

New York State Office of Children and Family Services

FOR RELEASE: APRIL 3, 2008

Press Contact:

Edward Borges

edward.borges@ocfs.state.ny.us

Public Information Office

(518) 473-7793

Events Across State Focus on Keeping Children Safe - Commissioner Gladys Carrión Kicks Off Child Abuse Prevention Month -

New York State Office of Children & Family Services (OCFS) Commissioner Gladys Carrión, Esq., will address community leaders and direct service providers at a Child Abuse Prevention Month Kickoff on Friday, April 4, in Harlem. It will take place at the Adam Clayton Powell State Office Building, 163 West 125th St., 8th floor conference room, starting at 9 a.m.

“We must do more to prevent child abuse from happening in the first place,” Commissioner Carrión said. “Communities need good support systems that include early childhood development, parent support, maternal mental health services and paternal involvement.”

The morning-long program in Harlem will highlight preventive services programs including Forestdale Fathering Initiative, a comprehensive program that provides a wide range of support services to 350 fathers a year to get their lives on track and help them reconnect with their children; Inwood House, recognized as a leader and innovator in youth development, teen pregnancy prevention, and family support; Healthy Families New York Home Visiting Program, which gives a helping hand to new parents who are at risk of child abuse; and the Family Violence Prevention Program at Connect. FVPP, in collaboration with NYC Administration for Children’s Services, works with more than 50 child welfare contract agencies to enhance the safety of children and prevent their placement in foster care.

The statewide advocacy group Prevent Child Abuse New York will hold its annual New York State Child Abuse Prevention Conference, with the theme of "Possibilities," at the Albany Marriott from April 7-9. The New York State Children and Family Trust Fund, part of OCFS, is a conference co-sponsor. About 600 participants are expected at the conference, which inspires and equips professionals, advocates, parents and other caregivers with the latest abuse prevention, child protection, and parenting information.

Prevent Child Abuse New York Executive Director Christine Deys said: “We must do more than simply respond to cases of abuse through prosecution and intervention. We need to provide programs and policies that engage communities, strengthen families, and support parents in the important job of raising their children — that’s what Child Abuse Prevention Month is all about.”

Also, Prevent Child Abuse New York is encouraging participation in a national "Pinwheels for Prevention" campaign of Prevent Child Abuse America. Throughout April, children's organizations will be planting pinwheel gardens to symbolize commitment to truly preventative measures.

Events planned in the Syracuse region for Child Abuse Prevention Month include a wine and cheese tasting event April 7 at the Oswego County Child Advocacy Center. It will be an opportunity to view changes, meet staff, and learn about the services it provides to victims of child abuse and non-offending family members. On May 3, the advocacy center will sponsor a walk/run at Breitbeck Park Gazebo to raise awareness about child abuse prevention.

In Western New York, Erie County services staff and others will be sporting blue ribbons during the month to emphasize the importance of child abuse prevention efforts on all fronts. A blue ribbon is the national symbol for child abuse prevention. The communities of Olean and Wellsville are raising child abuse

prevention awareness with downtown banners. Public service announcements are playing on radio stations in Cattaraugus and Allegheny counties.

The Child Advocacy Center of Niagara County held a breakfast program, “Honoring Every Day Heroes,” to honor staff of the Child Abuse Intervention Project and Healthy Families Niagara Referral Partners.

Last Saturday (March 30), St. Bonaventure University Athletics partnered with local services providers to host a “Kids First Day” on the campus. There were numerous activities for children, and prevention information was distributed to parents.

OCFS reminds anyone suspecting child abuse or neglect in New York State to call the State Central Register (SCR), more commonly called the Child Abuse Hotline, at 1-800-342-3720. Individuals are urged to call local law enforcement authorities if a child is thought to be in immediate danger. More information on child abuse and child protective services is available on the Office of Children and Family Services website at www.ocfs.state.ny.us. The Office of Children and Family Services mission is to promote the well-being, safety, and permanency of New York's children and families by setting and enforcing policies, building partnerships, and funding and providing high-quality services. The agency is responsible for foster care; adoption; adoption assistance; child protective services, including operating the Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment; preventive services for children and families; services for pregnant adolescents; child care licensing and funding; and operating the state juvenile justice programs. The agency also is responsible for protective programs for vulnerable adults, including adult protective services and the Commission for the Blind and Visually Handicapped.

[Back to news main page](#)

[OCFS Home](#) | [About OCFS](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Accessibility](#) | [Use Disclaimer](#) | [Site Map](#)

New York State Office of Children and Family Services · 52 Washington Street · Rensselaer, New York
12144-2796