\Splits	Syntax will save to this folder all SPSS data files (.sav) that are the result of running a SPSS Splits command statement. Results will be overwritten each time the code is run
1 - Fixed files	Some syntax calls the four fixed data files described below
1 - Fixed files\CFSR 3 AFCARS data quality checks.sav	Holds details about the AFCARS data quality checks, including data quality limits, descriptions, and the indicators to which they apply
1 - Fixed files\Child populations.sav	Holds U.S. Census Bureau child population estimates for 50 states, District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico
1 - Fixed files\CFSR 3 NCANDS data quality checks.sav	Holds details about the NCANDS data quality checks, including data quality limits, descriptions, and the indicators to which they apply
1 - Fixed files\states.sav	Holds states' FIP codes, full text name, and postal code abbreviations (SPSS version)
2 - DQ AFCARS	Syntax will save to this folder SPSS data files (.sav) containing states' data quality results related to the AFCARS data quality checks for every 6-month period examined
2 - DQ NCANDS	Syntax will save to this folder SPSS data files (.sav) containing states' data quality results related to the NCANDS data quality checks for every 12-month period and FY examined
3 - Performance observed child	Syntax will save to this folder child-level files produced after running the SPSS syntax to calculate states' observed performance
3 - Performance observed state	Syntax will save to this folder state-level files produced after running the SPSS syntax to calculate states' observed performance
4 - Performance modeled	Syntax will save to this folder child- and state-level files produced after running the Stata syntax to calculate states' risk-standardized performance

Folder \ File	Description
5 - SPSS Logs	Syntax will save to this folder SPSS log files generated as part of running the CFSR code
6 - Data for Tableau	Folder to store state-level files formatted for using Tableau software
6 - Data for Tableau\Stata Output	Syntax will save to this folder state-level files produced after running the Stata syntax to calculate states' risk-standardized performance. These files are formatted in a way to make using them in Tableau easier
7 - Additional Resources	Folder contains additional helpful resource documents including instructions for running the syntax and the data dictionary

¹ The Stata (.dta) syntax used to calculate risk-standardized performance (RSP) is provided for informational purposes only. Calculating RSPs requires child-level data from every state.

Appendix B: (Optional) Documentation

You may want to consider recording the AFCARS and NCANDS submission files that are included in each source file. If changes are made to the submission data, the source data file will need to be recreated in order for that change to be reflected in the observed performance calculations. The “as of” date is the date the file was submitted to CB.

(Optional) AFCARS and NCANDS Source File Documentation

Source File detail	Submissions Included	Submission “as of” Date
<p>Example</p> <p>Type: AFCARS</p> <p>Creation date: 2/1/2019</p> <p>Created by: Riley</p> <p>Notes:</p> <p>16A, 16B, and 17A were resubmitted on 11/20/2017 after an error in the AFCARS extraction code was detected and resolved.</p>	2013A	05/23/2013
	2013B	11/27/2013
	2014A	05/27/2014
	2014B	11/18/2014
	2015A	11/18/2014
	2015B	11/16/2015
	2016A	11/20/2017
	2016B	11/20/2017
	2017A	11/20/2017
	2017B	11/20/2017
	2018A	05/24/2018
<p>Example</p> <p>Type: NCANDS</p> <p>Creation date: 5/12/2019</p> <p>Created by: NAME</p> <p>Notes: FY 2017 file was resubmitted 10/22/18 due to a technical issue.</p>	FY2013	02/28/14
	FY 2014	02/24/15
	FY 2015	02/26/16
	FY 2016	02/23/17
	FY 2017	10/22/18
	FY 2018	02/21/19
Type:		
Creation date:		
Created by:		
Notes:		

(Optional) Observed Performance Run Documentation

You may want to consider recording the details for each time a syntax file is run to create a history that will assist in troubleshooting discrepancies and assist with monitoring performance over time.

Observed Performance File Details		Period of Interest	User Input
Example Syntax File: CFSR 3 – 3 Observed perf for maltx in care.sps			
Date of Source File(s):	AFCARS: 5/1/19 NCANDS: 5/12/19	Children in foster care during 17A and 17B	define YYYY () 2017 !enddefine.
Run Date:	5/20/19		define YYstr () "17" !enddefine.
Notes:	Run by Mary for review during management meeting 5/28/19.		define YY2str () "18" !enddefine.
Example Syntax File: CFSR 3 – 3 Observed perf for perm (first day).sps			
Date of Source File(s):	AFCARS: 5/1/19	Children who are in foster care on the first day of 18A who have been in care for more than 12 months but less than 23 months and children who are in foster care on the first day of 18A who have been in care for more than 24 months	define PeriodType () "AB" !enddefine.
Run Date:	5/20/19		define YYYY () 2018 !enddefine.
Notes:	Run by Mary for review during management meeting 5/28/19.		define YYstr () "18" !enddefine.
Syntax File:			
Date of Source File(s):			
Run Date:			
Notes:			

Appendix C: About the CFSR 3 Statewide Data Indicators

Title	Maltreatment in Foster Care
Syntax file	CFSR 3 – 3 Observed perf for maltx in care.sps
Data files required for each cohort of interest	Two consecutive 6-month AFCARS submissions that span a single FY (e.g., 17A & 17B) and two consecutive NCANDS FY child files that correspond to the FY defined by the AFCARS submissions and the next FY after that (e.g., FY 2017 and FY 2018)
Definition	Of all children aged 0–17 in foster care during a 12-month period, what is the rate of victimization per 100,000 days of foster care?
Denominator	Of children in foster care during a 12-month period, the total number of days these children were in foster care as of the end of the 12-month period
Numerator	Of children in foster care during a 12-month period, the total number of substantiated or indicated reports of maltreatment (by any perpetrator) during a foster care episode within the 12-month period
Exclusions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete foster care episodes lasting fewer than 8 days are not counted toward the total number of days in care. By extension, maltreatment that falls within those episodes are not counted toward the number of substantiated or indicated reports. • Maltreatment reports that occur within the first 7 days of removal are not counted toward the number of substantiated or indicated reports. • Records with a maltreatment report date outside of the 12-month period are excluded. • Child foster care episodes where the length of the episodes cannot be calculated (due to not having a valid date of discharge) are excluded. • Subsequent maltreatment reports that occur within 1 day of the initial maltreatment report are excluded. • Youth age 18 or older are excluded, as are youth in foster care at 18 or older. For youth who start out as 17 years of age and turn 18 during the period, any days in foster care or victimizations beyond his/her 18th birthday are not counted in the equation.

<p>Notes</p> <p>12-month cohort of children whose outcome is evaluated</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cases are matched across AFCARS and NCANDS using AFCARS ID. • The indicator relies on the report date to determine if the victimization occurred in the applicable 12-month period regardless of disposition date. A record is included if the report date falls in the 12-month period but the disposition date does not. • Victimization incident dates are not used to determine the occurrence or recurrence of child maltreatment for safety indicators. Incident dates are used (when reported) to help determine whether the victimization occurred outside the dates of the child’s foster care episode. • Because this indicator intentionally captures the maltreatment of a child while in the placement and care responsibility of the state agency, including when the child is visited by his or her parent or on a trial home visit, the entire length of the trial home visit (until discharge) is factored into the indicator. • When date of discharge is not available in the first 6-month AFCARS file, and date of prior discharge is available in the second 6-month file, and number of removals goes up by exactly one between the first and second 6-month files, then date of prior discharge in the second 6-month file is used to calculate the length of stay. • Two years of NCANDS data are required to determine if a report of maltreatment falls within the 12-month period. This is due to an NCANDS reporting delay. (Reports are only submitted to NCANDS after a disposition is documented.) <p>Children who are in foster care during the 12-month FY defined by the AFCARS files</p>
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Title	Recurrence of Maltreatment
Syntax file	CFSR 3 – 3 Observed perf for maltx recurrence.sps
Data files required for each cohort of interest	Two consecutive NCANDS FY child files (e.g., FY 2017, FY 2018)
Definition	Of all children aged 0–17 who were victims of a substantiated or indicated maltreatment report during a 12-month period, what percent were victims of another substantiated or indicated maltreatment report within 12 months of the initial victimization?
Denominator	The number of children with at least one substantiated or indicated maltreatment report in a 12-month period
Numerator	Of the children in the denominator, the number who had another substantiated or indicated maltreatment report within 12 months of their initial report

Exclusions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victims age 18 or older are excluded. • Children receiving alternative response are excluded. • Subsequent reports in which the incident date matches the incident date in the initial report are excluded as they are treated as rereports of same incident. • Subsequent victimizations with a report date that occurs within 14 days of the initial report are excluded. • Substantiated maltreatment that occurs before a child is born is not counted as maltreatment for this measure.
Notes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report dates are used as the primary data element to determine when the maltreatment occurred; only reports occurring during the 12-month period are included. Substantiated or indicated maltreatment reports with report dates in the 12-month period with disposition dates after the 12-month period are included. Use of incident dates is limited to determining whether maltreatment reports refer to same incident, in which case the duplicate record is excluded. The comparison of incident dates is a secondary check done only when incident dates are reported in the NCANDS file for each substantiated or indicated maltreatment report being compared.
12-month cohort of children whose outcome is evaluated	Children who are identified as victims in the first NCANDS file

Title	Permanency in 12 Months for Children Entering Foster Care
Syntax file	CFSR 3 – 3 Observed perf for perm (entries) & reentry.sps
Data files required for each cohort of interest	Six consecutive 6-month AFCARS submissions (e.g., 16A, 16B, 17A, 17B, 18A, 18B)
Definition	Of all children aged 0–17 who enter foster care during a 12-month period, what percentage are discharged to permanency within 12 months of entering foster care?
Denominator	Number of children who enter foster care in a 12-month period
Numerator	Number of children in the denominator who are discharged to permanency (reunification, living with relative, adoption, or guardianship) within 12 months of entering foster care
Exclusions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children in care fewer than 8 days are excluded. • Children who enter care at age 18 or older are excluded. • Children who do not have a discharge reason are excluded. • Children who reenter foster care in the same reporting period are excluded, as the AFCARS reporting structure does not include discharge reason for first episode.

Notes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth entering at age 17 who turn 18 while in care or discharge at age 18 due to age or running away are not counted as achieving permanency. • If a child has two episodes and records have dates indicating episodes overlap, only the most recent record is used. • A trial home visit adjustment is applied to all AFCARS reporting periods used for this indicator. Six consecutive 6-month AFCARS periods of data (3 years) are used to calculate the numerator in this indicator. This means that if a child discharges from foster care to reunification with parents or other caregivers after a placement setting of a trial home visit during any of the six reporting periods used for the indicator, any time in that trial home visit that exceeds 30 days is discounted from the length of the stay in foster care. In other words, the actual date of discharge to permanency could occur at any time during the 3 years used to calculate this indicator, and the trial home visit would then be applied to see if it may result in a reduction in the length of time in foster care for the purposes of this data indicator.
12-month cohort of children whose outcome is evaluated	Children who enter care during the 12-month period of interest, defined by the first two AFCARS files

Title	Permanency in 12 Months for Children in Care 12 to 23 Months
Syntax file	CFSR 3 – 3 Observed perf for perm (first day).sps
Data files required for each cohort of interest	Two consecutive 6-month AFCARS submissions (e.g., 18A & 18B)
Definition	Of all children in care on the first day of a 12-month period who had been in care (in that episode) between 12 and 23 months, what percentage are discharged to permanency within 12 months of the first day?
Denominator	Number of children in foster care on the first day of a 12-month period who had been in care (in that episode) between 12 and 23 months
Numerator	Number of children in the denominator who discharged to permanency (reunification, living with relative, guardianship, or adoption) within 12 months of the first day of the 12-month period
Exclusions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children who are age 18 or older are excluded. • Children who do not have a discharge reason are excluded. • Children who reenter foster care within the same reporting period are excluded, as the AFCARS reporting structure does not support reporting of the discharge reason for first episode.

Notes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth entering at age 17 who turn 18 while in care or discharge at age 18 are not counted as achieving permanency. The trial home visit adjustment is not applied to this indicator as the length of placement must exceed 11 months in order to be included.
12-month cohort of children whose outcome is evaluated	Children who are in care on the first day of the 12-month reporting period, who had been in care (in that episode) between 12 and 23 months
Title	Permanency in 12 Months for Children in Care 24 Months or More
Syntax file	CFSR 3 – 3 Observed perf for perm (first day).sps
Data files required for each cohort of interest	Two consecutive 6-month AFCARS submissions (e.g., 18A & 18B)
Definition	Of all children in foster care on the first day of a 12-month period who had been in care (in that episode) for 24 months or more, what percentage are discharged to permanency within 12 months of the first day?
Denominator	Number of children in foster care on the first day of a 12-month period who had been in care (in that episode) 24 months or more
Numerator	Number of children in the denominator who discharged to permanency (reunification, living with a relative, guardianship, or adoption) within 12 months of the first day of the 12-month period
Exclusions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children who are age 18 or older are excluded. Children who do not have a discharge reason are excluded. Children who reenter foster care within the same reporting period are excluded, as the AFCARS reporting structure does not support reporting of the discharge reason for first episode.
Notes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth entering at age 17 who turn 18 while in care or discharge at age 18 are not counted as achieving permanency. The trial home visit adjustment is not applied to this indicator as the length of placement must exceed 11 months in order to be included.
12-month cohort of children whose outcome is evaluated	Children who are in care on the first day of the 12-month reporting period, who had been in care (in that episode) 24 months or more

Title	Reentry to Foster Care
Syntax file	CFSR 3 – 3 Observed perf for perm (entries) & reentry.sps
Data files required for each cohort of interest	Six consecutive 6-month AFCARS submissions (e.g., 16A, 16B, 17A, 17B, 18A, 18B)
Definition	Of all children who enter foster care during a 12-month period who were discharged within 12 months to reunification, living with a relative, or guardianship, what percentage reentered foster care within 12 months of their discharge?
Denominator	Number of children aged 0–17 who enter foster care in a 12-month period who discharged within 12 months to reunification, living with a relative, or guardianship (this denominator is the numerator generated for the measure “permanency in 12 months for children entering fostercare” excluding those who left care to adoption)
Numerator	Of the children in the denominator, the number of children who reenter foster care within 12 months of discharge
Exclusions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children in care whose initial foster care episode lasted less than 8 days are excluded from the reentry analysis. • Children who enter care at age 18 or older are excluded. • Children whose discharge from their first foster care episode did not have a discharge reason are excluded. • Children who reenter foster care within the same reporting period are excluded, as the AFCARS reporting structure does not support reporting of the discharge reason. • Children whose date of latest removal for the reentry episode is reported as being before the date of discharge for the prior episode are excluded. • Children who reenter foster care at age 18 or older are not counted as a reentry into foster care for this measure.
Notes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a child has multiple reentries within 12-months of discharge, only his/her first reentry is selected. • Reentry is based on children who discharge from foster care to reunification, to live with a relative, or to guardianship. Discharges to adoption are not included because they cannot be tracked reliably since some states issue new child identifiers if a child who was previously adopted enters foster care. • Youth entering at age 17 who turn 18 while in care or discharge at age 18 are not considered reunified.
12-month cohort of children whose outcome is evaluated	Children who enter care during the 12-month period of interest, defined by the first two AFCARS files

Title	Placement Stability
Syntax file	CFSR 3 – 3 Observed perf for placement stability.sps
Data files required for each cohort of interest	Two consecutive 6-month AFCARS submissions
Definition	Of all children who enter foster care in a 12-month period, what is the rate of placement moves per 1,000 days of foster care?
Denominator	Among the children who enter foster care in a 12-month period, the total number of days these children were in foster care as of the end of the 12-month period
Numerator	Of children who entered foster care during a 12-month period, the total number of placement moves during the 12-month period
Exclusions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children in care fewer than 8 days are excluded. • Children who enter care at age 18 or older are excluded. • For youth who enter at age 17 and turn 18 during the period, any time beyond the 18th birthday is excluded. • The initial removal from the home (and into care) is not counted as a placement move. • Days in care for which the AFCARS file does not have placement information are excluded.
Notes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only placement settings that are required to be counted in the AFCARS file are used for this indicator. If the child is moved to a living arrangement or setting that would not result in the state increasing the number of placement settings reported in AFCARS, those moves are not included in this indicator (e.g., trial home visit episodes; runaway episodes; respite care and changes in a single foster family home's status, for example, to reflect a licensing change from a foster care home to a home dually licensed for adoption). • When a child experiences a second foster care episode during the 12-month period, and the end date of the first foster care episode is reported in AFCARS element 20 (date child was discharged from last foster care episode) of the second 6-month file, then the number of days in foster care and corresponding count of placement moves for the initial foster care episode are calculated using the last day of the first 6-month AFCARS submission. The number of placement moves is based on the reported count in the first 6-month file.
12-month cohort of children whose outcome is evaluated	Children who enter foster care during the 12-month period