

New York State Office of Children and Family Services

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OCFS ANNOUNCES \$4.4 MILLION FOR HEALTHY FAMILIES NEW YORK*Program Improves Birth Outcomes, Promotes Healthy Parenting Practices*

New York State Office of Children & Family Services (OCFS) Commissioner Gladys Carrión, Esq., today announced the award of \$4,414,278 million in grants to 11 community agencies across New York State for the Healthy Families New York (HFNY) Home Visiting Program. HFNY is a voluntary home visiting program that offers systematic assessment of pregnant women and new parents for risks that may lead to child abuse and poor health/ development outcomes. Ten of the awards are for new HFNY Home Visiting sites, and the 11th will expand an existing site.

"Healthy Families New York is a true New York success story," Commissioner Carrión said. "By identifying families with high risk factors and providing long-term home visiting services until the child is in school or Head Start, we are focusing on supporting parents and building on the inherent strength of families."

OCFS administers HFNY in partnership with Prevent Child Abuse New York and the Center for Human Services Research at SUNY Albany. The initiative is modeled after Healthy Families America, the most widely disseminated home visitation program in the nation.

"Healthy Families New York has a track record for being an effective prevention and intervention program that has yielded proven positive outcomes for New York's children and families," Commissioner Carrión said. "This home visitation program is credited for helping expectant and new parents develop positive parenting skills necessary to properly care for their children in the critical, early stages of life."

Prevent Child Abuse New York Executive Director Christine Deyss said: "Healthy Families New York sets the stage for strong, stable families who have the tools they need to nurture their children. With the expansion of the program, New York State is one step closer to ending child abuse and assuring that all children live in families that love, nurture and protect them."

HFNY currently operates 29 sites across the state -- nine in New York City and the remaining 20 in urban, suburban, and rural upstate counties. The new round of grants will expand the number of sites to 39. All of the programs are located in high-need areas. In 2006, approximately 4,800 families received 59,131 home visits. The 2007-08 New York State Budget includes \$25.2 million for HFNY. Since the HFNY program began in 1995, 17,847 families have been served and 531,368 home visits have been provided.

As proof of its successes, HFNY has completed two voluntary accreditation reviews by Healthy Families America (HFA), the most recent in 2004. In 1998, HFNY was the first such program nationwide to have all of its sites credentialed. In 2004, HFNY received a multi-site credential, one of only four states to receive this recognition. In addition, the program was also evaluated using a randomized experimental design -- considered the gold standard for evaluating program effectiveness -- in which parents were randomly assigned to either a treatment group that was offered HFNY services or to a control group that was given information and referral to other appropriate services. The evaluation included nearly 1,200 women from HFNY sites located in Erie, Rensselaer and Ulster counties who were interviewed one, two, and three years after their child's birth.

In February 2006, the RAND Promising Practices Network designated HFNY as a "Proven Program." This designation -- which indicates the program's effectiveness using extremely rigorous scientific standards -- provided further evidence of the positive impacts of HFNY on parenting and child health and development. As compared to mothers in a control group, mothers offered the HFNY program developed healthier parenting attitudes, adopted less abusive and neglectful parenting practices, had a lower incidence of low birth weight babies, and reported sustained access to health care.

Also, OCFS was awarded grants in the fall of 2006 from the National Institute of Justice and the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation totaling more than \$1.2 million to extend the randomized trial of HFNY from three years to seven years. The grants will help OCFS expand the scope of the seven-year follow-up to evaluate HFNY's impact on parenting behaviors that may contribute to abuse and neglect.

New HFNY grant recipients are listed below, by county:

Bronx County

Catholic Guardian Society and Home Bureau - \$500,000

To serve an estimated 100 families in the 10462 zip code in southeast Bronx.

Cayuga/Seneca Counties

Cayuga/Seneca Community Action Agency - \$461,301

To serve an estimated 135 families in the highest risk zip codes of Cayuga and Seneca counties.

Delaware County

Delaware Opportunities - \$198,000

To serve an estimated 66 families in Delaware County.

Herkimer County

Herkimer County Public Health Nursing Services - \$270,000

To serve an estimated 60 families in Herkimer County with priority given to several zip codes with highest risks.

Kings County

Brookdale Hospital Medical Center, East New York Healthy Families Project - \$500,000

To serve an estimated 100 families in the 11212 central Brooklyn area.

Kings County

Diaspora Community Services, Healthy Families NY Diaspora - \$464,286

To serve an estimated 100 families in the 11225 zip code in Crown Heights.

New York County

University Settlement Society of New York - \$500,000

To serve an estimated 110 families in the zip codes of 10035 and 10009.

Orange County

Occupations, Middletown Healthy Families - \$436,320

To serve an estimated 104 families in the community of Middletown.

Suffolk County

Family Service League of Suffolk County, Healthy Families Suffolk - \$456,622

To serve an estimated 100 families in the community of Brentwood.

Sullivan County

Sullivan County Public Health Services, Healthy Beginnings of Sullivan - \$227,749

To serve an estimated 80 families in Sullivan County. This grant expands an existing HFNY Home Visiting

site to the entire county.

Tioga County

Our Lady of Lourdes Memorial Hospital, Tioga PACT Healthy Families - \$400,000

To serve an estimated 100 families in Tioga County.

[Back to news main page](#)

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[Grant Applicants](#)

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