

MINISTRY OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT PERFORMANCE INDICATOR REFERENCE GUIDE

November 2016



Ministry of
Children and Family
Development

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1.01 Spare Capacity in Licensed Child Care Spaces¹

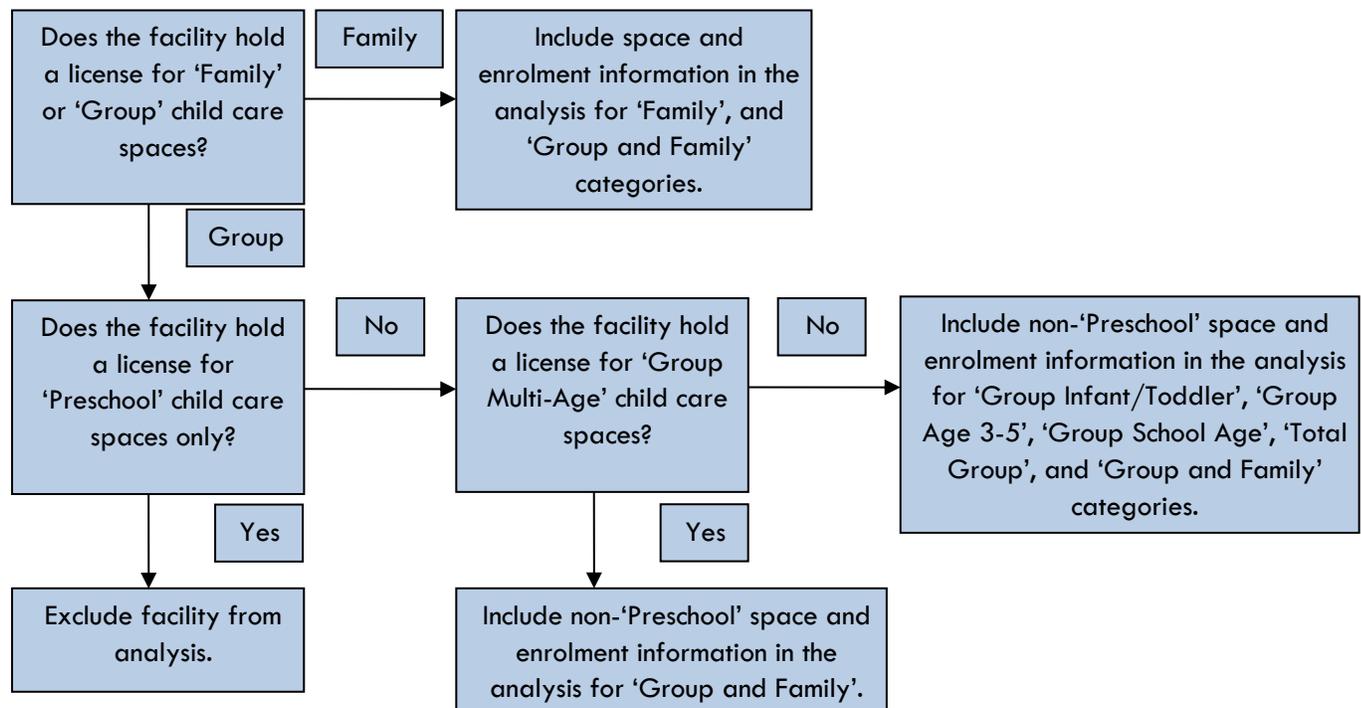
Indicator: A child care facility's **Utilization Rate** is determined by dividing its total enrolments for the month by the number of times a child care space can be used in a month. Two part time enrolments are assumed to be equivalent to one full time enrolment; 100% utilization of one child care space is assumed to be twenty-two full time equivalent enrolments in a month.

For example, a child care facility with one child enrolled full time in each child care space, for twenty-two days in a month will have a utilization rate of 100% (as will a facility with two children enrolled part time in each child care space, for twenty-two days in a month).

Rationale: Child care space utilization rates offer a proxy for the appropriateness of the amount and combination of types of child care spaces available in the province. Efficient use of child care spaces will be reflected in high utilization rates.

Indicator Notes

This indicator uses child care space and enrolment figures from CCOF contracted child care facilities. Licensed 'preschool' child care spaces have been excluded from these calculations as preschool facilities may be open on a part time basis either with morning and/or afternoon sessions, and from one to five days per week. For the calculations of utilization rates by group age cohorts, facilities with 'group multi-age' spaces have been excluded as it cannot be determined which spaces a facility's reported enrolments are utilized in.



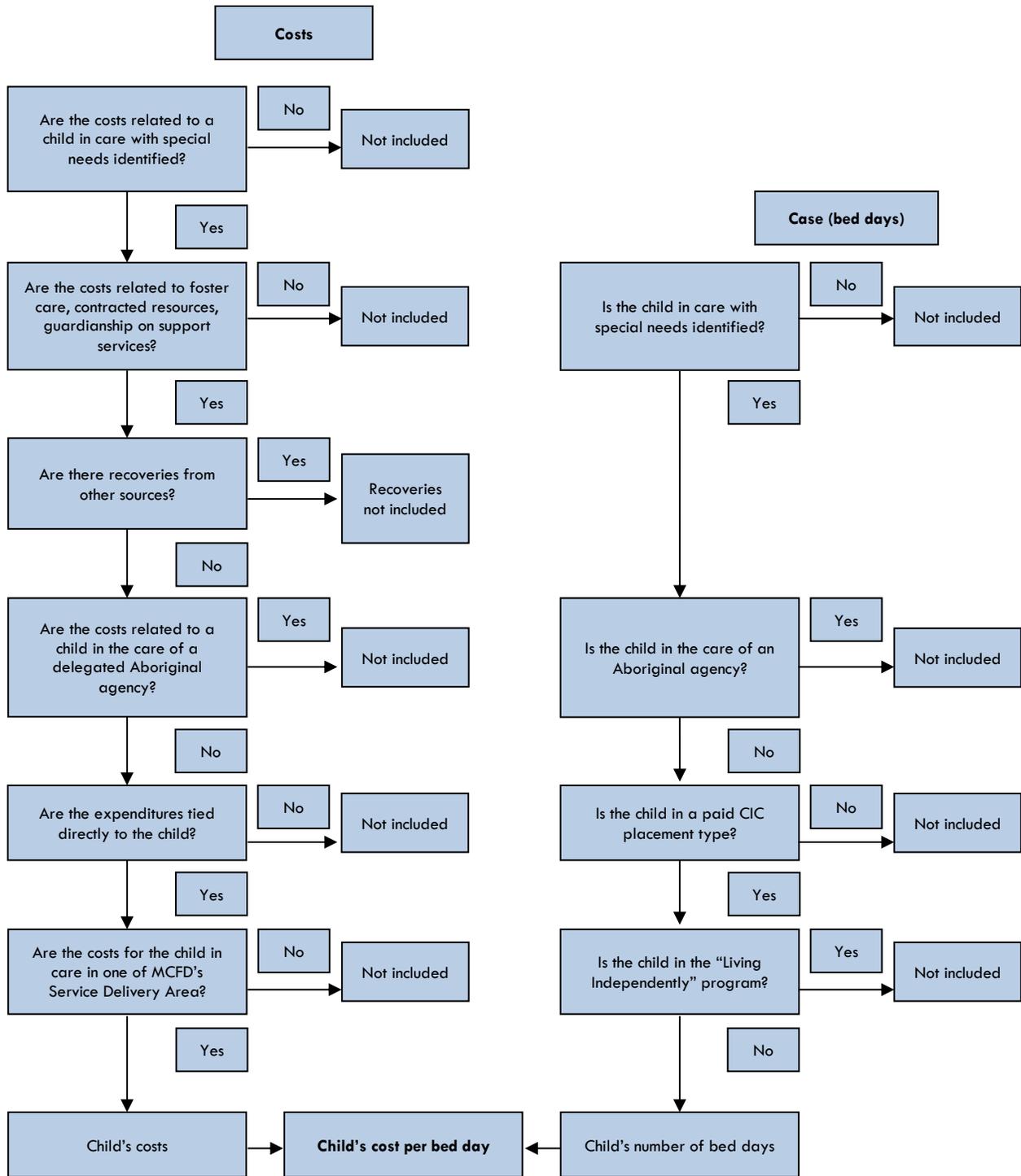
¹ Licensed child care spaces are spaces from Child Care Operating Funding Program (CCOF) contracted facilities and include both group and family facilities.

2.01 Cost Per Child and Youth in Care with Special Needs

Indicator: Median cost per day and full year spent living in a residential placement for children and youth in care that have been identified as having special needs (excludes children in the care of delegated Aboriginal agencies). Costs are based on a rolling 12 month period.

Rationale: Comparing costs between SDAs helps to identify cost pressures so that they can be effectively managed. There are various sources of cost pressures, for example a shortage of foster parents with specific skills in some areas that translates into a higher usage of more expensive contracted resources. Other examples include the use of exceptional payments to service providers and the level of care required by the current caseload composition.

Indicator Notes



Excludes the cost for children that are not in residential placements (i.e. children living independently, hospital, with relatives, etc.), children in the care of delegated Aboriginal agencies, recoveries from other sources, and the cost of funded unutilized beds. A child in care is deemed to have special needs if he or she meets at least one of the following criteria:

- 1) the child has a documented developmental disability;
- 2) the child has an autism diagnosis or receives autism funding;
- 3) the child is eligible for the At Home Program;
- 4) the child is in care with a Program Service code of CYSN;
- 5) the child is in care under a special needs agreement; and
- 6) the child is eligible for, or receiving Child Disability Benefits.

This measure may change retroactively to accurately reflect the latest data.

3.01 Child and Youth Mental Health Services Client Service Satisfaction

Indicator: Satisfaction of surveyed CYMH clients as reported by them in service satisfaction surveys.

This indicator reports on the satisfaction of the CYMH clients who were surveyed at the end of their service period. Satisfaction on the following aspects of the service is assessed:

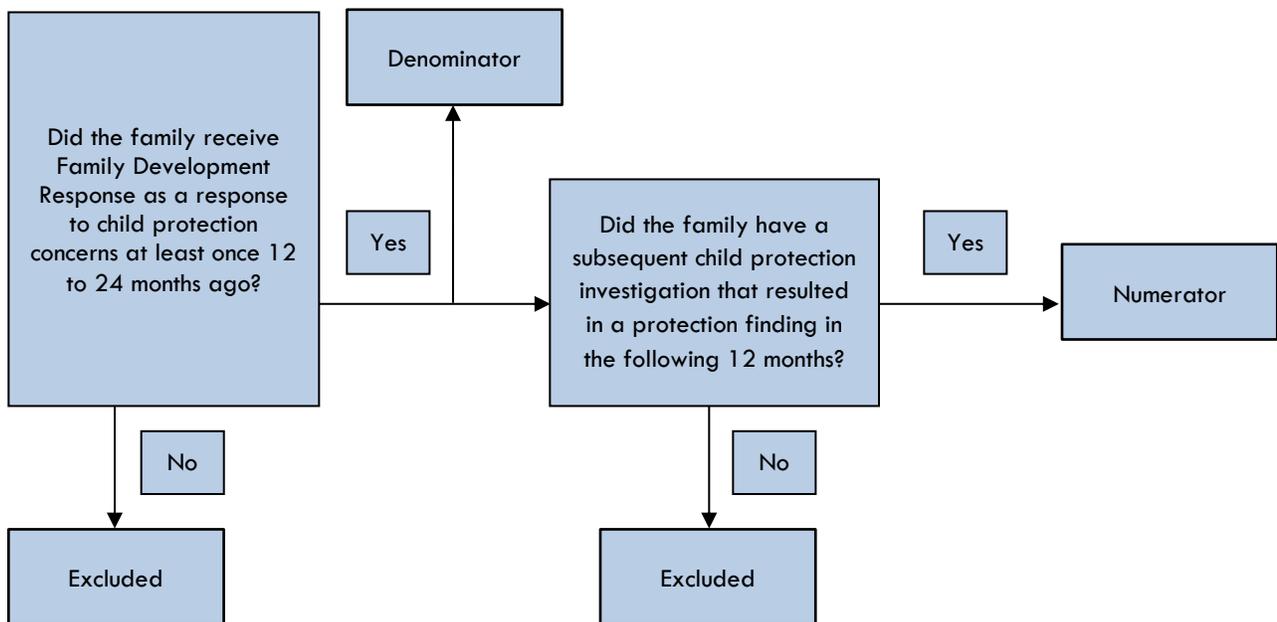
- Convenience of location
- Wait times
- Time of day of service
- Courtesy/Respect
- Information provided
- Coping skills learned
- Inclusive decision making
- Helpfulness of service
- Overall quality of service

4.01 Proportion of Families with a Closed Family Development Response with a Subsequent Investigation and Protection Finding in the Next 12 Months

Indicator: The percent of families who received FDR as a response to child protection concerns 12 to 24 months ago and then had a subsequent Child Protection Investigation resulting in a protection finding in the following 12 months. As FDR is an established approach to keeping children and youth safe it is expected that this indicator value will be low.

Rationale: Family Development Response (FDR) is an approach to responding to child protection reports where an investigation is not required. Based on strong evidence, FDR is a shift from an over reliance on investigation and removing children from their families to a range of responses and community based options intended to keep children safe within their families and communities.

Indicator Notes

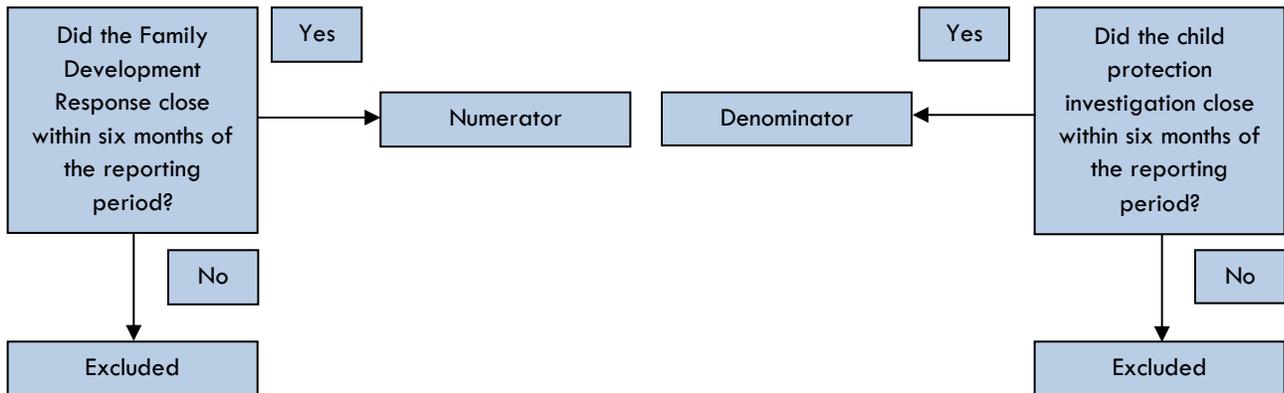


4.02 Ratio of Family Development Response (FDR) to Child Protection Investigation

Indicator: The ratio of closed Family Development Response to closed child protection investigations, rolling six month period.

Rationale: A number of families need extra support to provide safe and nurturing care for their children. Under the Child, Family and Community Service Act, child welfare workers assess every report about a child's need for protection and respond through the Child Protection Response Model with a variety of approaches including: Family Development Response (FDR), Child Protection Investigation Response and Youth Services Response. FDR is the preferred response when the circumstances do not involve severe abuse or neglect and families are able and willing to participate in collaborative assessment and planning. This performance indicator compares the use of FDR to the use of investigations. The ratio rises as the use of FDR increases and the use of investigations decreases.

Indicator Notes



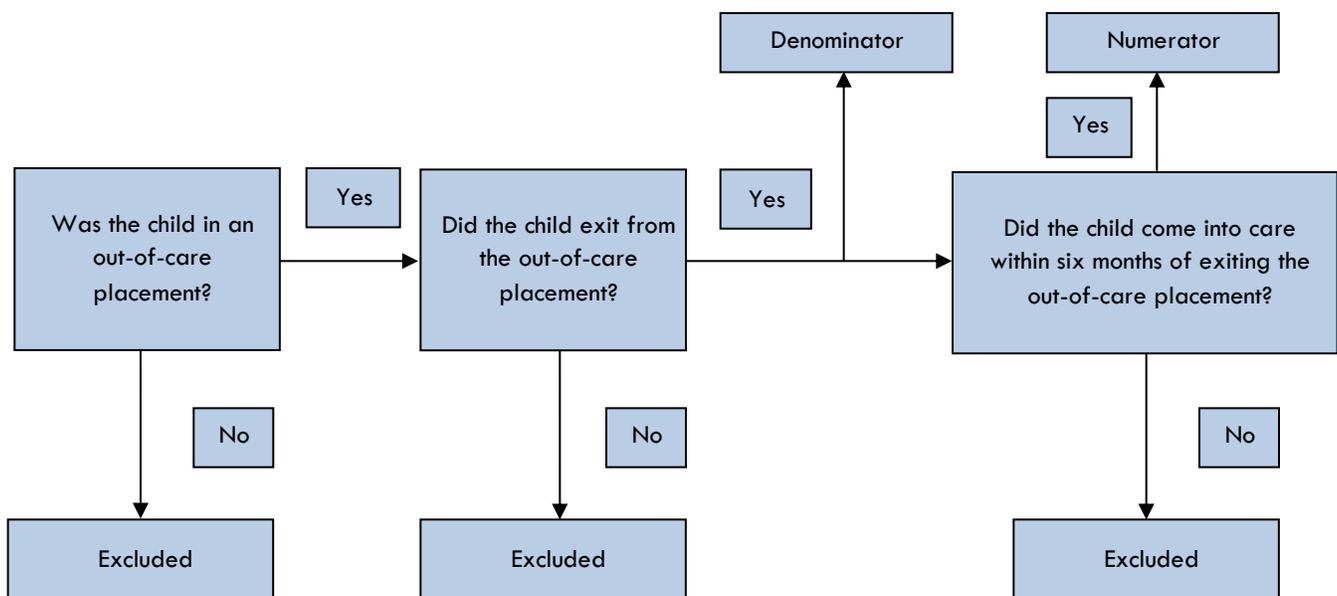
4.06 Children Admitted into Care that Previously had a Recent Out-of-Care Placement

Indicator: Proportion of children who exit from an out-of-care placement over a 12 month period and then enter care within six months of exit.

Rationale: Permanent, stable relationships are a major determinant of whether children feel safe and secure and therefore, of well-being overall. If a child has to leave her parental home, the ministry or delegated Aboriginal agency strives to place the child with people who know the child and will maintain a positive, life-long relationship with them, their families and communities, thereby minimizing disruptions to children and their families.

When a child needs to leave their parental home because they are at risk of abuse or neglect or are temporarily unable to live with their parents, the ministry or delegated Aboriginal agency can, if appropriate, arrange for an out of care placement with extended family or close friends which is an alternate care arrangement to foster care. This indicates how effective out-of-care placements are at keeping children from further involvement in the child welfare system by examining the proportion children who come into care after leaving an out-of-care placement.

Indicator Notes



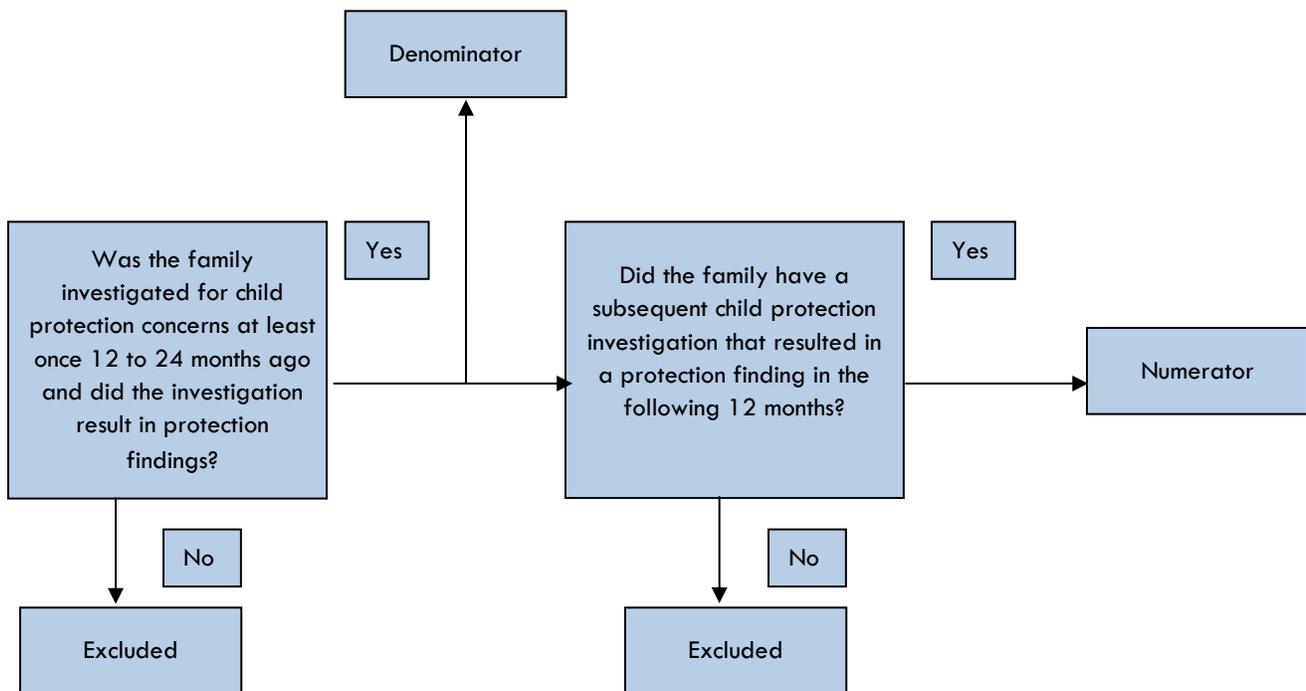
- The Out of Care caseload includes the following agreements and legal orders:
 - Extended Family Program Agreements
 - Interim Custody with Other under Director's Supervision – s. 35(2)(d)
 - Interim Custody with Other under Director's Supervision – s. 35(2)(d) - Consent
 - Temporary Custody with Other under Director's Supervision – s. 41(1)(b), 42.2(4)(c), 49(7)(b), 54.01(9)(b)
 - Temporary Custody with Other under Director's Supervision – s. 41(1)(b), 42.2(4)(c), 49(7)(b), 54.01(9)(b) - Consent
 - Extension to Temporary Custody with Other under Director's Supervision – s. 44(3)(b)
 - Extension to Temporary Custody with Other under Director's Supervision – s. 44(3)(b) – Consent

4.11 Proportion of Families Investigated with a Protection Finding with a Subsequent Investigation and Protection Finding in the Next 12 Months

Indicator: The proportion of families who were investigated for child protection concerns 12 to 24 months ago which resulted in a protection finding and then had a subsequent child protection investigation resulting in a protection finding in the following 12 months.

Rationale: A response to a child protection report may include: a referral to a community agency; a referral to family development response (FDR); or a child protection investigation. A child protection investigation is opened when a social worker has established a child's safety or health may be in immediate danger or may be vulnerable to serious harm. When it has been established that a child is at risk, the ministry works with the family to ensure child safety and reduce the risk of future harm by providing services that will address the needs of the child and their family. One of the ministry's core objectives is to protect children who have been victims of abuse or neglect from further maltreatment. This is an indicator of keeping children safe with families that have had protection findings by examining how many of these families have subsequently been investigated.

Indicator Notes

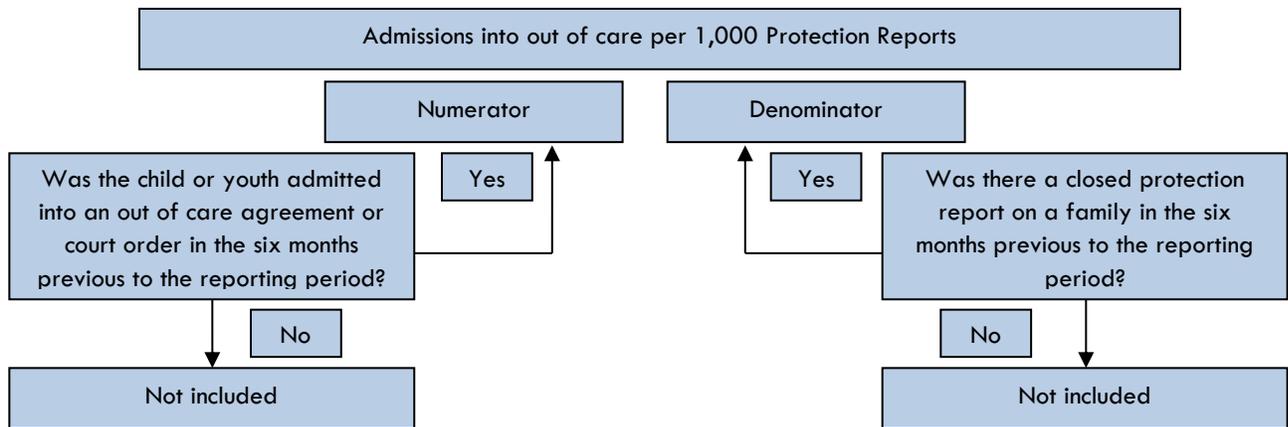
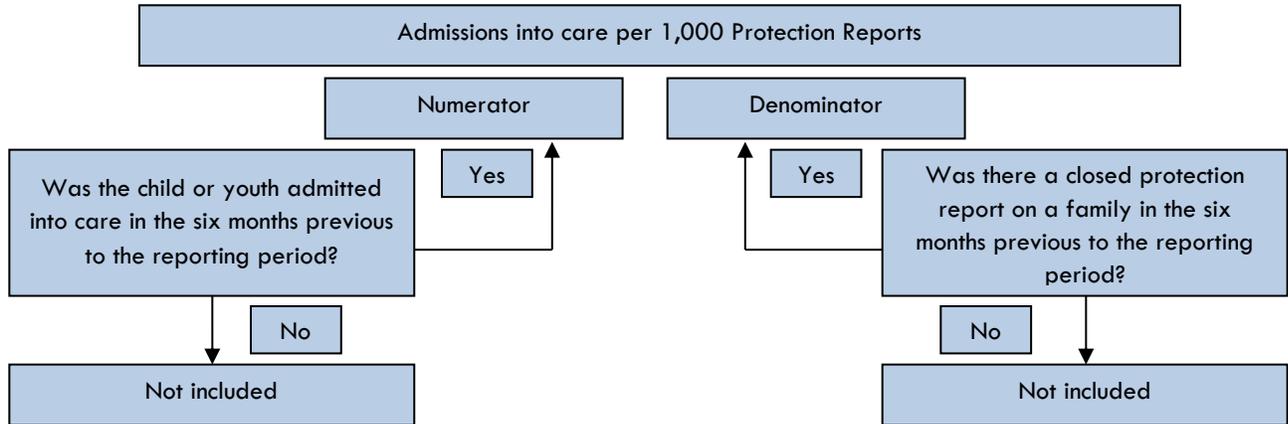


4.16 Relative Use of Admissions into Care and Admissions to Out-of-Care Controlling for Protection Reports

Indicator: Admissions into care per 1,000 protection reports, 6 month rolling period.

Rationale: When appropriate, out-of-care options are a best practice; the well-being of children and youth is, overall, better when children and youth can continue to live with their families. Sometimes children and youth can be placed in out-of-care options as a substitute for admission into care.

Indicator Notes



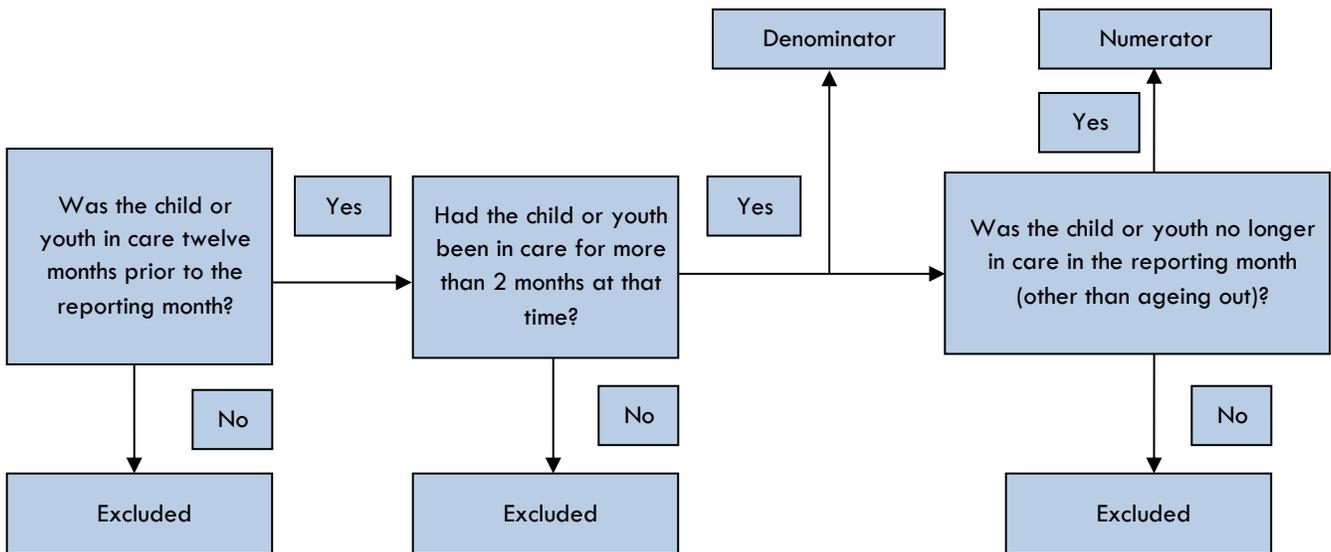
Out of care includes the following agreements and court orders: Extended Family Program Agreements; Interim Custody with Other under Director's Supervision – s. 35(2)(d); Interim Custody with Other under Director's Supervision – s. 35(2)(d) - Consent; Temporary Custody with Other under Director's Supervision – s. 41(1)(b), 42.2(4)(c), 49(7)(b), 54.01(9)(b); Temporary Custody with Other under Director's Supervision – s. 41(1)(b), 42.2(4)(c), 49(7)(b), 54.01(9)(b) - Consent; Extension to Temporary Custody with Other under Director's Supervision – s. 44(3)(b); and Extension to Temporary Custody with Other under Director's Supervision – s. 44(3)(b) - Consent.

5.01 Permanence

Indicator: Of all children and youth who were in care (with two months minimum duration) twelve months prior to the reporting period, the proportion that had exited from care by the reporting month for reasons other than ageing out (i.e., turning 19 years old). This is a leading indicator of permanency as, although the intention is permanency, it is possible that some of these children and youth return to care at some point in their future;

Rationale: Permanent, stable relationships are a major determinant of whether children feel safe and secure and therefore, of well-being overall. Permanence is achieved by leaving care through reunification, adoption or guardianship.

Indicator Notes



5.06 Recurrence of Maltreatment after Discharge from Out of Home Care

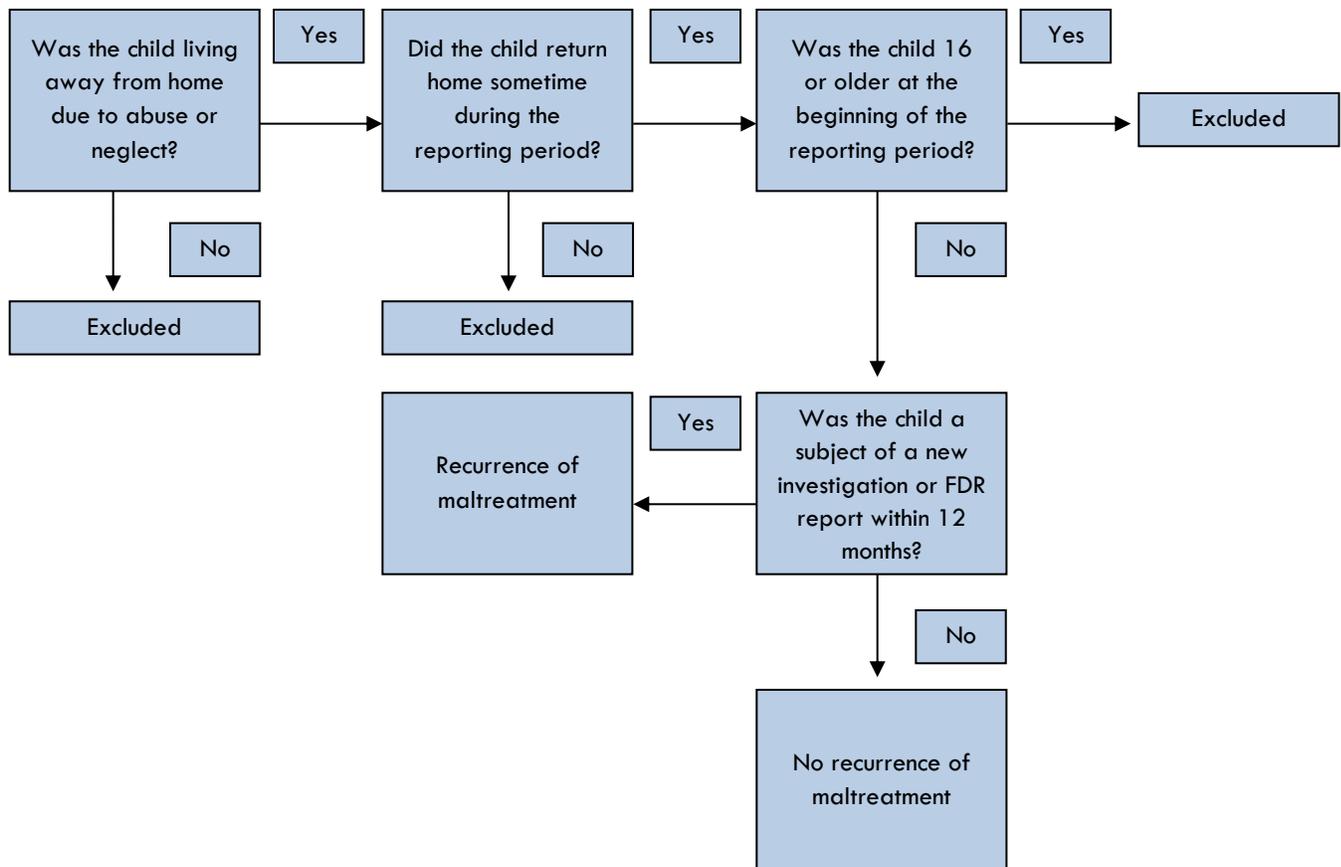
Indicator: Within one year of returning to their caregivers from being in “out-of-home-care”, the rate at which such children were the subject of a new child protection investigation or Family Development Response. “Out-of-Home-Care” refers to any ministry client who has to live away from their parents/home under a court order or agreement (includes both in care and out of care option clients).

For example, a child removed from his home in January 2009 returned home in April 2009 but whose family was involved a new child protection investigation or FDR in March 2010 is included.

Rationale: One of the ministry’s core objectives is to protect children that have been victims of abuse or neglect from further maltreatment. The maltreatment recurrence rate measures how often children that had to leave their homes because of abuse or neglect fell victim to further suspected abuse or neglect after reunification with their family. A lower maltreatment recurrence rate means that, of the children that returned home, more did so safely.

Indicator Notes

- Children 16 years or older are excluded from the base as they may not be available for the measure’s full cycle.



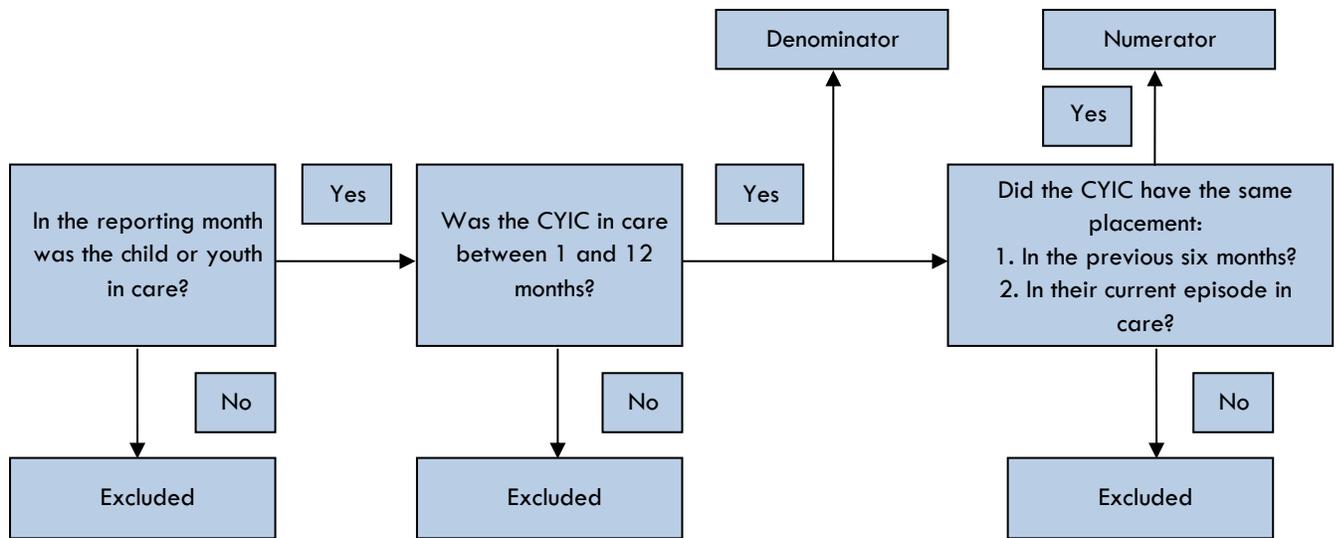
5.11 Placement Stability

Indicators: For CYIC with one to twelve months duration:

1. the proportion that did not experience placement changes within the previous six months of their current episode in care
2. the proportion that did not experience placement changes during their current episode in care.

Rationale: Placement stability is essential for children and youth to develop secure attachment to a caregiver (a fundamental determinant of their well-being) and sense of belonging. Some placement changes are necessary and can be beneficial in terms of ensuring the right fit for the child or youth, but generally avoiding or minimizing moves while in care is an important goal. Evidence shows that attachment to a caregiver for children under six can occur within as little as two-three months, and takes only slightly longer for older children and youth. Additionally, most moves occur within the first year of care.

Indicator Notes



The following moves are excluded from the indicator:

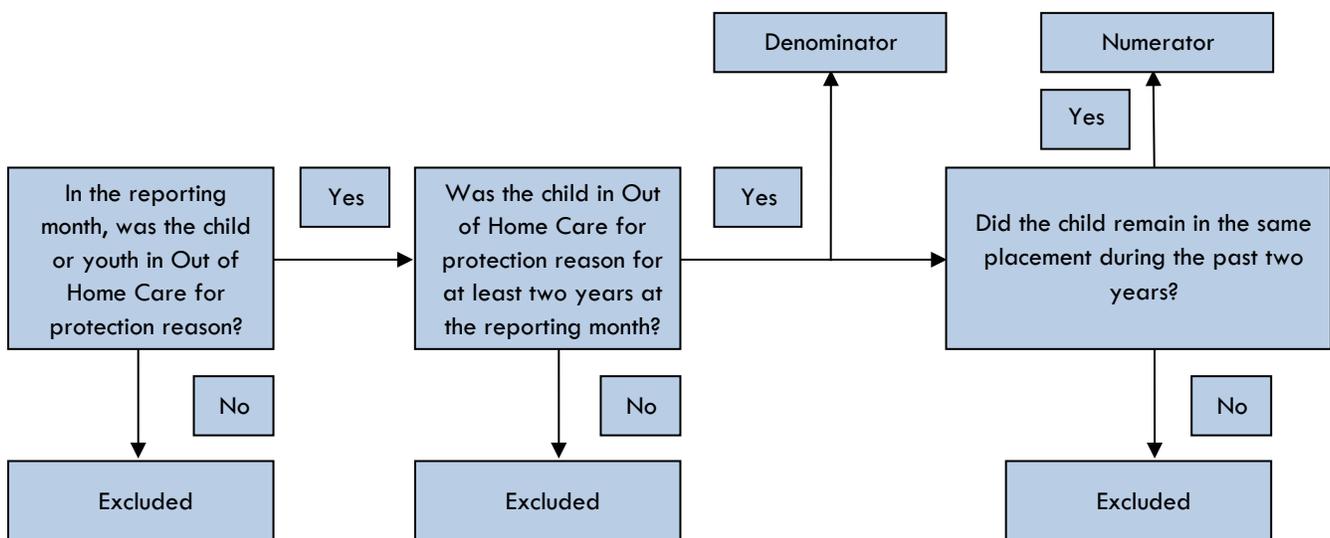
- a child's first placement
- change of caregiver address
- youth custody centre
- hospital
- AWOL
- pays own board
- independent living
- placements lasting three days or less.

5.11c Placement Stability – Children in Out of Home Care for at least Two Years with no Placement Change

Indicators: For children who had been in Out of Home Care for protection reason for at least two years at the reporting period, the proportion that did not experience placement changes during that time.

Rationale: Placement stability is essential for children and youth to develop secure attachment to a caregiver (a fundamental determinant of their well-being) and sense of belonging. Some placement changes are necessary and can be beneficial in terms of ensuring the right fit for the child or youth, but generally avoiding or minimizing moves while in care is an important goal. Evidence shows that attachment to a caregiver for children under six can occur within as little as two-three months, and takes only slightly longer for older children and youth. Additionally, most moves occur within the first year of care.

Indicator Notes



The following moves are excluded from the indicator:

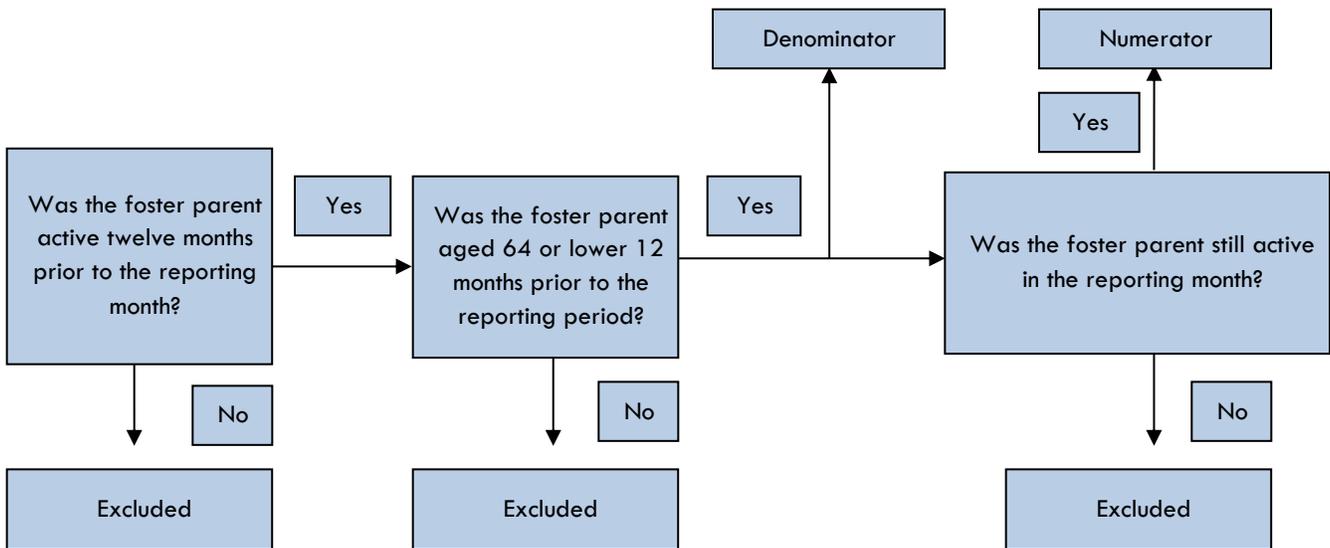
- a child's first placement
- change of caregiver address
- youth custody centre
- hospital
- AWOL
- pays own board
- independent living
- placements lasting three days or less.

5.12 Foster Parent Retention Rate

Indicator: Percentage of active foster parents that were 64 years or younger 12 months prior to the reporting month that were still active in the reporting month.

Rationale: Foster parent retention allows for stability of placement for the children and youth who cannot be placed in kinship care. Additionally, experienced foster parents may also be better able to provide complex care that is required for the children and youth in MCFD care. Effective support for foster parents is a significant factor in their decision to continue fostering over time. The effectiveness of this support will be reflected in rates of retention for foster parents from year to year.

Indicator Notes



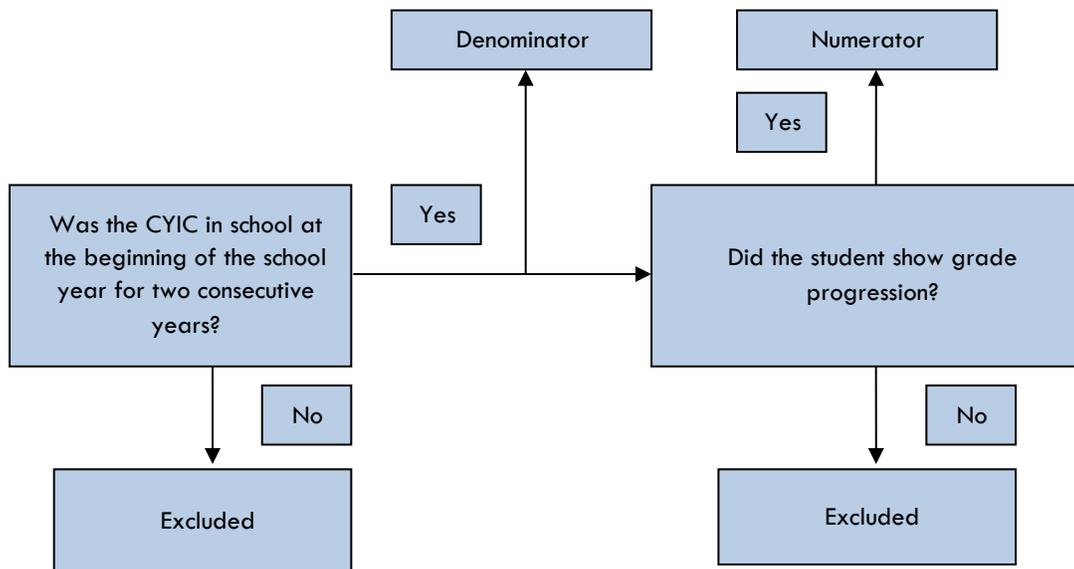
5.16 Grade Progression

Indicator: Proportion of all children in care who progressed at least one grade from the previous school year.

Rationale: MCFD and the Ministry of Education work together towards keeping CYIC in school and their learning progress at school. That CYIC are learning and progressing in school is an important outcome for the present and future well-being of CYIC. But it is also symptomatic of other aspects of the well-being and is a useful indicator to the ministry in its planning and service provision for each CYIC.

Indicator Notes

A student shows grade progression if they (A) entered school at a higher grade than they entered school in the previous year OR (B) they entered school in a “grade” curriculum and in the previous year they were in an “ungraded” curriculum (i.e. previous recorded grade was “Secondary” or “Elementary”).

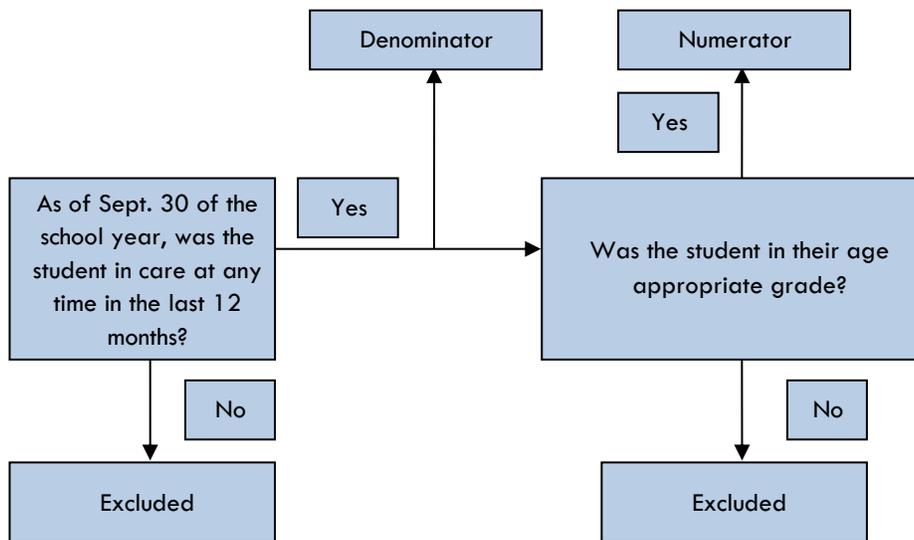


5.21 Age Appropriate Grade of Children and Youth in Care (CYIC)

Indicator: Proportion of all CYIC in their age appropriate grade on September 30 each year.

Rationale: Not only is education a determinant of healthy child development, long term well-being and social inclusion, it is also a good barometer of a child's current well-being. Children and youth may repeat a grade or delay starting school for many reasons. However, CYIC are more likely to fall behind in school because of their experiences both before and after they came into care. This indicator provides insight into how well children who have been in care are progressing in school over their entire school careers.

Indicator Notes



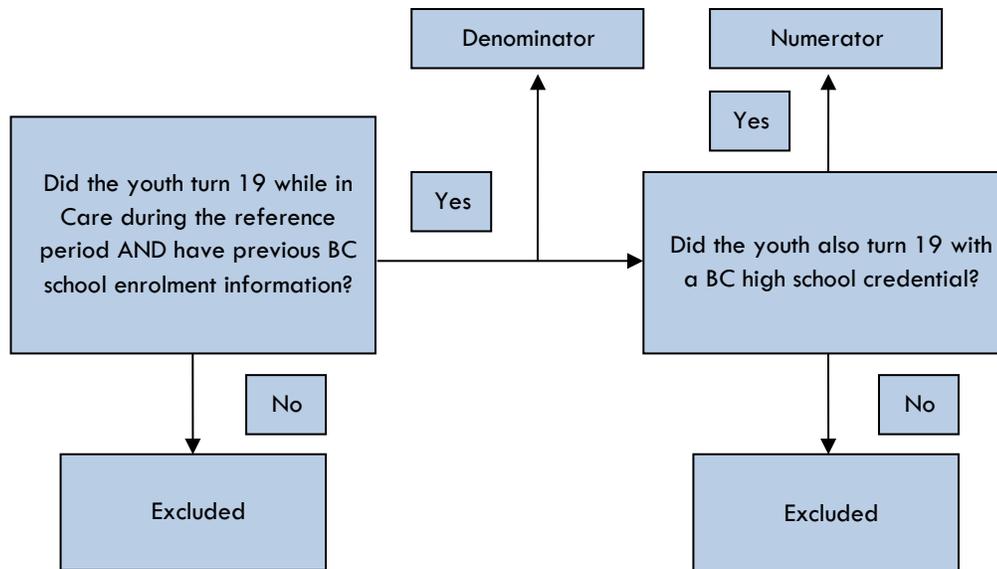
To be in an 'age appropriate grade' CYIC must be in the grade most common for their age (typically five years older than their grade). For example, a child eight years of age before the end of December of the school year is typically in grade three.

5.26 High School Credential for Former Youth in Care upon Turning 19

Indicator: Proportion of Ministry CYIC Clients that Turn 19 with a BC high School Credential (BC Adult Graduation Diploma, BC School Completion Certificate, or BC Secondary School Graduation).

Rationale: There is strong evidence that completing high school is conducive to general well-being throughout life. Furthermore, it is a good barometer of current general well-being for that particular cohort. MCFD works to maximize the educational attainment of CYIC.

Indicator Notes



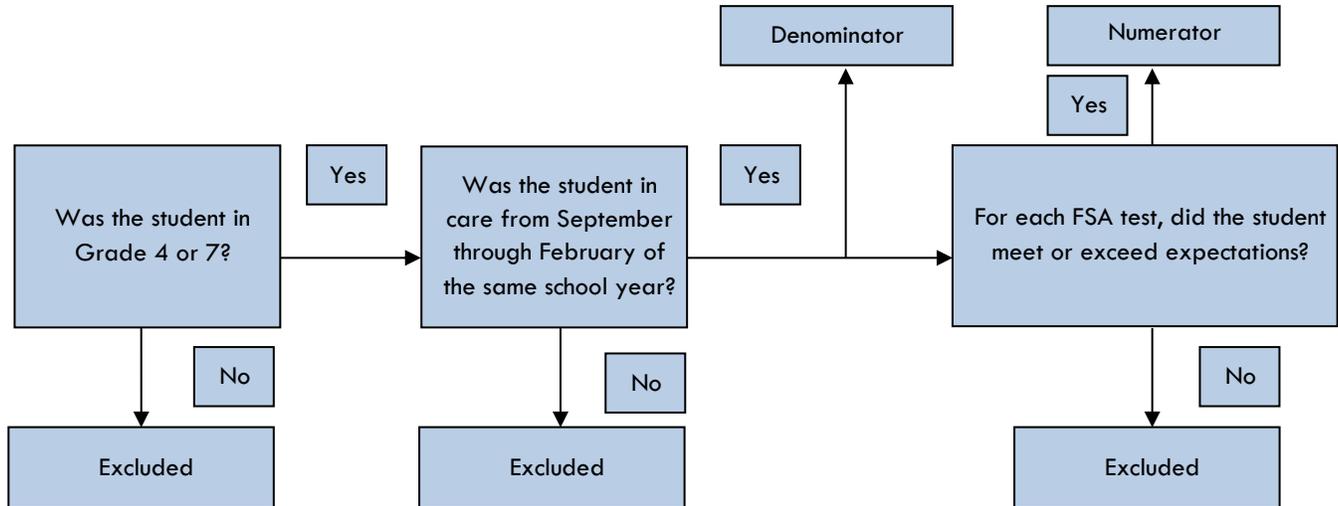
The ministry works to ensure that CYIC turning 19 gain independence, successfully complete secondary school, and gain life skills so that they can live independently as adults. This indicator measures how effective the ministry is at helping youth remain in and complete school by examining the proportion of youth who turn 19 while in care and with a BC High School Credential (BC Adult Graduation Diploma, BC School Completion Certificate, or BC Secondary School Graduation).

5.31 Foundation Skills Assessment for Reading, Writing and Numeracy, Grade 4 and Grade 7

Indicator: The proportion of CYIC from September to February of their grade 4 or grade 7 year who meet or exceed expectations for reading, writing and numeracy.

Rationale: Gauging the learning of CYIC provides MCFD with insight into their educational progress as well as some of their broader needs. FSA scores (even as early as Grade 4) have a high predictive power of high school completion.

Indicator Notes



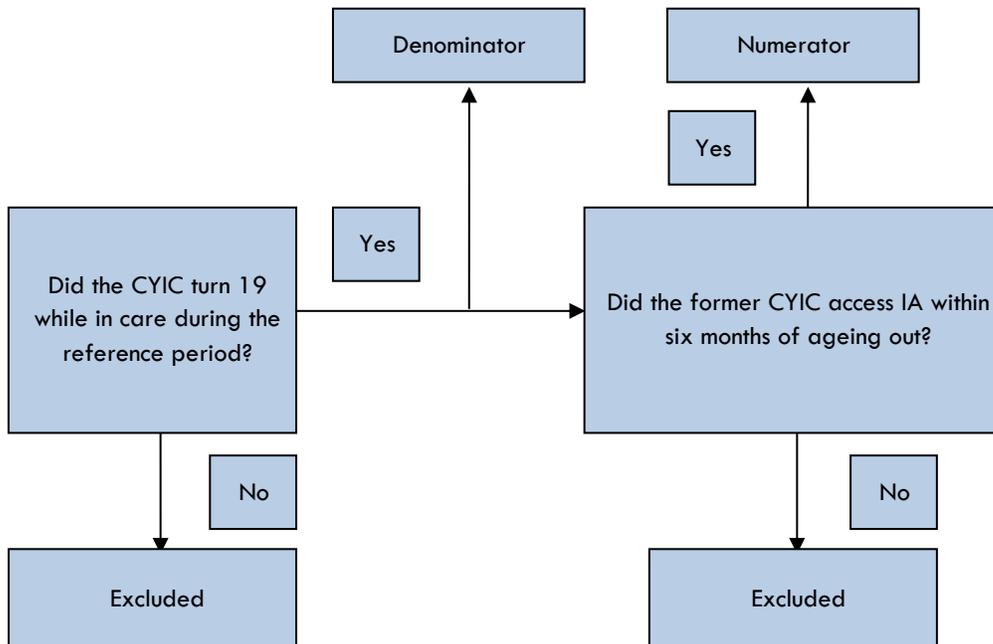
5.36 Claiming Income Assistance within Six Months of Ageing-out (CYIC)

Indicator: Of all youth in care who turned 19 years old during a six month reference period, the proportion that went on to claim Income Assistance within six months.

Rationale: The ministry assists and supports the transition to adulthood for any child in care who turns 19 years old. Among desired transitions are employment, further education or training not moving on to Income Assistance. This is an indicator of how effectively the ministry prepares youth to transition to adulthood.

Indicator Notes

These numbers include children in care that turned 19 and transitioned to CLBC (appropriate adult care system for their needs). While Aboriginal children in care that turn 19 years old with developmental disabilities and live on reserve are not eligible for CLBC services.



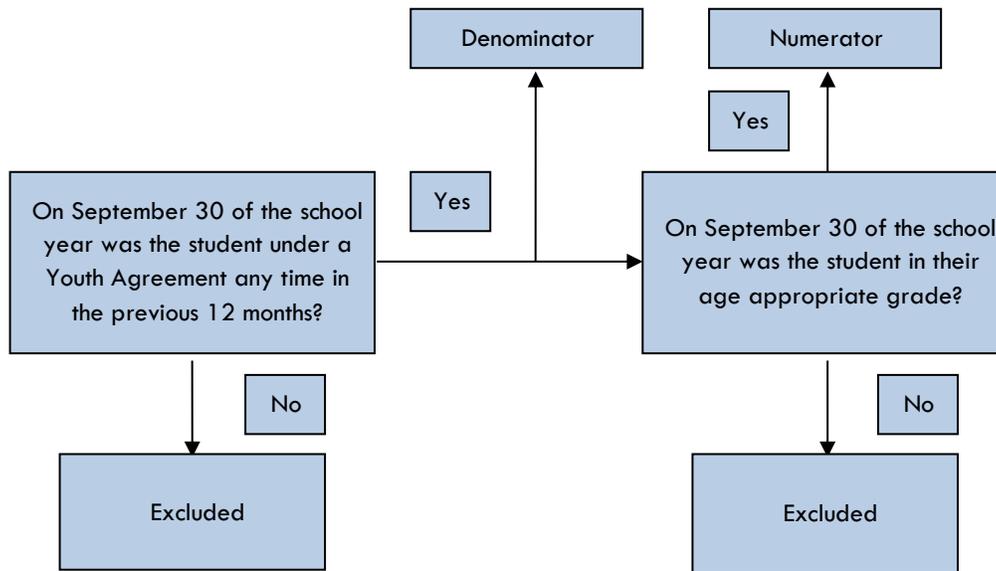
5.41 Age Appropriate Grade for Youth on Youth Agreements (YA)

Indicator: Proportion of all Youth on Youth Agreements (YA) who were in a grade appropriate for their age.

Rationale: Not only is education a determinant of healthy child development, long term well-being and social inclusion, it is also a good barometer of a youth’s current well-being. Youth may repeat a grade or perhaps had delayed starting school for many reasons. However, youth on a YA are more likely to fall behind in school because of their experiences both before and after they left their parental home. This indicator provides insight into where youth on a YA are at educationally and, when combined with grade progression (4B.1.4) and high school completion (4B.1.3) provides insight into how well these youth are progressing educationally.

Indicator Notes

Youth between the ages of 16 to 18 may enter into a Youth Agreement with the ministry when they cannot return home for reasons of safety. The agreement aims to support the youth gaining independence, returning to school, and/or gaining work experience and life skills so that they can continue to live independently.



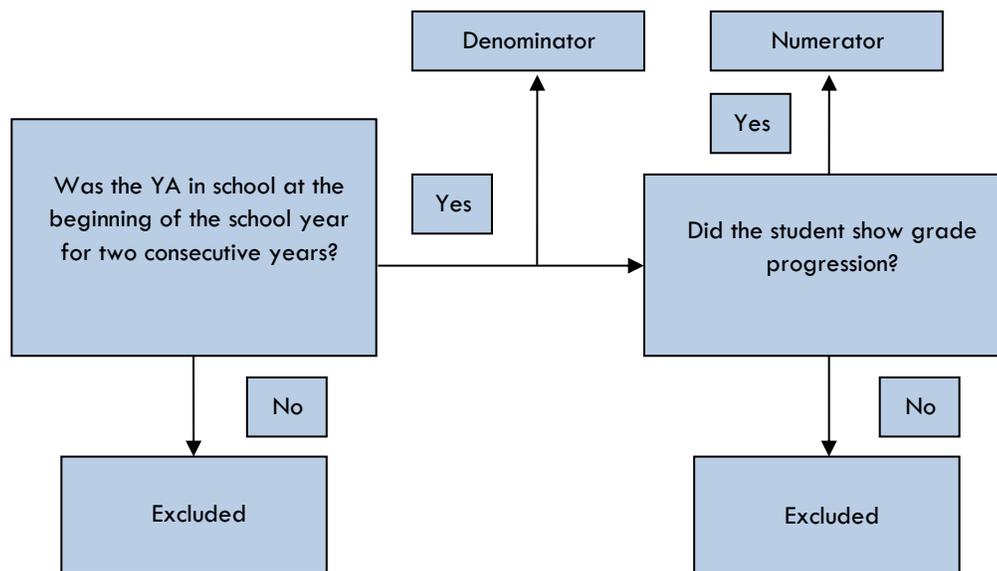
To be in an ‘age appropriate grade’ a youth on a youth agreement must be in the grade most common for their age (typically five years older than their grade). For example, a youth 16 years of age before the end of December of the school year is typically in grade eleven.

5.46 Annual Grade Progression of Youth on Youth Agreements

Indicator: Proportion of all Youth on Youth Agreements (YA) who progressed at least one grade from the previous school year.

Rationale: MCFD and the Ministry of Education work together towards keeping youth on YA in school and their learning progression at school. That youth on YA are learning and progressing in school is an important outcome for their present and future well-being. But it is also symptomatic of other aspects of their well-being and is a useful indicator to the ministry in its planning and service provision for each youth

Indicator Notes



A student shows grade progression if they (A) entered school at a higher grade than they entered school in the previous year OR (B) they entered school in a "grade" curriculum and in the previous year they were in an "ungraded" curriculum (i.e. previous recorded grade was "Secondary").

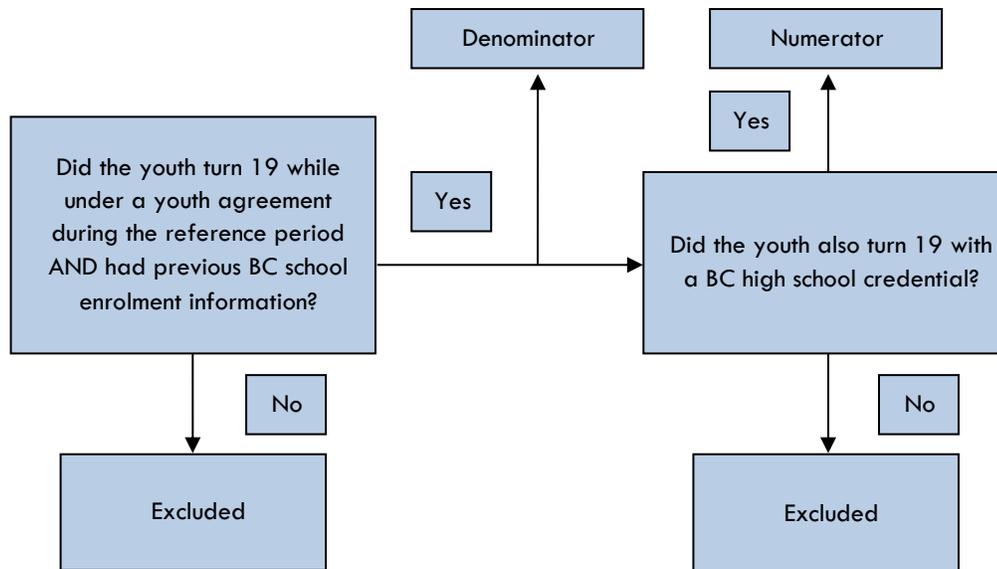
Youth between the ages of 16 to 18 may enter into a youth agreement with the ministry when they cannot return home for reasons of safety. The agreement aims to support the youth gaining independence, returning to school, and/or gaining work experience and life skills so that they can continue to live independently.

5.51 High School Credential for Youth on Youth Agreements

Indicator: Proportion of Ministry YA Clients that turn 19 with a BC high School Credential (BC Adult Graduation Diploma, BC School Completion Certificate, or BC Secondary School Graduation).

Rationale: There is strong evidence that completing high school is conducive to general well-being throughout life. Furthermore, it is a good barometer of current general well-being for that particular cohort. MCFD works to maximize the educational attainment of youth on YA.

Indicator Notes



Youth between the ages of 16 to 18 may enter into a youth agreement with the ministry when they cannot return home for reasons of safety. The agreement aims to support the youth gaining independence, returning to school, and/or gaining work experience and life skills so that they can continue to live independently. This indicator measures how effective youth agreements are at helping youth remain in and complete school by examining the proportion of youth who turn 19 while under a youth agreement and with a BC High School Credential (BC Adult Graduation Diploma, BC School Completion Certificate, or BC Secondary School Graduation).

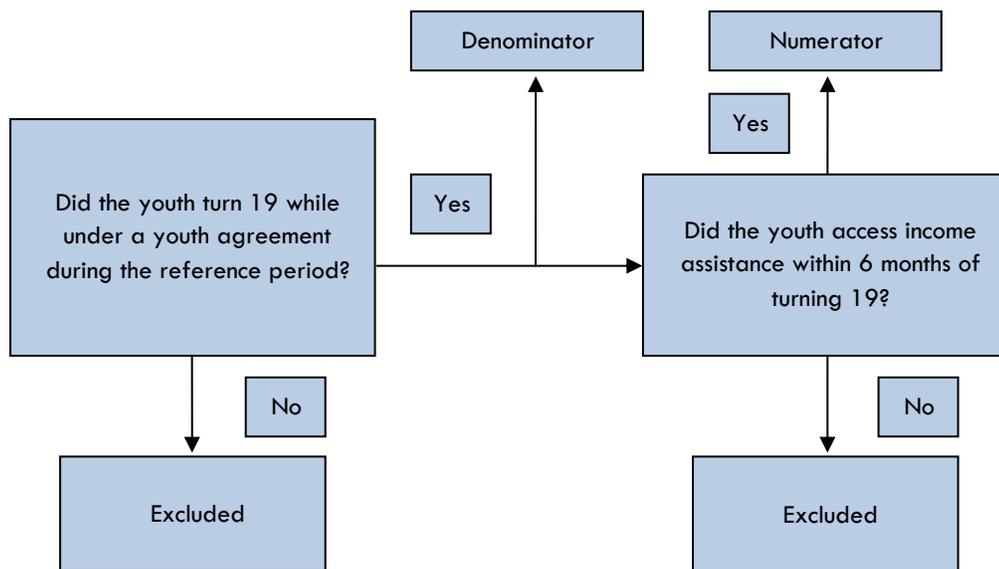
5.56 Youth who Claim Income Assistance within Six Months of Ageing-out of Youth Agreements

Indicator: Of all Youth on Youth Agreements (YA) who turned 19 years old during a six month reference period, the proportion that went on to claim Income Assistance within six months.

Rationale: The ministry assists and supports the transition to adulthood for any child in care who turns 19 years old. Among desired transitions are employment, further education or training not moving on to Income Assistance. This is an indicator of how effectively the ministry prepares youth to transition to adulthood.

Indicator Notes

A youth agreement is a legal agreement between the ministry and a young person between the ages of 16 to 18 who cannot return home to their family for reasons of safety. The purpose of the agreement is to help the youth gain independence, return to school, and/or gain work experience and life skills so that they can continue to live independently.

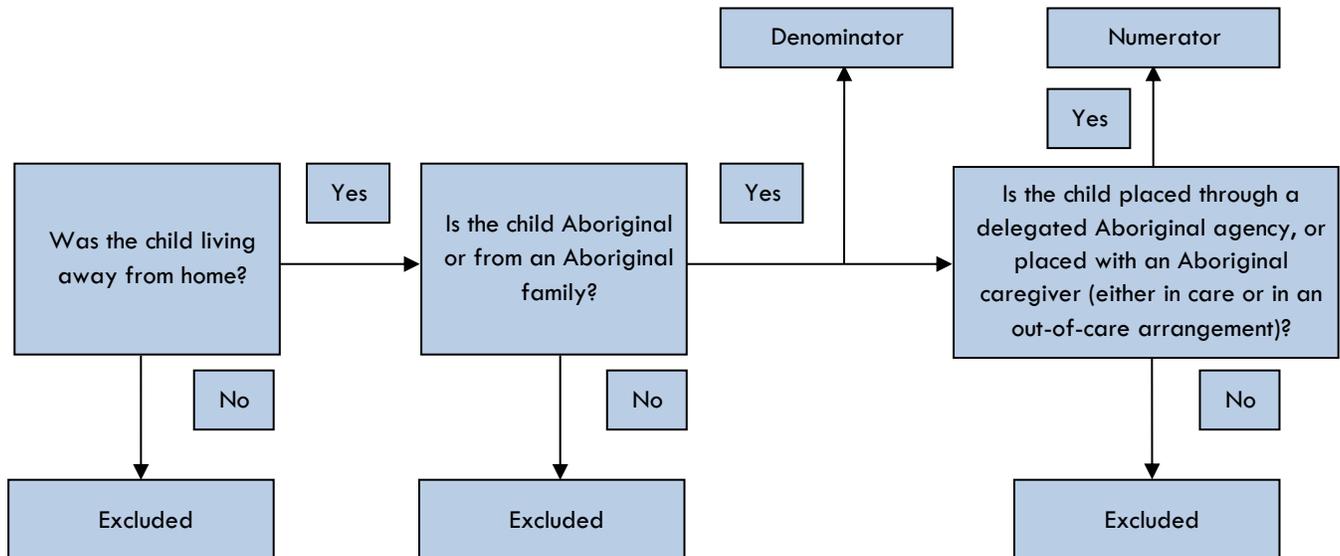


5.61 Aboriginal Children Cared for by Aboriginal Communities and Service Providers

Indicator: Percent of Aboriginal CYIC who receive services delivered by delegated Aboriginal agencies, Aboriginal service providers or Aboriginal friends and family, rolling six month period.

Rationale: Aboriginal children and youth, who have had to leave their parental home, need cultural safety through an Aboriginal service system that strongly connects them to their culture and traditions. This connection is important to identity and belonging and consequently overall well-being.

Indicator Notes



5.66 Cost per Child and Youth in Care (Excluding Children with Special Needs)

Indicator: The average cost per day and full year spent in a residential placement per child and youth in care, excluding those identified with special needs. Costs are based on a rolling 12 month period.

Rationale: Cost pressures often stem from a shortage of skilled foster parents, which translates into a higher usage of more expensive contracted resources. Other factors that can impact costs per case include the use of exceptional payments to service providers and the level of care required by the current caseload composition.

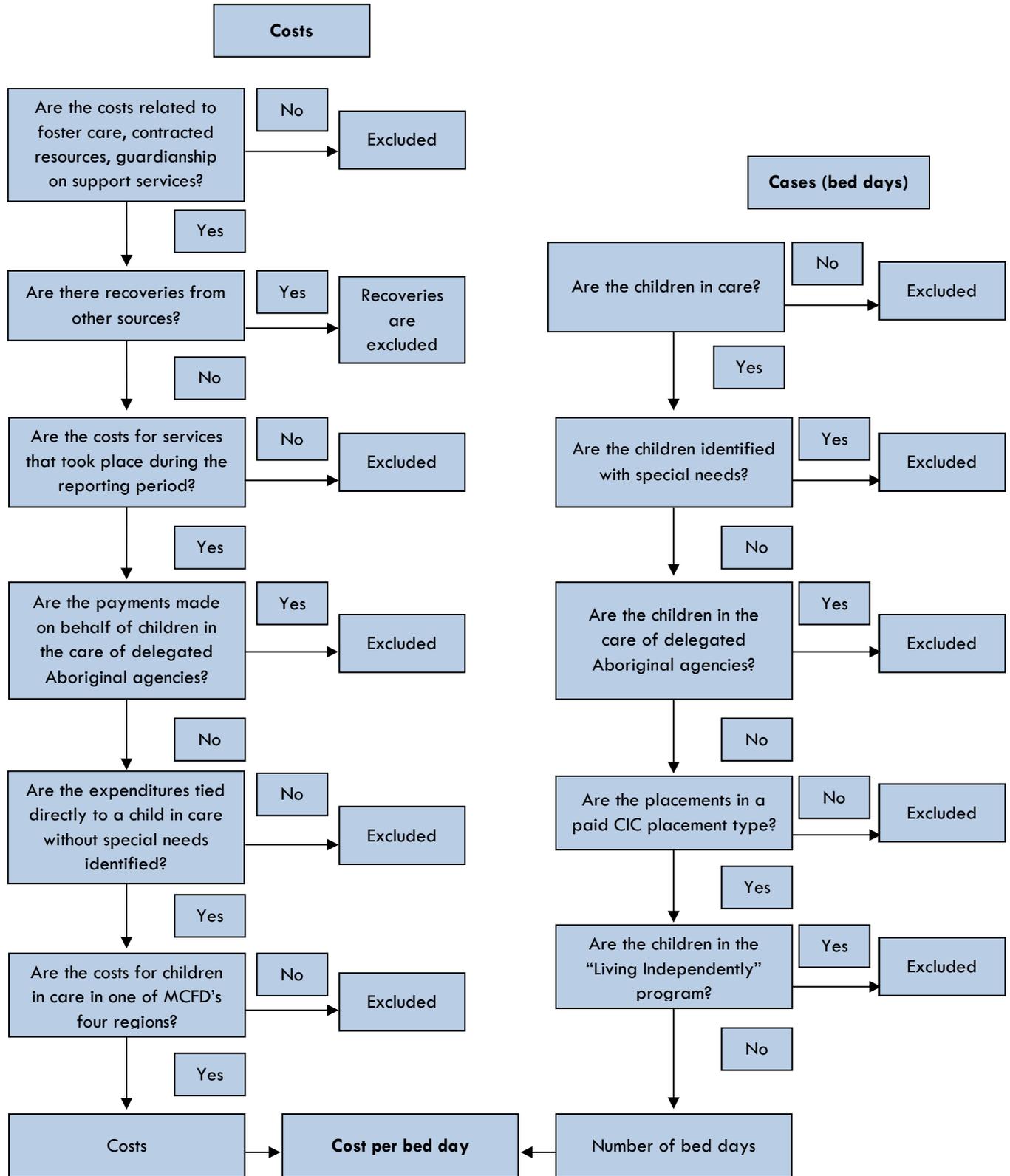
Excludes the cost for children that are not in residential placements (i.e. children living independently, hospital, with relatives, etc.), children in the care of delegated Aboriginal agencies, recoveries from other sources, and the cost of funded unutilized beds.

A child in care is deemed to have special needs if he or she meets at least one of the following criteria:

- 1) the child has a documented developmental disability;
- 2) the child has an autism diagnosis or receives autism funding;
- 3) the child is eligible for the At Home Program;
- 4) the child is in care with a Program Service code of CYSN;
- 5) the child is in care under a special needs agreement; and
- 6) the child is eligible for, or receiving Child Disability Benefits.

This measure may change retroactively to accurately reflect the latest data.

Indicator Notes



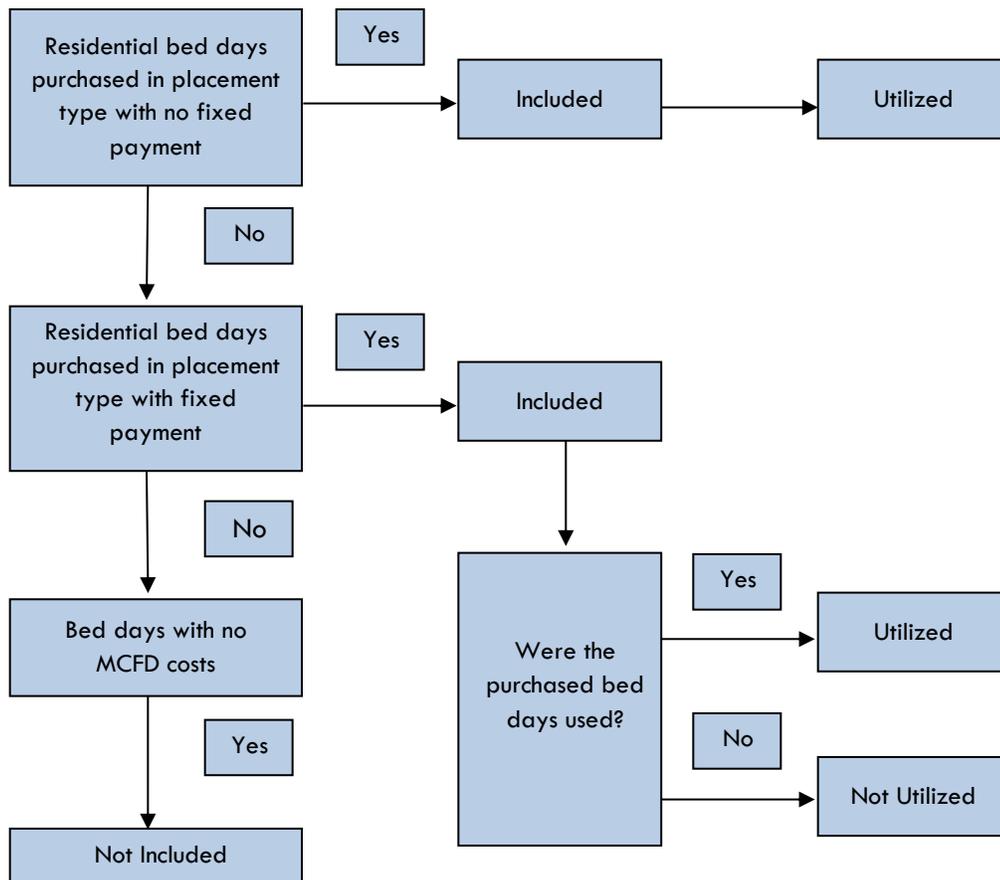
5.71 Funded Bed Utilization Rate

Indicator: Total number of bed days the ministry purchased and used, divided by the total number of bed days that the ministry purchased, over a rolling 12 month period. For contracts with no fixed payments (regular, restricted, and level one foster homes) the number of bed days used is equal to the number of bed days purchased. A bed is not considered vacant if it is held for a child that is temporarily away from a foster home but expected to return. The measure excludes bed days purchased by delegated Aboriginal agencies.

Rationale: In order to ensure sufficient quantities of appropriate homes for children and youth that come in to care the ministry needs to fund some empty beds. Foster parents with specialized skills are provided with a monthly fixed payment regardless of whether a child is living in the home.

This is an indicator of the ministry's ability to manage its contracts with foster care providers in order to optimize resources. Generally, a higher utilization rate (with sufficient capacity) is associated with more efficient use of foster home capacity.

Indicator Notes



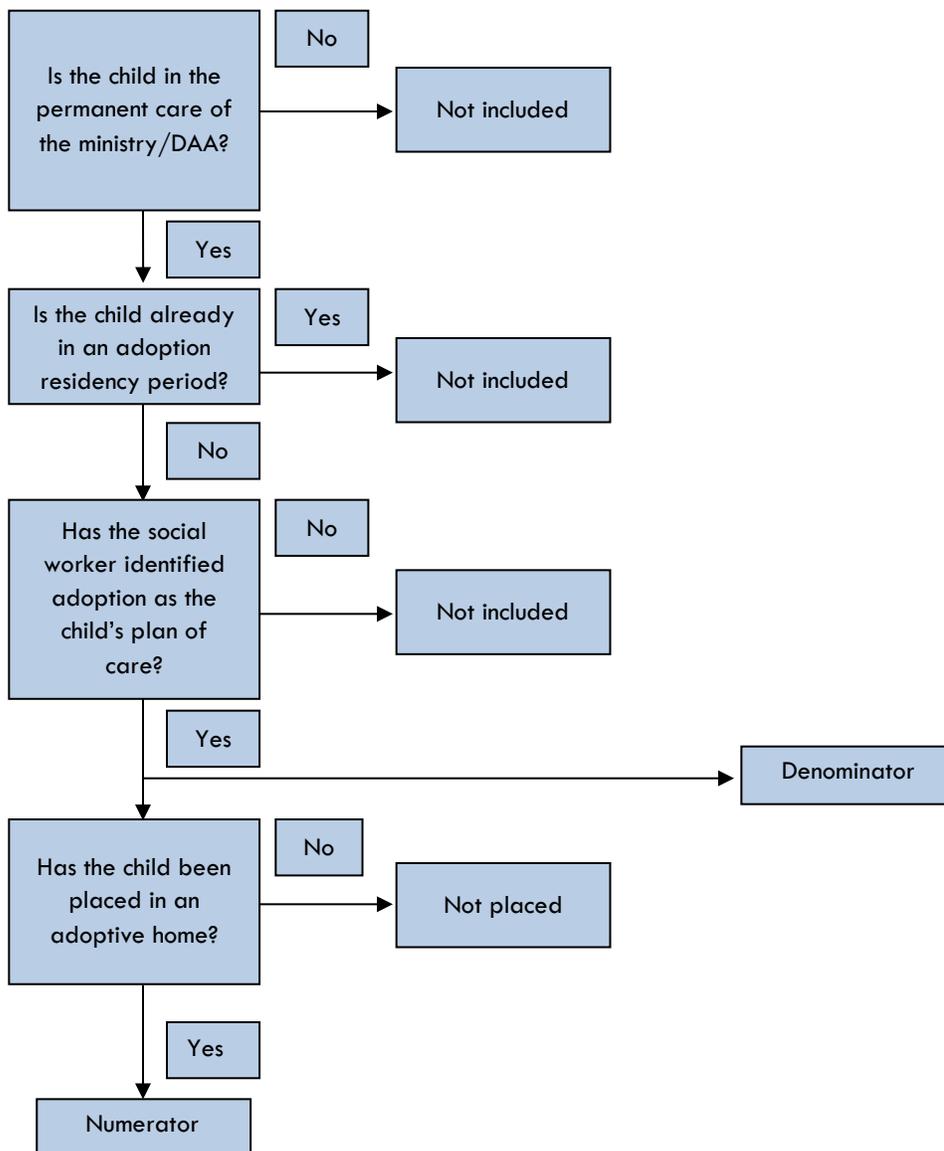
5.76 Percent of Children Eligible for Adoption Placed in Adoption Homes

Indicator: Percent of Children Eligible for Adoption Placed in Adoption Homes, 12 month rolling period.

Rationale: Evidence has shown that children require a stable and continuous relationship with a nurturing person or persons to maximize physical, social emotional and cognitive development. If this relationship is not possible with the birth family or other out of care options, then for children whom the ministry has legal permanent guardianship, adoption is an alternative.

Indicator Notes

Eligible children are defined as children in permanent care identified as having adoption as their plan of care at some point during the fiscal year, and not already in their adoption residency period. Although the adoption may not yet be completed from a legal perspective, a placement means the child has joined his or her new adoptive family. The legal completion occurs while the child is already with the new family.

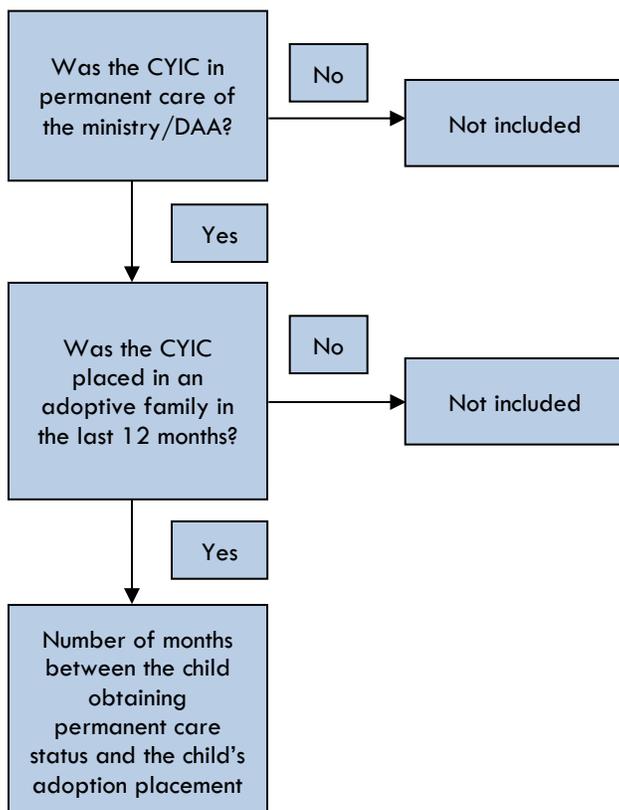


5.77 Average Wait Time for Children and Youth in Care to go from Permanent Care Status to Adoption Placement

Indicator: Of the Children and Youth in Care who were adopted over a rolling 12 month period, the average number of months they were in permanent care prior to being placed in their adoption home.

Rationale: For CYIC who are no longer able to return to their family, achieving permanency through adoption is a desirable option. Research has found that a longer history in out of home care, as well as a child's age at time of adoption are risk factors strongly associated with an adoption placement's chances for success, meaning that once it is determined that adoption is the best option for a child, it should take place without unnecessary delays.

Indicator Notes



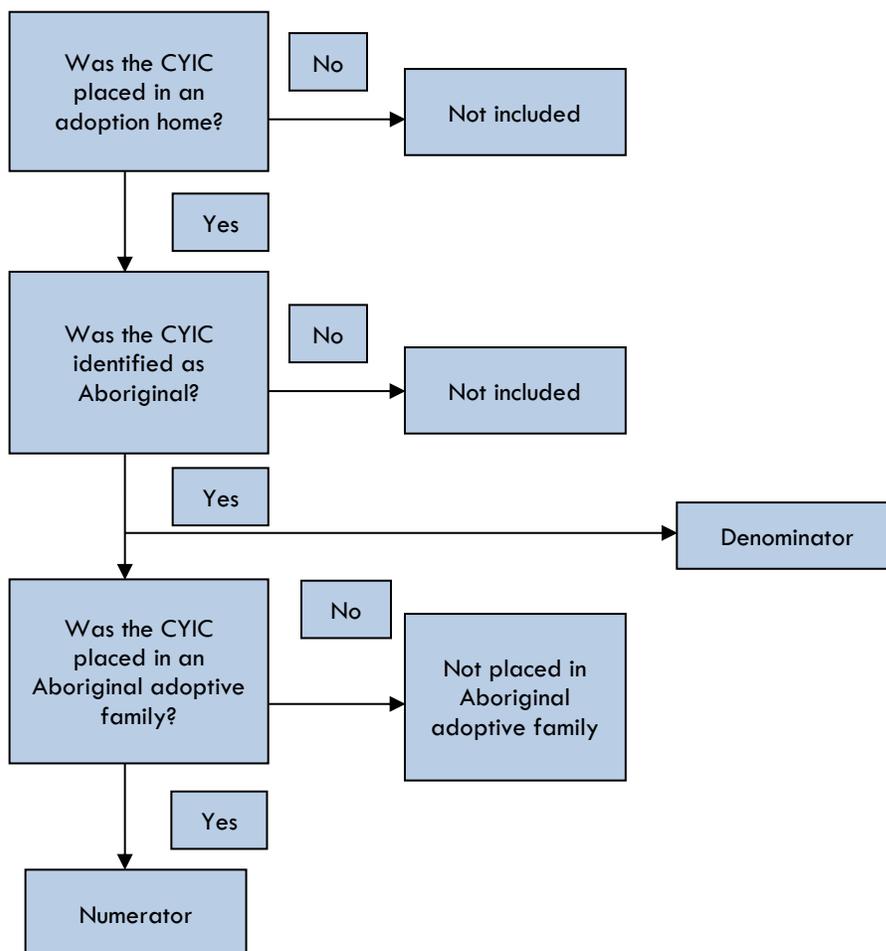
5.81 Proportion of Aboriginal Children and Youth Adopted to Aboriginal Families

Indicator: Percentage of adopted Aboriginal children who were placed with Aboriginal families, rolling 12 month period.

Rationale: Aboriginal children are more likely to be culturally safe when living in Aboriginal families. The ministry strives to place Aboriginal children that are eligible for adoption into Aboriginal families whenever possible.

Indicator Notes

Although the adoption may not yet be completed from a legal perspective, once placed, the child is living with his/her new adoptive family.



6.01 Five Year Recidivism of Formal Diversion Clients

Indicator: Clients receiving formal diversion services that did not commit a new offence within the following five years.

Rationale: Objectives of formal diversion include avoiding official labelling and processing, and providing services that help prevent a youth from re-offending.

6.06 Five Year Recidivism of First Community Sentence

Indicator: Clients receiving First Community Sentence services that did not commit a new offence within the following five years.

Rationale: One objective of a community sentence is to provide services that help prevent a youth from re-offending.

6.11 Five Year Recidivism of First Custody Sentence

Indicator: Clients receiving their first Custody Sentence Services that did not commit a new offence in the following five years.

Rationale: Recognizing that custody holds the highest risk population, one objective of custody services is to provide services that help prevent a youth from re-offending.

6.16 Youth Court Cases

Indicator: Youth Court Cases per 10,000 Youth Population

Rationale: Re-offending of low severity crime is best prevented when alternatives to court are applied, such as diversion. Effective community alternatives will reduce the rate of court cases relative to the crime rate.

6.21 Youth in Custody

Indicator: Youth in Custody per 10,000 Youth

Rationale: Committal to custody should be restricted to those youth that are the highest risk and who have the greatest likelihood of re-offending. Incarceration of lower risk youth can actually increase the likelihood of re-offending. Effective community alternatives will reduce and restrict the rate of youth in custody.