New York State's

Child and Family Services Plan

FY 2010 - 2014

Annual Progress and Services Report

Submitted

June 2011

Application for Funding:

- **Stephanie Tubbs Jones Child Welfare Services (CWS)…**
  Title IV-B of the Social Security Act, Subpart 1

- **Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF)…**
  Title IV-B of the Social Security Act, Subpart 2

- **Chafee Foster Care Independence (CFCIP) and Education and Training Vouchers (ETV) Programs …**

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Vision:
Safety, Permanence, and Well-Being
For
New York's Children and Families

New York State
Child and Family Services Plan
Annual Progress and Services Report
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Mission Statement

The New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) serves New York's public by promoting the safety, permanency and well-being of our children, families and communities. We will achieve results by setting and enforcing policies, building partnerships, and funding and providing quality services.

Agency Overview

OCFS serves as the Title IV-B Agency for New York State. OCFS is dedicated to improving the integration of services for New York's children, youth, families and vulnerable populations; to promoting their development; and to protecting them from violence, neglect, abuse and abandonment. The agency provides a system of family support, juvenile justice, child care and child welfare services that promote the safety and well-being of children and adults.

OCFS is responsible for programs and services involving foster care, adoption and adoption assistance, child protective services including operating the Statewide Central Register for Child Abuse and Maltreatment, preventive services for children and families, and protective programs for vulnerable adults. OCFS is also responsible for the functions performed by the State Commission for the Blind and Visually Handicapped and coordinates state government response to the needs of Native Americans on reservations and in communities.

OCFS provides oversight and monitoring of regulated child care (family day care, group family day care, school-age child care and day care centers outside of NYC), legally exempt child care, child care subsidies, child care resource and referrals, and the Advantage After-School Program, and also provides services and programs for infants, toddlers, pre-schoolers, and school-age children and their families.

OCFS is responsible for all elements of the state's juvenile justice programs, administering and managing residential facilities, community-based group homes, day-placement centers, and reception center programs for juvenile delinquents and juvenile offenders placed in the custody of the OCFS Commissioner.

OCFS operates twenty facilities, two reception centers, one community residential home, and five day-placement centers for youth placed in the custody of OCFS by family and criminal courts. There are also twelve Community Multi-Services Offices statewide that are responsible for services to the youth and family from day one of OCFS placement. OCFS works closely with municipalities such as local social services districts and county youth bureaus so that adequate youth development services and programs are available at the local level.

The Executive Office of OCFS, encompassing the Office of the Commissioner, the Office of the Executive Deputy Commissioner, the NYC Executive Office, the Office of the Ombudsman, the Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity Development, and Executive Services, provides overall leadership, management, coordination, and administration of agency operation and mission-driven priorities.

OCFS divides its responsibilities into two main areas: program and support. The program divisions/offices include: Division of Child Care Services (DCCS), Division of Child Welfare and Community Services (DCWCS), Division of Juvenile Justice and Opportunities for Youth (DJJOY), and the Commission for the Blind and Visually Handicapped (CBVH). The support divisions/offices include: Division of Administration (Admin), Division of Legal Affairs (Legal), Division of Information Technology (IT), Office of Communications (Communications), Office of Strategic Planning and Policy Development (SPPD), and the Office of Special Investigations (SI).

OCFS maintains regional offices in Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse, Albany, Spring Valley, Long Island, and New York City to support agency programs and partnerships with stakeholders and providers.

Introduction

OCFS was established in 1998 to improve, strengthen and integrate services to the State's children, youth and other vulnerable populations. The creation of OCFS responded to a growing recognition of the complexity and interrelatedness of today's problems and solutions. All children, youth and adults require the support of their families and communities. Fundamental to securing the safety and well-being of all State residents is the ability to access supports, without regard for funding sources, service capacities, or having to reconcile differing approaches to services among providers.

In addition to directly providing services, OCFS funds and supervises local social services districts, youth bureaus, child care programs and community and voluntary agencies in directly providing or collaborating with other agencies to provide a wide range of developmental, preventive and remedial supports to New York State's citizens. To succeed, OCFS must focus on efficiently and effectively maintaining and strengthening the self-sufficiency of families.

Under the leadership of Governor Andrew Cuomo and Commissioner Gladys Carrión, OCFS invests in, develops, and monitors programs that promote the self-sufficiency of families and individuals. The Governor has championed an agenda that encourages cooperation and collaboration between state agencies in an effort to maximize the benefit of public funds allocated to multiple service delivery responsibilities. A main focus of this plan will be to demonstrate how those collaborations work and, more importantly, how they benefit the children and families of New York State.

OCFS continues to specify and demand that outcomes be established and met for its substantial investment in the community. The ability to measure outcomes and define success continues to be a top priority for OCFS.

OCFS participates in many exciting initiatives that are detailed in this report. They reflect the efforts of countless committed professionals, families, volunteers and the communities in which they live and work. They reflect child care, youth development, juvenile justice, adult and child welfare and other services that are the responsibility of this agency. Most importantly, however, they reflect the diverse character and needs of the vulnerable populations found within the diverse regions of New York State.

OCFS serves to improve and integrate efforts to address the needs and build on the strengths of the State's children, youth and other vulnerable populations. OCFS responds to a growing recognition of the complexity and interrelatedness of today's problems and solutions. The ability to access supports without regard for funding sources, service capacities, or having to reconcile differing approaches to services among providers is fundamental to protecting the safety and well-being of all state residents.

The OCFS mission is to "serve New York's public by promoting the well-being, safety and permanency of our children, families and communities. We will achieve results by setting and enforcing policies, building partnerships, and funding and providing quality services." This mission statement guides OCFS' administration of public funds aimed at meeting its multiple service delivery responsibilities. OCFS is responsible for the administration and oversight of a continuum of human development, prevention, early intervention, protective, out-of-home placement and community re-integration services. State law establishes a number of mandates for OCFS, both direct responsibilities and those that the local social services districts must provide under the supervision of OCFS. Direct responsibilities include:

- Providing fiscal support, technical assistance and oversight to municipal youth bureaus for the planning, coordination and funding of youth development services for the under-21-year-old population;
- Receiving and tracking through the Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment of suspected reports of child abuse and maltreatment;
- Providing fiscal support and oversight to the statewide juvenile detention system;
- Coordinating the provision of training and technical assistance to voluntary agency and local government agency staff;
- Operating and overseeing programs designed to foster independence of the blind and visually handicapped
- Licensing and supervising voluntary foster care agencies, domestic violence and child care providers;
- Operating the New York State Adoption Service including adoption subsidies, photo-listing, and administration of the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children;
- Administering the federal Indian Child Welfare Act; and
- Providing for the care and treatment of youth placed by the courts in OCFS custody.

OCFS supervises local administration of child welfare and adult protective services by fifty-seven counties, New York City and the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe. Services provided include child protective services, preventive services, foster care, adoption, protective services for adults, and child day care.

The following principles guide OCFS work.

SERVICES SHOULD BE DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE. OCFS recognizes the importance of the stages of human development in guiding service delivery. The cognitive, emotional, physical and social skills of children, youth and adults are fundamental to their need for and ability to benefit from services. Recent studies in the separate fields of child development and youth development address the value of focusing on competencies rather than deficits. OCFS is committed to the use of strength-based approaches, with a focus on child and family strengths as opposed to problems or pathology. Building on individuals' strengths facilitates the efficacy of all services.

SERVICES SHOULD BE FAMILY-CENTERED AND FAMILY DRIVEN. Supporting families that foster the healthy development of their members requires serving the family as a whole, as well as individuals within the family. Research conducted on the development of children, from newborns through teens, emphasizes the crucial role of parents in the successful cognitive, emotional, physical and social development of their children. In fact, with the support of their communities, most families meet and exceed the expectations put on them. Strategies for family-centered services require family members, including youth, to participate actively with other stakeholders in identifying the design of community based family supports. OCFS is committed to the practice of planning for one child and family at a time, based on individual strengths and needs, not program categories.

SERVICES SHOULD BE COMMUNITY-BASED. Communities play a critical role in supporting the growth and development of their children and the self-sufficiency of their adults and families. The involvement of community-based organizations, schools, businesses, childcare providers, health care facilities, faith-based organizations, law enforcement and courts promotes culturally competent supports for children, youth, adults and their families in their neighborhoods. Development of comprehensive, collaborative, integrated, long-term community-based programs that address the full spectrum of child, youth, adult and family needs represent a wise investment of resources.

The diversity of New York State dictates that OCFS provides localities flexibility in tailoring programs to meet their unique circumstances. By supporting the provision of supports and services in family and community settings, OCFS supports the reduction of over-reliance on restrictive and expensive out-of-home placements and the reduction of the disproportionate representation of families and children of color in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems.

SERVICES SHOULD BE LOCALLY RESPONSIVE. The development of effective services and supports for individuals and families requires family and community involvement in decisions about service priorities, strategies and program interventions. OCFS is committed to delivering services that are culturally competent, recognizing that a family's cultural background might affect the determination of appropriate services. OCFS is committed to providing care that is unconditional, embracing the idea that services are provided to all in need regardless of how, when, or where they come in to the system.

The OCFS regional infrastructure offers the capacity to assist localities in tailoring local service delivery systems to community needs. Integrated local planning by local departments of social services and youth bureaus, with the involvement of community stakeholders, including families, has helped promote local public and private human services partnerships. The joint identification of local needs based on common definitions support program planning and development that addresses needs in a manner compatible with existing community resources and interests. The resulting shared outcomes and principles hold promise for effective service delivery and positive outcomes.

SERVICES SHOULD BE EVIDENCE AND OUTCOME BASED. The human services field has increasingly emphasized the use of outcomes for measuring program success. The move to outcome-based practice has resulted in a new series of questions about which practices most effectively produce desired outcomes. Too long guided by intuition and anecdote, human service providers and administrators now look for reliable and valid evidence to inform their service investments. OCFS specifies and demands that outcomes be established and met for its substantial investment in the community. The ability to measure outcomes and define success continues to be a top priority for OCFS as it seeks to achieve its core goals.

SERVICE CONTINUUM

Commissioner Carrión has championed a role that challenges and encourages local providers to take the initiative by preventing, rather than reacting to, family upheavals by intervening early with activities designed to reduce the need for removal of a child, youth or adult from the household. OCFS' focus on prevention is why the Service Continuum has its broadest effects in services meant to support families and individuals in their communities. Indeed, even when such broad-based supports fail to prevent problems, early interventions should be available to individuals in the context of their families and families in the context of their communities.

OCFS provides funds and oversees a wide range of services. One way to understand the interrelation among the totality these services is on a continuum that distinguishes them by the point of service delivery. The chart below, "The Children and Families Service Continuum," delineates some of the key features and gives examples of these services.

The ends of the continuum are connected, with the community as the beginning and end of service delivery, in recognition that the provision of effective services to children,

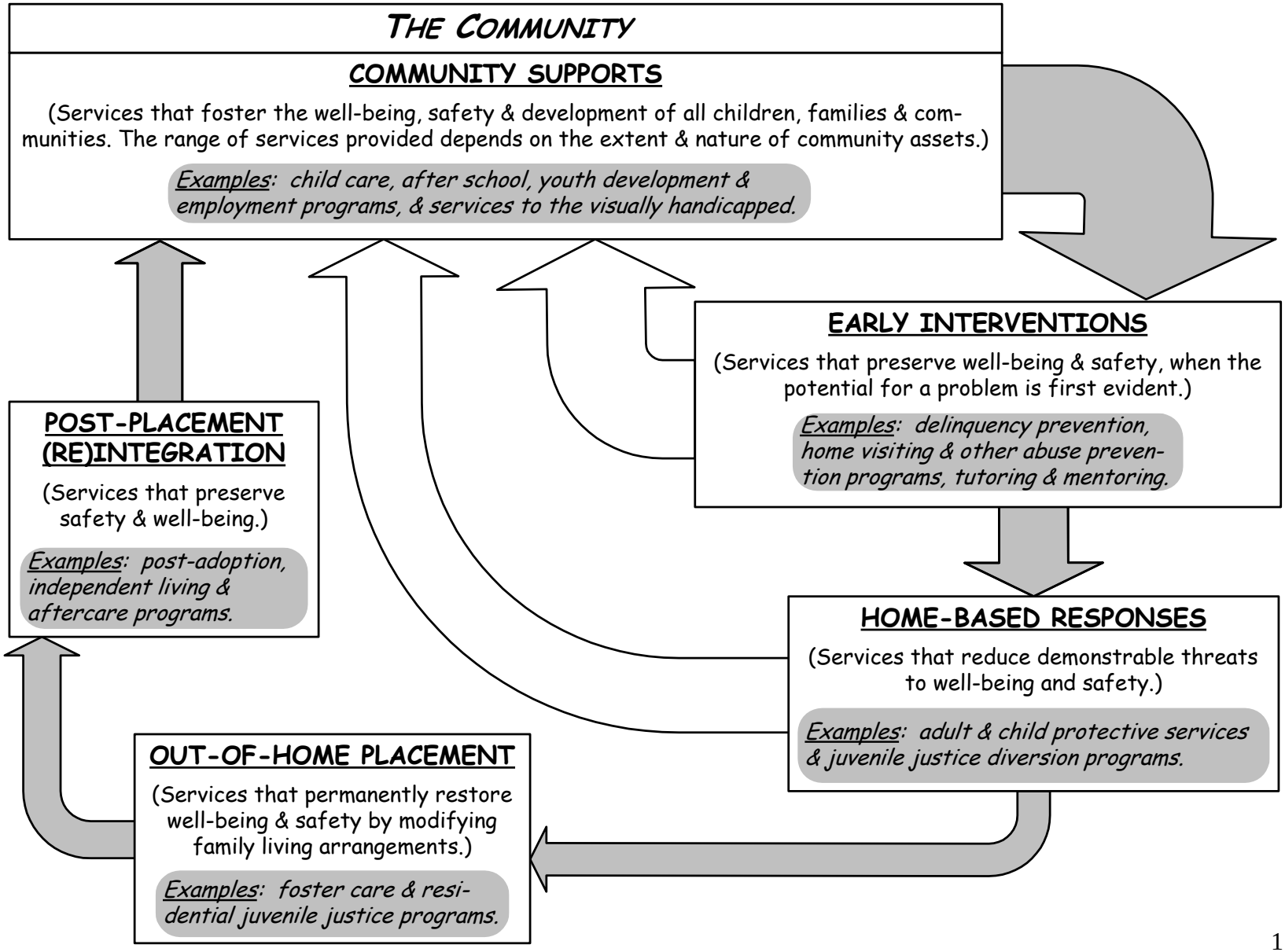
youth, adults and families could not be separated from the community. Just as the success of efforts to prevent placement are dependent on the effectiveness of interventions offered prior to placement, successful return from out-of-home placement depends on the supports provided during and after families are reunified.

In the continuum diagram, arrow size indicates the relative number in a community moving between the five service categories. Arrow size progressively decreases for each movement away from Community Supports. This reflects the reality that almost all of a community's residents benefit from Community Supports, while increasingly smaller groups need the progressively more intensive services available through Early Interventions, and Home-based Responses. However, for a small minority, Out-of-Home Placement may be the only available solution and almost all of this group will need some sort of Post-placement Reintegration service. It should be noted that the more effectively a community can resolve problems earlier in the continuum, the smaller the population that needs to advance to the next more intensive service.

Community Supports promote and sustain the well being, safety and healthy development of all children, youth, adults and families. Community supports must be available to all community residents. However, the scope, type and nature of community supports vary widely among communities, reflecting the assets, strengths and needs of their residents. For example, communities with large proportions of preschool children should have more childcare programs than senior citizen communities that need other sorts of programs. For most community residents, these Community Supports meet their needs and obviate the need for more intensive services.

Invariably, community supports do not suffice for some community residents and more targeted and intense supports are required. For individuals and families at risk of such problems, OCFS supports Early Interventions. These programs aim at preserving the well being and safety of community residents, when the potential for a problem first becomes evident. Typical of an early intervention, Healthy Families New York Home Visiting Program engages at-risk expectant or new parents in a program of home visits focused on improving parent child interactions, healthy child development and self sufficiency, building on families' strengths. Similarly, successful education and support of the visually handicapped rely on early identification of visual impairments among individuals who lack sufficient supports to prepare them to achieve self-sufficiency.

The Children and Families Service Continuum



For a smaller proportion of a community's individuals and families, these early interventions are not enough. For them, OCFS supports and oversees the provision of a third category of services, Home-based Responses. These aim to reduce demonstrable threats to the well being and safety of these individuals and families. Vulnerable adults, victims of domestic violence, and families working to keep their children safely at home are among those who benefit from home-based responses. Child welfare protective or preventive services signal the beginning of the permanency planning process, which emphasizes the right of children to be raised in safe and permanent homes, preferably with their birth families. Programs that divert youth, who have engaged in antisocial behaviors, from out-of-home placement by treating and supervising them in the community, represent another home-based response.

For an even smaller part of the population, whether because of abuse or neglect or for antisocial behavior and home-based responses are unable to preserve individual and/or community safety, OCFS funds, supervises and provides Out-of-Home Placement services for such circumstances. Out-of-Home Placement aims at developing a permanent outcome as expeditiously as possible. These outcomes include return home, living with a relative or other resource person, adoption and independent living.

Regardless of outcome, reestablishment of necessary community supports poses significant challenges. Furthermore, Community Supports alone often do not suffice to preserve safety and well being or to maintain the permanency of the living arrangement. Thus, Post-placement Reintegration interventions such as aftercare, post adoption and independent living services are necessary to promote individual and community safety as well as permanency for those returning from out-of-home placements.

Some programs meet needs at multiple points along the continuum of services. Childcare, for example, may function as a Community Support to enable a caretaker to enter the workforce. It is equally well suited as an Early Intervention for children requiring special attention. As a Home-based Response, it can be a valuable adjunct to other efforts to reduce risk of abuse/neglect. In Out-of-home Placement or as a Post-placement Reintegration service childcare can help promote healthy development while in foster care or during the period of reintegration with family and community. Likewise, effective parenting programs may be a valuable component in all five service categories.

In preparation for this year's submission, as done in previous years, OCFS and ACF have maintained conference calls to share information related to New York State's CFSP. These calls serve as both information sharing and plan guidance.

Quality Assurance and Program Support

OCFS remains committed to the principles of good management and accountability in its own operations and in those it supports. The approach must be coordinated to address the various funding mechanisms and partnerships with which OCFS is involved.

New York's State-supervised, locally administered system requires quality assurance efforts for the state, local government, and not-for-profit entities. OCFS's Office of Audit and Quality Control's (AQC) audit function plays a role at all levels. AQC maintains offices in Rensselaer, Manhattan and Buffalo.

In addition to conducting local district audits, AQC performs risk assessments, audits and fiscal reviews of contract agencies. Statutory and regulatory frameworks, coupled with specific contractual language, provide the standards against which performance of social services districts and contract agencies are measured. AQC also coordinates the review of the audited financial statements received from local districts and sub-recipient agencies that are required by the federal Office of Management and Budget, Circular A-133. Internal controls continue to support and improve the OCFS oversight of local districts and voluntary agency activities. OCFS monitors local districts, as well as contracted private agencies that provide services to children and families, to verify that they are meeting performance targets. OCFS has built performance expectations into its' RFP and award processes. The Contract Management System (CMS) manages fiscal, monitoring and reporting requirements consistent with the State Comptroller and State Finance Law requirements. Local district performance is specifically monitored by DCWCS. Local districts report on performance via the district Child and Family Services Plan, Annual Plan Updates, and the district CFSR Program Improvement Plan (PIP).

AQC performs a variety of activities which contribute to the accomplishment of OCFS's safety, permanency and well-being goals. AQC conducts contract audits of entities involved in the provision of child welfare services throughout New York State. AQC also participates directly in annual Single State Audit activities which identify and help correct fiscal and programmatic findings of all local districts and not-for-profit agencies as needed.

In response to American Recovery & Reinvestment Act (ARRA) requirements, AQC has implemented the following activities: The OCFS Internal Control Officer works with offices/divisions within OCFS to verify that all ARRA activities are identified, applicable internal control functional descriptions are current, and the internal controls in place for the ARRA activities are tested as part of the Commissioner's annual internal control certification. In addition to the internal control process, AQC staff also participates in the required quarterly ARRA reporting certification function, in which ARRA reporting templates completed by agency preparers are reviewed for compliance with established reporting standards, discrepancies are resolved and agency review attestation is completed**.**

AQC continued to monitor the adoption subsidy program during the past year. The New York State Office of the State Comptroller (OSC) recently released an audit of the state's adoption subsidy program. AQC has been working collaboratively with other districts, especially New York City's Administration for Children's Services (ACS) to see that audit findings from the Office of the State Comptroller (OSC) are addressed both prospectively and through claims adjustments. An analysis of statewide non-recurring

adoption subsidy payments made since January 2005 identified all child IDs for which accumulated payments exceeded the $2,000 threshold. AQC reviewed these findings and determined that the vast majority of these errors were caused by paying legal fees for a child's sibling under a single child ID. A case level review is planned for cases where a discrepancy remains. AQC also identified cases that had the potential to be paid past the child's 21st birthday. These children were identified by matching their pre-adoptive foster care dates of birth to the date of birth record for subsidy payments and excluded discrepancies of less than 30 days. A detailed analysis was performed by an ACS consultant who identified some overpayments. Another finding was that districts sometimes incorrectly reassign child IDs from closed foster care cases to a different child with a similar name.
OCFS signed agreements with the New York State and New York City Departments of Health in 2010 in an effort to begin periodic computer matches between the adoption subsidy population and statewide death records.

During the past year, AQC used data analysis to identify issues with ACS making timely eligibility decisions on Title IV-E adoption assistance subsidy cases when they reach their 18th birthday. AQC provided a comprehensive list of these children to ACS and is now providing weekly data files of Title IV-E children who will turn 18 years of age in the next month. AQC is working with ACS Finance so that accurate claiming adjustments are made based on OSC's audit findings. As a follow-up to the OSC audit draft findings, AQC and Erie County were able to determine that an input error of a social security number into the Welfare Management System (WMS) had created a false positive death match. AQC notified OSC of the input error prior to the issuing of the final report. OCFS has also been working with ACS Finance on verifying that accurate credits are made to the federal and state agencies regarding fraudulent subsidy payments which were the subject of federal criminal trial. Additionally, AQC reviews New York City's state and federal claims monthly which include adoption subsidy, foster care, child care and administrative costs.

A Child Care Subsidy Improper Authorization for Payment Review is conducted every three years in accordance with the requirements of the federal Improper Payments Information Act of 2002. This act mandates that federal agencies review programs and activities that may be susceptible to significant improper payments. Additionally, Title 45, Parts 98 and 99 of the Code of Federal Regulations, requires states to measure, calculate and report improper payments, and identify strategies for reducing future improper payments. Based on these requirements, the Child Care Bureau of the Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Children and Families (ACF) has directed all states to review their respective child care subsidy programs to measure improper authorizations for payment of child care subsidies. AQC's 2009 review included 276 cases from 35 local districts. After completing the review, AQC reported the results to ACF and then issued reports to each local district which had authorized cases included in the sample. These reports identified the findings related to each district's cases and contained specific recommendations for corrective action. An informational bulletin was then issued in June 2010 to all local districts advising them of

the types of errors identified in the review process. AQC is currently preparing for a review of another 276 cases authorized in the current federal fiscal year.

Quality Assurance also is a priority for OCFS' Division of Child Welfare and Community Services (CWCS) (formerly the Division of Development and Prevention Services). The monitoring of social services district and contract agency compliance with program statutes, regulations and practice standards is a joint responsibility between home office in the Bureau of Program Monitoring and Performance Improvement (BMPI) and staff in the Regional Offices in the Office of Regional Operations and Practice Improvement (ROPI). As noted below, the Regional Offices and BMPI work together to plan and to conduct reviews of local child protective services programs, called On-going Monitoring and Assessments (OMAs), in upstate social services districts. Onsite case reviews focus on an assessment of the required activities during the course of a child protective investigation, including the assessment of immediate danger, initial safety and safety at investigation conclusion, safety interventions, adequacy of the investigation, determination decision-making, service provision, legal intervention, child removal, case closing decision making, and risk of future abuse or maltreatment. District-specific reports are developed as a result of these reviews that identify strengths and areas of concern as well as required and recommended actions, if necessary. The local district then develops a corrective action plan that identifies the activities the local districts will undertake to respond to the recommendations in the final report if corrective action is warranted.

Regional Offices have developed various individualized strategies to provide technical assistance to the local districts to facilitate program improvement. Technical assistance strategies include a "life of the case" review of specific cases to determine critical decision making points from intake to case closure, focused refresher training for safety and risk assessment, facilitation of supervisory case reviews, management/organizational assessment, individualized casework review of challenging cases, checklist and other tool development to assist in managing caseloads, and review of regulations and laws as they relate to practice. Regional Offices will schedule follow-up activities as necessary and maintain regular contact with the local district supervisory and administrative staff to determine the level of program improvement. Additional case reviews may be conducted utilizing the OMA instrument to assess progress or less formalized mechanisms may be employed such as regularly scheduled on site meetings where identified program areas are discussed. The RO also utilizes data warehouse generated information on performance to help guide practice improvement discussions. Since 2000, CWCS has been monitoring social services districts' adherence to statutory and regulatory requirements and practice standards in foster care and adoption. This Safety and Permanency Assessment (SPA) assesses social services district performance in key areas related to Title IV-E of the Social Security Act through a case review of a year of casework activity for each youth in the sample. Areas to be reviewed included safety and risk, service provision, casework contacts, visitation, service planning and service plan review, and adoption and legal activity. The protocol for this review was significantly revised in 2006 to incorporate New York State law, Chapter 3 of the Laws of 2005, commonly referred to as the "Permanency Law", which increased the frequency

of permanency hearings and required a detailed report of the status of every foster child's safety, permanency and well-being. A final SPA Report is then developed with findings that include strengths and areas of concern as well as required and recommended actions. The process of providing technical assistance to the local district is the same as outlined above for the OMA, although the scope of the program areas under consideration is broader.

The SPA case review was implemented in 2000 and all upstate Group 1 or Group 2 districts have completed at least two SPAs and continue to be reviewed on a four year monitoring cycle. For 2010 and 2011, the SPA case review is being replaced by a Children and Family Services Review (CFSR) baseline and a follow-up case review which comprises the use of a revised CFSR assessment tool that includes nearly all of the elements on the SPA instrument with additional focus on targeted areas of foster care and preventive services provision such as family engagement practices, transition planning for youth, and sibling placement and visitation. A total of 12 local districts and the New York City boroughs participated in a review of 240 cases in 2010 and a follow-up to the baseline will be conducted in each of the 13 districts during 2011. Those districts that had a SPA case review due in 2010 or 2011 that were not part of the 13 districts participating in the CFSR case review outlined above were permitted to utilize the CFSR baseline instrument in place of the SPA for the permanency review and one district chose that option. Two other SPAs due in 2010 are being completed in 2011.

OCFS child protective services reviews are either Comprehensive reviews or smaller sample OMAs. Both include an examination of a random sample of cases to ascertain whether children are protected and whether adequate case assessments and decision-making occur during child protective investigations. All upstate districts and each New York City borough have been reviewed either through the Comprehensive or Ongoing Monitoring and Review process and continue to be reviewed on a four year monitoring cycle. The Bureau of Monitoring and Performance Improvement works with the Regional Offices to maintain an annual monitoring plan for OMA reviews. In 2010, a total of twenty OMAs were completed, comprising a review of 396 CPS investigations. For 2011, an OMA will be conducted in 19 local districts and three boroughs in New York City.

New York City Regional Office (NYCRO) and Administration for Children's Services (ACS) Monitoring and Activities

Local District:
NYCRO coordinated the review of the Child and Family Services Plan 2010 Annual Plan Update (APU). A panel of CPS, Foster Care, Adoption, Preventive, and Domestic Violence program directors was convened to review and comment on the plan submitted by ACS and HRA. Necessary clarification and revisions were facilitated with the ACS and HRA coordinators and the plan was approved.

NYCRO initiated the 2010 targeted review of the Administration for Children's Services to examine the effectiveness of the new practice model, Improved Outcomes for Children

(IOC). IOC represents a major shift in practice that delegates case management responsibility to the provider agencies, increases shared planning and decision making through Family Team Conferencing (FTC), and increases ACS' oversight and monitoring responsibilities. The targeted review examined decision-making around safety/risk, the Child Protective Services Monitor role, timely Family Assessment Service Plan (FASP) and Service Plan Reviews, evidence of the FTCs, and the provision of services. Representatives from the foster care/domestic violence unit reviewed a total of 50 randomly selected cases. The categories were: New Admissions, Multiple Moves, Discharges and Goal Changes. The findings were presented to ACS. NYCRO received ACS' response to the finding in February 2011. The 2011 follow up review commenced April 13, 2010. The finding will be assessed internally and presented to ACS.

The NYCRO's IOC Monitoring Work Plan was presented to ACS executive staff. The IOC Monitoring plan includes quarterly meetings with Agency Program Assistance (APA) and the Family Permanency Services Units as well as analysis of data and a targeted review held in April and May 2011. The unit will continue to utilize the Voluntary Agency Reviews (VARs), the Permanency Panels and IOC Targeted Reviews to assess the impact of the implementation of IOC.

In 2010, NYCRO participated in the OCFS Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) Program Improvement Plan Baseline Review. Staff participated in the case record review and Quality Assurance reviews. Representatives from the foster care unit read case records and conducted quality control. Staff will again participate in the 2011 CFSR Follow-up case record review and serve as Quality Control reviewers for 40 foster care cases.

Staff attended the Borough Based Improved Outcomes for Children (IOC) meetings held monthly in each of the four boroughs (Manhattan, Bronx, Brooklyn, and Queens). January's meeting began with a rich discussion around improving the Administration for Children's Services' (ACS) practice for transferring cases between ACS' Division of Child Protection (DCP) Unit and the various provider agencies. Provider agencies reported inconsistency in receiving information from DCP's Child Safety Conferences (CSC). Agencies reported that the information is critical to planning and identifying services that the child and family will need. As a result, the Division of Family Permanency Services (FPS) and DCP implemented DCP-Provider Agency Case Transition Conferences. The Transition Conferences will occur between DCP, the provider agency, biological family, and the preventive services agency (for active preventive cases) within 48 hours of a child (ren) being placed with a provider agency. The purpose of the meeting is to introduce the family to the provider agency, identify reasons for placement, and discuss any services that may be in place. ACS hopes that these efforts will increase communication between the provider agency and the birth family and reduce the number of moves a child in foster care may experience.

A team member participated in a work group that monitored the implementation of training for provider agencies on Family Team Conferencing and Parent-to-Parent models. Family Team Conferencing and Parent-to-Parent meeting sessions are built into

ACS' Improved Outcome for Children's program model. The purposes of the Family Team Conferences are to actively engage families in planning for children placed in foster care. The Parent-to-Parent model ensures that the birth families/legal guardians of children placed in foster care have an opportunity to meet with the foster parents/agency staff who will be caring for their child(ren).

As members of the Permanency Panel Workgroup, the Foster Care Team collaborated with Adoption staff on drafting questions for the residential, sibling, cross racial/cultural placement and length of stay categories for the statewide permanency panel. The purpose of the Permanency Panel Workgroup meetings is to identify practice and systemic challenges to permanency and the steps for overcoming the barriers.

Foster Care staff attended a meeting with the Adolescent Services Resource Network (ASRN) which was held at the NYCRO office with the Assistant Commissioner, Regional Director and ASRN staff to forge a closer working partnership. Two foster care summer interns were placed at NYCRO and assigned to the Foster Care unit. The summer interns were involved in a number of activities including the planning of the Domestic Violence forum and the organization and coordination of a Youth Forum that was attended by 50 participants, including, foster care and community youth, agency and ACS staff.

Foster Care attended the Youth In Progress (YIP) meeting to discuss the Educational Forum that will take place June 12, 2011. YIP hopes to develop peer to peer training with four youth trainees and one experienced "All American" youth this summer. "All American" youth are veteran youth who explore the different ways youth recognize permanency in their lives. Candidates for the 2011 summer internship have been selected and the interns are expected to begin in June.

CONNECTIONS:
Staff participate in the CONNECTIONS Transformation Implementation Planning Committee meetings. The purpose of the meetings is to collaborate on the implementation of the NYC work plan that includes the CONNECTIONS Transformation and the new and expanded Open Case Inquiry (OCI) via Share point, Q1 Geographic Information Center (GIC) and CONNECTIONS Architecture Modernization Project (CAMP). Staff arranged for IT to present at ACS' Quarterly Foster Care Director's meeting.

Monitoring:
The Foster Care Unit initiated a Casework Contact Campaign, sending the following monthly alert to agency management, supervisors and casework staff:

"Preserving connection with brothers and sisters is one of the most critical contributions that you can make for children and youth in Foster Care"

HAVE YOU SEEN YOUR CHILDREN THIS MONTH?

October 1, 2010 marked the beginning of the 2010 Federal Fiscal Year and final bench mark period to measure casework contact performance for all states. New York is required to meet the 90% benchmark for casework contacts with foster children. In an effort to encourage agencies to approach the new federal fiscal year with a strong start, the New York City Regional Office (NYCRO) has sent friendly reminders to agency executive directors stressing the importance of making monthly casework contacts. In addition to the friendly reminders sent in the form of a written correspondence addressed to the Executive Director for each of the agencies, representatives from the Foster Care/Domestic Violence unit and NYCRO's Information Technology (IT) team held meetings with all of the provider agencies to discuss plans to improve casework contact performance. New York City has improved performance from 47% in 2009 to 84% compliance as of March 2011. The unit submitted a proposal hire three Business Analysts and one administrative support position to work with NYCRO to support NYC agencies in achieving the 2011 90% federal benchmark. The positions have been funded effective June 1, 2011 through December 31, 2011.

The foster care/domestic violence team held two Permanency Panels reviewing 30 cases in 2010. Representatives from ACS, provider agencies and parent advocate groups participated in the panels. The rich discussions provided opportunities for an exchange of idea on practice as well as case specific guidance on cases. Topics covered during the November 2010 Permanency Panels included: multiple moves; children who have been in care for an extended period of time (2+ years); children placed with relatives under an Article 10; and children who are separated from siblings who are also in care. Thirty cases were presented by 16 provider agencies in 2010. The follow up Next-Step letters were issued to the agencies and implementation monitored by the unit. New rounds of permanency panels are scheduled for August and November 2011, with 30 cases being reviewed.

NYCRO staff from Foster Care/Domestic Violence reviewed Request for Proposals for Special Delinquency Prevention Programs. Our review focused on identifying those candidates who will provide the necessary services to prevent juvenile delinquency and promote youth development.

Program Development:
Staff collaborated with representatives from ACS' Policy and Planning Division and Agency Program Assistance (APA) Unit on new program models being introduced under ACS' new contract awards. Staff from NYCRO met with ACS to discuss each agency's proposed plans (Special Medical, Sexual Acting-Out Behaviors, Developmental Disability, and Blended Mother/Child-Maternity) and conducted joint sites visits to inspect the facilities and address modifications to the proposals. NYCRO will monitor the implementation of the new program in the coming year.

Program Technical Assistance:
The Foster Care/Domestic Violence provides ongoing technical assistance to the voluntary and provider agencies on regulatory, policy and program issues. The unit also fields inquiries regarding incorporation.

Foster Care/Domestic Violence Reviews:
The Unit initiated 10 Voluntary Agency Reviews (VARs) and 12 Domestic Violence Recertification reviews. The reviews identified the need for agencies to update their policies and procedures to reflect changes to regulations and policies and the implementation of ACS IOC. Areas of focus included the transitional plan, case management delegation, Family Team Conferences, casework contacts, CPS monitoring. Additionally, complete and timely documentation in CONNECTIONS is an area needing improvement. The unit will conduct a review of eight foster care agencies and conduct 15 domestic violence re-certifications.

Fatalities:
The unit assisted with quality control reviews of a preventive case that received media attention. The unit completed six foster care fatality reports. Corrective Actions identified included supervision, safety assessments, coordination of medical information by the agency with the child's medical provider and cross system issues such as services and transitional planning for children with special needs.

Bridges to Health (B2H):
The Bridges-to-Health Quality Management Specialists monitor and provide technical assistance to the Health Care Integration Agencies (HCIA). The B2H team conducts administrative and case record reviews, receives Serious Reportable Incidents generated through the HCIA, and attends Treatment Team Meetings. Issues identified through monitoring visits included staffing changes at some of the provider agencies and recruitment efforts to fill the positions. There was discussion around recruitment for Waiver Service Providers (WSP) to fulfill the ongoing need for service providers as the number of enrolled B2H participants continues to grow and freedom of choice protocols are followed. Two of the B2H service areas where provider staff recruitment remains challenging are Crisis Respite and Special Needs Community Advocacy.

ACS' B2H division recently modified its selection process in efforts to expedite the referral process. Trainings will be scheduled throughout the New York City area and all agencies were asked to send staff.

The B2H team received, reviewed and processed information from both ACS and DJJOY on new enrollments, B2H discontinuance, and approved Individualized Health Plans. (See page 45 for background on B2H).

Complaints:
The unit continues to respond to complaints and inquiries to OCFS. Complaints received related to licensing issues, removals from birth parents as well as foster parents, insensitivity/mistreatment by agency staff, foster parent payments, etc.

Prevention, Program Assessment and Improvement 2010-2011 and Projections for 2011-2012

NYCRO's Prevention, Program Assessment and Improvement (PPAI) Unit continued to monitor the provider agencies that contract with ACS to provide preventive services in New York City. The focus in this period continued to emphasize participation in case record reviews and providing technical assistance on areas identified during the previous year's reviews. Technical assistance was provided in collaboration with ACS' Agency Program Assistance (APA) unit through borough based sessions to the provider agencies in the area of preventive services program eligibility and program choice from April 2010 through August 2010.

In addition, PPAI obtained and reviewed ACS' reports on individual agency provider performance and corrective action plans. PPAI collaborates with ACS APA on technical assistance and providing training resources to implement corrective action plans.

PPAI took the lead in collaboration with Home Office and other NYCRO staff in conducting: "A Review of Investigations, Assessments and Decision Making In Cases Served by the Child Development Support Corporation Agency and the Administration for Children's Services". This review and report was conducted and issued in response to the fatality of a four year old child that was receiving child protective and preventive services from ACS and its contracted agency. The review was conducted from September 2010 through November 2010, and the final report was issued January 27, 2011. On February 25, 2011, ACS responded with a plan of action to address the necessary actions and recommendations in the report.

PPAI staff attended 12 IOC borough based meetings throughout 2010, including five transition meetings held in response to the announcement of the FRP awards by ACS for contracts to begin on July 1, 2011.

PPAI staff again collaborated with Home Office in the OCFS 2011 IOC Preventive Services Review conducted from March through May 2011. A total of 50 cases were reviewed from 11 preventive provider agencies. Cases included both preventive and protective cases, and preventive services only cases. The preventive services cases were read on site at the provider agencies.

In May and June, 2010. PPAI and NYCRO staff also observed 14 Family Team Conferences (FTCs) as part of the monitoring of IOC implementation. In addition, PPAI staff reviewed the service plans of the cases where planning conferences were observed to assess the effectiveness of the FTCs on the service plans.

In addition to monitoring IOC, PPAI will continue to monitor the preventive provider agencies from 2011 to 2012 through site visits, targeted case record reviews and technical assistance. PPAI will also monitor the preventive services offered directly by ACS' Family Services Units (FSU) and Family Rehabilitation Programs (FRP) through targeted reviews and technical assistance.

PPAI staff, along with NYCRO Child Protective Services (CPS) unit, has partnered with ACS' Division of Child Protection (DCP) and the Division of Quality Assurance (DQA)

to conduct reviews and quality assurance activities relative to joint DQA/DCP case reviews since December 2010. Four ACS DCP Borough Offices have been reviewed from December 2010 to April 2011. A total of six ACS DCP Borough offices will be reviewed by June 2011. PPAI staff are reviewing 25 of the 75 cases reviewed at each Borough Office and CPS staff are quality controlling 20 of the 45 cases. In 2011 through 2012, NYCRO will continue to support this joint monitoring effort providing technical assistance to the borough offices based on the findings of the reviews.

In 2011 through 2012, PPAI staff will continue to be the co-lead in preparation for the Federal Department of Health and Human Services' (DHHS) Administration for Children and Families (ACF) Title IV-E Foster Care Eligibility Review, scheduled to take place in 2012. In preparation, PPAI staff, along with OCFS Audit and Quality Control staff, will continue to monitor and provide technical assistance to ACS' efforts in appropriately claiming eligible cases for Title IV-E funding, including the 18 to 20 year old youth who meet the eligibility criteria that can now be claimed for Title IV-E.

Child Protective Services and Institutional Abuse 2010 – 2011 and Projections for 2011 - 2012

NYCRO's Child Protective Services (CPS) staff continues to monitor ACS' CPS Program through the investigation of complaints and requests received from the public and private sectors regarding ACS' investigation of SCR reports in familial, foster care and day care settings. In addition to desk reviews associated with complaints, staff made visits to four foster care agencies to follow up with issues relevant to the complaints. During the time spent in these agencies, staff provided informal technical assistance on systemic issues noted.

The CPS Unit will also be responding to requests for technical assistance from various ACS Field Offices. Thus far, the CPS Unit has completed two sessions with ACS' Division of Child Protection and has two sessions are scheduled for early May and June 2011. These sessions will cover Program Choice, CPS Monitoring Role, Safety and Risk Assessments; Case Transfers to preventive services; and Inter-jurisdictional issues.

A prime activity of NYCRO's CPS unit is the monitoring function. During the review of ACS' investigations of child fatality reports, ACS staff received ongoing technical assistance from NYCRO CPS regarding the investigation of 108 child fatality reports registered by the SCR for the period 1/1/10 through 5/9/11, and for the 45 reports registered pursuant to 06-OCFS-LCM-13 which requires reports to be issued regarding the deaths of children in Open Child Protective or Preventive Cases. The monitoring of the reports also involved the review of prior history for the families named in the reports. Of the 153 reports, 140 had prior history involving one or more prior CPS or preventive services cases.

CPS staff began to utilize the standardized template for requesting corrective action plans from ACS for fatality reports that resulted in findings or recommendations. As part of

this process, CPS staff met with ACS administrative staff to formalize the procedure for using the standardized template.

During the same period, the CPS Unit issued 140 reports inclusive of reports from 2009. Of these 140 reports, 135 have required Corrective Action Plans (CAPs) from ACS. CPS monitors the CAP submission and provides technical assistance regarding the completion of the CAPs.

CPS staff participated in the role of a caseworker in the "Safe Sleeping Practices for Infants and Young Children" video, which was sponsored by OCFS. The video provides information about the unsafe sleeping environments, and includes strategies for conveying child safety information to parents and caregivers.

The CPS Unit completed an assessment using the OMA instrument in the ACS Richmond and Kings County Divisions of Child Protection and in the ACS Office of Special Investigations (OSI). Other reviews are scheduled for July 2011 (Queens) and September 2011 (Manhattan). The review will provide information to OCFS and ACS as to the performance of ACS CPS staff on components of CPS practice, specifically safety, completeness of investigations, appropriateness of determinations, risk assessments, provision of services, court involvement, removals to foster care, case closing decisions, case transfers and supervisory involvement. In addition to the aforementioned areas, the cases will be reviewed for any unresolved child safety concerns, gaps in case activity and other ACS administrative issues.

CPS staff participated as readers and quality controllers in the Child and Family Services (CFSR) Baseline Review of Preventive and Foster Care Cases to see that quality services were/are provided to children and families through State child welfare systems. The staff will also participate in the review scheduled in 2011.

NYCRO CPS will be involved with the monitoring of the Improved Outcomes for Children (IOC) through assistance to other units that are directly involved with the agencies and through the analysis of data received from ACS.

CPS Unit will continue to meet with the Division of Day Care Services and NYC Department of Health periodically to review the process and implement changes to improve the intake and investigation process related to Day Care Services reports.

CPS Unit will resume quarterly meetings with ACS management regarding CPS Data Discussions. These discussions revolved around the number of workers with more than 20 open CPS investigations, timeliness of Safety Assessments and report determinations.

CPS staff has been involved with the workgroup meetings and discussions for the state wide implementation of the National Center for Child Death Review (NCCDR) Case Reporting System (CRS) in New York. Effective March 1, 2010, CPS Unit began the utilization of the NCCDR to input all child fatalities under the purview of OCFS. The NCCDR CRS will provide comprehensive data that will assist the unit to expand its

knowledge in the area of child death prevention. This system is driving a new format that the CPS Unit will use in preparing the formal fatality reports that are mandated by law. Expected date for the new format is later in 2011.

As direct service Specialists, NYCRO's Institutional Abuse (IAB) staff continuously monitors the congregate care and juvenile justice detention programs through on site investigations of reports of suspected abuse and maltreatment of juveniles in residential facilities. These reports are filed with the New York State wide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment (SCR). For this reporting period, 5/1/10 – 4/30/11, the IAB Unit received more than three hundred reports.

In the coming year, the NYCRO IAB staff will be engaged in updated training in areas where the subject matter has direct impact on day to day activities. Staff will also be required to attend any mandated training sessions that will be offered in the coming period. Currently, staff is scheduled to attend TCI training scheduled at NYCRO.

From 2010 to 2011, NYCRO will continue to monitor, provide technical assistance, and support ACS in compliance with Title IV-E licensing and safety requirements. NYCRO CPS staff will support the preparation for future Title IV-E Foster Care Eligibility Reviews.

Significant Initiatives:
The NYCRO Adoption Team was involved in two child welfare - family court committees charged with statewide implementation of the completed "Lawyers Guide to Adoption" and exploring ways to facilitate child welfare-family court collaboration. Staff met with Family Court Administrative Judge Edwina Richardson-Mendelson to affirm the Family Court's support of the Permanency Hearing Observation project in light of the changed administration. NYCRO's plans for the 5th annual permanency hearing observation initiative was presented and a copy of the final report of the 4th annual project was provided. Judge Richardson-Mendelson affirmed her support of the project as well as her support of the adoption panel review process.

The Adoption Team coordinated the quarterly Statewide Adoption Specialists' meetings. The meetings afforded Adoption Specialists an opportunity and forum to identify issues and develop strategies to expedite adoptions for state-wide as well as regional implementation. The agendas for the meetings included concerns about the continuation of TANF funding for post adoption services, updates on the federal Parent for Every Child project, availability of data on children returning to care from adoption dissolutions, and supporting inter-jurisdictional placement to increase permanency possibilities for children around the state. Staff accompanied Home Office staff managing TANF post adoption grants to oversight meetings with TANF contract agencies.

The Adoption staff attended monthly meetings of the Adoption Action Network and served on the planning committee for their annual forum "Critical Decision Making in Child Welfare" which was held at Hunter College School of Social Work.

The Adoption staff participated in the quarterly advisory meetings of the federal grant "A Parent for Every Child" awarded to the New York State Adoption Service. The project will evaluate the effectiveness of specialized recruitment efforts for older and special needs children placed in OMH, OPWDD and DJJOY facilities. The children selected for participation have been matched with children selected for a control group. Adoption staff completed Parent for Every Child control group enrollment forms for 27 children and follow-up forms for 22 children.

Staff participated in the statewide Permanency Panel work group to update instruments and guided questions to meet regional needs and served as facilitator at the OCFS initiative "Ten for 2010" enabling assembled child welfare leaders to give input on the Commissioner's initiatives for 2010.

ACS Initiatives:

ACS remains committed to providing temporary, out of home care for New York City children who come into foster care due to abuse or neglect, as well as maintaining an adequate number of available, loving and stable foster homes that reflect the race and ethnicity of the children in the system. As of January 2010, there were approximately 16,000 children in foster care in New York City. These children range in age from infants to adolescents and a majority of them are either African-American or Latino (approximately 85% in CY 2008). Most of the children in foster care have permanency planning goals of reunification with their parents, relatives or guardians, though those children in care for shorter periods (i.e. up to 18 months) are reunified more often.

ACS adopted a neighborhood-based service delivery model that aims to keep children in their home Community District (CD), allowing them to maintain ties to all that is familiar, thus reducing the trauma of being placed into foster care.

The majority of children adopted out of New York City's foster care system are adopted by their foster parents. As of April 2010, 4488 children have a goal of adoption and of those, 1819 children are freed for adoption. These youth have, in many cases, been in foster care for three years or more. Approximately 50% are 13 years or older and slightly more than 50% are male. Approximately 80% of freed children with a goal of adoption are African-American and Latino.

ACS continues to support and enhance the recruitment work of the contracted agencies and to directly provide full Model Approach to Partnerships in Parenting/Group Preparation and Selection (MAPP) and mini-MAPP training, both in English and in Spanish.

As part of the *Faith Based Initiative*, ACS has begun a partnership with NY Theological Seminary and five churches in NYC to recruit families for foster children, particularly older youth. Plans for training foster and adoptive parents, and constituents of ACS' Circles of Support (a network of neighborhood-based foster parent support groups run by foster and adoptive parent leaders), to work collaboratively with members of the Families for Teens Speaker's Bureau, in an effort to recruit foster and adoptive homes through neighborhood based network meetings and faith based organizations is ongoing.

ACS continues its Recruitment Corps, a group of experienced foster and adoptive parents whose goal is to assist with recruitment of prospective foster parents.

ACS continues *Wednesday's Child*, a weekly program begun in April 1999, featuring a child or sibling group who needs an adoptive home, in partnership with the Freddie Mac Foundation and NBC4. Since its beginning, Wednesday's Child has featured over 500 children.

ACS maintains the *Families for Teens Speakers Bureau*, whose mission is to challenge child welfare professionals, youth and prospective foster and adoptive parent applicants to recognize that all young people are entitled to a permanent family. The Speaker's Bureau consists of young people currently or formerly in foster care and foster/adoptive parents of teens who share their personal stories in an effort toward changing attitudes and thereby helping to find homes for teens. They participate in recruitment events, orientations and foster parent training sessions and their service is provided to ACS and all of its provider agencies.

ACS continues to partner with the *Heart Gallery NY*. Through the efforts of the Heart Gallery, recognized professional photographers have volunteered to photograph foster children who have been freed for adoption. These portrait photos artistically capture the individuality and spirit of each child. The Heart Gallery has been featured in numerous newspapers, magazines and other media.

The ACS Press Office regularly seeks media coverage of stories about children who need adoptive homes and families who have adopted.

ACS also continues to contract with specialized adoption recruitment agencies. These agencies are charged solely with recruiting and licensing adoptive homes for hard-to-place children, helping to make matches between prospective adoptive parents and hard-to-place children, and providing post-adoption services system-wide. Orientations and trainings for prospective adoptive parents are provided at varied times and locations convenient for the prospective parents. Recruitment agencies provide services that are reflective of the diverse communities, children, and families they serve including, but not limited to, hiring bilingual staff. No fees are charged to prospective adoptive parents.

Plans for 2011 – 2012:

- Continue monthly contacts with assigned ACS offices and provider agencies, serving public children, with a minimum of four of these contacts, conducted on-site annually for each assigned foster care/adoption agency; and two annual visits to private, domestic/international adoption agencies.
- Assess training and adoption regulatory compliance needs. Initiate needs based training and technical assistance to the field on adoption as needed. Introduce new and critical information to the field as needed.
- Facilitate ongoing agency assessments, review ACS PAMS data and corrective actions, ACS Adoption Scorecard measures, Permanency unit agency reviews, AMS and Data Warehouse reports and NYCRO Adoption and Permanency Review data. Review and

monitor the implementation of the MEPA compliant Comprehensive Recruitment Plan. Complete adoption Programs Reviews for in-state and Article 13 incorporation requests within 90 days of assignment.

- Continue the Adoption Panel Reviews; generate panel review summaries, and follow-up promptly on OCFS identified barriers to the permanency process. Incorporate the Adoption Album, OCFS Adoption Services Guide for Caseworkers, NYS adoption regulations and other pertinent materials into ongoing technical assistance and training.
- Respond to adoption requests for information and/or complaints by individuals, agencies, and community groups within seven working days and bring to resolution as soon as practicable.
- Represent NYS Adoption Service in adoption subsidy fair hearings, analyze and implement the outcomes of the hearings and share data with stakeholders. Serve as a resource for Home Office initiatives agreed to by NYCRO and Adoption Specialists throughout NYS.
- Organize and coordinate 2010 Permanency Hearing Observations to facilitate monitoring compliance with NYS statute and regulations. Desired Outcomes and/or Recommendations/Actions: Improvement in caseworker's timely submission of permanency hearing reports; assess lack of foster and birth parent participation in permanency hearings. Surveys conducted, or inquiry by/query of caseworkers at FTCs. Increase in participation by attorneys. Distribute the report and findings to the courts.

OCFS Evaluation and Research

The OCFS Bureau of Evaluation and Research designs and conducts research studies in a wide range of program areas in order to: (1) evaluate the effectiveness of policies, programs, and practices in achieving desired goals; (2) assess whether a program is consistent with best practices in the field; (3) improve understanding of the extent, nature, causes and effects of particular problems or issues; (4) measure the performance of OCFS in improving outcomes for children, youth, and families; and (5) develop and validate risk and needs assessments. The Bureau also approves outside research proposals involving children, youth, and families served by programs operated, regulated, or supervised by OCFS, and provides technical assistance on research methodology, sampling, performance measurement, and data collection and analysis to OCFS staff. Current research and evaluation in areas that support the goals and objectives articulated in this plan are presented within the goals sections.

Child and Family Services Review Program Improvement Plan (CFSR PIP)

In May 2008, OCFS participated in Round 2 of the CFSR. OCFS submitted a Program Improvement Plan (PIP) to address each of the outcomes and systemic factors determined through the CFSR to be out of substantial conformity. Three components of the CFSR are used to determine conformity: statewide AFCARS and NCANDS data, case record reviews, and stakeholder interviews. The PIP is required to be submitted 90 days after receipt of the CFSR Final Report from the Administration for Children, Youth and Families.

The Round 2 PIP is expected to build upon many of the Round 1 PIP initiatives, such as safety, family engagement, which includes: family meetings; family visiting, locating and engaging absent fathers, concurrent planning, and family connections; timeliness and permanency of reunification and timeliness of adoption, workforce and supervisor development, and court collaboration. Widespread input from internal and external stakeholders will be sought throughout the entire two-year PIP development and implementation phase. Information, input, and data obtained via the CFSR process provide direction and collective feedback in the development of the CFSP. OCFS continues to work toward the seamless alignment of these processes.

Based on the preliminary findings shared by ACYF, OCFS designed a draft PIP which focuses on three major themes: Safety, Permanency and Well-Being. The PIP was approved by HHS/ACFY on April 9, 2010.

Overall feedback from the field indicated that the three outcomes outlined in the PIP are the right areas to focus on over the next several years. Stakeholders noted that implementation of the PIP will require consistent and ongoing communication with all stakeholders in order for the practice strategies to take root statewide. Feedback indicated of a strong preference for face-to-face communication. This can be accomplished through the use of Regional Forums and Director of Services meetings on the state level, and supervisor to worker meetings on the local and agency level. These suggestions will be incorporated into how OCFS works with the districts and agencies during the life of the PIP. Wherever possible, the latest in technology will be explored as a possible communication tool.

OCFS will continue our collaborative relationship with the Office of Court Administration (OCA) through meetings and our participation on the OCA Court Improvement Project Advisory Board.

On March 17, 2009, the final report from HHS/ACYF was received noting strengths and areas needing improvement.

The report highlighted the following:

Strengths:

- Item 1, which pertains to the timeliness of investigations, was rated as a Strength in 100 percent of applicable cases.
- Item 5, which pertains to foster care reentry, was rated as a Strength in 92 percent of applicable cases.
- Item 10, which pertains to meeting the permanency needs of children with a case plan goal of other planned permanent living arrangement (OPPLA), was rated as a Strength in both of the applicable cases.
- Item 11, which pertains to proximity of children's placements to their parents or close relatives, was rated as a Strength in 94 percent of applicable cases.
- Item 22, which pertains to meeting children's physical health needs, was rated as a Strength in 94 percent of applicable cases.

- The State also met the national standard for the data indicator pertaining to placement stability (Composite 4).
- New York was found to be in substantial conformity with the systemic factors of Quality Assurance (QA) System and Agency Responsiveness to the Community.

Areas needing improvement:

- Well-Being Outcome 1 (Families have enhanced capacity to provide for children's needs) was substantially achieved in only 34.4 percent of the 64 cases reviewed.
- Permanency Outcome 1 (Children have permanency and stability in their living situations) was substantially achieved in only 40 percent of the 40 foster care cases reviewed.
- Permanency Outcome 2 (The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved) was substantially achieved in only 42.5 percent of the 40 foster care cases reviewed.
- New York did not meet the national standards for the safety-related data indicators pertaining to the absence of maltreatment recurrence and the absence of maltreatment of children in foster care by their foster parents or facility staff members.
- New York did not meet the national standards for the data indicators pertaining to the timeliness and permanency of reunification (Permanency Composite 1), the timeliness of adoptions (Permanency Composite 2), and achieving permanency for children in foster care for extended periods of time (Permanency Composite 3).
- With regard to individual items, the most critical concern identified pertained to achieving adoptions in a timely manner, which was rated as a Strength in only 18 percent of the applicable cases.
- For the following items, less than 50 percent of the cases were rated as a Strength:
    - Item 13—Visiting with parents and siblings in foster care (47 percent of applicable cases rated as a Strength)
    - Item 15—Relative placements (45 percent of applicable cases rated as a Strength)
    - Item 16—Relationship of child in foster care with parents (42 percent of applicable cases rated as a Strength)
    - Item 17—Needs and services of child, parents, and foster parents (36 percent of cases rated as a Strength)
    - Item 18—Child and parent involvement in case planning (43 percent of applicable cases rated as a Strength)
    - Item 20—Caseworker visits with parents (39 percent of applicable cases rated as a Strength)
- The State was not in substantial conformity on the following systemic factors: Statewide Information System; Case Review System; Training; Service Array, and Foster and Adoptive parent Licensing, Recruitment and Retention. Performance on the two systemic factors of Case Review System and Training, in particular, may have critical implications for the State's performance with regard to achieving permanency in a timely manner, promoting sufficient attention to assessing and meeting the service needs of parents and children, and involving parents and children in case planning.

To address the areas needing improvement, OCFS has structured this PIP around three key outcomes: safety, permanency and well-being. A series of practice strategies aimed at improving performance in each area were included in the PIP. Several of these practice strategies cut across more than one outcome.

The seven strategies include:

1. Infuse and implement family centered principles into casework practice that promotes family engagement across all stages of the child welfare delivery system.

2. Continue collaboration with the Office of Court Administration to enhance and promote local district and court collaborations aimed at improving timely permanency and improved well-being for children in foster care.

3. Expand trauma informed practice in congregate care.

4. Improve Service Array.

5. Redesign Statewide Information System.

6. Expand recruitment of foster and adoptive parents and clarify foster care standards for consistent implementation statewide.

7. Enhance training of local and voluntary agency staff to address the skills and knowledge needed to carry out their duties.

Within OCFS, the Division of Child Welfare and Community Services (OCFS/CWCS) is the statewide oversight entity for the locally administered child welfare system. OCFS/CWCS provides direct oversight of local districts and licensed voluntary agencies through a regional office structure. OCFS/CWCS provides oversight and support through each of the six regions in the state – Albany, Buffalo, NYC, Rochester, Spring Valley, and Syracuse.

Districts were required to complete a local self-assessment using performance data and input from local stakeholders to assess strengths in their practice and service delivery system and areas needing improvement. Additionally, they were required to implement a program improvement plan that focused on safety and permanency and well-being. OCFS/CWCS will provide enhanced support to the thirteen districts with the highest foster care population as a means of promoting improved outcomes for the majority of the children placed in out of home care and in receipt of preventive services.

As indicated by HHS/ACFY at New York's exit conference, New York needs to focus their efforts on making sure practice initiatives are implemented statewide and drilled

down to the caseworker level. This will be a key theme in New York's PIP over the next two years. To that end, New York will focus on one primary practice principle- Family Engagement.

Family engagement is both a principle of practice and a set of specific methods by which families are involved in assessing their needs, charting the pathway for meeting those needs and assessing their progress. Starting at the first point of contact and continuing throughout the life of the case, family engagement will be the guiding principle for improving or establishing practices that include involving the parents and youth (and extended family if appropriate) in the assessment of safety, risk, needs and strengths, and in the case planning process through effective use of interpersonal skills, family-friendly local polices, family meetings. Also included as part of family engagement is concurrent planning, fostering family connections through visiting and the identification and location of all parents. This one key practice principle is the foundation upon which New York will base our practice improvement agenda.

Practice Initiatives

Infuse and implement family-centered principles into casework practice that promotes family engagement across all stages of the child welfare delivery system.

In 2003, New York State developed a Child and Family Service Review Program Improvement Plan (CFSR-PIP) which had, as its foundation, the advancement of child centered, family focused case practice. At the epicenter of this work is family engagement. National research, as well as New York State stakeholders, lead us to the conclusion that when a family is actively engaged in developing a plan to improve their family functioning, they are more likely to commit to the goals and the personal work required to achieve those goals. This year's CFSR-PIP continues New York State's commitment to family engagement as the focus of our efforts. While progress has been made toward the development of a family-led child welfare system, there is more that needs to be done to take this practice statewide.

Our decision is based on our belief that families are the experts in their own family, and best able to identify their own strengths. Solutions to family issues are most likely to be found within the context of the extended family. The nature of the casework relationship is the key to engaging families. The ability and willingness of families to participate in planning and working toward the common goals is directly related to the beliefs, values, attitudes and engagement skills of the caseworkers. The beliefs, values, attitudes, knowledge and skills of caseworkers that they bring to their work with the families and children with whom they are working will determine how well the caseworker is able to reach out to families and involve them productively in planning and working together toward common goals. Caseworkers need to exhibit empathy, sincerity, respect and cultural awareness in their everyday relationship with families. These core conditions for helping, along with interpersonal, assessment, critical thinking and decision-making skills require development, and reinforcement through effective supervision.

OCFS has committed to supporting and enhancing frontline case practice of family engagement. The CFSR-PIP is targeted at capacity building at the local level, including addressing basic underlying beliefs and principles of family engagement. Developing the caseworkers' and supervisors' knowledge base and skills, supporting cultural competency of frontline casework staff, and enhancing organizational culture and infrastructure are necessary to support family engagement.

Family engagement work begins with the knock on the front door by child protective services. Child protective investigations are usually perceived by families as adversarial as there is, by definition, a questioning of a parent's ability to adequately care for their children. The caseworker needs to engage the family as partners in identifying the resources and needs of the family, and in securing the safety and well-being of the children.

From the initial contacts and through-out the life of the case, family engagement is at the core of helping a family address their children's need for safety, permanency and well-being. In addition to the casework relationship itself (including regular and consistent casework contact with the child and parent/caregiver with a focus on protecting the safety of the child) and the impact of that relationship on influencing change, stakeholders involved in developing the PIP identified several key aspects of casework where family engagement is particularly vital. Several of these began during our first program improvement plan and will continue during the current PIP.

In January 2010, OCFS began its Program Improvement Plan. Local districts were required to do a local self assessment to include stakeholder input and the inclusion of the Child and Family Services Review Data packets. Upon completion of the local self assessment and the identification of areas needing improvement, each county was required to develop a program improvement plan to include strategies for improving safety and permanency. Plans were submitted to Regional Offices for approval. Training and technical assistance needs were identified by Regional Offices.

Regional Offices in conjunction with our training partners provided training and technical assistance to local departments of social services as well as some of the authorized voluntary agencies on family engagement. Four "toolkits" were developed – Family Meetings Coaching Family Visits, Locating and Engaging Fathers, and Child Centered Family Focused Practice. The 13 districts with the highest number of children in foster care were given the training and coaching first, with smaller districts and agencies following.

In 2010, a baseline case record review, focusing on seven of the CFSR case review items, was completed. In 2011, a follow-up case record review will be completed. It is anticipated that improvements will be seen in case work practice specific to engaging families through the use of family meetings, locating and engaging fathers, coaching family visits and a focus on concurrent planning with families throughout the life of a case. Quarterly reports were required from all districts detailing their progress in meeting

their outcomes as outlined in their individual program improvement plans. Regional Offices reviewed the quarterly reports and provided technical assistance as needed.

A caseworker survey was administered in 2010, with a follow up planned for June and July 2011. The survey was aimed at collection information on the values, beliefs and practice of caseworkers and supervisors implementing family engagement strategies. The follow-up survey will help assess if any changes have occurred to this group of workers after having the family engagement training and coaching.

The Family Assessment Response model continued to be rolled-out in 2010, with a total of 19 counties implementing FAR. Training and coaching from the American Humane Association also continued, providing support to the local district caseworker and supervisory staff.

OCFS also continued to work with the Office of Court Administration on local agency and court collaborations that are aimed at improving safety, permanency and well being of children and families who are involved with Family Court. A total of 21 collaborations are currently receiving support, training and technical assistance from both OCFS and OCA. Court Data packets are expected to be shared with the 21 Family Courts in 2011.

Also under our agency/court improvement agenda is integration of NYS Office of Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services and local treatment providers into local court and district collaboration. Two districts have agreed to pilot a protocol to be used in cases involving the misuse of alcohol or drugs. A third district is being sought for this pilot.

Through OCFS' contract with Andrus, training on trauma informed care continued in 2010. Five additional voluntary agencies began the training and are moving towards certification. Andrus provides training and technical assistance to these agencies. The overall goal is to reduce unnecessary restraints and reports of abuse and neglect in residential care.

Bridges to Health continued to expand across New York State with a total of 2,230 enrolled by the end of 2010, with another 393 referred. Trainings and technical assistance was provided to the Health Care Integration Agencies throughout 2010.

OCFS was able to procure and distribute 1800 laptops and desktop computers for local districts and voluntary agencies. These additional computers were aimed at assisting districts and agencies to complete progress notes in a timely manner. Additionally in 2010, OCFS developed and deployed the Share Point technology with local districts that affords caseworkers and supervisors access to critical workload and performance measures. And OCFS began the pilot with two counties of the new dot.net style of architecture that will allow caseworkers to easily navigate in and out of their workload, organize critical tasks, and maximize use of pre-filled options which will assist in the improving timeliness and accuracy of data.

Local districts were required to develop and submit to OCFS their Recruitment and Retention Plans for foster and adoptive parents in 2010. A series of several satellite broadcasts were aired by OCFS on recruitment and retention strategies which included "Best Practices in Foster and Adoptive Parent Recruitment and Retention, "Recruiting and Retaining African American and Hispanic American Foster and Adoptive Families", and "Recruiting and Retaining Native American Foster and Adoptive Families".

Child and Family Services Plan

The Child and Family Services Plan FYs 2010–2014 was submitted in June 2009 and included the combined Final Report FYs 2005-2009. This year's Annual Progress and Services Report (APSR) is the second update to the 2010-2014 CFSP. In New York State, services are a state-supervised, locally administered service delivery system. Fifty-eight social services districts (including the five boroughs of New York City), the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe, and county youth bureaus offer and fund services at the community level. A framework of regulation, policy and procedures is established by OCFS and operationalized by the 58 social services districts and the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe (hereinafter included in the term social services district). While OCFS has responsibility for direct oversight of some services and program development, the daily responsibility to serve the majority of clients accessing the various services available within the social services environment rests with the social services districts. Approximately one-third of New York State's counties are considered rural. OCFS works with these districts to fund and provide services and programs to address the needs of these rural populations.

Planning in New York State continues to be a joint activity, with the focus of activity occurring in the social services districts and youth bureaus. OCFS' role is to provide guidance to assist social services district planning efforts, including youth bureau involvement, to reflect the goals and performance targets established. In partnership with those social services districts, New York State continues in the direction of achieving the various outcomes established within the CFSP. This partnership between the social services districts, youth bureaus, stakeholders, state agencies and OCFS is critical to the achievement of outcomes noted in the CFSP. Described initiatives in this document include those supported with federal Child Welfare Services funds (Title IV-B, subpart 1, the Stephanie Tubbs Jones Child Welfare Services Program); federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment funds (CAPTA); federal Title IV-E funds, including the application for and other information regarding the Chafee Foster Care Independent Program; Runaway Homeless Youth Act; Child Care Development Fund; and other state and federal sources. Title IV-B, subpart 2 funds, Promoting Safe and Stable Families, for providing service delivery of family preservation, community-based family support, time-limited family reunification and adoption promotion and support, as well as planning and service coordination, were requested and received by New York State. Additionally, the state does support various programs with other federal and state funds that by definition fall under these categories. This Plan is further evidence that New York State will take every opportunity to explore whether the State is eligible to receive such funds.

The Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) and subsequent Annual Progress and Services Reports (APSR) will be made available to: social services districts; other state agencies involved in major joint projects with OCFS; and the Indian Tribes. OCFS will provide specific notification to related providers on the availability of the Report. In addition, the public will have access to these documents through local social service districts. Also, the Child and Family Services Plan will be made available on the OCFS website.

OCFS Data Warehouse

The data warehouse initiative provides users, including local district, contract, regional, and State OCFS staff access to management reports and ad-hoc reporting on data in CONNECTIONS and legacy systems (child welfare-related data). Local districts and voluntary agencies are able to obtain summary reports at the worker, caseload, local district, regional, and state levels. The OCFS Data Warehouse provides a series of standard reports that can be produced on demand at different levels of aggregation and time-periods and tools by which local district and voluntary agency staff can produce ad-hoc reports on clients or caseloads. The end result is improved management and analytical reporting capabilities for the OCFS services system.

The OCFS Data Warehouse provides end-user access to users in a manner suitable for strategic analysis and decision support. Available pre-defined reporting areas include: CPS (Child Protective Services) Allegations, CPS Investigations, CCRS (Child Care Review Service), foster care cases and foster care homes, facilities' licensing and capacity, security, and CFSR PIP data. The OCFS Data Warehouse presents information needed by managers to monitor caseload trends and track compliance with State and Federal standards.

Because the Data Warehouse can replicate the Federal data profiles, it gives local districts the ability to view child level data for each submitted measure. The Data Warehouse is used as a data source in an increasing number of requests from districts, voluntary agencies, home office, the legislature, and general public.

Planned activities will focus on improving management reporting capabilities with CONNECTIONS. Additional users will be trained and brought into the Data Warehouse. Ongoing development efforts will continue to provide additional data tables, data marts, cubes, and reports to support state and local usage of data, particularly in the areas of Family Case and Financial Management.

OCFS continues to focus its data warehousing efforts on growing the Data Warehouse to include data not only on child welfare related individuals and cases, but on other individuals and cases served by the agency (for example, adults receiving protective services, and juveniles receiving youth services); and on controlling the growth of the warehousing environment through strict and strategic data acquisition.

Title IV-E Plan

On December 20, 2010, OCFS submitted a Title IV-E State Plan Amendment as required by Administration for Children and Families (ACF) Directive ACYF-CB-PI-09-08 that directed states to revise and submit a Title IV-E State Plan Amendment to comply with all Title IV-E statutory. On March 31, 2011 ACF approved New York's IV-E Plan Amendment to operate a Title IV-E Kinship Guardianship Assistance Program (GAP). On May 20, 2011, OCFS received ACF approval of the Title IV-E Plan Amendment for Foster Care and Adoption Assistance to Age 21.

Child Welfare Laws, Policies, and Procedures

The OCFS Internet provides extensive information on pertinent statutes, regulations, policies and procedures.

New York State Chapter Laws of 2010 and 2011:

The following Chapter Laws do not affect New York's eligibility for CAPTA. They are included for informational purposes:

Chapter Laws of 2010; 2011

CHAPTER 8 of the Laws of 2010, signed 3/16/10, amends Public Health Law, generally; amends §81.22, repealed §81.29 sub (e), Mental Hygiene Law; amends §1750-b, Surrogate Courts Procedure Act. Creates the family health care decisions act; establishes procedures for family members, surrogates and others close to an incapacitated patient making health care decisions on behalf of patients unable to decide about treatment for themselves in accordance with special procedures, standards and safeguards.

CHAPTER 41 of the Laws of 2010, signed 4/14/10, amends §1101, Civil Practice Law & Rules; amends §§75-f, 76-f, 112-b, 113, 115-b, 240 & 254, Domestic Relations Law; amends §§503 & 508, Executive Law; amends §§35 & 35-a, Judiciary Law; amends Family Court Act, generally; amends §§2306 & 2782, Public Health Law; amends §§358-a, 372, 383-c, 384, 384-a, 384-b, 409-e, 409-f & 422, Social Services Law. Relates to the representation of children; replaces the term "law guardian" with the term "attorney for the child" to more accurately reflect the attorney's role.

CHAPTER 58 of the Laws of 2010, signed 7/2/10, part f, establishes the Kinship Guardianship Assistance program.

CHAPTER 113 of the Laws of 2010, signed 6/15/10, amends §§384-b & 409-e, Social Service Law. Relates to the guardianship and custody of destitute or dependent children who have a parent or parents incarcerated or in a residential substance abuse treatment program.

CHAPTER 192 of the Laws of 2010, signed 7/15/10, Adds §33.06, amends §45.07, Mental Hygiene Law. Requires the establishment of procedures or mechanisms to

receive allegations of abuse or mistreatment of patients served by programs licensed or operated under the mental hygiene law; includes allegations received anonymously; requires toll-free number.

CHAPTER 342 of the Laws of 2010, signed 8/13/10, amends §§1055, 1087, 1088, 1089 & 1090, adds Article 10-B §1091, Family Court Act; amends §§371 & 409-a, Social Services Law. Relates to trial discharges of youth in foster care and voluntary replacements of older adolescents in foster care; extends trial discharges at permanency hearings for successive periods of up to six months until youth reach the age of 21, and where the affected youth is over 18, any such trail discharge would require his or her consent; allows youth between 18-21 who have been discharged within 24 months to seek leave to return voluntarily to foster care.

CHAPTER 343 of the Laws of 2010, signed 8/13/10, adds Article 6 Part 1-A §§635 - 637, amends §1089, Family Court Act; amends §384-b, Social Services Law. Thus, provides a process for a petition to restore previously terminated parental rights under certain circumstances.

CHAPTER 11 of the Laws of 2011, signed 4/13/11, amends §459-a, Social Services Law. Includes aggravated harassment, sexual misconduct, forcible touching, sexual abuse, stalking, criminal mischief, criminal obstruction of breathing or blood circulation, and strangulation within the criminal offenses which may constitute domestic violence for the purposes of domestic violence prevention; and includes unrelated persons in an "intimate relationship" within the definition of "family or household members" for purposes of domestic violence prevention.

OCFS Policy and Procedure:

11-OCFS-ADM-03 Kinship Guardianship Assistance Program (KinGap), issued April 1, 2011. The purpose of this Administrative Directive (ADM) is to provide comprehensive information and guidance to social services districts and voluntary authorized agencies about the Kinship Guardianship Assistance Program (KinGAP).

10-OCFS-LCM-15 Guidance for CPS Investigations of Infant Fatalities and Injuries Involving Unsafe Sleeping Conditions, issued November 16, 2010. The purpose of this Local Commissioners Memorandum (LCM) is to provide guidance to Child Protective Services (CPS) staff regarding factors to consider and evaluate when investigating a report of a death, or serious injury, of an infant that may have been caused by or related to unsafe sleeping conditions.

10-OCFS-ADM-12 Heath Care Proxy for Youth Transitioning Out of Care, issued September 17, 2010. During the completion of the transition plan, the caseworker is required to inform and educate youth exiting care at age 18, 19, or 20 of the importance of having a health care proxy, and provide the youth the opportunity to execute a health care proxy by helping the youth obtain and complete the form.

10-OCFS-ADM-10 Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption to Age 21, beginning October 1, 2010, for each Title IV-E eligible foster child who has agreed to remain in foster care after reaching the age of 18, on each such youth's 18th birthday and each birthday after that through age 20 (if the youth remains in foster care), the responsible district worker must perform a re-determination, using the revised Re-determination of Title IV-E Eligibility Checklist (LDSS-4810 Rev. 10/10). This Checklist includes the new criteria necessitated by the change in federal standards enacted by the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008. Similarly, a redetermination is also to be performed by the responsible district worker for any youth in foster care who is already age 18 on October 1, 2010.

10-OCFS-ADM-09 Requirements for Incorporating Youth Voice into the Annual Renewal of Certified and Approved Foster Homes, issued August 25, 2010. This directive provides for youth voice as a part of the annual evaluation process of certified and approved foster homes.

Caseworker Visits

Interim data for casework contacts between October 2010 and March 2011 show New York at **83.2%** for children in foster care that have been contacted every month they were in care.

Target percentages:	10/1/08	15%, reported actual 21.3%
	10/1/09	45%, reported actual 47.3%
	10/1/10	75%, reported actual 67.5%
	10/1/11	90%

OCFS continues to use Foster Children Contact summary and detail reports to measure monthly performance by local districts and voluntary agencies. OCFS staff from the Regional Offices uses these reports when meeting with voluntary agencies (in New York City most services for Foster Children are subcontracted to voluntary agencies). The results of these collaborative meetings have demonstrated significant improvement in Foster Children contacts in some of New York City's largest voluntary agencies.

These reports are useful in finding and resolving discrepancies between legacy applications. Child Care Review Service (CCRS) is the system of record for foster children; CONNECTIONS is used to record services that Foster Children receive – including casework contacts.

OCFS developed on-line Foster Children Contact reporting using the CONNECTIONS application.

OCFS is working toward increasing the CCRS and CONNECTIONS Foster Children data available in Foster Children Contact reports. Including Case Manager/Case Planner information and their associated organizational codes (i.e. site-unit), will enable agencies to monitor and improve accountability for Casework Contacts.

OCFS is currently automating the refresh of the Foster Children data mart, which will result in more frequent updates of the data mart. Currently, the data mart is refreshed once a month. More frequent updates (i.e. weekly) will allow agencies to monitor their progress during the month and take action to make child contacts prior to the end of the month.

OCFS is continuing to provide laptop computers to voluntary agencies. For FFY 2011, 146 laptops will be distributed to various voluntary agencies. These laptops enable caseworkers to enter casework contact notes while out in the 'field'.

In addition, OCFS is procuring 45 copies of 'Dragon Naturally Speaking' software. This software product enables caseworkers to dictate progress notes that the software translates into electronic notes, thereby improving the efficiency of the caseworkers. OCFS provided 'train the trainer' classes on the software.

Each quarter OCFS sends a Foster Children Contact letter to districts and voluntary agencies. The letter is accompanied by FFY month-to-date (Oct-Dec, Oct-Mar, Oct-June, etc.) Foster Children Contact metrics by district and voluntary agency.
These letters reinforce the importance of making casework contact with children in foster care.

Monthly workgroups continue to be held to discuss performance and strategies for improving casework contacts. Workgroups are comprised of staff from Legal, Budget, Child Welfare and Community Services, Strategic Planning and Policy Development, Information Technology, and Division of Juvenile Justice and Opportunities for Youth.

Child and Family Services Plans (formerly district consolidated service plans)

As previously indicated, all counties in the state are required to submit a single county plan from LDSS and county Youth Bureaus. Counties will be required to submit a new multi-year plan fall of 2011, effective January 1, 2012.

Accomplishments for 2010-2011:

- OCFS continues to enhance the infrastructure of the SharePoint site; an intranet site used to store, monitor, and access county plans and is working to provide counties access to the site.
- OCFS has taken the feedback collected from the local districts and regional offices on last year's planning cycle and is working to streamline the counties submission and reporting requirement.
- New York State Division of Probation and Community Alternatives (DPCA) continue to jointly review and approve the PINS Diversion Component of the plan. The review and approval process was completed by way of teleconference between OCFS staff and DPCA staff allowing for shared dialogue, coordinated review/approval of plans, and direct support to districts.

- OCFS is currently working on an automation system to serve Title XX reporting data that is accessible to respective state and county personnel via program permissions.
- OCFS continues to explore collaborating with the New York State Office of Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS), to participate in using its on-line planning system. Currently, OASAS, the Office of Persons With Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD), and the Office of Mental Health (OMH) have worked together to develop a common planning methodology utilizing this Web-based application that serves both the state and county level agency service systems.

Plans for 2011-2012:

- OCFS will continue to enhance the infrastructure of SharePoint site and will work to provide counties access to the site.
- OCFS will continue to involve local districts and regional offices in child and family services planning.
- OCFS will continue to explore collaborating with OASAS, to participate in using its on-line planning system. Currently, OASAS, OMRDD, and OMH have worked together to develop a common planning methodology utilizing this Web-based application that serves both the state and county level agency service systems.

Consultation, Collaboration, and Service Integration

The creation of OCFS was accompanied by a statutorily created Children and Family Services Advisory Board comprised of 24 members. The Board's purpose is to help OCFS construct a better system of services for New York's children, families and individuals. The Governor appoints twelve members and the State Senate and Assembly appoint six each. Its duties broadly include consideration of matters relating to the improvement of children and family services, review of proposed rules and regulations of the OCFS prior to their adoption, advocacy for OCFS programs, and liaison with local stakeholders.

OCFS routinely involves a wide range of agency staff in all discussions involving aspects of the delivery of services to children, youth and families. Typically staff representing policy, legal, program operations, fiscal, and training participate, as appropriate and by expertise, give input on issues encompassing the entire range of child welfare services, i.e. child protective services, foster care, adoption, preventive services, independent living, juvenile justice, and any of the Social Services Block Grant (SSBG or Title XX) services.

In addition to the broader avenues of input noted below, social services districts and voluntary authorized agencies interact with OCFS regional offices routinely for technical assistance, feedback on problem areas, and suggestions for improvement. Regional offices share those concerns/suggestions with OCFS home office on an ongoing basis. Monthly meetings provide a vehicle for advising and discussing with OCFS home office

field concerns and for comparing various regional issues to determine how broad the issue may be or whether geographic location or county population is a factor.

In a similar manner, the OCFS Native American Services (NAS) unit actively interacts with the Tribes to offer general forums for discussions of issues, as well as to address specific child/family circumstances and consult with the Tribal communities. Monthly meetings with Tribal representatives provide the opportunity for ongoing dialogue. As with regional office staff, the NAS unit provides feedback to OCFS home office. In addition, regional office staff and county welfare attorneys are involved and provide another conduit for feedback. The NAS unit is very active in supporting and sharing feedback from the Tribes and for facilitating meetings for direct feedback to home office.

OCFS is also committed to hearing the voice of youth impacted by service systems. To that end, OCFS has supported the development and growth of Youth in Progress (YIP), a statewide foster care youth leadership advisory board. This group of young people, accompanied by adult mentors, has provided ongoing input related to a wide range of topics that impact their experience in foster care and beyond.

OCFS seeks the input of its partners in the social services districts, youth bureaus and voluntary authorized agencies using a variety of methods. Communication occurs through state level associations - the New York Public Welfare Association (NYPWA), the Council of Family and Child Caring Agencies (COFCCA), the Empire State Coalition of Youth and Family Services (Empire State Coalition), the New York State Juvenile Police Officers Association (NYSJPOA), Foster and Adoptive Parent organizations and the Association of New York State Youth Bureaus (NYSAYB). OCFS staff participates in association meetings and conferences, and frequently communicate with individual members of sub-groups as needed and appropriate.

OCFS and the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) Faith- and Community-Based Partnership was formed in 1998 in response to the federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Charitable Choice provisions.

Accomplishments 2010 - 2011:

The partnership had continued to assist faith-and–community-based organizations groups to become high quality human services providers by maximizing the availability of information and resources administered by OCFS and OTDA. The primary focus of this partnership was on helping small organizations gain access to any of the materials, resources, and technical assistance that may be available.

OCFS provided consultation and technical assistance sessions allowing faith and community organizations to discuss program development activities, related to their church mission and needs. OCFS has developed a strong working relationship with the Muslim community, primarily in NYC to assist them as they seek to establish partnerships with the NYC Administration for Children's Services, on behalf of vulnerable Muslim children and families.

Plans for 2011-2012:

Currently there are no plans to fund the faith based partnership going forward.

Coordination and Service Integration Efforts

OCFS staff is involved in several collaborative efforts related to a wide range of child, youth, and family services. OCFS is committed to working cooperatively with state agencies, community providers and advocacy groups to forge partnerships to develop and implement effective strategies to address issues that affect New Yorkers. These joint efforts may be formal interagency task forces and/or workgroups, efforts required by statute or regulation, or informal responses to an identified problem. All of these efforts have positive effects beyond the stated issues in forming working relationships and mutual understanding of approaches to populations and problems and have the continuing effect of improving communication and problem-solving ability, thereby promoting improved service delivery.

In addition to these activities, the collaborative efforts noted below and on the following pages describe several coordination and service integration efforts that provide excellent opportunities for consultation, discussion, and input from various agencies and constituencies regarding a wide array of services to children, youth and families. The various groups, depending upon their charge, are comprised of representatives from State and local, public, and private entities.

Cross Systems Collaborations

OCFS Commissioner Carrión stated in her article in the August 2007 OCFS newsletter titled, "Strengthening Partnerships", that "…we have been diligently working to create partnerships with advocacy groups, community programs, and our sister state agencies working together to find common ground with our stakeholders and the community…the needs of our children and families call for a broader approach that includes the intervention of other state agencies."

Collaborative Accomplishments 2010-2011:

Since December 2007, a meeting of state agency commissioners serving children is held to discuss the need for cross system collaborations for children with service needs that involve more than one service delivery system. Commissioners from the following agencies attended: OCFS, the Office of Mental Health (OMH), the Office of Persons With Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD), the Office of Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS), the Department of Health (DOH), the Division of Probation and Correctional Alternatives (DPCA), the State Education Department (SED), and the Commission on Quality of Care and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities (CQCAPD).

The Commissioners meet quarterly to continue the discussion and to develop and implement joint solutions to improve the lives of children, youth and families.

Examples of collaborations with sister state agencies and/or local districts include:

The NYS DOH and OCFS have continued to work collaboratively to improve the collection and analysis of information available on child deaths. OCFS looks to broaden its perspective on child deaths from a view through the child welfare lens to a wide angle view that embraces a more community based and public health perspective. The purpose is to break new ground in addressing system issues to inform practice across disciplines to prevent child deaths.

A primary objective to the achievement of this goal is to create a more collaborative partnership with DOH to expand and improve child fatality reviews and prevention efforts at the local and state levels.

The guiding principles for partnership include the following:

- Child fatality review requires multidisciplinary participation;
- Comprehensive review of all child deaths will identify those that are preventable;
- Information about preventable deaths will help communities identify risk factors; and
- This information will lead to actions to prevent child deaths, illness and injury.

The partnership with the DOH provides the core strength for increased strategic action and the basis for a broader, state level, multi disciplinary child fatality reviews. OCFS is working with DOH and its sub-grantee, SUNY Stony Brook to develop and provide technical assistance, resource information, consultation and community prevention initiatives to local Child Fatality Review Teams (CFRTs) currently funded by OCFS. This collaborative process is scheduled to occur throughout 2011.

With support of DOH, OCFS has moved forward with implementation of the National Center for Child Death Review (NCCDR) Case Reporting System. This web based system houses information based on a public safety perspective and allows access to an even greater data pool than that afforded by NYS DOH. The system has been implemented as of March 2010, and all CFRTs and OCFS Regional Offices now input key data on child deaths in New York State. Data for approximately 890 fatalities (from 2008-March 2011) have been input into the system.

In addition, OCFS continues to actively participate on a workgroup with DOH that has been charged by the legislature to develop protocols for review of all unexpected child deaths that occur en route to hospitals in New York State, as part of the broader public health approach to the review of child deaths. A draft protocol has been developed and is the internal review process at DOH. OCFS is anticipating the document for review in the near future.

Commissioners from the OTDA and OCFS have established operational work teams to address serious issues related to child care and child support, child-only Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) caseloads, limited English proficiency services, adult protective services, and fatherhood initiatives.

OCFS/DJJOY has partnerships with many non-profit agencies to deliver services to court placed youth while they are in residential care and upon their return to their home communities. These partnerships include Children's Village for the provision of Multi-Systemic Therapy (MST); Vera Institute for Adolescent Portable Therapy and Cayuga Homes for their Multi-dimensional Treatment Foster Care program. We also contract with the Children's Aid Society for their Lasting Investment in Neighborhood Connections or LINC program, a youth-development program for New York City youth.

OASAS is working in collaboration with OCFS to align the delivery of drug and alcohol services for OCFS' juvenile justice facilities and aftercare services, as well as for local districts that need access to drug and alcohol treatment services to support family functioning, such as a co-location project described elsewhere in the plan.

OCFS, along with OPWDD and OMH are working jointly to reduce the use of physical restraints in child care settings, as well as to improve service delivery to cross-systems children who need support from multiple systems.

OCFS has been working collaboratively with SED to develop bed capacity within New York State to prevent placement of children with high service needs in out-of-state residential facilities and when appropriate, return children currently in out-of-state residential programs to services that are delivered close to home within New York State.

For the past few years, OCFS has worked closely with the New York State Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence (OPDV) in several areas, particularly in the area of training. OPDV delivers the required two-day training on domestic violence to every CPS caseworker in New York State outside of New York City, which does the training itself. OCFS is currently working with OPDV to develop a new training curriculum for CPS supervisors on domestic violence and how to assist their caseworkers when dealing with these types of cases. The new curriculum is scheduled to be completed and the training piloted by OPDV in early 2011.

OCFS, OMH, OMRDD, and DOH continue to work to provide comprehensive services to children with cross-systems needs.

<u>Bridges to Health Home and Community Based Medicaid Services Waivers (B2H)</u>
OCFS continued to implement the Bridges to Health for Children with Serious Emotional Disturbance (B2H SED), Bridges to Health for Children with Developmental Disabilities (B2H DD) and Bridges to Health for Children with Medical Fragility (B2H MedF) Waivers in five OCFS Regions. B2H is the first program in the nation to use Home and Community Based Medicaid Waivers to exclusively serve children in the child welfare system along with their caregiver network and does so within the federal principles of

freedom of choice, strength based approach, person-centered and family focused service planning and delivery.

B2H services are provided for children in foster care and other community based settings whose diagnosed conditions are sufficiently severe to warrant placement in a medical institution were it not for the supports provided by the B2H waiver. B2H services are not provided by the foster care system and are not supported through state or federal funding available for foster care services, but are instead additive to services provided by the foster care system.

OCFS and DOH are responsible for the operation and oversight of the B2H waivers. B2H services are intended to serve persons under the age of 21 in a community-based setting and within their support network, as children in foster care have many people involved in their lives- including birth families, foster and adoptive families, caregivers, local districts, providers, clinicians, courts, and advocates. Available B2H services are as follows: Health Care Integration; Planned Respite; Skill Building; Day Habilitation; Family/Caregiver Supports and Services; Prevocational Services; Intensive In-Home Supports; Supported Employment; Special Needs Community Advocacy and Support; Immediate Crisis Response Services; Crisis Avoidance, Management and Training; Adaptive and Assistive Equipment; Crisis Respite; and Accessibility Modifications. Service needs are determined pursuant to an enrolled child's Individual Health Plan. (See Goal 2 for more on B2H)

NYS Teaming Model

OCFS began to pilot the Teaming Model in early 2007 in an effort to provide more supports to the child welfare workforce, to counter the forces that contribute to caseworker turnover such as worker stress and isolation, and to support quality decision-making. OCFS and its training partner, the Center for Development of Human Services (CDHS), continue to adapt its Teaming Model Initiative from the casework model developed by the Massachusetts Department of Social Services. Teaming transforms child welfare work from one of individualized casework practice to that of a shared workload and decision making practice.

Accomplishments 2010 – 2011:

OCFS supports 23 teams in 13 counties and is expanding this initiative into 2011 by adding up to ten additional teams. Each team is invited to attend the Annual Teaming Symposium, and provided ongoing technical support by our CDHS partners in the form of onsite consultation, team building and coaching activities and guidance through the various phases of team development. To learn if Teaming increases worker and supervisor satisfaction, reduces the likelihood of isolation and turnover and supports effective decision-making, OCFS contracted with the Social Work Education Consortium, University at Albany School of Social Welfare, for an evaluation to collect data from participating counties. The results of this evaluation will be forthcoming once all the data has been collected and formatted into a final report.

Plans for 2011 – 2012:

Pending the availability of fiscal resources, we plan to solicit local district interest in 2012 and support between five and eight additional teams.

Office of Court Administration (OCA)
Permanent Judicial Commission on Justice for Children (Commission): The Commission is chaired by Chief Judge Jonathan Lippman. In addition to OCFS Commissioner Carrión, other members include judges, lawyers, advocates, physicians, legislators, and state and local officials.

The NYS Child Welfare Court Improvement Project (CIP) began in 1994 and was administered from its inception through the fall of 2006 by the Commission. In 2006, the increased focus on court operational issues prompted the transition of the administration of the project to the Office of Court Administration's Division of Court Operations. The CIP continues to operate with the support, advice, and counsel of the Commission. OCFS and OCA have initiated a joint project to build more effective collaboration between the family courts and the social services districts with the highest foster care populations in the State. The newly formed statewide court collaboration team will design and oversee the implementation of court collaboration initiatives on the State and local levels. The project will support the development of enhanced family court practices and enhanced child welfare case work and legal practices to support the timely resolution of court cases so as to reduce children's time to permanency. The project is also providing a process by which data maintained by both local social services districts and courts can be shared to evaluation the impact of innovations that promote improved outcomes for children.

As indicated in our CFSR work and to support our overall CFSP, OCFS has continued to work with the Office of Court Administration on local agency and court collaborations that are aimed at improving safety, permanency and well being of children and families who are involved with Family Court. A total of 21 collaborations are currently receiving support, training and technical assistance from both OCFS and OCA. Court Data packets are expected to be shared with the 21 Family Courts in 2011.

Also under our agency/court improvement agenda is integration of NYS Office of Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services and local treatment providers into local court and district collaboration. Two districts have agreed to pilot a protocol to be used in cases involving the misuse of alcohol or drugs. A third district is being sought for this pilot.

The Seneca Nation Peacemaker Courts Collaboration began in 2005 and includes judges and court personnel from the 8th Judicial District, the Seneca Nation of Indians and the Peacemaker Court judges. This collaboration provides a forum to discuss practices and procedures and provides a welcome point of contact for issues including the

implementation of the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA), and the development of a tribal Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) program.

The Child Protective Services (CPS)/Domestic Violence (DV) Collaboration Projects began in 1997. The projects outstation a DV advocate from a local non-for-profit DV agency in the local CPS office to participate in joint home visits, joint safety planning and interventions, consultation, case conferencing, cross-training and protocol, and team development. OCFS currently supports 11 CPS/DV projects in five regions: one in the Rochester region, two in the Albany region, three in the Syracuse region, four in the Spring Valley region, and one in the Buffalo region. (More information related to this project is noted in Goal 3)

In-Depth Technical Assistance (IDTA): In 2006, NYS was awarded an In-Depth Technical Assistance (IDTA) opportunity from the National Center on Substance Abuse and Child Welfare (NCSACW) following a joint application by OCFS, OASAS and OCA. The purpose of this work is to enhance collaboration to improve outcomes for families with substance abuse issues involved in the family court and child welfare system. The collaboration is called the New York State Partnership for the Family Recovery. *Gearing up to Improve Outcomes for Families NYS Collaborative Practice Guide for Managers and Supervisors in Child Welfare, Chemical Dependency Services and Court Systems* was publicized in 2009. This document provides a framework and guidance for districts to increase local collaboration between systems, and the development and identification of cross-systems training opportunities to increase the understanding by workers in each of the systems of each other's work. The Partnership also issued four separate desk guides designed for child welfare workers, substance abuse service providers, judges and judicial officers, and Family Court practitioners. Late in 2010 the Partnership began working directly with Oneida and Dutchess counties. These counties have begun to build local cross-system collaborations that will aid in improving outcomes for families affected by substance use disorder.

Racial Equity and Cultural Competence Initiative: In 2007, the OCFS implemented the Disproportionate Minority Representation (DMR) Initiative, which was renamed the Racial Equity and Cultural Competence (RECC) Initiative in 2009. The RECC Initiative has been developed to examine the issue of overrepresentation of Black and Latino children and their families in the state's child welfare and juvenile justice systems. In addition, this initiative is examining the under representation of the same populations in necessary services that can prevent out of home placements in other systems (i.e. child care, adult services, services to the blind and visually handicapped). Each OCFS division has staff representation within this committee on behalf of the agency. OCFS is engaging our local partners in this effort.

Since OCFS Commissioner Gladys Carrion sent a memo to the commissioners of the local department of social services in 2009 inviting them to collaborate with OCFS to safely reduce the high numbers of our out of home placements by reducing and eliminating racial disparities for Black and Hispanic/Latino youth. Two additional counties have responded with one joining the initiative in March 2010 and the other in

the fall of 2010, so that now there are seven counties who are working with OCFS and CFP to reduce and eliminate racial and ethnic disparities. They have developed plans and budgets to use a small planning grant to pay for technical assistance and training. On March 22 and 23, 2010, in depth TA sessions were provided in Monroe and Westchester counties. The Center for the Study of Social Policy (CSSP) agreed to conduct and Institutional Analysis in Monroe County in collaboration with the Monroe County Department of Social Services (MCDSS) and their DMR work group. They began the IA in the latter part of 2010 and will continue it into 2011. OCFS and Casey Family Program convened a two day technical assistance session in Albany County with technical assistance from representatives of disproportionate minority or Race Equity initiatives from Texas and Minnesota. CFP sponsored the training and representatives from all seven pilot counties and OCFS regional office staff attended. OCFS collaborated with other State and local agencies and organizations to present at conferences to continue to provide information and education to stakeholder about the work and to encourage cross system approached to addressing disparities in various domains. Cross system presentations have been provided with representatives from the NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services, the agency responsible for address disproportionality and disparity in juvenile justice systems, and to organizations such as the NYS Minorities in Criminal Justice, Court Appointed Special Advocates, and local departments of social services. OCFS is currently working with the pilot counties on further development and implementation of their plans.

In response to the need for detailed data on the extent and nature of disproportionality in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems in New York State, OCFS' Bureau of Evaluation and Research has been analyzing OCFS child welfare data and population projection data to identify racial/ethnic disparities at different decision points in the New York State child welfare system. Similar analyses are being performed for the juvenile justice system, using data from OCFS, the Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS), criminal justice agencies in New York City, and population projections. In addition, the Bureau of Evaluation and Research has conducted a comparative analysis of child welfare data disaggregated to the county level in order to determine the areas of the state where disproportionality is most evident and the demographic factors that are associated with high levels of disproportionality. County-level DMR indicators were developed and included in the data packets that are being provided to local districts as part of the federal Child and Family Services Review Performance Improvement Plan process. This data is readily available on a regular basis and are used in presentations to highlight the issues of disparity and disproportionality by location and over time.

Plans for 2011-2012:

This was the first initiative of its kind and is considered as a model for other divisions to consider. By July, all CBVH staff completed an introductory session on cultural competence with training provided by an expert from the New York City Jewish Board of Family and Children Services.

Current OCFS data continues to show that Black and Latino children and families consistently comprise 75% of the state's foster care cases and over 80% of the juvenile justice placements. OCFS will continue to implement various activities at the state and local level to:

- assess relevant data;
- heighten public awareness of the issue of disproportionality;
- provide technical assistance and training to relevant stakeholders at the state and local level regarding RECC;
- identify strategies and funding opportunities which assist communities to address the issue; and
- identify evidence based and/or best practice strategies and/or approaches which can be replicated in New York State to respond to the issue.

Fatherhood Initiatives

OCFS and OTDA staff collaborated and met regularly to encourage and support the development of responsible fatherhood initiatives jointly and in their respective agencies. Current fiscal circumstances have impacted on the plans that were developed for 2010 and 2011 and this update reflects changes made as a result of the new state and national fiscal reality.

Accomplishments 2010 - 2011:

- The OCFS Division of Juvenile Justice and Opportunities for Youth (DJJOY) continues to develop its fatherhood initiative. The DJJOY work group meets regularly to support the work. The pilot program and focus group of young incarcerated fathers at Brookwood Secure Center met with the OTDA and OCFS staff during 2010. The MacCormick program continues to be a model for the other DJJOY facilities. A third facility, Highland Residential Center started their fathers group in late 2010 and continues to serve a small group of young fathers. All facilities have participated in various meetings and a videoconference to gather updates and share information.
- OCFS staff has developed a Framework document as a guide for implementing the fatherhood program in DJJOY. The document is a tool that presents a process for consideration that starts at reception and intake and informs the practice efforts through release from facility and into community service status. This guide continues to be used to develop the program.
- OCFS and OTDA are entering into the 5th year of the "Dads Take Your Child to School" initiative. OTDA and OCFS continued to expand the program, which is now active in New York City, Albany, Schenectady, Troy, Syracuse, Rochester, White Plains as well as other cities throughout the state. It is anticipated that it will include Buffalo in 2011. It is also our understanding that this is being considered a model for other states to consider throughout the nation. In September 2010, in addition to the Dads Take Your Child to School event, OCFS, OTDA and representatives from Albany High School participated in a webinar entitled "Creating Father Friendly Schools", which

was targeted at school systems throughout the state and drew an audience of representatives from schools systems across the country. That webinar is available on DVD.

- OCFS NYCRO staff, continue to work with New York State Assemblyman Scarborough to implement a responsible fatherhood initiative in the borough of Queens. This effort has had city-wide impact with the coordination and collaboration of resources for fathers from OCFS programs and facilities who return to or already reside in New York City.

Plans for 2011-2012:

- Continue periodic meetings with work group to review and consider various activities and projects.
- Consider the development of a New York State Fatherhood Advisory Committee.
- Continue to support the development of OCFS DJJOY fatherhood program.
- Develop a process to identify fathers in Division of Child Welfare and Community Services (DCWCS) voluntary agencies

After School RFP Taskforce: In SFY 2010 - 11, OCFS participated on the *After School Request for Proposal (RFP) Taskforce*, a partnership of public and private stakeholders involved in the development of after school programs. Participants included three public agencies (NYS Education Department, OCFS and the New York City Department of Youth and Community Development) and stakeholders from the provider community, the advocacy community, and other nonprofits working on practice and policy across the state. Through a review of RFPs, program models, evaluation processes, definitions of quality, and other parameters, the taskforce produced a comprehensive list of recommendations for improving the quality of RFPs that fund after school programs. The After School RFP Taskforce recommendations will facilitate the accomplishment of the following task force goals:

- Strengthen public agency RFPs and processes;
- Provide programs with RFPs that are current and coordinated to facilitate braiding, program development and reporting;
- Strengthen the coordination of the statewide system for afterschool, strengthening the link between afterschool with other youth-serving agencies and systems.

New York State After School Network (NYSAN): As a member of the New York After School Network (NYSAN) Steering, Operations, and Policy Committees, OCFS works in collaboration with public and private stakeholders to improve the quality of after school programs. In SFY 2010 – 11, OCFS worked with the NYSAN Quality Assurance Subcommittee to refine the Quality Self Assessment (QSA) tool, which was implemented within the Advantage After School Program in September 2010. OCFS also work with NYSAN to develop and implement a program monitoring tool which is aligned with the program standards in the QSA. The piloting of this monitoring tool began in October 2010, and a final tool was developed and implemented in February 2011.

Program Service Descriptions According to Goals

GOAL #1

FAMILIES, INCLUDING NUCLEAR, EXTENDED AND ADOPTIVE FAMILIES WILL BE STRENGTHENED AND SUPPORTED IN RAISING AND NURTURING THEIR CHILDREN; IN MAINTAINING THEIR CHILDREN'S CONNECTIONS TO THEIR HERITAGE; AND IN PLANNING FOR THEIR CHILDREN'S FUTURE

Primary Strategy: 1. Infuse and implement family-centered principles into casework practice that promotes family engagement across all stages of the child welfare delivery system.

National research, as well as New York State stakeholders, lead us to the conclusion that when a family is actively engaged in developing a plan to improve their family functioning, they are more likely to commit to the goals and the personal work required to achieve those goals. From the initial contacts and through-out the life of the case, family engagement is at the core of helping a family address their children's need for safety, permanency and well-being.

Goal: Increase the engagement of families in the assessments of needs and strengths, case planning and positive outcomes.

Action Steps and Benchmarks:

1. Obtain commitment from the 13 counties with the highest foster care population to adopt and implement a Family Engagement initiative.
Benchmarks 1.1(a) Letter sent to counties identifying Family Engagement as NYS key practice and to have each district adopt it as a key strategy in their PIP (submitted in a logic model format)
1.1(b) Develop and distribute CFSR data relative to safety, permanency and well-being. Districts are required to complete a local self-assessment based on data and local stakeholder input that identifies any need for improvement in family engagement
1.1(c) Provide T/A to districts related to the understanding and use of CFSR data
1.1(d) Development and distribution of four sample family engagement logic model templates that assist districts in identify their needs and connect them to the strategy that best facilitates practice change
1.1(e) Provide T/A to districts related to the understanding and use of logic models. The needs in the area of family engagement differ by districts, therefore regional and home office support will be tailored to assist each district in selecting those strategies based on their identified needs.

1.2 OCFS will provide or coordinate training and technical assistance to the 13 counties in implementing family engagement strategies Benchmarks 1.2.(a) Review local district PIPs to identify the training and technical assistance to be responsive to the strengths, needs, and strategies in implementing Family Engagement

1.2(b) Develop and distribute electronic versions of Family Engagement Toolkits to districts and agencies
1.2(c) Family Engagement Specialists will provide training and coaching as needed
1.2(d) CPS staff in the counties participating in FAR initiative will receive training in culturally competent family engagement from AHA

1.3 Expansion of Family Assessment Response (FAR has been implemented in six counties, four of which are part of the 13 counties.)
1.3(a) FAR will be expanded to eight additional counties in Round 2. One of which is part of the 13 counties.
1.3(b) Applications for round 2 received and approval letters provided back to the counties
1.3(c) Planning calls held with round 2 counties
1.3(d) district specific training provided by AHA
1.3(e) FAR symposium held to afford knowledge exchanged between round 1 and 2 counties who are implementing
1.3(f) FAR evaluation completed

1.4 Monitor LDSS's progress in implementation of family engagement strategies
1.4(a) Develop and distribute quarterly reporting forms for districts to indicate the action steps they took during the quarter with respect to their Family Engagement activities.
1.4(b) Review, analyze and provide feedback to each of the districts on their quarterly reporting forms
1.4(c) Develop and administer online surveys of front line staff and supervisors to determine changes in knowledge, attitudes, skills and motivation around Family Engagement.
1.4(d) Complete analysis of data and write report

Primary Strategy: 5. Redesign of the Statewide Information System
The Statewide Assessment noted concerns regarding the accuracy and currency of information relevant to a child's goals due to challenges surrounding the timeliness of data entry into New York's statewide information system (CONNECTIONS). OCFS has proposed several ways to promote more timely data entry of permanency planning information in CONNECTIONS that will increase the accuracy of the information available to caseworkers.

Goal: NYS' Statewide Information System will be user-friendly and provide timely and accurate child welfare data

Action Steps and Benchmarks:

5.1 Procurement and distribution of approximately 1,510 laptops to enable Foster Care workers to access CONNECTIONS to record casework contacts in a timely manner

5.2 Development and deployment of Share point technology that affords caseworkers and supervisors access to critical workload and performance measures.

5.2(a) Provide LDSS and VA users with training on Share Point technology.

5.3 Deployment of a new dot.net style of architecture that will allow caseworkers to easily navigate in and out of their workload, organize critical tasks, and maximize use of pre-fill options which will assist in the improving timeliness and accuracy of data
5.3(a) Provide LDSS and VA users with training on new transformation technology.

5.4 Develop and implement an enhanced dynamic Permanency Hearing Report
5.4 (a) Provide training to LDSS and VA users on the new Permanency Hearing Report

Primary Strategy: 7. Enhance training of voluntary agency staff participating in the Improved Outcomes for Children as initiated by the Administration for Children's Services.

OCFS will review and provide guidance related to the training and technical assistance offered by the Administration for Children's Services (ACS) to voluntary agency staff, who through the Improved Outcomes for Children initiative will be responsible for the case planning and management of child welfare cases (preventive and foster care). ACS's training and technical assistance will focus on Family Team Conferencing facilitation training. Refresher days will also be included.

Goal: Training will be provided to voluntary agency staff participating in ACS' Improve Outcomes for Children initiative.

Action Steps and Benchmarks:

7.1 Review and Monitor ACS' training to IOC agencies on Family Team Conference facilitation skills. [Pasted]

ASSESSMENT OF NEED AND CURRENT STATUS

Between 1998 and 2005 admissions to foster care declined steadily. This trend changed in 2006, when there was a 26.7 % increase in admissions. In 2007, admissions were down 4.1 % from the previous year. In 2008 admissions went up slightly 1.1 %. For 2009 admissions declined 5.1 %. For 2010 the admissions declined 3.1% from 2009. The number of care days in foster care in 2010 also declined 4.2 % compared to 2009.

An analysis of foster care admission data reveals that the two age cohorts most highly represented in the current foster care admission population are children under the age of two and children age 14 -17. This reflects the same age cohorts as 2009: Children under the age of two (21.9%) and children age 14-17 (30.8%). The percentage for admissions for the age group 2-5 years (18.2%), 6-9 years (13.6%) and 10-13years (15.2%). The age group 2-5years and 6-9years went up from 2009 and age group 10-13 years stayed the same as 2009. The older age group is most likely to come into care after contact with the juvenile justice system.

The percentage of foster care readmissions as a function of all admissions remained stable. In the year 2005, readmissions were 13.7% of admissions. Since that year, the percentage has fluctuated. For 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009 readmissions were 11.8%, 11.9% and 14.0%, 13.3%. In 2010 the percentage of readmissions declined to 10.6%.

PERFORMANCE TARGETS

Lack of Recurrence of Child Abuse and Maltreatment (CAM)

A state meets the national standard for this indicator if, of all children who were victims of substantiated or indicated child abuse and/or neglect in the first six months of the reporting period, 93.9% or more children had **no** additional substantiated or indicated report within six months.

NEW YORK STATE PERFORMANCE:	2005	87.3%
	2006	86.3%
	2007	87.7%
	2008	87.9%
	2009	87.8%
	2010	87.7%

Data Source: OCFS DATA WAREHOUSE

STATE AND LOCAL ACTIVITIES

Prevention Services Program

The OCFS Prevention Program was created in response to the community needs throughout the State for resources to support community-based efforts that implement a wide range of primary and secondary prevention and permanency planning services.

A total of 53 preventive services programs statewide were supported by approximately $16 million for the SFY 2009-2010. The applying agencies provided sufficient data and demographics to support the identified service needs in collaboration with other stakeholders for the proposed services in their community. The programs were selected and awarded through competitive bidding.

The target population includes young children, adolescents, parents and caretakers with a child at risk of child abuse or foster care, or in foster care but for whom program services will shorten placement and facilitate reunification or some other permanency option. There is no requirement that there be an open preventive or protective case. Programs work with families who are at risk of entering the child welfare system as well as families

already involved in the child welfare system. Some programs specialize in working with families with substance use disorders. Families must meet TANF income eligibility guidelines (income below 200% poverty level).

Prevention Services are funded as part of a five year contract shell with an expiration of 2010 or early 2011. Annual funding is contingent upon the availability of funding in the State's budget.

Prevention services outcomes include:

- Prevention of placement in foster care
- Prevention of the return to foster care placement or other out-of-home setting
- Prevention of child abuse and neglect
- Acceleration of family reunification after foster care, other out-of-home placement

Community-based prevention programs deliver a wide range of services. These services include but are not limited to:

- Advocacy
- Information and Referral
- Family Support Centers
- Parent Education
- Parent and Child Support Groups
- Aftercare Services
- Case Planning
- Respite Care
- Crisis Phone Lines
- Therapeutic Support Groups
- Intensive Case Management For Families Affected by Alcohol and Substance Abuse
- Functional Family Therapy
- Clinical Services
- Parent Aide and Skill Training

Performance Measures/Local Collaboration

Accomplishments 2010 – 2011:

The 53 funded prevention programs provided direct services to over 8500 adults and children and met the performance targets tied to the above-mentioned outcomes. Significant accomplishments were noted in participants receiving substance abuse intervention services to keep their children at home; children remaining in their homes through intensive intervention; children being reunited earlier than expected through appropriate interventions with their caregivers; and parents improving their parenting skills, knowledge in child development, appropriate discipline, problem-solving, identification and use of family and community supports.

- 1096 participants received substance abuse intervention
- 1816 children remained in their home through intensive intervention
- 118 children reunited with their families earlier than expected
- 1560 parents improved their parenting skills and knowledge of child development; appropriate discipline, problem-solving, identification and use of community resources

The Prevention Programs reached the final term of their five year contract shell with the programs ending in December 2010, March 2011, and June 2011. In an effort to prepare a smooth transition for families that might have ongoing service needs, agencies worked closely with stakeholders and families to ensure service continuum. Cases with service goals met were closed with resource options available for families for their future use. Families with continued service needs were transferred to other preventive programs or returned back to the local districts. Overall, program closures were adequately accomplished.

The Post Adoption "Lessons Learned" Report of 2009 was completed and disseminated. It contained details of challenges, unmet needs, promising practices, lessons learned and recommendations reported by the prevention programs in their Final Program Reports.

Plans for 2011-2012:

The State budget for 2010-2011 appropriated six million in federal TANF funding for the continued support and development of prevention services. A Prevention and Post-Adoption RFP is under development to meet the legislative mandates with a planned release in 2011. This funding opportunity will focus on serving families at high risk of child abuse/maltreatment and/or foster care/out-of-home placements, residing in high need communities. Priorities under this initiative are to create standard performance measures to improve outcome data, using lessons learned to improve practice and support local communities by aligning with local child welfare strategies. A TANF Prevention "Lessons Learned" Report will be developed for dissemination this coming year.

Healthy Families New York (HFNY)

Based on the national Healthy Families America (HFA) model, Healthy Families New York (HFNY) is a community-based prevention program that seeks to improve the health and well-being of children at risk for abuse and neglect through the provision of intensive home visitation services. HFNY offers systematic assessment of pregnant women and new parents for risks that may lead to child abuse and poor health/ development outcomes. Specially trained paraprofessionals, who typically share the same language and cultural background as participating families, deliver home visitation services to families identified as being at high risk until the child reaches five or is enrolled in Head Start or kindergarten.

Home visitors provide families with support, education, and linkages to community services aimed at addressing the following goals: 1) to promote positive parenting skills and parent-child interaction; 2) to prevent child abuse and neglect; 3) to ensure optimal prenatal care and child health and development; and 4) to increase parents' self-sufficiency. Home visits are scheduled biweekly during pregnancy and weekly during the first six months or so of the child's life. As families progress through the service levels based on their needs, the frequency of home visits declines, from biweekly, to monthly, and then quarterly.

HFNY is administered by OCFS in partnership with Prevent Child Abuse New York (PCANY) and the Center for Human Services Research (CHSR) at SUNY Albany. The initiative is modeled after Healthy Families America (HFA), the most widely disseminated home visitation program in the nation. New York is one of a handful of states to have earned a HFA multi-site certification in a very rigorous credentialing process.

All of the programs are located in high need areas. Between 4/1/2011 and 3/31/11, 3425 families were assessed. 5,716 families received 73,987 home visits. Since the HFNY program began in 1995, 26,969 families have been served and 919,778 home visits have been provided.

Accomplishments 2010-2011:

The State Budget for 2011-2012 included $23.288 million dollars. Accomplishments include continuation and exploration of additional funding streams for the HFNY Program. The programs will continue to add families as they serve their current caseload.

HFNY has developed specific data forms to collect information on the activities of Fatherhood advocates in our program and the work they do with fathers to see if specific outcomes can be measured. A grant was applied for to assist in these efforts, however we were told that although our proposal was strong it was not one of the proposals funded.
OCFS staff provides onsite and regional technical assistance and monitoring to the sites. During 2010-2011, monitoring visits were conducted to most of the 38 programs. OCFS staff focused their visits on the management of the program, community relationships, and ability of sites to meet HFA standards for providing quality home visits. OCFS staff reviews all of the sites' policy manuals and practices to determine if policies and practices are in compliance with New York State and HFA standards.

Over the past year, the Schuyler Center for Advocacy and Analysis has continued to bring together a group of OCFS, State Health Department (DOH), and local county health departments and provider agencies to work towards developing a coordinated system of home visiting. It supports the idea that all new families in NYS should receive assistance from a system of support and services that promotes optimal health, mental health, family functioning and self-sufficiency. Work has focused on coordination of existing services and exploration of increased funding to expand services including HFNY funding, Medicaid funding, TANF Block grant and COPS funding. OCFS will

continue to work collaboratively with SDOH to coordinate and expand home visiting services and assist localities to develop coordinated systems of care. The HFNY evaluation points to many positive health outcomes for participants including reduction of the incidence of low birth weight and increase in access to health care for both the mothers and infants. OCFS staff will continue to inform local social services districts about the benefits of home visiting and available funding options.

OCFS has been contacted by the New York State Developmental Disability Planning Council and a proposal has been issued for a demonstration project for HFNY's programs to work with parents who have developmental disabilities to assist them in improving their parenting skills. Proposals have been received from several community agencies and three programs have been selected to begin their project in June or July of 2011.

Plans for 2011-2012:

HFNY administrative staff is also working with our Maternal and Child Health Grant recipients on refining the Needs Assessment and final application required for the federally mandated funding dedicated for prevention to support home visitation services through provisions in the health care freeform legislation, the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (H.R. 3590; Sec. 2951).

HFNY has begun phase 2 of a pilot project to enroll families earlier in their pregnancy. As a result of our Randomized Controlled Trial, HFNY has significant effects on birth outcomes, and more specifically low birth weight. The program has made efforts to find and enroll families as early as their first trimester so that the program can have the best outcomes on the birth of the child. In addition, families who are enrolled prenatally tend to stay in the program longer and have stronger outcomes overall. Five sites participated in the initial phase of the pilot and yielded good results. The information learned assisted in refining forms and development of a tool kit to assist the system in enrolling families early in their pregnancy.

HFNY's Management Information System is undergoing a change from the current system to a web based system. In preparation for this, OCFS has been reviewing all of the forms completed by program staff and the information collected in order to make the new system as useful as possible. The new system will incorporate the new federal guidelines and outcome information, improve data collection and measure outcomes better. OCFS anticipates that the web-based system will be implemented sometime in the Spring-Summer of 2012.

HFNY state system plans to undergo the Healthy Families America accreditation process beginning this year. This will be the third time that the system has participated in this process.

<u>Evaluation of HFNY:</u>

To assess the impacts of HFNY on parenting, child health and development, and parental life course development, in 2000, OCFS' Bureau of Evaluation & Research in collaboration with the Center for Human Services Research at the University at Albany initiated an evaluation of HFNY utilizing a randomized controlled trial in three counties with established home visitation programs (Erie, Rensselaer, and Ulster). The randomized trial includes 1,173 women who met the eligibility criteria for HFNY and were randomly assigned to either an intervention group (n=579) that was offered HFNY services or a control group (n=594) that was given information and referrals to other appropriate services. Mothers were interviewed in their homes at intake into the study and again at the time of the child's birth, and first, second, and third birthdays. The Year 3 follow-up also included videotaped observations of a subsample of 522 mothers interacting with their three-year-old children during a series of structured situations that imposed varying demands on mother and child. To minimize the potential for biased measurement, interviewers were independent of the HFNY program and were kept blind to the participant's group assignment. The rate of retention in the study was high, with 91% of the study participants who were interviewed at baseline re-interviewed at Year 1, and 85% re-interviewed at Year 2. In addition, data on reports of child abuse and maltreatment involving families participating in the study were collected through a review of Child Protective Services (CPS) records.

In the fall of 2006, OCFS was awarded grants totaling more than $1.2 million from the National Institute of Justice and the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation to extend the HFNYrandomized trial from three years to seven years in order to test the program's long-term effectiveness in preventing child abuse and neglect. Mothers in both the intervention and control groups were reinterviewed at the time of the target child's seventh birthday, and for the first time, the target children were interviewed. In addition, videotaped observations of parent-child interactions were performed for a subset of the study's families. Data collection for the Year 7 follow-up study was completed in April 2009. Interviews were conducted with 942 mothers (81%) and 800 children, and 419 videotapes were completed. The research team is in the process of analyzing the data to examine the extent to which 1) HFNY prevents and/or reduces abuse and neglect of school-age children; 2) the program's effects on child maltreatment can be explained by its success in changing early parenting attitudes and behaviors and improving access to health care; 3) HFNY reduces precursors of juvenile delinquency, such as aggression, poor impulse control, compromised health and cognitive disabilities, among target children; and 4) the long-term benefits of HFNY outweigh its costs. In addition, the research team has conducted analyses on the entire data set to explore factors that may protect against or trigger the initiation and recurrence of child maltreatment, which, in turn, may lead to the development of more effective interventions to prevent child abuse and neglect.

In March 2010, the Pew Center on the States awarded OCFS $112,000 to expand the scope of its RCT to further evaluate the effectiveness of home visiting services. Capitalizing on existing data from earlier waves of HFNY's RCT, the study will answer three important policy questions regarding home visiting services. First, is home visiting an effective strategy for promoting children's academic and behavioral adjustment

immediately following their transition to school? Second, how do variations in the content, intensity, and duration of home visiting services relate to child outcomes? Third, are there conditions under which home visitation is particularly effective in improving children's adjustment at home and school? Funds from Pew will support the collection and analysis of first grade school reports, which will offer information about an area where there is limited evidence, and generate an objective measure of children's academic performance and behavior at school. Using data on children's behavior from school records, mother's reports, and self-reports, researchers in the Bureau of Evaluation and Research will examine children's level of adjustment at home, in school, and with peers at age seven, to identify the most successful and poorest performing groups, and HFNY's relationship to these groups.

Key Evaluation Findings

The following results have been abstracted from peer-reviewed articles appearing in the *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* and *Child Abuse and Neglect*, OCFS working papers, and reports to project funders.

Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect

- The program produced a reduction in the rate of confirmed reports for two subgroups within the sample: mothers who were already involved in a substantiated Child Protective Services (CPS) report prior to random assignment (the Recurrence Reduction Opportunity, or RRO, subgroup) and first-time mothers under age 19 who were offered HFNY early in pregnancy (the High Prevention Opportunity, or HPO, subgroup).
    - RRO Subgroup: Compared to their counterparts in the control group, HFNY mothers in the RRO subgroup had markedly lower rates of involvement—from random assignment to Age 7—in confirmed CPS reports for any type of abuse or neglect (41.5% vs. 60.4%); in confirmed reports involving physical abuse (3.3% vs. 13.4%); and in preventive, protective, and placement services (38.0% vs. 60.0%).
    - HPO Subgroup: Program impacts on confirmed CPS reports began to emerge for the HPO subgroup around Age 5, or at time of entry into school. From Age 5 to 7, the target children of HFNY mothers in the HPO subgroup were less likely to be named as confirmed victims in CPS reports than were their counterparts in the control group (9.9% versus 19.3%).
- Whole Sample: Maternal and child reports of physical aggression were considerably lower for the HFNY group than for the control group at Ages 1, 2, and 7, revealing a sustained pattern of effects over the first seven years of life.
    - At Age 2, and again at Age 7, HFNY mothers reported committing 75-80% fewer acts of serious physical abuse (e.g. hitting child with fist, slapping on face, kicking) than mothers in the control group.
    - At Age 1, HFNY mothers reported engaging in fewer incidents of very serious physical abuse and minor physical aggression than mothers in the control group.
    - When the target children were interviewed at Age 7, those in the HFNY group were less likely to report that their mothers engaged in minor physical aggression against them than were the children in the control group (75.7% versus 81.6%).

- HPO Subgroup: HFNY was particularly effective in reducing the use of aggressive and harsh parenting practices among mothers in the HPO subgroup, with the effects enduring from early childhood to school age.
    - Compared to their counterparts in the control group, HFNY mothers in the HPO subgroup were substantially less likely to report engaging in minor physical aggression (51% vs. 70%) and harsh parenting (41% vs. 62%) at Age 2.
    - Effects of a similar magnitude emerged at Age 3, with HFNY mothers displaying lower rates of harsh parenting behaviors while interacting with their children during structured tasks.
    - At Age 7, HFNY mothers were less likely to report using psychological aggression and minor physical aggression with their children than were control mothers in the HPO subgroup.

Positive Parenting Practices

- Whole Sample: HFNY promoted the use of positive parenting skills that support and encourage children's cognitive and social development across developmental stages.
    - At Age 2, mothers assigned to the HFNY group were more likely to endorse appropriate limit setting strategies than those in the control group.
    - At Age 3, mothers assigned to the HFNY group were more likely than those in the control group to be observed using parenting strategies that stimulated the child's cognitive skills and were sensitive to the child's needs and affective cues.
    - At Age 7, HFNY mothers were more likely than control mothers to use non-violent discipline strategies, and also used these strategies more often.

Improved Birth Outcomes

- Mothers who enrolled in HFNY before their 31st week of pregnancy were only about half as likely as control group mothers to deliver low birth weight babies (5.1% vs. 9.8%).
    - The rate of LBW for mothers receiving HFNY met the goal of 5% set by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in its Healthy Families 2010 initiative.
    - HFNY was particularly effective in reducing LBW among black and Hispanic mothers—groups that persistently experience high levels of poor birth outcomes. For example, black mothers who were assigned to home visiting group were 70 percent less likely than black mothers in the control group to deliver LBW babies.
    - HFNY offers opportunities for substantial Medicaid savings through large-scale reductions in LBW. In 2007, Medicaid rates covered the delivery of 107,418 babies, including 9,800 LBW deliveries at a cost of $241,429,372. If these pregnant women had initiated services with HFNY prior to the 31st week of pregnancy, it is estimated that the program would have averted an additional 4,300 LBW deliveries and saved Medicaid $96.8 million.

Children's Educational and Cognitive Outcomes

- Whole Sample: Children in the HFNY group were more likely to participate in a gifted program and less likely to receive special education services and to self-report skipping school than were children in the control group.
- HPO Subgroup: As compared to their control group counterparts, HFNY children in the HPO subgroup were less likely to score below average on a standardized vocabulary assessment and to repeat a grade, and more likely to participate in a gifted program.

Long-Term Monetized Benefits and Costs of HFNY

The cost to deliver the HFNY program varied across participants, but was approximately $4000 per family. Other costs to government were calculated by summing expenses associated with public assistance and food stamp payments, Medicaid births, CPS investigations, preventive services and foster care placements, and then subtracting income tax revenues. Potential savings were estimated by comparing other government costs across the HFNY and control groups.

- RRO Subgroup: For the RRO Subgroup, HFNY generated savings in other government costs of $12,395 by the target child's 7th birthday. As a result, HFNY returned $3.16 for every dollar invested in RRO families.
- Whole Sample and HPO Subgroup: Although the savings in other government costs did not outweigh the cost of delivering HFNY for the whole sample and the HPO subgroup, the investment in HFNY produced non-monetized benefits in terms of:
    - Decreased physical abuse and aggression as reported by mothers and children
    - Reductions in confirmed reports from age 5 to 7 for children in HPO subgroup
    - More nurturing, responsive, and positive parenting
    - Decreased reliance on special education
    - Increased participation in gifted programs
    - Lower rate of skipping school
    - Reductions in repeating a grade and improvements in vocabulary assessments (HPO Subgroup)

Based on the evaluation's rigorous random assignment design and program's significant and positive effects on a range of outcomes, HFNY was designated as a "proven program" by RAND's Promising Practice network and an effective program by both Child Trends and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

Family Assessment Response (FAR) Demonstration

In 2007, the New York State Legislature enacted Chapter 452 of the Laws of 2007, which temporarily authorized the establishment of differential response (DR) programs in local departments of social services (LDSS) outside of New York City in order to provide a more flexible and effective response to families reported to the Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment (SCR),. Under this law, a LDSS can apply to the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) for approval to use a family assessment and services track to respond to certain types of child neglect reports, rather than a traditional Child Protective Services (CPS) investigation. Shortly after passage of the law, OCFS began planning for the implementation of DR, which it refers to as the

Family Assessment Response (FAR), and subsequently issued guidelines to LDSSs for submitting an application to establish a FAR program. Since 2008, OCFS has approved applications from 19 LDSSs and has provided training and technical assistance to enable these districts to implement the FAR approach successfully. The law also required that OCFS conduct an evaluation of the DR initiative and submit to the Governor and the Legislature a final report presenting findings and recommendations.

Upon passage of the DR Law, OCFS immediately began to plan internally and to reach out to local social services districts to assess interest in being a pilot site. OCFS also reached out to other states and experts with experience in developing and implementing DR programs. OCFS developed strong partnerships with local districts, the American Humane Association (AHA), the Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy, and the Casey Family Foundations to support New York's model development and implementation in three rounds of participating districts. Round 1 consisted of six counties that began accepting families to the FAR track in late 2008 and early 2009. Subsequently, eight Round 2 counties and five Round 3 counties joined the demonstration project and started serving families using FAR between September 2009 and July 2010. To date, 19 LDSSs have implemented FAR programs and approximately 9,000 reports have been handled using FAR instead of the CPS investigative response. Applications from two more districts have already been approved and eight additional districts have expressed interest in starting FAR programs after permanent legislation is enacted.

Evaluation of FAR

The OCFS Bureau of Evaluation and Research designed and completed a comprehensive evaluation of FAR, which examined the effects of FAR on improving family engagement and satisfaction, broadening community involvement in meeting family service needs, and reducing further penetration into the child welfare system. The findings were detailed in a report submitted to the Governor and Legislature in January 2011.

The evaluation consisted of both a process study and an impact study. The process study described the FAR program structure, eligibility requirements, and family characteristics in the six Round 1 counties that first volunteered to pilot the FAR program (Chautauqua, Erie, Onondaga, Orange, Tompkins, and Westchester). A total of 2,036 families who received the FAR intervention in these six counties during the seven-month sampling period (August 2009 through February 2010) were included in the process study. The process study also compared the attitudes and experiences of FAR caseworkers and investigative caseworkers from the Round 1 counties and six Round 2 counties (Chemung, Columbia, Essex, Livingston, Monroe, and Washington), based on an online survey of 79 FAR and 121 investigative caseworkers. A family satisfaction survey administered to 493 FAR families and 123 investigated families from the Round 1 counties provided information on whether families felt their caseworkers treated them well, considered their needs and preferences, and helped them to address issues affecting child safety or well-being.

The impact study examined whether the FAR approach: 1) increased the satisfaction of families with the local district's response to reports; 2) increased the percentage of families provided or referred to services that address their needs; 3) reduced the prevalence of subsequent reports of child abuse and neglect; 4) reduced the number of children for whom petitions are filed in the family court; and 5) reduced the use of formal child welfare services while increasing use of natural and community resources to meet family needs. The impact study compared the outcomes for FAR families to the outcomes for control groups consisting of similar families who met the FAR eligibility criteria but who received the traditional CPS investigative response. The impact study was limited to two Round 1 counties—Onondaga and Tompkins—where it was possible to establish control groups. In Onondaga County, a randomized control trial was used to assign FAR-eligible families to receive the FAR intervention or to a control group to receive the traditional CPS investigation. In Tompkins County, a control group was constructed by using a multi-stage process to identify FAR-eligible families reported to CPS in 2007 and then applying propensity score pairing to select control group families who matched the demographic and child welfare characteristics of families who entered the FAR track during the evaluation sampling period. The impact study samples included 946 FAR families and 546 control families from Onondaga County, and 299 FAR families and 299 control group families from Tompkins County.

Key Evaluation Findings

- *Family Engagement and Satisfaction*. Strong evidence was found that families were more positive about the FAR approach than they were about the investigative response. Compared to the investigated parents in the control group, parents assigned to the FAR track in Onondaga County were significantly more likely to report that their caseworkers fully listened to them (87% vs. 75%) and respected them (91% vs. 81%), to feel very or somewhat positive about their overall experience with CPS (86% vs. 72%), and among those who had a prior encounter with CPS, to report that their most recent experience with CPS was better than their previous one (65% vs. 35%). FAR caregivers were significantly less likely than investigated caregivers to report feeling annoyed, stressed, irritated, angry, and worried by the end of the first home visit. FAR workers rated three-quarters of primary caregivers as very engaged in the assessment and solutions process, but reported less success engaging secondary caregivers and children. While not necessary in all cases, in almost half of FAR cases, caseworkers tried to engage the family's natural or community supports. The majority of FAR workers reported that attempts to engage families' support networks have been fairly useful or very useful in identifying and implementing solutions.
- *Access to Services*. The FAR approach increased, expanded, and expedited families' access to appropriate services, especially services to meet basic family needs, such as food, housing, and utilities. In Onondaga County, FAR families were much more likely to report receiving help from their workers than similar FAR-eligible families who received an investigation (70% vs. 56%). FAR families were more likely than investigated families to report receiving help from

caseworkers to get basic things needed for children, such as diapers, formula, food, or clothes (17.9% vs. 6.5%), help with a difficult relationship with a partner or ex-partner (11.0% vs. 4.9%), and help obtaining public assistance services, such as TANF, food stamps, or Medicaid (9.6% vs. 3.3%).

- *Broader Community Involvement*. FAR caseworkers broadened the involvement of the community in meeting family service needs. FAR caseworkers were more likely than investigation caseworkers to refer families to non-traditional service providers such as neighborhood organizations (18% vs. 7%), community action groups (18% vs. 6%), and self-help groups (24% vs. 11%). More FAR workers than investigation workers reported that they had referred families to providers of food (58% vs. 42%), housing (66% vs. 45%), and utilities assistance (52% vs. 20%) in a recent three-month period.
- *Caseworker Perspectives*. FAR workers were more likely than investigative workers to believe that a majority of families on their caseload view the CPS agency as a source of support and assistance (53% vs. 21%), and that a majority of families would feel they were better off because of their involvement with CPS (24% vs. 11%). FAR workers were more likely than investigative workers to believe that that they have intervened effectively (70% vs. 52%) and helped more than 50% of the families on their caseload obtain the services or assistance they need (72% vs. 58%).
- *Petitions Filed in Family Court.* The FAR approach led to a decrease in the need for family court involvement. The percentage of families on whom a petition was filed in family court within six months after the focal report intake date was significantly lower for FAR families than for investigated control group families in Onondaga County (1.9% vs. 4.4%) and trending lower in Tompkins County (2.6% vs. 4%).
- *Child Welfare Services Cases.* FAR resulted in a reduction in the need for traditional public child welfare services (CWS). FAR families were significantly less likely to have a CWS case opened within six months of the focal report than were families who received a CPS investigation in Tompkins County (8.2% vs. 13.8%). Although FAR families in Onondaga were also less likely than control families to have a CWS case opened (9% vs. 11.6%), this difference was not statistically significant. As one of the essential goals of FAR is to broaden the usage of community resources to serve families, a reduction in new CWS cases could be an indicator that families received sufficient services from community resources and assistance from their own natural support networks to resolve child safety and other problems without public monitoring.
- *Subsequent Child Abuse / Neglect Reports.* No significant differences were found between the FAR and investigated control groups in the likelihood of having a subsequent report by six months after intake, or by six months after case closure. This finding is consistent with the research in other states with DR programs, where impacts on subsequent reports did not begin to emerge until 18 months after intake. If FAR follows the experiences of the DR programs in other states, it

is anticipated that further follow-up will demonstrate a reduction in subsequent reports among FAR families over the long term.

Based on these positive findings, OCFS recommended that new legislation be enacted in early 2011 to make FAR a permanent alternative to investigations of child abuse and neglect reports.

Advantage After School Program

New York State created the Advantage After School Program (AASP) in 2000, to provide quality youth development programming to school-age children and youth during the after school hours. AASP programs must offer a broad range of educational, recreational and cultural age-appropriate activities that integrate what happens in the school day. Each program represents a partnership between a community-based organization and a school.

The Advantage After School Programs are designed around four program outcomes, three performance targets, and established Program Standards of Excellence. The Advantage After School Program Outcomes are:

- To improve the social, emotional, academic and vocational competencies of school-age children;
- To prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock adolescent pregnancies;
- To reduce other negative behaviors such as violence and crime; tobacco, alcohol and substance abuse; disengagement from school; school suspension; and truancy and health-compromising behaviors; and
- To provide parents with a safe after school environment for their children.

Advantage After School Programs have three performance target areas that relate to the achievement of these four program outcomes. The three performance target areas for all programs are:

- Child Performance – a measurement of how children that regularly attend the after school program will enhance their academic achievement
- Youth Involvement/Attendance - a measurement of program quality as demonstrated by the consistency of attendance by the children enrolled in the after school program.
- Parental/Guardian Involvement – a measurement of program quality as demonstrated by parent satisfaction and participation

Family Unification Program Demonstration (Department of Housing and Urban Development)

The Family Unification Program (FUP) is a federal initiative under the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) which provides limited Section 8 assisted housing to families whose children are at risk of foster care placement or whose return to the family is delayed primarily due to a lack of adequate housing. Families must be certified as eligible for the service through the public child welfare

agency, which in New York is the local department of social services. Eligibility in New York State parallels eligibility for mandated preventive services. HUD program rules require that the program include both public housing authority and public child welfare agency participation for locating, identifying and assisting eligible families. In New York State this involves the New York State Division of Housing and Community Renewal (DHCR) and its Section 8 Local Administrators and OCFS and its social services districts.

Accomplishments in 2010-2011:

OCFS continues to concentrate upon improving the usage rate of existing FUP vouchers. As a result of the ongoing collaboration between OCFS and DHCR, the usage rate of available vouchers remains very high. The effort to involve additional districts as FUP participation continues, as does ongoing technical assistance to participating entities.

Plans for 2011-2012:

- Await postings of new Notice of Funding Announcements (NOFAs). OCFS will consider new funding opportunities as they become available.

Training Provided 2010-2011

OCFS continued the process of restructuring its training system for child welfare. OCFS has worked with, social services districts, and its university-training partners to implement a system of training that support the development of outcome-focused practice skills. OCFS updated its foundation level outcome based training. The training includes greater emphasis on interviewing children; solution focused trauma sensitive care, as well as expanded web-based training and reliance on the supervisor to support transfer of learning.

The Child Welfare/Child Protective Services Caseworker Common Core is the foundation component for line staff. Based on input from OCFS's Advisory Group, the Common Core program was redesigned in 2009-2010 and will be fully implemented in 2011. The Supervisory Core was implemented in 1999, and was revised in 2007. Additional revisions will be made based on OCFS' work with the Northeast and Caribbean Resource Center on a three year grant to design a system of support for child welfare supervisors. The Child Protective Services Response Specialty Component was implemented in 2001 and was redesigned in 2010. The Adolescent Services Resource Network, designed to prepare youth for self-sufficiency, has been available since 2000. The Adoption Specialty "Achieving Permanency through Surrender and Termination of Parental Rights" was piloted in 2005 and 2006 and implemented in 2007. During 2009, OCFS worked with the National Resource Center for Adoption to adapt the Adoption Competency Curriculum for use in New York State. The NCWRC for Adoption conducted a series of train the trainer program across the state to prepare voluntary agency trainers to deliver the program to their organizations. The rollout of the Family Preservation/Reunification Specialty training began in 2005. These trainings are designed to provide non-CPS child welfare caseworkers with the knowledge and skill to

achieve expected outcomes. The Core Essential Skills for Experienced Caseworkers Specialty, developed specifically for experienced caseworkers, was fully implemented in 2002 in all regions of the state. This eight-day residential program is designed to build practice skills in more experienced staff. This program will be revised to mirror the Common Core changes.

The Outcome Based Training (OBT) System includes an on-the-job training component. This on-the-job component facilitates the transfer of learning from the classroom to the workplace and contributes to building a mutual commitment to clear, focused practice between supervisors and caseworkers. The OBT system builds a set of professional helping skills, assessment, planning, intervention skills and decision-making skills that will allow caseworkers and supervisors to address competently the unique needs of each family. OCFS believes that this combination of casework skills, applied in a context of a shared framework of practice among social services districts and voluntary agencies, will make a significant contribution toward the achievement of OCFS's goals and the federal outcomes.

The child welfare training program continues in transition as OCFS refines its training to align with national best practice standards and evolving child welfare policy. OCFS has and is continuously exploring ways to expand the use of computer-based and distance learning technologies to enhance accessibility to child welfare staff.

Training Provided in Federal Fiscal Year 2010-2011

- **Child Welfare Casework Documentation Training**

This training program prepares caseworkers to effectively document on-going case activities, decisions and milestones with families and children in a manner consistent with the practice framework, policy, and procedures of NYS. The program provides a structure for the management of the case through assessment, service planning, implementation, and evaluation. One component of this project focuses on Family Assessment and Service Planning (FASP). A FASP Manual is under development. Another component focuses on Progress Notes.

2917 trainees
250 training days

- **Working with Substance Abusing Families -- Training For Child Welfare Staff**

This training program builds the knowledge and skills necessary to identify, assess, and plan with families affected by alcohol and substance abuse. Local district and voluntary agency child welfare caseworkers and supervisors develop competencies in recognizing the natural resilience of families, in utilizing strengths to motivate and facilitate change, and in supporting families throughout a member's treatment and recovery.

224 trainees
10 offerings

33training days

- **Sexual Abuse Dynamics and Intervention Training – for Child Welfare Staff**

This statewide training is provided for caseworkers in all child welfare services program areas on the dynamics of sexual abuse as well as the treatment modalities currently utilized to protect and support victims and to treat and support the family. The program builds the knowledge base that caseworkers need to identify the presence of intra-familial sexual abuse, to make accurate and effective safety assessments, interventions, risk assessments and service plans to keep children safe and reduce the risk of future harm. This course is provided to a combined audience of Child Protective and other Child Welfare caseworkers.

371 trainees
16 offerings
48 training days

- **Training for Experienced CPS Caseworkers**

This is advanced level training for child protective service caseworkers who have completed basic training. These trainings enable experienced caseworkers to strategically apply the skills they acquired in foundation training in a variety of critical areas of practice. The courses include: Advanced Medical and Legal Issues, Forensic Interviewing Best Practices, CPS In-Service training programs that are district specific training. All experienced caseworkers, including CPS staff, are also able to participate in the soon to be piloted course Advanced Child Welfare Interviewing. For those acting in a CPS On-Call capacity, an online iLinc class is offered.

1948 trainees
78 offerings
2 Teleconferences
110 training days

- **Child Welfare/Child Protective Services Common Core**

The current program is required for all new CPS caseworkers and strongly recommended for all new caseworkers. The objective of the training is to equip new workers with the knowledge, attitudes, and skills to practice effectively. The training provides caseworkers with opportunities to practice using a set of skills that research and best practice standards have shown to positively impact the achievement of child safety, permanency, and child and family well being outcomes. Sixteen days of classroom training are provided for practice on assessment, safety, risk and abuse maltreatment, professional casework relationships, decision making, case management, and legal skills. There is one day of integrated CONNECTIONS Systems training, for a total of 17 classroom days. The program also includes synchronous and asynchronous computer-based training and on-the-job training to impart knowledge on policies, procedures, and

casework practices that will prepare trainees for the skills based classroom portion of the training.

384 trainees
18 offerings
248 total training days

- **Child Protective Services Response Training**

This course completes the mandated core training for child protective staff. The course builds on a set of interpersonal engagement, assessment, and decision making skills and values learned in the Common Core and apply them to the CPS role and responsibilities in the context of the CPS Response. This course focuses on the principles and techniques of investigations, relationships with other investigative bodies, legal issues in child protection, interviewing children, and methods of remediation, diagnosis, treatment, and prevention.

391 trainees
17 offerings
119 training days

- **Child Welfare/Child Protective Services Supervisory Core**

Supervisory Core is composed of two components: Module I Foundations, a five-day course for all supervisors that focuses on leadership, supervisory effectiveness behaviors, and generic supervision; and Module II A, the Child Protective Services Specialty, a six-day course for CPS supervisors, focusing on supervising the child protective response.

Module I

71 trainees
3 offerings
15 training days

Module II A
38 trainees
2 offerings
13 training days

- **Foster/Adoptive Parent Training**

Foster/Adoptive Parent Training consists of an integrated, comprehensive series of training courses that will be available to foster and adoptive parents from pre-placement of a child to their permanency goal. This project begins with training that prepares agency staff and foster parent teams to deliver a 10-week Group Preparation and Selection II/Mutual Assessment of Partnerships in Parenting (GPSII/MAPP) training

program for prospective foster and adoptive parents. It also includes COMPASS training, an in-service foster/adoptive parent training program and continues with the provision of specialized training through the Therapeutic Foster Boarding Home training project. Foster/Adoptive Parent training also consists of modules that respond to the needs of foster/adoptive parents. Child development, communication, interpersonal helping skills and many other related topics are addressed in this program. In response to popular reception, the distance learning format iLinc will be featured as a way to reach foster/adoptive parents in their homes via their own personal computers at times they are available for training.

6166 trainees
521 training days

- **Child Welfare/Child Protective Services Core Essential Skills for Experienced Caseworkers**

This training program is designed for staff having one or more years of direct child welfare experience who did not attend the Common Core Training. The program provides experienced staff with a framework for their practice that defines workers as agents of change who use a professional casework relationship to engage families in the assessment, service planning, and change process to achieve child welfare goals of safety, permanency, and well being. This 8-day program builds skills consistent with those presented in the Common Core training and is being revised to mirror changes in the Common Core program. This program includes an optional one day 'engagement' skills clinic for supervisors.

312 trainees
14 offerings
112 training days

- **Outcome Based Training and Technical Assistance**

Technical assistance is delivered in groups or on a one-on-one basis. Supervisors and caseworkers receive technical assistance to plan, implement and make operational the Outcome-Based Training system in their local districts. This includes pre, mid and post core conferences with caseworkers, supervisors and staff development coordinators to assess training skills learned in the classroom and on-the-job training components and to develop a plan to meet ongoing training needs. Technical Assistance can also include training of trainer activities and providing training and follow-up training to large local districts that provide their own Core training.

11 days of technical assistance
980 pre, mid and post core conferences

- **Family Preservation/Reunification**

This is an 8-day specialty course for Preventive, Foster Care and Adoption staff. It can follow the CWS/CPS Common Core and is presented in two modules. This program builds upon the generic caseworker skills and abilities developed by trainees during their

participation in the Common Core training. It focuses on the strategic use of professional casework, assessment, and service planning skills to work with families to promote children's safety and to achieve rapid permanency. Module I is designed for Preventive, Adoption, and Foster Care caseworkers, and is a prerequisite for Module II. Module II is designed for Adoption and Foster Care caseworkers.

Module I

51 trainees
3 offerings
15 training days

Module II
22 trainees
2 offerings
6 training days

- **Training and Consultation to Support Local District/Voluntary Agency Implementation of Family Meetings and Family Engagement Strategies**

The focus of this program is on training and consultation for the individual, unit and organization. The program highlights practices that promote and sustain family engagement. The program includes delivery of set of toolkits designed to promote family engagement, including engaging fathers, using visitation and family meetings to promote safety, permanency, and well-being, and child centered family focused practice. Technical assistance is provided, along with district/agency specific training and a wide range of other activities.

- **Directors of Services Leadership Institute**

OCFS introduced the Directors of Services Leadership Institute in 2006. This is an annual two-day event (delivered in half day/full day/half day format) intended to provide local district Directors of Services with the knowledge and skills necessary to apply generic and program-specific management principles and skills to the changing landscape of Child Welfare (Child Protective Services, Preventive Services, Foster Care, and Adoption Services). (This accomplishment also applies to Goal 2.)

69 trainees
1 offering
2 training days

- **Child Welfare Eligibility Training**

The purpose of this project is to provide social services districts with training so that staff will have the knowledge and skill needed to accurately, effectively, and efficiently determine eligibility for federal funding of child welfare and Medicaid programs. Topics include the history and rationale of federal funding streams, how to define and understand

the distinct use of each category of eligibility, the use of the Welfare Management System (WMS) and how to identify and access the resources available to help accomplish these objectives.

492 trainees
43 offerings

- **Training for OCFS and Local Social Services Districts' Attorneys**

This project provides legal training for OCFS, Social Services Districts' attorneys, and Family Court personnel to assist them in the understanding of technical and strategic aspects of child welfare and social service law and to manage legal actions on behalf of the children and families they serve.

157 trainees
3 offerings

Training Planned For Federal Fiscal Year 2011-2012

Nearly all of the training programs provided in 2010-2011, as described in Goal 1 of the APSR, will be offered again in the coming year.

- Child Welfare/Child Protective Services Common Core provides outcome-based training for all new child welfare services and child protective services caseworkers. It focuses on building skills that are most likely to lead to positive outcomes for clients and the achievement of program objectives. The training uses a variety of methodologies, including self-instructional materials, to impart knowledge on policies, procedures and practice concepts. The program was redesigned in 2009-2010 and will be fully implemented in 2011. In the new program, sixteen days of classroom training focus on the abilities required to conduct safety, risk, abuse/maltreatment and family strengths and needs assessments, the professional casework relationship, decision-making and case management skills. The program now includes a module on child interviewing, solution focused trauma sensitive practice, and an enhanced on-the-job training component that is conducted by social services districts and authorized voluntary agencies to reinforce and integrate the knowledge and skills portions of the training with the realities of the job. The redesigned Common Core training also includes a supervisors' guide to the Common Core and OJT, and synchronous and asynchronous on-line computer-based components. CONNECTIONS and legal training are integrated into the program.

An additional feature of the core training is an enhanced trainee evaluation process. OCFS developed a feedback loop between core trainers and trainees' supervisors to provide a developmental feedback on the trainees' participation in and progress through Core. A midpoint and final conference will be conducted. A written assessment tool was developed to continue to provide valuable feedback to trainees and their supervisors on trainees' progress and developmental needs.

In 2011-2012, the CW/CPS Common Core for New Caseworkers training curriculum will be revised to incorporate the basic principles and practices of Family Assessment Response so that the caseworkers, whether they are assigned to FAR or an investigative units will have a skill set that supports effective practice with families reported to the State Central Register.

572 trainees
22 offerings
352 training days

- **C**hild Welfare/Child Protective Services Supervisory Core provides outcome based training for new and existing child welfare and child protective services supervisors. The Supervisory Core has two components: Module I Foundations, a five-day course for all supervisors (preceded by two LearnLinc sessions); and Module II A, the Child Protective Services Specialty, a six-day course for CPS supervisors. These courses focus on building skills in leadership and the supervision of CWS/CPS casework practice. Training will also be provided to supervisors and program managers statewide on their role in developing and assessing new staff through the on-the-job training component of the new caseworker and supervisor core program.

Module I, Foundations

80 trainees
4 offerings
20 training days

Module II A, CPS Specialty

60 trainees
3 offerings
15 training days

- Training Support will be delivered to groups or on a one-on-one basis and will supplement training on the Common Core, Supervisory Core, Core Essentials Skills, Family Preservation/Reunification, and Achieving Permanency through Surrender and Termination of Parental Rights. Supervisors and caseworkers will receive training support to maintain the Outcome Based Training system in their local districts. This includes pre, mid and post core conferences with supervisors and caseworkers to assess training skills learned in the classroom and on-the-job training components, and to develop a plan for ongoing training needs. Training Support may also include training of trainer activities and providing training and follow-up training to large local districts that provide their own Core training.

50 Days of Training Support
2276 Pre, mid, and post-core Conferences

- **Child Welfare Casework Documentation Training**

Through a process of guided self-instruction, classroom training, and small group work, caseworkers will learn how to use case documentation to facilitate their case practice and meet requirements of child welfare legislation and regulation. The training will continue to incorporate modifications to reflect further development of CONNECTIONS as needed. Training will continue on both Progress Notes and the Family Assessment and Service Plan (FASP).

3420 trainees
300 training days

- **Family Preservation /Reunification**

This program provides specialized training for Foster Care, Adoption, and Preventive Workers. The training will build upon the generic caseworker skills and abilities developed by trainees during their participation in the CWS/CPS Common Core training. As a result of the Specialty training, Foster Care, Adoption, and Preventive Workers will acquire the competencies, knowledge and skills specific to their program areas. The content includes training on supporting families to make change, addressing the issues that led to placement or the risk of foster care and achieving permanency within Title IV-E timeframes. There are two components to this training: Module I is for Foster Care, Adoption, and Preventive Services caseworkers, and is five days in length. Module II is for Foster Care and Adoption caseworkers, and is three days in length.

Module I
100 Trainees
5 Offerings
25 Training Days

Module II
60 Trainees
4 Offerings
12 Training Days

- **Adoption Specialty Training**

This training currently consists of one course, "Achieving Permanency through Surrender and Termination of Parental Rights." The program provides participants with the basic knowledge and skills to assess the effectiveness of diligent efforts; determine the appropriateness of setting a goal of adoption; prepare children for adoption; use the legal process to free children for adoption and to comply with Title IV-E and State statutes. This training will also include training delivered by an attorney on diligent efforts, how to obtain a TPR and how to take a voluntary surrender. Portions of the program may be delivered through LearnLinc or comparable technology.

Achieving Permanency through Surrender and Termination of Parental Rights

100 Trainees
5 Offerings
30 Training Days

- **Child Protective Services Response Training**

This course completes the mandated core training for child protective staff by building upon a set of interpersonal engagement, assessment, and decision making skills and values learned in the Common Core and applying them to the CPS role and responsibilities in the context of the CPS Response. This course focuses on the principles and techniques of investigations, relationships with other investigative bodies, legal issues in child protection, and methods of remediation, diagnosis, treatment, and prevention.

In 2011-2012, the Child Protective Services Response training curriculum will be revised to incorporate the basic principles and practices of Family Assessment Response so that the caseworkers, whether they are assigned to FAR or an investigative units will have a skill set that supports effective practice with families reported to the State Central Register.

375 trainees
15 Offerings
105 Training Days

- **Training for Experienced Child Welfare and CPS Caseworkers**

A variety of advanced level training programs are offered to child welfare and CPS caseworkers who have completed basic training. These training programs enable experienced caseworkers to strategically apply the skills they acquired in foundation training in a variety of critical areas of practice. The programs include: Advanced Medical and Legal Issues Forensic Interviewing Best Practices, district specific and regional training, and a new training program, Advanced Child Welfare Interviewing, that is being developed for delivery in 2011. For those acting in a CPS On-Call capacity, an online iLinc class is offered.

2331 trainees
77 offerings
2 Teleconferences
118 training days

- **Sexual Abuse Dynamics and Intervention Training for Child Welfare Staff**

Statewide training provided to child welfare staff on the dynamics of sexual abuse as well as on the treatment modalities currently utilized to protect and support victims, and to treat and support the family. This course will be provided to a combined audience of Child Protective and other Child Welfare caseworkers.

400 trainees
16 offerings
48 training days

- **Working with Substance Abusing Families -- Training For Child Welfare Staff**

This training program builds the knowledge and skills necessary to identify, assess, and plan with families affected by alcohol and substance abuse. Local district and voluntary agency child welfare caseworkers and supervisors develop competencies in recognizing the natural resilience of families, in utilizing strengths to motivate and facilitate change, and in supporting families throughout a member's treatment and recovery.

550 trainees
22 offerings
66 training days

- **Foster/Adoptive Parent Training**

Foster/Adoptive Parent Training consists of an integrated, comprehensive series of training courses that will be available to foster adoptive parents from pre-placement of a child to their permanency goal. This project begins with training that prepares agency staff and foster parent teams to deliver a 10-week Group Preparation and Selection II/Mutual Assessment of Partnerships in Parenting (GPSII/MAPP) training program for prospective foster and adoptive parents. It also includes COMPASS training, an in-service foster/adoptive parent training program, as well as the provision of specialized training through the Therapeutic Foster Boarding Home training project. Foster/Adoptive Parent training also consists of modules that respond to the needs of foster/adoptive parents. Child development, communication, interpersonal helping skills and many other related topics are addressed in this program. In response to popular reception, the distance learning format iLinc will be featured as a way to reach foster/adoptive parents in their homes via their own personal computers at times they are available for training.

7140 trainees
743 training days

- **Child Welfare/Child Protective Services Core Essential Skills for Experienced Caseworkers**

This program provides training for experienced Child Welfare and Child Protective Services caseworkers. The training focuses on building skills most likely to result in positive outcomes for clients and the achievement of child welfare outcomes. This 8-day program builds core skills for experienced staff that are consistent with skills presented in the Common Core training, supporting staff's ability to achieve safety and permanency for children and will be revised to reflect the changes in the Common Core program. There will also be up to 15 one-day "Engagement for Supervisors" Skills Clinics.

In 2011-2012, the Core Essential Skills for Experienced Caseworkers training curriculum will be revised to incorporate the basic principles and practices of Family Assessment Response so that the caseworkers, whether they are assigned to FAR or an investigative unit, will have a skill set that supports effective practice with families reported to the State Central Register.

260 Trainees
13 Offerings
104 Training Days

- **Safety and Risk Refresher Training**

The purpose of this 2-day training program is to review knowledge based information on safety and risk and to build or enhance the ability of casework staff to assess safety and risk.
The program reviews the safety and risk definitions, the process and protocol used to assess safety and risk, including the safety factors and risk elements, safety criteria, safety decisions, and safety plans. The program also reviews the risk elements, expanded risk elements, the risk assessment profile, risk ratings and the decision to open a case for services. The program includes skill development through case examples and case simulations.

320 Trainees
16 Offerings
32 Training Days

- **Training and Consultation to Support Local District/Voluntary Agency Implementation of Family Meetings and Family Engagement Strategies**

The focus of this program is on training and consultation for the individual, unit and organization. The program highlights practices that promote and sustain family engagement. The program includes delivery of set of toolkits designed to promote family engagement, including engaging fathers, using visitation and family meetings to promote safety, permanency, and well-being, and child centered family focused practice. Technical assistance is provided, along with district/agency specific training and a wide range of other activities.

- **Directors of Services Leadership Institute**

This component is a two-day event (delivered in half day/full day/half day format) intended to provide local district Directors of Services with the knowledge and skills necessary to apply generic and program-specific management principles and skills to Child Welfare (Child Protective Services, Preventive Services, Foster Care and Adoption Services). (This component also applies to Goal 2.)

Possible topics may include, but not be limited to, measuring outcomes; how to assess the NYS Improving Child Welfare Outcomes initiative; use of service plan reviews; visitation; coaching; strengths-based child-centered, family-focused practice; how the case management model supports good practice; the Data Warehouse.

75 trainees
1 offering
2 training days

- **Training and Technical Assistance for Child Welfare Teams**

OCFS is supporting a model of service delivery by casework teams with 14 local districts. The project is designed to support local districts to provide effective and efficient protective, preventive or foster care services by assigning casework teams instead of individuals. Training and technical assistance include team building, the process of group supervision and case conference facilitation, family engagement skills, and other strategies as identified by the individual participating districts. At least one new district will be added in 2011-2012 along with team expansion in districts already having one team or more.

- **Family Assessment Response Training**

In response to legislation enabling NYS to pilot an alternative response to CPS investigations, OCFS began working with six local districts to develop and implement alternate response, known as Family Assessment Response (FAR), pilots in each of those districts. Permanent legislation is pending. In 2009 an additional 8 counties began development and implementation of n the program. In 2010 additional units within these counties began delivering FAR services, and an additional 5 counties will begin implementation. During the 2011-2012 contract year, another 5 counties or expansion units within the county will begin the implementation process. Training and technical assistance is provided to district administrators, managers, supervisors, and caseworkers so that pilot staff has the knowledge and skills necessary to implement an alternative protective response.

- **Child Welfare Eligibility Training**

The purpose of this project is to provide social services districts with the knowledge and skill needed to accurately, effectively, and efficiently determine eligibility for federal funding of child welfare and Medicaid programs. Topics include the history and rationale of federal funding streams, how to define and understand the distinct use of each category of funding eligibility: Title IV-E; TANF-EAF; Title XX below 200%, Non-Reimbursable Payments; and Candidacy in Foster Care. The focus is how to determine and document each category of eligibility, the use of the Welfare Management System (WMS) and how to identify and access the resources available to help accomplish these objectives.

450 Trainees
45 Offerings

- **Training for OCFS and Local Social Services Districts' Attorneys**

This project provides legal training for OCFS, local social services districts' attorneys, and Family Court personnel to assist them in the understanding of technical and strategic aspects of child welfare and social service law and to manage legal actions on behalf of the children and families they serve.

200 trainees
4 offerings

- **Child Welfare Core Training for Voluntary Agencies**

The Core curriculum is designed for caseworkers and supervisors who work in NYC voluntary agencies. The program provides caseworkers, child care workers, administrators, and other agency staff with the skills and knowledge they need to maintain safe and stable placements, to assess safety and risk, and to promote permanency and well-being. The program provides an overview of the child welfare system in NYC as well as the policy and regulatory framework that guides practice in NYS. The program consists of two components: a 12 day core curriculum and special topics component.

1100 total trainees (400 for Core; 700 for Supplemental topics)
5 offerings of Core
35 Supplemental offerings

- **NYC Safety and Risk Assessment Training**

This program builds the proficiency and capacity of ACS and voluntary agency staff in NYC to conduct accurate safety and risk assessments. The program also includes a Leadership and Development component for ACS managers and supervisors to continue the learning process with their staff after formal training. The program supports NYC's Improved Outcomes for Children for preventive and foster care agencies. Courses include: Safety and Risk Refresher Training, Safety and Risk Assessment Coaching, Supervising Safety and Risk – Critical Thinking, and Leadership and Organizational Development to Support Safety and Risk Assessment Practice.

825 trainees
66 offerings

GOAL #2

CHILDREN WHO ARE REMOVED FROM THEIR BIRTH FAMILIES WILL BE AFFORDED STABILITY, CONTINUITY AND AN ENVIRONMENT THAT SUPPORTS ALL ASPECTS OF THEIR DEVELOPMENT

Primary Strategy: 2. Continue collaboration with the Office of Court Administration to enhance court practice and share data.

OCFS and the Office of Court Administration (OCA) are committed to improving permanency outcomes for children in New York State. OCFS and the OCA Child Welfare Court Improvement Project (CWCIP) will work together to build effective collaboration between the Family Court and the social services districts with the highest foster care populations in the State. OCFS will support the development of enhanced court practices in the Family Courts and provide a process by which certain data maintained by both local departments of social services and Family Courts can be shared to evaluate the impact of innovations to promote improved outcomes for children.

Goal: Improve timeliness of adoptions and permanency for children in out-of-home placements.

Action Steps and Benchmarks:

2.1 Enhance and or implement a court and local districts (LDSS) collaborative in each of the 12 counties, (one of the 13 already exists) aimed at improving the timeliness of adjudications and dispositions for both abuse and neglect and TPR petitions.
2.1(a) Form a statewide OCFS/OCA workgroup to oversee the enhancement and implementation of local court and LDSS collaborative.
2.1(b) Disseminate resource materials to local courts and districts that supports local collaborative.
2.1(c) Share and provide technical assistance to the 13 Family Courts, relative to the Child Welfare Court Improvement Project Data Measures.
2.1(d) Support statewide "kickoff" conference on court and LDSS collaboratives. Topics will include role of courts and districts in improving outcomes related to child permanency and well-being.
2.1(e) Provide technical assistance to each of the local court and LDSS collaborative.
2.1(f) Provide training to each of the local court and LDSS collaboratives on child welfare related topics.

2.2 Monitor the implementation of the Local court and LDSS collaborative.
2.2(a) Development and dissemination of local court and LDSS collaborative reporting template.

2.3. Pilot the integration the NYS Office of Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services and local treatment providers into the local court and LDSS collaboration process to support integrated planning in all cases involving the misuse of alcohol or other drugs.
2.3(a) Develop and pilot in three counties protocols for handling cases that intersect the family court, child welfare and substance abuse treatment systems.

Primary Strategy: 3. Expand trauma informed practice in congregate care
New York is committed to the continued expansion of trauma informed practice as a means to reduce and prevent abuse or maltreatment, as well as to reduce physical restraints in residential foster care settings.

Goal: Reduce the occurrence of abuse and maltreatment in foster care.

Action Steps and Benchmarks:

3.1 Six additional voluntary agencies will begin training on the Sanctuary Model in 2010. (Ten agencies have already completed training. Three have achieved certification in the model and the others are moving towards certification in the Sanctuary Model)
3.1(a) Agencies complete self-readiness assessments and forward to OCFS for review and selection.
3.1(b) Training provided by Andrus Sanctuary Leadership Development Institute to each of the agency's Leadership teams. The five day training was delivered in February of 2010.
3.1(c) TA provided by Andrus
3.1(d) Participation in consortium conference calls

3.2 Evaluation of the implementation and outcomes of the Sanctuary Model in the five (Parsons, Baker Victory Svs, House of Good Shepherd, Green Chimney, and Children's Home of Poughkeepsie) Cohort two agencies.
3.2(a) Data comparing the number of IAB reports and restraints will be tracked prior to the implementation of the Sanctuary Model and post implementation

Primary Strategy: 4. Improve Service Array.
Meeting the health needs of children in out-of-home care is critical to promoting their well-being and permanency. The B2H medicare Waiver Program is designed specifically for children in foster care with significant mental health needs, developmental disabilities or who are medically fragile. With approval from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CCMS), B2H offers 14 uniquely designed services not otherwise available in the community to children with these complex medical conditions, and does so in the context of their often complicated family and caregiver network.

Goal: Children have access to an array of services.

Action Steps and Benchmarks:

4.1 Expand B2H services into the Buffalo and Long Island regions, bringing B2H statewide (currently in those parts of the state supervised by OCFS RRO, SRO, ARO, SVRO and NYCRO).
4.1(a) Provide training to districts on B2H services and enrollment process.
4.1(b) Provide training to qualified service providers.
4.1(c) District referral and enrollment begins.

4.2 Enrollment slots expanded across New York State.

4.3 Ongoing Support and Quality Assurance to Districts and HCIAs.
4.3(a) Quarterly Forums conducted in 2010. Upon full implementation, forums will be held semi annually with districts, HCIAs, and other stakeholders.
4.3(b) Hold conference calls with HCIAs to share information and to resolve barriers.
4.3(c) Quality review of cases to determine timeliness and appropriateness of services.

4.4 Evaluation of implementation and outcomes of B2H.

4.5 Participate in joint state initiatives, which includes – Children's Cabinet on Disconnected Youth; and the Commissioners' Committee on Cross Systems - OMH Children's Plan aimed at improving accessibility and availability of resources.

Primary Strategy: 6. Expand recruitment of foster and adoptive parents.
Foster and adoptive parents play a critical role in providing permanency and well being for children entrusted to their care. Local districts and agencies should establish and maintain a pool of qualified, ethnically and racially diverse foster/adoptive parents. To assist local districts and agencies with the challenges of recruitment, OCFS has a training contact that provides foster/adoptive family recruitment and retention technical assistance, consultation, and materials development to local districts and agencies. This contract is designed to support the on-going recruitment and retention of ethnically, racially, and culturally competent foster and adoptive parents.

Goal: There will be sufficient numbers of foster and adoptive parents that can care for sibling groups, adolescents and that reflect the race and ethnicity of the children coming into care.

Action Steps and Benchmarks:

6.1 Work with training contractor to identify and share with districts the latest recruitment tools that address recruitment of foster and adoptive parents for sibling groups and adolescents, and that reflect the race and ethnicity of the children coming into care.

6.2 Review of data of the 13 districts determine difference in the race and ethnicity of foster/adoptive parents as compared to the children in care, siblings separated at placement and the number of youth not placed in foster boarding homes.

6.3 Training and support provided to home finders and recruiters as identified by the RO.

6.4 Recruitment Plans that are MEPA compliant of 13 districts will be reviewed for appropriateness.

6.5 Hold conference call with Local District and Voluntary agency Home Finders to determine areas of confusion or where clarification is needed related to regulations and practice of licensing foster boarding homes.

6.6 Updates and changes to Licensing of Foster Boarding Home handbook made, if needed.

6.7 Regional Training of Home Finders held to go over areas of confusion and to clarify misunderstandings; updated handbook shared.

ASSESSMENT OF NEED AND CURRENT STATUS

On December 31, 2010, there were 23,180 children in foster care. This was a 5.8% decrease from the census of 24,620 children in foster care on December 31, 2009.

As of December 31, 2010, 81.0% of children in care statewide were in foster family care, including approved relative foster homes.

In 2010, the population of foster children in approved relatives' foster homes was 5,900. This reflects an upward trend from 2005 when there were 5,440 children in approved relative's homes.

In 2010, there were 10,884 children in care within New York State who were part of a sibling group, a decrease from 11,557 in 2009. Of these children 46.0% (4,996) were separated from at least one other sibling in care. As of December 31, 2010, 20.0% (4,534) of the children in care were in a placement outside of their county and 2.0% (474) were in a placement outside of New York State. Of these, kinship placements accounted for 9.8% of the out-of-county placements and 52.7% of the out-of-state placements.

Of the children in care on December 31, 2010, 52.3% had a Permanency Planning Goal return to parent or guardian.

There were 2,297 children discharged to adoption in calendar year 2010, a percentage increase of 4.5% from 2009 when 2,197 children were discharged to adoption.

Of all children in care on December 31, 2010, 27.5% had a Permanency Planning Goal (PPG) of Adoption. This is a slight increase from last year.

There were 6,232 children in care on December 31, 2010, with the goal of adoption.

Of adoptions finalized during 2010, 70.7% of the children for whom ethnicity was known were minority children. This is a slight decrease from 72.9% in 2009.

Of children discharged to adoption in 2010, 98.6% received an adoption subsidy. This is a slight increase from 96.9% in 2009.

Of all children with a goal of adoption on December 31, 2010, 52.3% were not freed after 12 months of having the goal.

Of all freed children, 58.2% were not placed within 12 months of being freed.

Of all placed children, 33.8% had not had their adoptions finalized after one year.

For children under eight years of age, discharged to adoption in 2010, the length of time from the establishment of the goal of adoption to discharge, was less than two years for 59.7% of the children, between two and three years for 21.4%, and over three years for 18.9%.

For children over the age of eight, the time between goal setting and discharge was less than two years for 38.5% of the children, two to three years for 20.8% and over three years for 40.8%.

PERFORMANCE TARGETS

Permanency Outcome 1: Placement Stability	
National Standard	101.5
Performance as Measured in Final Report/Source Data Period	108.1
Performance as Measured in Baseline/Source Data Period	109.7

- New York State has achieved this outcome. New York State's target will be to maintain or better the national standard of 101.5.

STATE AND LOCAL ACTIVITIES

The diversity of the situations and needs that have brought children into care requires a system of care that is both intricate and flexible. New York State led the nation in reforming the foster care system of decades past into a community-linked resource driven by permanency planning for each child. However, while the goals set in the 1970's have not changed, the stresses placed on the system by increasingly troubled families and children has required even greater energy and innovation.

Kinship Care

A central strategy for maintaining family and community ties for children requiring out-of-home care due to a lack of safety in their own homes is to promote the use of relatives as placement resources. New York State statute requires that judges direct social services districts to consider the availability of relatives as a placement resource, either as a direct custodian or foster parents, prior to placing a child in need of care in foster care with a non-relative.

The federal Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) that amended Title IV-E of the Social Security Act authorized the exemption of children placed in foster care with relatives from the requirement that there must be a petition to terminate their parents' parental rights if they have remained in care for fifteen of the most recent twenty-two months. This is a recognition that children placed with their relatives may be in circumstances where legally freeing them may not be in their best interests. New York state regulations allow documenting that a child is in a kinship foster home as a justifiable reason for not filing a termination petition against the child's parents. However, case planners in New York are advised that a social services district is not precluded from filing a petition to terminate parental rights solely because the child is placed with a relative.

In kinship foster care situations where it is determined that children are unlikely to be returned home, exploration of the relative's willingness to adopt is generally the next best alternative. However, there are other times when a relative is not interested in adopting her/his kin where the child may remain with the relative in foster care for a more extended period. While social services districts have had increasing success in decreasing lengths of stay for these kinship foster children, their lengths of stay in foster care remain higher, on average, than that of other foster children. Children residing in kinship foster care are increased in real numbers, and as a percent of the total foster care population for the first time in a number of years. More than 6,200 foster children are currently placed in foster care with a relative, which represents approximately 25% of the total foster care population. Effective April 1, 2011, New York State enacted legislation providing for a kinship guardianship assistance program as an alternative for children where return to their birthparents, or adoption is not the appropriate plan (see below). However, under Article 6 of the Family Court Act, relative custody or guardianship remains an option (without subsidy).

Approved relative and certified foster homes are governed by the same standards, except that there is the authority to waive a non-safety standard for an approved relative home, while there is no comparable provision for certified homes. The regulations allow approving relative homes on an emergency basis. Thus, the maximum period of time when a home can be in this status is 90 days (although no Title IV-E funds are claimed during the "emergency" period until full approval). This regulatory provision allows for a single placement for a child when a relative is available at the time of an emergency child protective services removal, is able to provide safe care to the child, and can continue to provide care until the child can safely be returned home or another permanency outcome can be achieved. Additionally, the regulations permit more distant relatives, godparents or other persons with a positive pre-existing relationship with the family to be used as an emergency placement resource if such a home meets the

regulatory requirements that exist for relatives (again, no Title IV-E is claimed until full certification is completed).

In 2006, the OCFS created the *New York State Kinship Caregiver Program* to assist persons caring for related children. A statewide network of supportive programs is used as an alternative to placing children in unfamiliar foster homes by promoting household stability and permanency through services for kinship caregivers and their kin.

Utilizing approximately $2.7 million in FY 2010-2011 state and TANF funds, the *New York State Kinship Caregiver Program* allows programs to deliver a wide range of services that address the multiple needs of caregivers and the children in their care including:

Financial Stability		
Counseling	Legal Information	Support Groups
Respite	Parenting Skills	Education Advocacy
Housing	Case Management	Referrals

Twenty one community-based organizations deliver these services to caregivers in 30 counties. Families in "informal" kinship care as well as those that are in kinship foster care are eligible for services. It is estimated that over 4,300 families have been served since the program's inception.

As of the submission of this report, $338,000 thousand state and $400,000 thousand in federal CBCAP funds have been allocated to support eight kinship programs in FY 12/1/2011-11/30/2012. OCFS will ensure that the most families possible, in the highest need areas, will be served, with this funding.

The New York State Kinship Navigator Program is among the kinship-related programs funded through OCFS. Developed jointly by OCFS and lead agency Rochester Catholic Family Center, the program is designed to creatively assist kinship caregivers and the children in their care in all counties in gaining access to information and community support services. Any caregiver residing in any part of the State is able to utilize a toll-free phone line or website to identify kinship care related services in their home locale. In addition, kinship specialists are available to assess caregiver needs and develop a plan of action. In 2010, the *NYS Kinship Navigator Program* served 69,622 individuals on their web site along with 3,329 caregivers on their phone line where more detailed kinship services were provided. Over 40 legal fact sheets are available on the website to assist families and professionals advocating for the rights and services for their families.

Undoubtedly, more families will look to the Kinship Navigator website and toll-free number to guide them.

Training and technical assistance was provided by OCFS to promote quality programs. In August 2010, OCFS offered a web-based, from your desk, ILINC training on the use of the Efforts to Outcomes software, managed by one of the kinship programs and, used in all 21 programs.

In addition, steps have been taken to collaborate with state agencies, kinship care coalitions, the legal community and other stakeholders such as AARP to help develop coherent policies and coordinated services for kinship caregivers throughout New York. In June 2010, OCFS staff participated in the Kinship Summit where experts, statewide leaders, and advocates convened to make recommendations to support the unique needs of kinship caregiver families. OCFS continues to partner with the NYS Kincare Coalition and Office for the Aging. OCFS Executive staff met with advocates on several occasions in 2010.

As a joint project of the OCFS and OTDA, a publication is available entitled "Having a Voice and a Choice: New York State Handbook for Relatives Raising Children."

The handbook covers a range of subjects including

- how a child may come into a relative's care;
- the role of the Department of Social Services;
- legal arrangements, such as informal care, direct placement, legal custody, temporary or permanent guardianship, foster care and adoption;
- the types of financial assistance available to relatives;
- health care provision and coverage for children in a relative's care; and
- the child's education.

A list of local, state, and national resources and websites is included.

This handbook was written for relatives who are raising, or considering raising, children in need of a stable home because their parents are unable to take care of them. Whether a child needs a placement outside the home because of safety concerns or because of individual circumstances in the family, the handbook provides information on the various options available to relatives so that relatives can make the best decision for their own situation.

In May 2010, an OCFS Publication entitled "Know Your Options: Relatives Caring for Children" was released. A five page booklet designed for caseworkers to give to families, it explains the options relatives caring for children have, and refers them to the OCFS website and NYS Kinship Navigator, where they can access the larger handbook mentioned above and an array of resources and referrals.

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Accomplishments 2010-2011:

In September 2010, a statewide meeting of all OCFS funded kinship programs was held to discuss policy and practice, collecting data and tracking outcomes, and issues faced by kinship families.

Part F of Chapter 58 of the Laws of 2010 (Chapter 58) added to Article 6 of the Social Services Law (SSL) a new Title 10, entitled, "Kinship Guardianship Assistance Program" (see §§458-a-458-f of the SSL). In addition, Chapter 58 amended the Family Court Act (FCA) and the Surrogate's Court Procedure Act, setting forth standards and procedures relating to the application for and issuance of letters of guardianship to prospective relative guardian(s).

The New York State statute meets all applicable federal requirements to operate a KinGAP and obtain federal reimbursement for eligible foster children. In addition, Chapter 58 includes New York State specific provisions and extends to children who, while not eligible under the Title IV-E kinship guardianship assistance program, are eligible for payments under New York State's KinGap.

As a condition for New York's KinGap Law (Chapter 58) to take effect, New York State was required by law to obtain the approval from the Federal Administration on Children, Youth and Families (ACF) of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) by submitting a Title IV-E State Plan Amendment. The Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) filed the required State Plan Amendment with ACF on December 22, 2010. New York State's plan amendment was approved by ACF on March 31, 2011.

OCFS filed implementing regulations on an emergency basis, as authorized by Part F of Chapter 58 of the Laws of 2010, and at the same time filed these regulations for public comment on December 17, 2010. The regulations took effect on April 1, 2011. They can be found at the following link:
http://www.ocfs.state.ny.us/main/legal/Regulatory/final/

The Kinship Guardianship Assistance Program (KinGAP) is a new program in New York State which went into effect on April 1, 2011. It is designed to provide a monthly payment and other benefits to eligible relative guardians of foster children who have been discharged from foster care.

Plans for 2011-2012:

With the ever increasing need to collect, quantify, and evaluate data, we hope to continue to collect data on the families and the progress towards reaching performance targets and outcomes. We plan to use what we have learned about best practice and develop a more standardized "model" of kinship caregiver programs.

OCFS is developing a webpage dedicated to Kinship families and professionals. There, they can link to publications and other websites for needed services.

Many additional supports are in development to implement the KinGAP, a Practice Guide for caseworkers and supervisors, and an informational booklet for relatives.

Among other possible initiatives for the upcoming year and beyond include expanding the scope of the existing kinship navigator program and continued emphasis on making sure that relatives of children who need out of home placement and care are aware of the options that may be available to such relatives in terms of legal statuses, financial assistance and available services.

Bridges to Health (B2H) Home and Community-Based Services Medicaid Waiver

The B2H Waiver Program provides expanded and enhanced services to children in foster care settings whose diagnosed conditions are sufficiently severe to warrant placement in a Medicare institution were it not for the supports provided by the B2H waiver. B2H serves three eligibility groups of children in foster care—children with serious emotional disturbance, children with development disabilities, and children who are medically fragile—so that cross-systems issues can be better integrated. The program also serves their families; including birth parents, foster parents, pre-adoptive parents, and siblings. Once children are enrolled in the program, they may be eligible for B2H services until they are 21 years old, even if they have been discharged from foster or other care.

Quality Management is an integral component for the successful implementation of B2H. OCFS has implemented a multi-pronged approach of continuous quality management activities. The OCFS B2H Quality Management Strategy consists of the following: Team Meeting Reviews; Case Record Reviews; Administrative Site Visit Reviews; Quarterly Regional Forums; Monthly Conference Calls; a Quality Advisory Board; LDSS Meetings; Satisfaction Surveys; and Audit and Quality Control reviews.

CMS' initial approval of B2H was for three years, from January 1, 2008 through December 31, 2010. Thereafter, reauthorizations are approved for an additional five year

period. The three B2H waiver reauthorization applications were submitted to CMS on October 1, 2010. Extensive stakeholder input and OCFS internal review formed an integral part of the reauthorization application process. Prior to submitting the reauthorization applications, OCFS received a favorable response from the October 2009, submission to the DHHS CMS Quality Review of the B2H Waiver Program. CMS found OCFS to be in compliance with each of the six federal assurances. In addition, OCFS will continue engaging in Quality Management activities as B2H is implemented statewide.

Accomplishments 2010 – 2011:

Effective January 1, 2011 CMS reauthorized the B2H for an additional five year period (2011 – 2015). Federal reauthorization allows OCFS and our partners at the LDSS and HCIAs to serve up to 3305 children in foster care and other community-based settings in least restrictive settings and avoid medical institutional placement. The B2H Program Manual and forms were revised to reflect federal reauthorization modifications and posted to the B2H website.

OCFS continues to implement a multi-pronged approach to continuous quality management activities for the B2H Waiver Program. The OCFS B2H Quality Management Strategy consists of the following: HCIA Annual Administrative Reviews; Regional Forums; a Quality Advisory Board; LDSS Meetings; Satisfaction Surveys; and Audit and Quality Control reviews. Some of the major highlights of the B2H Quality Management accomplishments are detailed here:

- HCIA Annual Administrative Review consist of the following activities: B2H policy and protocols review; interviews with key B2H staff; a review of B2H staff qualifications and training; a retrospective review of case records during this review period and a retrospective review of Team Meetings during this review period. The results of the reviews are provided to the HCIA; where necessary plans of corrective action are developed.
- OCFS conducted 28 Regional Forums throughout New York State in 2010 and an additional six forums in April 2011 with stakeholders to elicit feedback and identify challenges and issues that may have programmatic or policy implications for the B2H Waiver Program. These discussions focused on the importance of developing enrollment and engagement strategies as early as possible, and identifying and utilizing communication opportunities as well as offering promising practices that have been noted thus far. The next series of Regional Forums is scheduled for October 2011.
- OCFS and B2H service providers are required to conduct satisfaction surveys. To avoid asking children and families to complete numerous surveys, reduce providers' responsibilities for the entire survey administration and reporting process, and collect consistent information from clients across the state regardless of which agencies provided the B2H services, OCFS created a single survey to address satisfaction with each waiver service, the complaint process, and effects of the services on child functioning. Caregivers may complete the survey on-line

and are asked to report on changes in the child's functioning since enrolling in B2H, how the program has affected the caregiver, and whether the caregiver would recommend the program to other families with foster children with special needs. The survey was designed by OCFS with extensive input provided by B2H service provider staff. The survey first became available online in October 2009, and was implemented statewide in 2011.

- In January 2010, OCFS launched an on-line version of Waiver Services Provider Training. This training is composed of four modules that must be completed within six months of beginning B2H service provision. The modules include: B2H Documentation, Personal boundaries; Safety in the Community and Coping with Trauma Loss. The on-line training also includes a mechanism to track for individual training completion and certification.

Plans for 2011 - 2012:

OCFS will continue to strengthen the following activities throughout 2012: OCFS Quality Management and Oversight including significant data collection and analysis to inform and improve performance, Training, and the Regional Forums. In addition, OCFS anticipates hosting the first annual B2H Summit. The B2H Summit will provide an opportunity to recognize the success of the B2H Waiver Program and work together to share effective practices and develop creative strategies. The agenda for the B2H Summit is expected to include: workshops and panels on promising practice models, and facilitated workgroups on collaborative strategies to address barriers to B2H Waiver provision and service provision.

Statewide Foster Care and Adoption Recruitment and Retention Activities

Throughout New York State, OCFS conducts and supports a variety of programs and initiatives to improve and expand the recruitment and retention of foster care and adoptive families. Much of this work is spearheaded by the six OCFS Regional Offices. Many of the most successful activities occur in most all of the Regions. A summary of these activities include:

<u>Heart Gallery:</u>
Heart Gallery is a traveling exhibit featuring portraits of foster children in need of adoption. Photographers donate their time and talent to create high quality portraits of children which are displayed in prominent venues to raise awareness about the hundreds of children available for adoption.

<u>Permanency Panel Reviews:</u>
These reviews target children that are in need of specific adoption recruitment efforts. Staff from local districts, courts, and voluntary agencies is often involved in these collaborative activities. Barriers facing these children are discussed and frequently individual adoption plans are developed for the child. This approach has resulted in permanency plans for many children.

Adoption Day, Week or Month Celebrations:
Celebrations associated with successful adoption activities occur throughout New York State. They provide an opportunity to highlight the collaborative work and supports needed to achieve adoption for children with special needs and generate positive publicity for ongoing adoption efforts. The OCFS website continues to feature videos of children available for adoption. In 2010, Regional Heart Galleries held openings and ceremonies in a variety of venues across the state. A schedule of statewide Heart Gallery events, adoption month activities and a list of key adoption month websites was compiled and placed on the OCFS website for Adoption Month. Throughout 2011, Heart Gallery displays will continue to be featured in a variety of venues as collaborations with local businesses and entities like the Capital District Transportation Authority are developed to support recruitment of foster/adoptive families.

Adoption Exchanges:
Adoption Exchanges provide a networking opportunity for adoption staff to share with each other and to exchange information about waiting children with prospective adoptive families.

Training:
Training activities include specific topics such as the impacts of legislative and regulatory changes, targeted recruitment strategies, and techniques to utilize foster parents as recruiters. Additionally, training initiatives occur in each Region which addresses issues that are identified at the regional level.

Publicity:
In conjunction with various media many programs and initiatives have been developed to inform the public of the number of children in New York State awaiting adoption. Many local television stations produce weekly segments highlighting children who wish to be adopted. Feature articles or series are found in many newspapers which not only identify children awaiting adoption but provide viewers and readers with resources if they wish additional information.

OCFS has been working with the National Resource Center for the Recruitment and Retention of Foster and Adoptive Parents at AdoptUSKids to assist OCFS with providing technical assistance to districts and voluntary agencies on recruitment and retention of foster and adoptive parents. The Recruitment Specialists work directly with OCFS Regional Office staff in providing technical assistance to local districts and agencies on recruitment and retention. These efforts will also help address a New York State need to address recruitment and retention efforts as required by the CFSR.

As part of the New York State CFSR PIP, all local districts and authorized voluntary agencies having a purchase of services contract with a local district for the operation of an adoption or foster boarding home program, are required to update their Recruitment and Retention Plans focusing on compliance with the federal Multiethnic Placement Act of 1994 (MEPA). A template was provided that outlined the key components of a plan.

OCFS completed work with the National Resource Center for the Recruitment and Retention of Foster and Adoptive Parents at AdoptUSKids, and SUNY Albany Professional Development Program (PDP) on December 31, 2010. There were three satellite broadcasts: 1) June 8, 2010 - addressed the elements of a comprehensive recruitment and retention plan which is MEPA compliant and strategies and tools which may be useful in implementing an agency plan; 2) August 9, 2010 - focused on MEPA requirements and targeted community recruitment efforts featuring African American and Hispanic populations; and 3) November 30, 2010 - featuring targeted recruitment efforts for Native Americans. Recruitment specialists from SUNY Albany PDP also provided technical assistance across New York State in conjunction with OCFS Regional Offices to assist local districts and voluntary agencies in updating comprehensive, MEPA-compliant recruitment plans due to OCFS by December 31, 2010.

Other state effort examples by region include:

New York City Regional Office (NYCRO)

Recruitment & Retention Activities 2010-2011 and Plans for 2011-2012

The NYCRO Adoption and Foster Care/Domestic Violence/Bridges-To-Health units have been merged to form the Permanency/DV/B2H Unit. This reorganization reflects similar realignments within the NYC Administration for Children Services and many of the provider agencies to improve timely permanency outcomes.

The passage of the Kinship Guardianship Assistance Program law that became effective on April 1, 2011 will expand permanency options for children and families. Staff will provide technical assistance and monitor implementation.

The NYCRO Permanency Unit continues to monitor and provide technical assistance to the NYC Administration for Children's Services' (ACS) Specialized and Direct Care units. Fifty-four children were identified as needing permanency/adoption resources. These cases were included in the semi-annual Adoption Panels. Twenty-three children (42.5%) have the potential for discharge or visitation resources and more than 30 children were identified to be photolisted or updated. Some youth will not be discharged to a resource due to their severe needs. The Adoption Training Specialist will monitor the outcomes of the Adoption Album training that was provided to ACS staff as well as recruitment efforts for this special needs population.

The Permanency Unit completed the bi-annual Adoption Comprehensive Recruitment Plan review process. This year, agencies were required to submit demographic data that was utilized in the review of their plans. The 2010 Recruitment Plans received from ACS and the provider agencies have been reviewed and approved. The review examines foster care and adoption agency recruitment and placement strategies, monitors for compliance with OCFS regulations and policies related to the Multiethnic Placement Act of 1994 (MEPA), as well as planning efforts to meet agency specific needs in achieving timely

and appropriate placements for waiting children. ACS has implemented a number of reform initiatives that include Improved Outcomes for Children (IOC) that delegated case management and decision making to the provider agencies and downsized residential care shifting placement priorities to foster homes. ACS has also increased specialized beds in the residential and foster home programs. These changes require more foster family homes able to manage the challenging needs of children, as well as serve as potential permanency resources. The team will monitor the implementation of the recruitment plans.

NYCRO Permanency Unit staff along with ROPA, CDHS and OCFS BOT, continue working to review and discuss ACS' request to include adolescent specific content in the current GPS II/MAPP foster and adoptive parent curriculum. The focus of planning discussions is to identify realistic expectations for incorporating material that highlights the needs of adolescents while maintaining the fidelity of the training program within the current resource constraints.

NYCRO Permanency Unit staff continues to work with PPAI, ROPA, and OCFS BOT staff to advise the Hunter College School of Social Work Institute for Professional Development in Human Services (IDPHS) in their training curriculum development for increasing competency in Critical Thinking Skills and Safety and Risk Assessment in Child Welfare. The curriculum is a "behavior/knowledge" paradigm that uses a series of accessible activities that allow participants to build confidence and hands-on experience over time so that they develop the capability to handle the overall complexity that the subject demands. IDPHS is currently using a pilot of the curriculum at a provider foster care agency that was identified by ACS.

A member of the Adoption Team was selected by OCFS' Public Information Office (PIO) to be interviewed by a reporter from the Ukraine. The interview focused on New York regulations regarding the discipline of children in foster/adoptive homes. The reporter's inquiry was in response to the widely televised abuse involving an international adoption that was featured on a prime time talk show, Dr. Phil. The segment highlighted an incident involving an adoptive parent who was observed administering cruel and unusual punishment to a five-year old child that she had adopted.

The 2011 NYCRO Winter Adoption Panel Reviews for children with a permanency planning goal of adoption were completed. This series of Adoption Panels were the first of the newly formed Permanency Unit and foster care team members participated in each of the panels. Panel cases included children legally freed, adoptively placed or in need of recruited adoptive family resources. The reviews were attended by the Administration for Children's Services (ACS), and staff from the ACS funded recruitment programs, the Council on Adoptable Children, You Gotta Believe and 26 provider agencies. A total of 1,957 cases were reviewed, and of that total, 461 were targeted for April 15, 2011 filing dates. The panels also identified systemic barriers to adoptions. With the April 2011 implementation of the Kinship Guardianship Assistance Program law (KinGap), the panel identified two cases recommended for Kinship Subsidized Guardianship.

In follow-up to the panels, letters were sent to the Executive Directors of the provider agencies. The focus of the letters was to identify systemic issues which might present delays to finalizing adoptions, to identify cases to be filed by targeted dates and to identify children to be referred for specialized recruitment efforts and/or permanency counseling by NYC Children's Services' Specialized Recruitment Programs. Significantly, as a result of the review, photo-listing was initiated or updated for over 30 children with special needs from the ACS Specialized Care Unit.

An Adoption Training Specialist and graduate of the Minority Adoption Leadership Development Institute (MALDI) represented New York State at the four day MALDI conference held in Detroit, Michigan in 2010. A goal of the institute is to develop minority leadership in the field of adoption. The conference was held to initiate the incoming class of future MALDI leaders who will implement projects that positively impact minority adoptions. The staff shared his experiences subsequent to completion of the MALDI institute. MALDI is forming an alumni association to continue opportunities for graduates to network, share information and support the on-going mission of the institute. The next meeting date is August 2011, in the Washington DC area.

In commemoration of November as National Adoption Month, staff participated in the opening of the Heart Gallery New York City held in the Times Square area. This recruitment event featured portraits of children available for adoption taken by professional photographers who donate their talents. Additionally, staff attended adoption finalizations held on November 23, 2010 in the Bronx, Brooklyn, New York, Queens and Richmond Family Courts of New York City. For these finalizations, staff secured funding to make available an assortment of age appropriate adoption educational books for families and children finalizing adoptions on this day.

In addition to being a general resource to families, the Permanency Unit adoption staff also served as specialists for adoption in general and Haitian adoptions in particular. Upon request of the Haitian Earthquake Resource Center, the unit also sponsored a seminar on international and Haitian adoption featuring a panel of presenters from the US Citizen and Immigration Services, Bethany Christian Services, and Heartshare Human Services of New York.

Adoption Unit staff serves on the ACS Immigrants Advisory Committee and presented on post adoption services to two Brooklyn Community Partnership Projects. The presentations to the Community Partnerships focused on informing the agencies and service providers who are participants in the project about the community service needs of their constituent adoptive families and the importance of adoption competent service providers to meet the post adoption needs of these families.

The Legal Adoption Specialist provided training and coordination of the 5th year of Permanency Hearing Observations, which are targeted to record the Permanency Hearing Process, including timeliness of distribution of the Permanency Hearing Reports, findings of reasonable efforts, and attendance by subject children age 14 and older. Staff from NYCRO and from ACS APA attended 140 Permanency Hearings in this fifth year. Over

the five years of Permanency Hearing observations, we have documented significant sustained improvement in attendance by caseworkers and timely filings of Permanency Hearing Reports. Most recent observations have documented and brought attention to a growing concern of the courts about the low rate of participation by birth and foster parents, and adolescents. The report findings were presented to ACS' Family Court Legal Services in May 2011.

The Adoption Legal Specialist participated in more than 60 Subsidy Fair Hearings on requests for subsidy upgrades and related subsidy issues. The role of the Legal Specialist has been to defend and represent the NYS Adoption Service's case decisions and/or to provide application of subsidy regulations and statutes with regard to the case facts.

Adoption Unit staff met with six visiting representatives from Kazakhstan and the Kyrgyz Republic, and with a contingent of child welfare students from Louisiana Tech University. Both groups were interested in learning about adoption programming. Junius Scott, Program Manager from Region II of the U.S. Administration for Children and Families, attended the first meeting and provided perspective on the oversight relationship and collaborative efforts between the federal agency and New York State.

Voluntary Agencies:
Adoption Unit staff completed 107 site visits to provider agencies and NYC Children's Services to provide oversight of compliance with adoptions standards and regulations, training and technical assistance.

The Adoption Unit presented on OCFS issues, regulations and initiatives at the bi-monthly New York City Adoption Exchange Meetings attended by ACS provider agencies and the ACS Director of Expedited Permanency Compliance and Adoption Services. The meetings provide an important opportunity for dissemination, discussion and clarification of local, statewide and federal information on adoption.

Training:
Adoption Unit staff facilitated and participated in two sessions of the Adoption Competency Curriculum Training of Trainers provided by the National Child Welfare Resource Center. The 38 foster care and adoption staff from provider agencies who attended the training committed to using the information, tools and DVDs from the curriculum to improve the casework skills within their respective agencies.

Staff provided training on entry of adoption codes into CCRS to nine agencies and NYCRO staff to increase their knowledge of the important steps in achieving adoption finalization and their overall knowledge of the adoption process.

The Adoption Legal Specialist provided training on "Barriers to Adoption" for staff of ACS' Family Court Legal Services in the Bronx, Queens and Manhattan. Staff commented that the training provided them with a better understanding of the adoption process enabling them to feel more empowered in conducting freed child permanency hearings. Additionally, the Legal Specialist provided training to 45 agency staff on the

"Legal Process for Termination of Parental Rights" enabling them to have a better command of this critical process.

Adoption Unit staff attended the following trainings: "Ethics of Adoption in the 21st Century" and "Disproportionality in Child Welfare".

Significant Initiatives:
The NYCRO Adoption Team was involved in two child welfare - family court committees charged with statewide implementation of the completed "Lawyers Guide to Adoption" and exploring ways to facilitate child welfare-family court collaboration. Staff met with Family Court Administrative Judge Edwina Richardson-Mendelson to affirm the Family Court's support of the Permanency Hearing Observation project in light of the changed administration. NYCRO's plans for the 5th annual permanency hearing observation initiative was presented and a copy of the final report of the 4th annual project was provided. Judge Richardson-Mendelson affirmed her support of the project as well as her support of the adoption panel review process.

The Adoption Team coordinated the quarterly Statewide Adoption Specialists' meetings. The meetings afforded Adoption Specialists an opportunity and forum to identify issues and develop strategies to expedite adoptions for state-wide as well as regional implementation. The agendas for the meetings included concerns about the continuation of TANF funding for post adoption services, updates on the federal Parent for Every Child project, availability of data on children returning to care from adoption dissolutions, and supporting inter-jurisdictional placement to increase permanency possibilities for children around the state. Staff accompanied Home Office staff managing TANF post adoption grants to oversight meetings with TANF contract agencies.

The Adoption staff attended monthly meetings of the Adoption Action Network and served on the planning committee for their annual forum "Critical Decision Making in Child Welfare" which was held at Hunter College School of Social Work.

The Adoption staff participated in the quarterly advisory meetings of the federal grant "A Parent for Every Child" awarded to the New York State Adoption Service. The project will evaluate the effectiveness of specialized recruitment efforts for older and special needs children placed in OMH, OPWDD and DJJOY facilities. The children selected for participation have been matched with children selected for a control group. Adoption staff completed Parent for Every Child control group enrollment forms for 27 children and follow-up forms for 22 children.

Staff participated in the statewide Permanency Panel work group to update instruments and guided questions to meet regional needs and served as facilitator at the OCFS initiative "Ten for 2010" enabling assembled child welfare leaders to give input on the Commissioner's initiatives for 2010.

ACS Initiatives:

ACS remains committed to providing temporary, out-of-home care for New York City children who come into foster care for reasons of abuse or neglect, as well as maintaining an adequate number of available, loving and stable foster homes that reflect the children in the system. As of January 2010, there were approximately 16,000 children in foster care in New York City. These children range in age from infants to adolescents and a majority of them are either African-American or Latino (approximately 85% in CY 2008). Most of the children in foster care have permanency planning goals of reunification with their parents, relatives or guardians, though those children in care for shorter periods (i.e. up to 18 months) are reunified more often.

ACS adopted a neighborhood-based service delivery model that aims to keep children in their home Community District (CD), allowing them to maintain ties to all that is familiar, thus reducing the trauma of being placed into foster care.

The majority of children adopted out of New York City's foster care system are adopted by their foster parents. As of April 2010, 4488 children have a goal of adoption in 24 hour care and of those, 1819 children are freed for adoption. These youth have, in many cases, been in foster care for 3 years or more. Approximately 50% are 13 years old or older and slightly more than 50% are male. Approximately 80% of freed children with a goal of adoption are African-American and Latino.

ACS continues to support and enhance the recruitment work of the contracted agencies and to directly provide full MAPP and mini-MAPP training, both in English and in Spanish.

As part of the *Faith Based Initiative*, ACS has begun a partnership with NY Theological Seminary and five churches in NYC to recruit families for foster children, particularly older youths. Plans for training foster and adoptive parents, and constituents of ACS' Circles of Support (a network of neighborhood-based foster parent support groups run by foster and adoptive parent leaders), to work collaboratively with members of the Families for Teens Speaker's Bureau, in an effort to recruit foster and adoptive homes through neighborhood based network meetings and faith based organizations is ongoing.

ACS continues its Recruitment Corps, a group of experienced foster and adoptive parents whose goal is to assist with recruitment of prospective foster parents.

ACS continues *Wednesday's Child*, a weekly program begun in April 1999, featuring a child or sibling group who needs an adoptive home, in partnership with the Freddie Mac Foundation and NBC4. Since its beginning, Wednesday's Child has featured over 500 children.

ACS maintains the *Families for Teens Speakers Bureau*, whose mission is to challenge child welfare professionals, youth and prospective foster and adoptive parent applicants to recognize that all young people are entitled to a permanent family. The Speaker's Bureau consists of young people currently or formerly in foster care and foster/adoptive parents of teens who share their personal stories in an effort toward changing attitudes and thereby helping to find homes for teens. They participate in recruitment events,

orientations and foster parent training sessions and their service is provided to ACS and all of its provider agencies.

ACS continues to partner with the *Heart Gallery NY*. Through the efforts of the Heart Gallery, recognized professional photographers have volunteered to shoot portraits of foster children who have been freed for adoption. These photos artistically capture the individuality and spirit of each child. The Heart Gallery has been featured in numerous newspapers, magazines and other media.

The ACS Press Office regularly seeks media coverage of stories about children who need adoptive homes and families who have adopted.

ACS also continues to contract with specialized adoption recruitment agencies. These agencies are charged solely with recruiting and licensing adoptive homes for hard-to-place children, helping to make matches between prospective adoptive parents and hard-to-place children, and providing post-adoption services system-wide. Orientations and trainings for prospective adoptive parents are provided at varied times and in locations convenient for the prospective parents. Recruitment agencies provide services that are reflective of the diverse communities, children, and families they serve including, but not limited to, hiring bilingual staff. No fees of any kind are charged to prospective adoptive parents.

2011 – 2012 Projections:

Continue monthly contacts with assigned ACS offices and provider agencies, serving public children, with a minimum of four of these contacts, conducted on-site annually for each assigned foster care/adoption agency; and two annual visits to private, domestic/international adoption agencies.

Assess training and adoption regulatory compliance needs. Initiate needs based training and technical assistance to the field on adoption as needed. Introduce new and critical information to the field as needed.

Facilitate ongoing agency assessments, review ACS PAMS data and corrective actions, ACS Adoption Scorecard measures, Permanency unit agency reviews, AMS and Data Warehouse reports and NYCRO Adoption and Permanency Review data. Review and monitor the implementation of the MEPA compliant Comprehensive Recruitment Plan. Complete adoption Programs Reviews for in-state and Article 13 incorporation requests within 90 days of assignment.

Continue the Adoption Panel Reviews; generate panel review summaries, and follow-up promptly on OCFS identified barriers to the permanency process. Incorporate the Adoption Album, OCFS Adoption Services Guide for Caseworkers, NYS adoption regulations and other pertinent materials into ongoing technical assistance and training.

Respond to adoption requests for information and/or complaints by individuals, agencies, and community groups within seven working days and bring to resolution as soon as practicable.

Represent NYS Adoption Service in adoption subsidy fair hearings, analyze the outcomes of the hearings and share data with stakeholders. Serve as a resource for Home Office initiatives agreed to by NYCRO and Adoption Specialists throughout NYS.

Organize and coordinate 2010 Permanency Hearing Observations to facilitate monitoring compliance with NYS statute and regulations. Desired Outcomes and/or Recommendations/Actions: Improvement in caseworker's timely submission of permanency hearing reports; Assess lack of foster and birth parent participation in permanency hearings. Surveys conducted, or inquiry by/query of caseworkers at FTCs. Increase in participation by attorneys. Distribute the report and findings to the courts.

Albany Regional Office (ARO)

On May 24, 2010, OCFS sent out a letter to all agencies requiring them to develop a comprehensive Foster/Adoption Parent's Recruitment and Retention Plan (R&R) pursuant to federal and state legal requirements. In this plan agencies were directed to review/evaluate their recruitment processes to ensure that they utilized strategies that generated a sufficient number of potential foster and adoptive parents in order to achieve a timely and appropriate placement of all waiting children.

Both, Office's regulations and the Multiethnic Placement Act (MEPA) require each agency to develop a comprehensive recruitment plan that include strategies to accomplish the dissemination of information to the community at large and targeted groups/communities on the characteristics and needs of waiting children; an understanding of the foster care and adoption process; as well as the supports available to foster and adoptive parents. The plan requires the generation of a sufficient number of potential parents that resemble the racial and ethnic diversity of the children in need of placement; the provision of cultural sensitivity training to pertinent staff to enable them to work effectively with diverse cultural, racial and economic communities and language barriers. Another quality requirement of this comprehensive plan is the involvement of communities/groups not represented or underrepresented in the pool of available or approved foster and adoptive parents. Agencies cannot utilize any other types of standards that otherwise have the effect of excluding certain racial, cultural, or ethnic groups of prospective parents.

All agencies had a deadline of December 31, 2010 to submit their plans.

The Albany Regional Office identified two very important stages in the process of meeting the expectations Recruitment and Retention (R&R) Plans that are MEPA compliant for all local districts and for the Voluntary Agencies who certify their own foster/adoptive homes. The first stage involved providing technical assistance to the agencies so that they could develop an adequate and meaningful R&R plan.

The second stage involved the task of monitoring the implementation of each agency's the R&R plan. This stage will involve more long term future regional oversight.

The initial step in meeting our R&R regional objective was to develop regional work group with the task of training, monitoring and assisting the 18 local departments of social services and six voluntary agencies required to submit these R&R plans. The task of this work group was to ensure that each agency in the region developed a meaningful, realistic and outcome-measurable R&R plan that drove their practice and to make sure that all plans were submitted to ARO by the required deadline.

Accomplishments 2010-2011:

ARO conducted teleconferences June 8, 2010 and August 8, 2010 on how to develop a comprehensive R&R plan that could address the needs of the diverse population they serve. The workgroup also provided for four regional orientation forums each at a different geographical area during the dates of September 16, 22, and 24, and October 4, 2010. These forums were well attended and rich in the discussion of R&R planning, implementation, efficacy and process/outcome evaluations.

The regional R&R workgroup also met frequently with the other regional office staff in order to see that the regional service we were providing our agencies in this process was also comprehensive and meaningful to their needs.

Another vehicle that ARO utilized during this stage was the quarterly Adoption Exchanges. During the Exchanges of July 16 and October 22, 2010, our regional office continued to provide orientation and answer R&R questions from the agencies in contemplation to meeting the end of the year deadline.

ARO stressed the need for each agency to be mindful of their plans of recruitment and retention as "live" documents with clear goals, realistic objectives, achievable action plans and action-improving outcome and process evaluations that responded to the particular R&R needs, resources and practice of their agency.

During the Adoption Exchange Meetings of January 21, and April 15, 2011, part of the agenda was to address implementation issues such as the need to understand community environment, to identify and utilize agency and community partners that could help implement the R&R action plans, and the necessity of analyzing foster care and adoption data.

Plans for 2011-2012:

The ARO Regional Office R&R tasks will concentrate on seeing that all agencies in the region continue to implement their plans and that the plans have long term sustainability toward improving R&R outcomes.

ARO will continue to partner with these agencies in order to provide technical assistance as required;

Post Adoption Services Activities:

In general all agencies in ARO region describe their post-adoption services as "Adoption Subsidy", "B2H", or "post adoption case visits" when applicable on a case by case basis.

Only Parson's Child and Family Center reported to have a specific Post Adoption Resource Center (PARC) to provide post adoption services for families in Albany, Rensselaer, Saratoga, Schenectady, Warren and Washington counties who have adopted or are in the process of adopting. Families can access services such as respite and parent support groups, which includes peer groups and child care for families attending the support groups.

Staff works together with the families and provides information and referral to appropriate providers within the community, parents and peer support groups, and limited case planning services.

Buffalo Regional Office (BRO)

In 2010, the Buffalo Regional Office conducted permanency panels in each of the eight counties of Western New York. Ten cases were reviewed in each of the smaller counties and twenty cases were reviewed in Erie County. The purpose is to assess each district's plans toward achieving permanency for children in care and to offer technical assistance in implementing further plans.

Additionally in 2010, BRO staff provided technical assistance to all local districts and voluntary agencies in the development of their three-year foster parent recruitment and retention plans. The implementation and effectiveness of these plans are a focus of BRO staff quarterly visits with districts and agencies.

The BRO is a member of the Coalition of Adoption and Foster Family Agencies. CAFFA is composed of agencies providing foster care and adoption services in Western New York and is organized to support and enhance the delivery of quality adoption service to families and children. The mission of CAFFA is to collaboratively promote children's permanency through advocacy, education and support. As a CAFFA member, the BRO participated in numerous recruitment events at Western New York community events such as fairs, festivals, community markets, and Buffalo's Gay Pride Parade.

Two installments of The Western New York Heart Gallery were on display in 2010. The Heart Gallery features portraits of approximately 25 freed children, as well as portraits of families created through adoption. The Gallery was featured at the Larkin Building, an office building occupied with nearly 2000 people from a diverse workforce who includes law firms, health care companies, advertising, financial firms, government agencies, insurance, and media. The gallery was also featured at Autistic Services, Inc. in Buffalo. The portraits were displayed along with the art work of Autistic Services clients. The Heart Gallery offers an opportunity to recruit families for specific children

as well as educating the public on foster care and adoption. The Heart Gallery is operated by CAFFA.

BRO hosted two Family Fests in Buffalo and in the Southern Tier in 2010. The Family Fests are planned by members of CAFFA and offer opportunities for approved adoptive families to meet and interact with children waiting for an adoptive placement. While the Fests are not matching events, they provide a safe, fun environment for youth and an opportunity for adults to interact with youth in need of a forever family. One adoption has been finalized as a result of the Buffalo Family Fest.

The Buffalo Region sponsored two three-day adoption training sessions utilizing the National Resource Center's Adoption Competency Curriculum. The sessions, held in Buffalo and the Southern Tier, were open to all local district and voluntary agency case workers in the Buffalo region. The curriculum focuses on practice, including assessing and preparing children and families for adoption.

Rochester Regional Office (RRO)

Adoption panel reviews were replaced with a Permanency panel review process in the Rochester Region. The panel process reviewed a minimum of 15 children in foster care in each district, with a focus on casework practice with emphasis on family engagement noting strengths in the practice as well as barriers to permanency. Participants on the panels included representatives from OCFS regional office, the local DSS, the voluntary agency if applicable, and a representative from the Family Court.

As part of the CFSR Program Improvement Plan, the LDSS and Voluntary Agencies submitted an updated recruitment and retention plan which reflected the MEPA and ICWA requirements. The Rochester Regional Office provided technical assistance in the plan development to each of the LDSS and VA's in the region. Adopt US Kids provided a full day of training and technical assistance on concepts of recruitment and retention of African American and Hispanic families. All plans submitted were reviewed and approved by the Regional Office by December 2010.

Rochester Region districts and agencies sponsored a variety of events in conjunction with November as Adoption Month. Participants in the events included district staff, adoptive families, general public, potential adoption resources, adoption agency staff, and in several cases, staff representing Family Court and OCFS. Some of the events celebrating adoption included the following:

1) Chemung County had adoption ceremonies in the courtroom followed by lunch and refreshments.
2) Ontario County sponsored an event at the court house celebrating finalizations that occurred during National Adoption Day
3) Monroe County sponsored an event that included finalization ceremonies of several adoptions. Numerous judges were in attendance along with dignitaries such as the Mayor of Rochester, the Social Services Commissioner and local television personalities. There were several speeches regarding adoption including one particularly heartfelt address spoken by an adoptive mother who had the adoption of

her child finalized that day along with a poem written and shared by the adoptive child.

4) Seneca, Yates, and Steuben counties did not have any finalized adoptions during the month however, each county celebrated Adoption month activities in their communities.

The Adoption Resource Network Inc. (ARNI), part of Hillside Family of Agencies, and Children Awaiting Parents (CAP), as part of the Wendy's Wonderful Kid's recruitment project, sponsored several events relating to recruitment and retention of both foster and adoptive families. ARNI sponsored a full day conference, which offered professional development and learning opportunities for adoptive parents, caseworkers, foster parents and others interested in adoption for children and families.

Hillside Children's Center, through the Post Adoption TANF programs, continued to sponsor on-going support groups, respite, counseling for adoptive parents. In addition to support, these groups provide an opportunity for education and skill building regarding topics such as parenting difficult children and dealing with emotional trauma.

Children Awaiting Parents (CAP) was the lead agencies in the Heart Gallery of Rochester and the Southern Tier. Collaboration and participation from the Rochester Regional Office, LDSS and Voluntary Agencies in the region made the Gallery a success. The Heart Gallery was on exhibit at the Strong National Museum of Play during the month of November.

The Rochester Regional Office Adoption Specialist attends the quarterly Adoption Specialist meetings.

Spring Valley Regional Office (SVRO)

The following represents the activities and programs sponsored by the NYS-OCFS Spring Valley Regional Office that help the Local Districts and Voluntary agencies in Region V to fulfill the Multi-Ethnic Placement Act (MEPA) requirements in their recruitment of foster and adoptive parents:

- Quarterly Recruitment and Retention Forums
  The nine districts and the voluntary agencies meet to share information on recruitment and retention strategies and to learn innovative methods on how to recruit families from all communities in their counties with emphasis on how to recruit families from minority communities. Written recruitment strategy handouts as well as flyers and posters are given to the participants to aide in their recruitment/retention efforts.

- Mid-Hudson Adoption Exchange
  Agencies in the Mid-Hudson Region meet quarterly to discuss child welfare issues and to exchange information on waiting children and families. These meetings enable local districts, voluntary agencies and parent groups to network between meetings and work together to provide permanency for children

- The Nassau/Suffolk Bi-County Adoption Exchange

  Nassau and Suffolk County representatives, voluntary agencies, parent groups as well as representatives from the Nassau Children's Museum and private domestic/international adoption agencies meet bi-monthly to discuss child welfare issues and to plan joint recruitment projects. Two Adoption/Foster Care forums for the public will be held in 2011. These forums will be advertised through the media, flyers and posters and by putting information with the board and subsidy check mailings that are sent to foster and adoptive families. (One was held in January 31, 2011. The second will take place in October). The Bi-County Exchange also provides a networking mechanism for agencies to exchange information on waiting children and families. The Nassau Children's Museum will be hosting post-adoption workshops for parents to help in our retention efforts.

- Westchester Post-Adoption Work Group

  Westchester County Department of Social Services has a contract with the Westchester Institute for Human Development (WIHD) to provide post-adoption services to adoptive families to prevent adoption disruptions. The services provided are support groups for parents, teens and children; individual and family counseling and forums on various child welfare issues. The Adoption Training Specialist represents the SVRO on the Post-Adoption Work Group and has been instrumental in getting OCFS to pay for Forum speakers. The forums are given several times during the year on various parenting topics. Each forum is given twice a day in the mornings and in the evenings. Adoptive and foster parents, caseworkers, supervisors, administrators and psychotherapists are encouraged to attend. The Post-Adoption Work Group is composed of WIHD, Westchester County DSS, private social service agencies, voluntary agencies and therapists who service Westchester County as well as OCFS.

- Heart Gallery Exhibits

  Beginning in 2005 six of the seven Mid-Hudson local districts worked together to sponsor the Mid-Hudson Heart Gallery Exhibit. This photo exhibit featured older children, sibling groups and special needs children, from the Mid-Hudson local districts, who were freed for adoption and in need of families. The exhibit traveled to various venues in each of the participating counties during the months of October and November. Professional photographers and the Kodak company, volunteered their time and talents to capture the essence of each child's personality through pictures and to develop the photos. Write-ups concerning the children, many of which were written by the youth themselves, were displayed next to each photo. In addition, videos were also developed in which the children were interviewed and talked about what they wanted in an adoptive family. The videos were shown at the exhibits and some of them were displayed on the New York State Adoption Services, "Our Children, Our Families" website. The traveling Heart Gallery was a very successful media event and each opening

Gallery reception, in the various counties, was attended by County Commissioners, politicians, judges, families, children and NYS-OCFS. It was held from 2005 to 2009. Half of the children featured in the Mid-Hudson Heart Gallery obtained families during the first four years of its inception.
Due to budget cuts, the traveling exhibit could not be held in 2010. However, some of the local districts had their own Heart Galleries displayed at various county venues all year round. Four of the Mid-Hudson Counties participated in the Statewide Heart Gallery which was shown at the Albany Amtrak and New York Pennsylvania train stations and on electronic billboards in Times Square in New York City. Some of the districts will participate in the 2011 Statewide Heart Gallery.

- National Adoption Day/Month

  Each year the agencies participate in National Adoption day and month which focuses on the need for adoptive and foster homes. Various events such as dinners, luncheons and breakfasts, are held to honor adoptive and foster parents and to let the public know about the need for homes. In addition, agencies have give-a-ways created to advertise the need for families. These give-a-ways (pens, buttons, bookmarks, fans etc.) are given out at various locations, not only during the month of November (National Adoption Month), but all year round.
  On National Adoption Day many adoptions are finalized at the Family Courts in each county and receptions are held afterwards. This day is highlighted in the media and is an excellent recruitment tool.

- Adoption Finalizations and Recruitment Strategies

  It should be noted that the Spring Valley Region finalized 295 adoptions during year 2010 and has met or exceeded its finalization goals since 2003. We will continue to work on innovative recruitment and retention strategies.

<u>Syracuse Regional Office (SRO)</u>

Accomplishments in 2010-2011:

- All districts and voluntary agencies in the region submitted two year recruitment and retention plans
- The annual regional Adoption Festival was held in September 2010. The event provides an opportunity for prospective adoptive parents to interact with children available for adoption in a relaxing and positive atmosphere. Child specific adoption consultations and information on foster care and adoption is made available to prospective families. Additionally, the event allows prospective parents the ability to gain more understanding about the population of children in foster care that are in need of adoptive families. As a result of the event, three teenagers were matched with adoptive families.

- The Heart Gallery was on display every month in a different venue throughout the region. The Heart Gallery draws both child specific and general recruitment of foster and/or adoptive families.
- Adoption panels were held in three counties. One of the purposes of the panels is to explore and identify additional child specific recruitment activities.
- A regional Adoption Exchange was held in January 2011. This event provides an opportunity for caseworkers to present information on waiting children and prospective adoptive families. Thirteen of the 21 children had potential adoptive families identified during the event. As a result, two children will be placed for adoption.

Plans for 2011-2012:

- A second exchange will be scheduled in late 2011 and early 2012.
- The annual regional Adoption Festival is scheduled for September 2011, and again in September 2012.
- The Heart Gallery will continue to be on display at different venues each month throughout the 14 county region.
- Adoption panels will be held in six counties. The counties were selected on the highest number of freed children in care. A primary focus will be on children without adoptive resources, and the identification of the agency's child specific recruitment efforts.

[For tribal recruitment and retention efforts see Goal 5]

Adoption Opportunity Grant Award

In October 2008, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services awarded OCFS a five-year Adoption Opportunities grant totaling 2.2 million dollars to support an initiative entitled "A Parent for Every Child" that is designed to promote the diligent recruitment of permanent families for freed older foster care youth with severe emotional, behavioral and developmental needs that require residential treatment in a New York State facility of the Office of Mental Health (OMH), the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) , the Division of Juvenile Justice and Opportunities for Youth (DJJOY/OCFS) or in a Residential Treatment Facility (RTF). The project will recruit a pool of families willing to adopt youth with special needs and will provide training to assist parents with special parenting requirements to meet the needs of these youth. Year one of the grant was a planning year, In Year two the first cohort of 80 youth were randomly selected. Half of the sample (40) were assigned to the intervention group and the other half (40) were assigned to the control group. Youth in the intervention group were assigned a permanency specialist based on location of the facility in which he/she resides. Permanency Specialists received specialized training in Adoption Competency, Extreme Recruitment and Family Finding. Child specific recruitment activities began including case mining, face-to face contact, contact with viable resources and videos of the youth. A database was developed by the Project Evaluator to maintain information on case specific permanency efforts for youth in both the intervention and control group.

A website, www.parentforeverychild.org was designed and provides PFEC program information, videos of youth in the intervention group and links to parent resources. Three regional cross-systems meetings were held by each partner agency to foster discussion and collaboration with cross system partners and stake holders in their region and a marketing campaign was begun. In November 2010, the second cohort of youth was selected with 13 youth entering the intervention group and 12 entering the control group. The project continues to grow and progress and as a result in early 2011 two adoptions were finalized and a permanent commitment ceremony for a third youth was celebrated.

Evaluation of Parent for Every Child Project:

The OCFS Bureau of Evaluation and Research developed an evaluation design for the project that calls for a randomized controlled trial to be conducted in each of the three project sites, and has contracted with the Chapin Hall Center for Children to assist in conducting the evaluation. Approximately 175 children who meet the eligibility criteria for the project will be randomly assigned to either an intervention group that will receive services under the initiative or to a control group that will receive services as usual. The randomized trial will address the question: "Do freed children with serious mental health, mental retardation, or criminal justice histories who receive the specialized permanency intervention program achieve permanency at higher rates and sooner than other children with the same characteristics who do not receive the specialized services?" The evaluation will also assess the relative effectiveness of the various program strategies; alone, in combination, and for various subgroups of the target population. Lessons learned from this project will be disseminated to other states so that agencies across the country can benefit from the practices developed for waiting children within the mental health, developmental disability and juvenile justice systems of care.

Since fall 2009, three cohorts of children meeting the study criteria have been identified, randomly selected and assigned to the intervention or control groups, and their eligibility confirmed or a replacement randomly selected. This process has resulted in 130 children currently enrolled in the randomized control trial, with 67 children assigned to the Parent for Every Child (PFEC) program and 63 assigned to the control group. In October 2011, an additional 44 children will be randomly selected and randomly assigned to either the intervention or control groups.

Post Adoption Services

The continued encouragement of timely adoptions of foster children has resulted in increased attention to the need for services following the adoption. Adoptive parents, service providers and advocates have underscored the importance of a broad range of services provided by specially trained professionals which recognize the unique needs of adoptive families.

In addition, social service districts provide preventive services to those adoptive families experiencing turmoil that threatens to result in placement of their child (ren). Two

factors curtailed expansive and effective provision of these post-adoptive services: (1) lack of service providers with expertise to serve adoptive families and (2) reliance on social services districts to routinely develop and deliver (either directly or through purchase) specialized services.

Refinement of our understanding of the unmet service needs of adoptive families is important to OCFS and social service districts for developing programs to deliver services. The availability of uncapped 98% of 65% state reimbursements to social service districts for this purpose allows for targeted district investments in filling gaps in services.

On-going demand for post adoption services promise to distinguish for the state and its social services districts which services must be tailored to the unique circumstances of adoptive parents to achieve a suitable level of efficacy. For example, must a respite program incorporate information on adoption and its impact on family relationships to be effective? This question could be repeated for a wide range of health, mental health, educational and social services. The more information that is garnered through studies, demonstrations and research, the more programs can be provided to facilitate the ongoing success of adoptions.

The Child Welfare Finance Legislation, Chapters 53 and 83 of the Laws of 2002, enacted for a five year period, was extended by Chapter 57 of the Laws of 2007 to June 30, 2009 and by Chapter 57 of the Laws of 2009 to June 30, 2012. This provides districts uncapped state matching reimbursement for local spending on protective, preventive, aftercare, independent living and adoption services. OCFS has conducted regional training to train on the implementation of this spending. Among other things, the uncapped reimbursement allows districts to consider expansion of existing services or use of innovative strategies for supporting adoptive families.

The Adoption Album

The Adoption Album is a web-based system which caseworkers throughout New York are using to photo-list children on the Internet, and register and photo-list potential adoptive families. Since 2008, OCFS has maintained the Adoption Album which interfaces with CONNECTIONS. One-on-one training is available as needed by phone. OCFS Regional Office Adoption Specialists are also available to provide training and technical assistance.

The Adoption Album allows caseworkers and photo listing contacts to continue the critically important recruitment work of photo listing children freed for adoption and registering families who have expressed an interest in adopting these children. The Adoption Album has always been a valuable resource as a first step in matching children with families and this redesign will encourage greater use of this valuable tool. The time required to photo list a child has been significantly reduced from weeks to, in most cases, the same day as referral to OCFS and workers are now able to upload digital photos. Additionally, New York State families with a completed and approved adoption home study can now register via the internet in the same manner out-of-state families can register. New York State families and out-of-state families interested in registering on

New York State's Family Adoption Registry must: (a) complete the form online; and (b) submit the form to New York State Adoption Services (NYSAS) with the appropriate verification identifying that they have an approved home study. NYSAS reviews the registration and the supporting documentation and, if all materials are acceptable, the family is then placed into the Family Adoption Registry. This online form allows an out-of-state family to complete the registration online and electronically submit the information to NYSAS. The family will then mail the appropriate verification to NYSAS. Families can also digitally upload a photo that can also be placed on the Family Photo listing Registry. Once NYSAS receives and reviews the family's information, the family can be registered. The family will receive an e-mail message with notification that their family has been registered. Implementing the online registration eliminates the need for NYSAS to data enter the family's information into the Family Registry and helps to expedite the process of registration. The Adoption Album continues to be an invaluable recruitment tool for providing prospective adoptive parents the ability to view New York State children available for adoption online. The Album provides general information on the individual needs of each child. The internet version of the Adoption Album provides the name and phone number of each child's photo-listing contact on line. This provides prospective adoptive parents the information they need to make an initial inquiry of a child.

There are currently 265 prospective adoptive families registered in the Family Registry and 380 children photo listed. A total of 145 photo listed children were adoptively placed in 2009. For 2011, OCFS regional offices are committed to support efforts to see that all freed children who have not been placed with an adoptive resource are photo listed in the Adoption Album.

"Adoption Now" Workgroup

New York's "Adoption Now" was a collaborative initiative among OCFS, OCA, ACS and, ultimately, all social services districts to hasten the achievement of a safe and permanent home for the children in New York freed for adoption but not yet adopted. By working together to influence the respective systems, barriers that can delay or prevent adoption finalizations were identified in each system and strategies were developed to address them.

In addition, various activities focus on moving children to permanency through adoption. For example, in November of each year, during National Adoption Month, "National Adoption Day" is held. The Chief Judge and the Commissioners of both OCFS and ACS participate in the festivities honoring that success.

A major accomplishment of Adoption now was the creation of panels consisting of representatives from OCFS, the Court and ACS to review the status of adoption-ready children on a case-by-case basis. This is a very powerful and effective model that serves many purposes. It helps in the analysis of the children and families awaiting the completion of their adoptions; demonstrates to adoption agencies that all stakeholders are in this together and want to support their efforts to provide permanence through adoption, especially in these very difficult financial times; and helps the collaboration develop strategies focused upon 'real time' issues with achievable goals.

Adoption Now reviewed the functioning of the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC), the Adoption Subsidy Program, Criminal History Record Checks and the SCR. The initial findings suggest that the effective and timely provision of each of these services is dependent upon other sources. The ICPC depends significantly upon the cooperation of other states; the SCR requires local districts to provide case records to help them expedite their processes, etc.

In 2009 the name of the workgroup was changed to Permanency Now to reflect a broadening of focus. *The Lawyers' Guide to Adoption* was completed and trainings on the guide began in 2010. Discussions broadened to include adolescent issues such as youth transitioning from care and crossover youth. These issues are largely the work of the Adolescent Strategy Workgroup but Permanency Now was interested in supporting that work if needed. Review of the Court Improvement Project's assessment of ICPC issues was also shared with the group as was the development of an electronic permanency hearing report.

State Central Register Database Checks

Expediting processes for adoption-related cases for database checks against the SCR and for administrative reviews of cases involving indicated reports of child abuse or maltreatment. Additional training in search techniques is being provided to local districts.

Adoption Services

Development continues on the comprehensive Adoption Discovery Project, a web based system designed to allow data sharing with many stakeholders. Additional enhancements to be accomplished include new functionality to comply with new ICPC provisions, information sharing with other state ICPC offices, management reports and analytical tools. Additional enhancements to the current Adoption Album include development of an integration system for audio and videos of photo listed children. A Memorandum of Understanding was executed by OCFS and the Office of Court Administration to allow family courts direct electronic access to the information maintained by the Putative Father Registry in order for courts to complete searches for registered fathers.

Adoption Subsidy

In 2010, the Adoption Album was expanded to include electronic submission of adoption subsidy applications. This module of the database allows for electronic submission and tracking of adoption subsidies, expedites the submission and review of applications and significantly reduces errors, returns, copying and mailing costs. Users from local departments of social services and authorized voluntary agencies were trained on the use of the database through distance learning I-Linc offerings. These trainings continue as

needed. Overall feedback from users has been very positive as they become comfortable working in the database and benefit from the ease of completing applications. Agencies with scanning capability are able to submit subsidy applications with the click of a button eliminating mailing costs and reducing delays previously experienced when they were awaiting mailed documents. With over 1300 electronic applications reviewed in 2009, the average length of time from receipt of the application to the approval/denial of the application by OCFS is 4 days which is a tremendous benefit in supporting more timely adoptions.

Subsidy applications are stored within the system allowing for easy access to copies of the application in the future. One of the major barriers to completing Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance (ICAMA) requests for children moving out of New York State has been the difficulty adoptive parents face in locating a copy of their child's subsidy. Applications that are created electronically will be accessible to districts, agencies and OCFS as needed to support more timely submissions of amendments, upgrades and ICAMA requests.

Criminal History Review

OCFS has expedited processes for criminal history background checks for adoption-related cases. Rapid turnaround of requests for current documentation is being provided as cases are identified through the case review process.

In addition to making improvements in its operational systems, OCFS is bringing additional supports to this effort.

TPR Barriers

A work group including attorneys, judges, social workers and OCFS convened from 2004 to 2008 to explore barriers surrounding the Termination of Parental Rights. This group identified one barrier to adoption related to unclear lines between custody and guardianship, the TPR process and the need to explore methods to expedite appeals. In 2008, legislation was crafted by OCFS and was enacted as Chapter 519 of the Laws of 2008. It clarified the rights and responsibilities of custodians and guardians and created a permanent guardianship.

Other initiatives aimed at expediting adoptions statewide included the following accomplishments:

- Revising the Lawyers Guide to Adoption for the purpose of publishing this document as a statewide guide of the responsibilities of attorneys in the adoption process.

- The Comprehensive Adoption Report (CAR) is now available online for use by social services districts and voluntary agencies. The CAR was developed to provide a standard model/template that will guide practice and training on the

contents of an agency's adoption report to be submitted to the court. The CAR provides a guide so that adoption reports prepared and submitted by agencies meet the requirements of State statute and the courts. In NYC, CAR training was provided to ACS, voluntary agency and the court personnel in an effort to initiate use of the CAR in all 5 boroughs.

- Collaborative effort to focus on the needs of older youth in foster care, the services available to them and improving permanency planning for these youth

Collaboration to AdoptUSKids:

The Collaboration to AdoptUSKids is a service offered by the Department of Health and Human Services' (DHHS) Children's Bureau. This is a national foster care and adoptive initiative to recruit new foster care and adoptive families for children in our foster care system. At the conclusion of the contract for the Response Recruitment teams in 2009, OCFS has taken on the responsibility of responding to inquiries for all upstate families by linking them to the local agency with responsibility for a child or linking them to the state/county/local agency responsible to provide pre-service training and home studies. The Administration for Children's Services continues to respond to inquiries from New York City, OCFS worked with AdoptUSKids to assist in updating New York State children with overdue or outdated photo listings and assisted AdoptUsKids in their efforts to clean up outdated family information.

ADOPTION MONITORING SYSTEM
FREQUENCY COUNTS FOR STATEWIDE
WAITING CHILDREN (FREED NOT PLACED) – 959
April 5, 2011

Age Group	NUMBER	PERCENT
0 TO UNDER 2	27	2.8
2 TO 5	189	19.7
6 TO 9	191	19.9
10 TO 13	224	23.4
14 TO 17	278	29.0
OVER 17	50	5.2
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TOTAL	959	100.0

Ethnic groups	NUMBER	PERCENT
WHITE	297	31.0
BLACK	433	45.2
HISPANIC	99	10.3
INTERRACIAL	62	6.5
OTHER	68	7.1
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TOTAL	959	100.1

Sex	NUMBER	PERCENT
FEMALE	437	45.6
MALE	522	54.4
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TOTAL	959	100.0

Number of siblings	NUMBER	PERCENT
01	871	90.8
02	41	4.3
03	21	2.2
04	9	0.9
05	10	1.0
06	6	0.6
08	1	0.1
TOTAL	959	99.9

Institutional Abuse/Maltreatment Investigations (IAB)

Accomplishments 2010-2011:

In 2008, State Law was amended to redefine Institutional Abuse and Neglect (IAB) practice and protocols. Chapter 323 of the Laws of 2008 took effect on January 17, 2009. This legislation changed definitions, practice protocols and outcomes of report investigations.

While OCFS continues to investigate and make determinations in those cases containing allegations of abuse or neglect of children in residential care that are registered by the Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment (SCR) concerning residential care facilities within New York State**,** it does so under new standards. In those reports determined to be indicated, OCFS, through its regional offices, continues to promote the development and implementation of appropriate and effective plans of prevention and remediation. Additionally, several new requirements were enacted. It is now necessary to establish whether a familial case must be registered at the SCR, whether a crime may have occurred and whether a regulatory standard has been violated. In all circumstances, appropriate follow-up activity is required. IAB investigators remain empowered to send letters of concern to those agencies that are found to have programmatic issues regardless of the individual case determination. The new legislation enhances this requirement.

OCFS devoted significant energy to providing information and training to all stakeholders in the field that were impacted by this legislation. A final teleconference was broadcast in June 2010 that addressed "Chapter 323: Implementation Updates."

OCFS remains committed to IAB Quality Assurance. In March 2011, an updated IAB Program Manual was issued. Quarterly IAB quality assurance case reviews are ongoing. In 2010, the Quality Assurance process change to incorporate regional office staff into the review sessions.

OCFS Staff from IAB work closely with stakeholders in the field to continue to elevate trauma awareness and distribute information regarding trauma informed program models of residential care.

OCFS has also worked collaboratively with stakeholders in the field and in August 2007, the Automated Restraint Tracking System (ARTS) was brought on line. Each Regional Office hosted a training site for the simultaneous statewide training of all voluntary agencies. This is a web-based system designed to capture critical information regarding each use of physical restraint in residential care agencies. As the database grows, it will help to inform practice and identify training needs for residential care providers.

OCFS continues to investigate and reach appropriate determinations in reports accepted by the SCR that concern children residing in New York State residential care facilities. In addition, OCFS will continue its efforts with regard to the development and implementation of appropriate and effective plans of prevention and remediation. OCFS

remains focused on improving the timeliness of determinations and feedback to agencies in order to support the development and implementation of meaningful plans of prevention and remediation. IAB continues to promote close, productive working relations between home office and the various regional offices; to maintain a close working relationship between investigative staff and staff with responsibility for foster care and licensing; to coordinate among OCFS and the various State agencies with which it interacts regarding institutional child abuse/maltreatment (State Education Department, OMH, OPWDD, and the Commission on Quality of Care and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities (CQCAPD)). Efforts are also focused on the development of ongoing training initiatives.

A web based training addressing the unique aspects of Mandated Reporting and Institutional Abuse is planned for 2011-2012.

In order to support IAB activities, creation of an internal OCFS database and a tracking system for incidents of abuse and neglect in residential settings are being explored. This system would allow OCFS to track data elements regarding reports of institutional abuse. The potential exists for OCFS to be able to identify trends in types of allegations, reporting and determinations**.** This activity is being supported in the OCFS Data Warehouse. Eventually, the data could be analyzed to support activities related to prevention and remediation efforts. Additionally, a tracking system has been developed and revised to support activities relative to the administrative review and fair hearing process.

Since the beginning of 2008, OCFS Division of Legal Affairs has been reviewing all recommended determinations made in cases investigated by the Commission on the Quality of Care and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities**.** OCFS has been providing technical assistance and support to investigative staff at CQCAPD.

Safety of Children in Residential Care: Establishing Trauma-informed Facility Environments

Plans for 2010-2011:

Evaluation of Sanctuary Model:

In fall 2008, the OCFS Bureau of Evaluation and Research initiated a multi-year evaluation of the Sanctuary Model®. Evaluation activities will focus on monitoring changes in institutional culture and practices over time, and will assess the extent to which Sanctuary ideals and tools are being implemented with fidelity to the Sanctuary Model. The findings will help to identify areas in which the model is most successful in order to capitalize upon them and identify weaknesses in order to make improvements.

The Sanctuary Model Evaluation examines whether youth and staff's perceptions of facility climate (e.g., safety, youth-staff relations, communication) and sites' use of sanctuary tools (e.g., community meetings, safety plans) improve over time as programs progress through the three-year implementation process outlined by the Sanctuary

Model®. Eight sites, including three DJJOY facilities and five voluntary agencies, are included in the evaluation. To gather information on how Sanctuary affects program climate, the evaluation team developed two survey instruments – one for staff and one for program youth – that ask about staff-youth interactions, communication, perceptions of personal safety and well-being, and knowledge of Sanctuary tools and concepts. Surveys are being administered once a year at each of the eight sites included in Cohort #2 of the Sanctuary Roll-Out (three OCFS facilities, five voluntary agencies).

The evaluation is expected to be completed by September 2011.

Training Provided in Federal Fiscal Year 2010-2011

- **Training and Technical Assistance to Support Social Services District Permanency Planning**

  A statewide and regional child welfare training resource project provides district-specific training and technical assistance to improve caseworker, supervisor, and managerial skills, support performance improvement initiatives, enhance district foster parent recruitment and retention efforts, and to effectively use the legal system to advocate for and obtain safety, permanency, and well being for children. Also provides consultation to OCFS Home Office on the development, design and delivery of child welfare training.

- **Training for New York City Voluntary Agencies**

  Training for New York City voluntary agencies, development and operation of a training consortium (a network of training providers), provides a competency-based foundation program for child welfare caseworkers and supervisors, and a variety of in-service training resources to voluntary agencies. Technical assistance is provided. A one-day conference for child care staff was also delivered in NYC. In addition, the training project provides resources to support Children's Services Improved Outcomes for Children initiatives.

  881 trainees
  101.5 training days

- **Foster/Adoptive Parent Training**

  - This program consists of several foster/adoptive parent leader certification preparation components, Group Preparation and Selection II/Model Approaches to Partnerships in Parenting (GPSII/MAPP), Caring for Our Own, Shared Parenting, and Deciding Together. These training programs prepare local district and voluntary agency staff and foster/adoptive parents to lead training groups in their areas on the topics above.
  - GPSII/MAPP: A 30-hour preparation and selection program delivered over a period of 10 weeks by districts and agencies to prospective foster and adoptive

parents to assess, develop, and strengthen the attitudes, skills, and knowledge needed by parents intending to foster or adopt children.

- Caring For Our Own: Develops program skills needed for local district and agency staff to prepare relatives of children in care for their role as care giver and to provide necessary support.
- Shared Parenting: Provides a four day leader certification program prepares trainers to deliver the Shared Parenting Program to foster parents. The program is also delivered directly as needed.
- Mini-MAPP: Prepares GPSII/MAPP certified trainers to provide an overview of the basic concepts in the GPSII/MAPP training program to child welfare staff and foster and adoptive care staff within the agencies.
- Deciding Together: Provides training to individual families to prepare them to foster or adopt. There is also a leader certification component to this training.
- COMPASS, the in-service portion of this training program, includes basic and advanced courses in such topics as Loss and Separation, Preparing Children for Adoption, Managing Difficult Behaviors, Sexual Abuse, Child Development and Discipline among other. There is a leader certification component to this training.

6166 trainees
521 training days

- **Therapeutic Foster Boarding Home Training (TFBH)**

TFBH provides training and technical assistance in a set of core problem-solving and intervention skills for foster parents, agency workers, and trainers in therapeutic foster boarding home programs.

459 trainees
100 training days

Behavior Support, Crisis Prevention and Intervention in Residential Settings

The program focuses on building the competencies of staff to work more effectively and in a positive, therapeutic manner, with children in institutional settings. The training includes techniques on preventing, de-escalating, and intervening in crisis situations. The training leads to certification of Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI) trainers. In addition to the core program, refresher training and technical assistance is provided to previously certified TCI trainers, to assist them in keeping their certification current. This program also provides training on Institutional Abuse (IAB) Practice in New York to OCFS employees and staff from residential care agencies who work with IAB and residential care issues.

1,425 trainees
100 technical assistance days

- **Child Welfare Training and Technical Assistance**

Provide training and technical assistance to social services districts to improve casework practice and to overcome barriers to permanency for children in care. Provide training manuals and materials in support of OCFS policy and program initiatives.

214 training and technical assistance days

- **Health Services for Children in Foster Care**

This project teaches local district and voluntary agency child welfare staff how to facilitate access to health care services for children in care, and how to coordinate services, identify health risk factors and integrate the current health standards into their practice and case management. This program is part of a larger child welfare training project entitled Advanced Medical and Legal Issues Training in Child Welfare.

251 trainees
12 training days

Training Planned for Federal Fiscal Year 2011-2012

- The training programs provided in 2010-2011, as described in Goal 2 of the APSR, have been judged effective, and continue to reflect an ongoing need. Therefore, all of these training programs will be offered in the coming year. In addition, the following programs will be offered or revised.

- The work of the Social Work Education Consortium will continue**:** OCFS has developed a Consortium of Schools of Social Work to work in partnership with the agency to elevate public child welfare practice. The Consortium activities include a full range of training and education activities including degree programs for local district staff, field instruction, curriculum development as well as short term training and workforce development.

OCFS plans to continue to provide a wide variety of management and computer training, which is available to State and local staff from all programs. These courses are open to managers and staff in the child welfare area as well to those serving in administrative functions that support all programs.

GOAL #3

VICTIMS OF FAMILY VIOLENCE, BOTH CHILD AND ADULT, WILL BE AFFORDED THE SAFETY AND SUPPORT NECESSARY TO ACHIEVE SELF-SUFFICIENCY (ADULT), AND/OR TO PROMOTE THEIR CONTINUED GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT (CHILD)

ASSESSMENT OF NEED AND CURRENT STATUS

Local districts are required to provide emergency shelter and services to all victims of domestic violence regardless of financial eligibility.

All approved residential and non-residential domestic violence programs in the state are in compliance with the program regulations and offer the core services designed to provide safety and the supports needed to achieve self-sufficiency. NYS is fortunate to have a mandated funding stream and federal family violence funds to help support these initiatives.

2010-2011 PERFORMANCE TARGETS

In eleven counties CPS and DV staff will continue to implement a joint protocol to improve safety outcomes for families affected by child abuse and domestic violence.

Baseline: Eleven counties were funded to implement protocols to work jointly on cases with both domestic violence and child abuse in 2010. In 2010, it estimated that approximately 1,700* families received specialized services through the CPS/DV collaboration projects. Below are process and outcome measures for 2010:

- Approximately 970** families served jointly by CPS and DV advocates
  - 240 were visited jointly in the home
  - 153 were visited jointly outside of the home
  - 710 were joint consultations
- Of the 311 CPS reports indicated, in 84% of the cases the child(ren) remained safely with the non-offending parent
- Of the 233 CPS reports with unfounded allegations of child abuse or maltreatment, 92% of the families were able to access necessary supports and services

*At the time this report was prepared, OCFS only had information for 6 out of the 11 agencies, who have CPS/DV collaboration projects. This number is an estimate for the number of families served by all 11 agencies.

** This represents the actual number of families served over a 12 month period for 6 out of 11 agencies reporting at the time of this report.

- Approved residential and non-residential services will be provided to adult victims of domestic violence and their children in an effort to offer safety and self-sufficiency options.

Baseline: In 2010, there were 165 domestic violence residential programs licensed by OCFS with a total of 3,033 beds and 86 approved non-residential programs.

- Approximately 15,500 adults and children received domestic violence residential services
- Approximately 47,000 adults and children received domestic violence non-residential services
- Approximately 1,030 adults and children entered domestic violence transitional housing
- Approximately 185,000 Domestic Violence (DV) crisis/hotline calls were received by individual providers across the state.

- All CPS workers in NYS will receive the mandated DV training in accordance with Chapter 280 of the Laws of 2002.

Baseline: In 2010, 328 CPS workers were trained in total, 2,437 workers have completed the mandated DV training since its inception in 2005.

- Five additional districts will be visited and provided with Domestic Violence Profiles. OFCS will assist these counties in planning and improving their domestic violence services after evaluating the profiles.

Baseline: In 2010, 10 districts were visited and provided with Domestic Violence Profiles. OCFS assisted these districts in planning and improving their domestic violence services after evaluating the profiles. The districts visited are in various stages of reviewing self improvement plans due to their individual situations and self assessments.

STATE AND LOCAL ACTIVITIES

Domestic Violence Services

The prevention of and intervention in domestic violence is a central component of New York State's approach to preserving and strengthening families. After the passage of the State Domestic Violence Prevention Act of 1987 (Social Service Law Section 459-a et. seq.**)**, OCFS completed a multitude of regulatory, funding and licensing initiatives which resulted in major changes in the way domestic violence programs are funded and services are provided to victims of domestic violence. Social services districts are required to refer victims of domestic violence, whether eligible or ineligible for public assistance, to available licensed residential programs and reimburse such programs on a per diem basis which is established by OCFS and approved by the New York State Division of the Budget. Social services districts are also required to provide non-residential services for victims of domestic violence directly or to purchase such services from a residential or non-residential domestic violence program. As a result, domestic violence programs, over a multi-year period, have become increasingly mainstreamed into the social services delivery system. These programs continue to offer the safety and support needed to

assist victims of domestic violence and their children in becoming self sufficient and living free of violence.

OCFS is responsible for funding, licensing, approving and monitoring these programs and providing the technical assistance needed to support quality and comprehensive services. This work requires on-going collaborative efforts with other state agencies, social services districts, service providers and Domestic Violence victims and their families.

Accomplishments for 2010-2011:

- Federal Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FFVPSA) Funds – In 2010, OCFS received an FFVPSA award of $4,355,055. Five percent of the funds ($217,752) were applied to administrative expenses. $755,157 supported continuation of CPS/DV collaboration projects, and the remaining $3,382,146, in the amount of $35,602 each, was issued to 95 approved residential and/or non-residential domestic violence programs. The grants support program maintenance, health and safety improvements and/or program enhancements.

- Domestic Violence Information System (DVIS) – During 2010, the Domestic Violence Information System, which is used to support the statistical requirements of the mandated annual report, continued to be refined. The goal of the system is to improve the accuracy and timeliness of the annual report and make related information more accessible to users and other stakeholders. DV providers entered their 2010 data directly into the system. For NYC providers, who already report data to the Human Resources Administration (HRA), our data system was able to import data from the HRA system directly.

- CPS/DV initiatives – During 2010, significant progress was made towards improving safety outcomes for families experiencing both domestic violence and child abuse and maltreatment.

    - 11 CPS/DV collaboration projects were funded in 2010. The collaborations have an out stationed domestic violence advocate at the local CPS office. To facilitate reporting outcome data, common outcomes were used by the projects.
    - OCFS worked on coordinating the implementation of the CPS/DV co-location model and the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) Program Improvement Plan strategy to improve safety outcomes for families impacted by both domestic violence and child abuse/maltreatment.
    - A 2-day mandated domestic violence training for CPS workers was again provided to local department of social services districts. OCFS contracts with The Office of the Prevention of Domestic Violence (OPDV) to provide the training. This training is designed to improve

CPS capacity to intervene with families experiencing both domestic violence and child abuse and maltreatment.

- OCFS is currently contracting with OPDV to provide domestic violence training to CPS supervisors in the local social services districts. Curriculum is being developed and a pilot training is scheduled to be provided in 2011.

- Non-residential Programming – Additional efforts were made to support the network of non-residential domestic violence programs across the state. In 2010, county plans updates were reviewed by OCFS. Included in the plans are the appendices for approving non-residential domestic violence programs. Also during this year, staff conducted site visits to many of the stand alone non-residential domestic violence programs. In response to site visits and county plan reviews, home and regional office staff, together with local districts, addressed regulatory, contractual and best practice issues

- Domestic Violence Regulatory Workgroup – OCFS has co-facilitated a Domestic Violence Regulatory Workgroup with OPDV and the Office for Temporary and Disability Assistance. The workgroup includes domestic violence program and local social services representatives, the intent of which is to review and recommend changes to the domestic violence regulations which have existed unchanged for approximately 20 years.

Plans for 2011-2012:

Initiatives

- OCFS will continue to support CPS/DV collaborations. These collaborations are designed to improve safety for families experiencing both domestic violence and child abuse/maltreatment. Other anticipated outcomes include preventing reoccurrence of child abuse/maltreatment, and reducing out-of-home placements. Draft guidelines for domestic violence programs to collaborate with child protective services have been developed. These include screening questions to assist in identifying domestic violence and focus on new ways to work with batterers while keeping safety of the victims of paramount concern. Office staff will continue to assist in the provision of domestic violence training to child protective workers and other child welfare workers across the state.

- A 2-day mandated domestic violence training for CPS workers will continue to be provided to districts. OCFS contracts with The Office of the Prevention of Domestic Violence (OPDV) to provide the training. This training is designed to improve CPS capacity to intervene with families experiencing both domestic violence and child abuse and maltreatment.

- A one day domestic violence training for CPS supervisors will be rolled out in 2011. OCFS is working with OPDV to provide the training with the purpose of

giving CPS supervisors the tools they need to assist CPS caseworkers when dealing with CPS cases that involve domestic violence.

- Non-residential Programming – OCFS will continue to support the network of non-residential domestic violence programs across the state. County plans are reviewed by OCFS. Included in the plans are the appendices for approving non-residential domestic violence programs. Staff will also conduct site visits to many of the stand alone non-residential domestic violence programs. In response to site visits and county plan reviews, home and regional office staff, together with local districts, will address regulatory, contractual and best practice issues.

- OCFS will continue to license and approve domestic violence programs and distribute Federal Family Violence Prevention and Services Act and TANF funds to support the viability of residential and non-residential programs.

- The internet based DV Information allows staff to identify information that will be useful to programs and communities in identifying trends and gaps to assist in further supporting and enhancing services for victims of domestic violence. OCFS will collaborate with other state agencies on collecting and reporting information that can support community development. Data collected will be used to provide Domestic Violence Profiles to each county social service district to assist them in evaluating the domestic violence services provided by their county. Also, this information will help them recognize any areas which may be lacking and assist them in planning and improving overall services for victims of domestic violence in their particular county.

- OCFS will review and approve county consolidated services plans as they relate to non-residential domestic violence services and will provide technical assistance to counties and programs as needed to comply with the non-residential program regulations and to provide quality services.

- OCFS will continue to collaborate with other state agencies to help achieve consistency and coordination regarding funding and program quality. OCFS will participate in the OPDV Advisory Council and the data, prevention and funding subcommittees.

NYCRO Foster Care/Domestic Violence Unit

Foster Care/Domestic Violence Activities for 2010-2011 and Plans for 2011 – 2012

Program Initiatives:

Staff represented OCFS at an exhibitors' table at the AARP Grandparent Coalition Speak Out at the Long Island University Brooklyn Campus. The conference was hosted by

Senator Velmanette Montgomery, 18th Senatorial District. Organizers focused on the need to develop a network of support for grandparents caring for grandchildren.

The unit participated on an OCFS implementation workgroup for the Kinship Guardianship Assistance Program. The unit received and reviewed the proposed regulations and introduced Kinship Guardianship Assistance arrangement as another permanency option. The program was discussed during this year's permanency panels and in monitoring visits with agencies. Staff attended the ACS KinGap May 2011 forum and will monitor ACS and the provider agencies' implementation through 2011/2012.

Permanency/DV staff led the OCFS NYCRO efforts in organizing and providing staffing coverage for the Haitian Earthquake Family Resource Center (HEFRC). The initiative included several agency partners from the Federal Government, New York State, and New York City. Staff from the New York City Regional Office provided information, referrals concerning the adoption process and assisted the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) and State Emergency Management Office (SEMO) with translating services, and assessments of families' need for services provided through the Haitian Earthquake Resource Center as well as in local communities. In addition to providing staff coverage at the HEFRC, the Foster Care unit also contacted community providers to obtain support for center operations and other referral sources as necessary.

OCFS staff continues to work closely with and monitor the New York City Human Resources Administration (HRA) and the domestic violence agencies to improve services to individuals and families impacted by domestic violence.

Permanency/Domestic Violence unit met with Voices of Women (VOW), a DV advocacy organization, in 2010 for a follow up meeting regarding several concerns raised by the organization around Domestic Violence shelter reviews, services, and inspections. During the meeting, OCFS reported on the progress made towards revisions to domestic violence regulations, and changes and modifications to the domestic violence program reviews, which will include assessments of the agency's training policies, length of stay and services for the disabled.

Staff attended the ACS Commissioner's Advisory Board Domestic Violence Subcommittee Meeting in 2010. ACS presented updates concerning staffing reductions and reductions in the preventive budget which will impact services such as home making and child care. The merger between the Department of Juvenile Justice and ACS was announced. Several ACS Division of Child Protection managers attended the meeting and presented on the topic of intersections between Domestic Violence and Child Protection. The use of Criminal Background Checks, sensitive case investigations, CPS/DV trainings and DV conferences with the ACS on site DV representative were seen as useful tools in case practice, investigations and planning.

October was Domestic Violence Awareness Month. The unit organized its first forum an October 21, 2010. There were approximately 225 attendees with experts from the field who came together to focus on developing a cross systems approach to enhance resources

and services for victims of domestic violence and their families. The workshops were followed by a clothesline outreach activity at Montefiore Children's Hospital in the Bronx on October 22, 2010. Members from the community and visitors from The Children's Hospital received information on how to identify the signs of unhealthy relationships and where to call for help. Many of the people, both young and old, male and female, who attended the event participated in the outreach activities by inscribing heartfelt messages on tee shirts provided by the Foster Care/Domestic Violence's Assistant Director who helped organized the event.

Training Provided in Federal Fiscal Year 2010-2011

- **Domestic Violence Training for Child Welfare Caseworkers**

  This training provides caseworkers with the knowledge to identify domestic violence within their caseloads, to conduct comprehensive safety and risk assessments, and to develop service plans that promote safety, permanency, and well being.

  267 trainees
  12 offerings
  36 training days

- **Domestic Violence Training for Child Protective Services Caseworkers**

  This training provides CPS staff and supervisors with the knowledge and skills to identify domestic violence within their caseloads, to conduct comprehensive safety and risk assessments, and to develop intervention strategies in cases where domestic violence is present that promote child safety, permanency, and well being. Chapter 280 of the NYS Laws of 2002 requires this mandatory training for all CPS workers.

  334 trainees
  22 offerings
  40 training days

Training Planned for 2011-2012

The training provided in the current year has not only been judged effective but also continues to reflect an ongoing need. Therefore, the Domestic Violence and Child Welfare training, as described in Goal 3 of the last APSR, will be offered in the coming year.

Domestic Violence Training for Child Protective Services Caseworkers

This two-day training is designed to provide a comprehensive skill base for child protective workers. Course topics include: The Nature and Dynamics of Domestic Violence; The Impact of Domestic Violence on Children; Harm Experienced by

Children, Prevention of Foster Care Placement, Legal Remedies, and Cultural Factors Involved in Responding to Domestic Violence, Obstacles to Leaving, and Coordination of Services and Community Resources Including Domestic Violence Service Providers. The training will be delivered to CPS workers in LDSS offices throughout the State.

360 trainees
18 offerings
36 training days

Domestic Violence Training for Child Welfare Staff

Provides training in Domestic Violence including the dynamics of family abuse and safety planning interventions for child welfare caseworkers and supervisors who are working with families experiencing domestic violence.

360 trainees
18 offerings
36 training days

GOAL #4

ADOLESCENTS IN FOSTER CARE
AND AT-RISK TEENS IN RECEIPT OF PUBLIC ASSISTANCE
WILL DEVELOP THE SOCIAL, EDUCATIONAL AND VOCATIONAL SKILLS
NECESSARY FOR SELF-SUFFICIENCY

Objective:
OCFS will increase the number of foster care youth and former foster care youth who will be able to make a successful transition to self-sufficiency and who will be able to develop into healthy, functional citizens with permanent attachments to supportive adults, families and communities.

Actions and Benchmarks:

1. Workgroup will be formed to plan for the presentation of educational and vocational forums targeted to foster care youth, service providers, foster parents and the community, locations and dates of regional forums identified, materials to be distributed developed.

1.1a Six regional forums will be held and materials distributed.

ASSESSMENT OF NEED AND CURRENT STATUS

In 2010 the number of youth with a goal of Independent Living now called *Another Planned Living Arrangement with an adult resource* or APLA was 2,795 or 12.3% of the total number of children in care. This number continues the upward trend from the previous year.

Of the youth discharged from care during 2010, 1,361 or 10.8% were discharged to APLA. This represents a decrease from the previous year of 0.5 %.

The mean length of stay at time of discharge for youth with a goal of APLA is 6.8 years. This is the same as in the previous year.

In 2010, 33.3% of the youth leaving care after their fourteenth birthday had spent three or more consecutive years in care. Thus, for these youth, their residential care experience extends over a period of time in their development when the acquisition of self-sufficiency skills is very important.

STATE AND LOCAL ACTIVITIES

Independent Living Activities

Program Access

The Independent Living Program for foster care youth is directly administered by OCFS for the facilities it operates, each of the 58 social services districts**,** and the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe (hereinafter included in the reference to social services district) in New York State. Social services districts have the option of providing independent living services to foster care youth either directly or through a purchase of services contract. Each social services district's Independent Living Program must have available the array of services described below.

The Independent Living Skills program provides youth in OCFS direct care facilities, which are found in several locations throughout the State, twice-weekly life skills training sessions. In addition, youth returning to the community continue to receive community living skills training.

The Education and Training Voucher program for foster care youth and former foster care youth, including youth currently in or discharged from OCFS direct care facilities, is directly administered by the Orphan Foundation of America under contract with OCFS, with the cooperation of local social services districts.

Program Administration

OCFS is the State agency responsible for administering the John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP)**,** including the newly established Federal Education and Training Voucher program carried out under this plan. OCFS has a strong commitment to supporting positive youth development and assisting youth in their transition from foster care to self-sufficiency. OCFS and its predecessor agency have been responsible for administering the federally funded Title IV-E Independent Living Program for foster care youth in New York State since the program's inception in 1987.

Program Description

New York State has a state-supervised, locally administered child welfare system. New York's Independent Living Program and Education and Training Voucher Program for foster care and former foster care youth is administered by the social services districts. In addition, OCFS has direct service responsibilities for the Independent Living Program for youth adjudicated as juvenile delinquents receiving care in our direct care residential centers.

Independent Living Program

New York State's Independent Living Program for foster care youth, which is operational on a statewide basis, is designed to help youth who are under the responsibility of social services districts or the State to develop skill in areas that promote self-sufficiency. The Independent Living Program consists of the following service components:

A. Assessment Services and Case Planning activities include the setting of a permanency planning goal and documentation of case planning and service

provision in the Uniform Case Record, self-identified goals and activities of the foster child and at a minimum, joint discussion of the plan semi-annually. Assessment services must include educational and vocational assessments as well as documentation of Life Skills competencies as a minimum, with semi-annual assessments and modifications of the plan to reflect continued growth and learning.

Upon discharge, the social services district**,** in consultation with the youth, must identify any persons, services or agencies that would help the child maintain and support him/her and must assist the child to establish contact with such agencies, service providers, or persons by making referrals and by counseling the child about these referrals prior to discharge. In addition, each youth who will be discharged to Independent Living must receive a written 90-day notification of discharge, including the established discharge plan. The plan developed in consultation with the youth also outlines coordination of services otherwise available to the youth.

B. Educational Services are integral parts of the Independent Living plan in helping youth receive the education, training and services necessary to obtain employment.

1. Academic Support Services are provided to assist youth in achieving literacy and basic academic skills required for completing a high school degree program or equivalency or, where appropriate, to help youth prepare for and enter post-secondary education institutions. Academic Support Services include, but are not limited to, educational and career assessment and counseling, tutorial and mentoring services, examination preparation and resource and referral services. These services, particularly the mentoring services, should provide personal and emotional support to youth and promote interactions with dedicated adults.

2. Vocational Training, which should be selected on the basis of assessments of interests and aptitudes**,** is provided, where appropriate, to those youth in foster care who will not pursue post-secondary education or who may not graduate from high school before their 20th birthday. Remedial education is required prior to the provision of the vocational training for youth with limited academic proficiency. Vocational training includes, but is not limited to, training programs in a marketable skill or trade or formal on the job training. Vocational training may include two-year college programs with specific vocational objectives, occupational training supported by other State or federal funds or provided by organizations, which have demonstrated effectiveness in providing such training. Agencies will advocate and arrange for youth with special needs to receive specialized assessments in order to qualify them as eligible for Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities (VESID), mental health or other specialized services.

3. Life Skills Training offers, at a minimum, job search, career counseling, locating housing/apartments, budgeting and financial management skills, alcohol and substance abuse prevention, preventive health activities, shopping, cooking and house cleaning.

Youth should be provided with experiential learning or practice opportunities in all areas under the guidance of coaches or mentors.

C. Independent Living Stipends are provided to foster care youth who are actively participating in the Independent Living programs and serve as an incentive to participate in the program; provide money management experience; and provide the means where savings can accumulate to assist in the transition to independent living.

D. Aftercare Services are provided to former foster care youth between the ages of 18 and 21 years and include financial, housing, counseling, employment, education and other appropriate support and services. Aftercare services are required for any youth over the age of 16 who is discharged to Independent Living through a trial discharge period. Trial discharge is required for every child discharged to independent living. Custody of the youth is retained for at least six months and certain requirements for casework contacts and service provision apply. The trial discharge period may continue until a youth reaches the age of 21. If a youth loses housing during the period of trial discharge, the social services district must assist the youth to find other appropriate housing or replace the youth in a foster care setting, if necessary. In addition, when custody ceases, the social services district must maintain supervision of the youth until the youth is 21 years of age. Supervision includes casework contacts, referral to needed services, including income and housing services, with sufficient follow-up so that the youth has begun to receive the necessary services.

E. Room and Board Services, as defined include, but are not necessarily limited to, money for rent, ongoing maintenance (e.g. utilities), furnishings and start-up costs generally associated with renting an apartment, (e.g. money for security deposits on apartments or a utility deposit). For a residence to be considered appropriate under room and board services there needs to be a reasonable expectation that the housing the youth enters will be available to the youth for at least 12 months. Appropriate residence proposed will exclude shelter for adults, shelter for families, or any other congregate living arrangement that houses more than 10 unrelated persons, with the exception of college dormitories or new, innovative models which provide intensive employment or other supportive services in residential settings. In addition, youth receiving room and board services will be required to be supervised. Supervision will include at least monthly contact with the youth if the youth has not sustained adequate housing and income continuously for six months. Additionally, face-to-face quarterly contacts would be required. Quarterly casework contacts are required to be maintained for youth

who have sustained adequate housing and income continuously for the past six months.

New York State's approach to room and board services affords social services districts the flexibility to determine how much of their Independent Living federal allotment (up to thirty percent) they will spend on room and board services and whether they will provide limited housing assistance (e.g. security deposits on apartments) or a more complete package of housing services. This approach will support the development of creative strategies to assist youth in a successful transition to adulthood. Social services districts that choose to provide room and board services must establish written policies and procedures for room and board services that address:

- The categories of youth that will be provided room and board services; including if room and board will be provided to the optional category of eligible youth who left care before attaining the age of 18; the maximum levels of funding for the provision of room and board assistance to former foster care youth who aged out of foster care at 18, 19 or 20, but who have not attained the age of 21; and the expenses that will be covered under the room and board program; and

- The maximum dollar amount that will be paid to any youth for room and board assistance; the length of time room and board assistance can be provided to eligible youth; and any stipulations related to employment or school for the provision of room and board

In addition, New York State provides preventive housing services, including rent subsidies of up to $300 per month, and up to three years, to youth in foster care who have a goal of independent living when the acquisition of housing is needed to complete the discharge.

In New York State, social services districts have the option of providing room and board services for youth who left foster care because they attained 18 years of age, but have not yet attained 21 years of age. These services may be provided for youth upon discharge from foster care or at a later point in time, provided the youth has not yet attained the age of 21. In addition, social services districts have the option to provide room and board services to former foster care youth who were in foster care and eligible for Independent Living Services while in care, but who left foster care before they attained the age of 18.

Services to Youth

New York State has a state-supervised, locally administered child welfare system. New York's Independent Living Program and Education and Training Voucher Program for foster care and former foster care youth is administered by the social services districts. In addition, the OCFS has direct service responsibilities for the Independent Living Program

for youth adjudicated as juvenile delinquents receiving care in our direct care residential centers.

OCFS Direct Residential Care

OCFS directly operates the Independent Living Skills Program for its direct care residential population as part of the Focus Intervention Process-counseling program. Youth prescriptively receive Independent Living sessions based upon their risk evaluation scores. The program is designed to help youth improve their capacity to make good decisions and develop needed skill sets.

OCFS has identified nine life skill modules as primary interventions to address recidivism risk factors for youth in OCFS direct care juvenile justice settings to better prepare youth to transition to self-sufficiency. The modules include:

Making Good Decisions

Building Self-Esteem and Awareness
Youth and the Law
Employment
Community Resources
Relationships
Parenting

To further meet the needs of youth at risk, an Independent Living Skills Community Based Curriculum was developed for those youth who have been released from residential care and are on aftercare status. The course is outcome based, highly interactive and includes a variety of learning strategies including discussions, experimental activities, and simulations. Facilitators are encouraged to have youth practice the skills taught in a community based setting and begin to develop community resources. This curriculum is a four-month program, which corresponds to the average length of stay for OCFS placed youth who are on aftercare status.

The following is a list of the modules in this curriculum:

Developing Community Resources and Transportation Skills
Developing Employment and Money Management Skills
Developing Housing/Home Management & Healthy Living Skills
Developing Media Awareness and Skills for Parenting

Services and Supports for Youth in local district custody

Accomplishments for 2010 – 2011:

New York State's Permanency legislation, Chapter 3 of the Laws of 2005, brought about many changes to laws that will affect adolescents. The law includes a requirement to

provide life skills services to foster care youth beginning at age 14, regardless of the youth's permanency goal. Implementing OCFS regulations were initially filed on an emergency basis. These regulations became effective as final regulations on December 20, 2006. With these new regulations, the discharge-planning goal of independent living has been renamed "Discharge to another planned living arrangement with a permanency resource." This permanency planning goal is to assist foster care youth in their transition to self-sufficiency by connecting the youth to an adult permanency resource, equipping the youth with life skills and, upon discharge, connecting the youth with any needed community and/or specialized services. An adult permanency resource is a caring committed adult who has been determined by a social services district to be an appropriate and acceptable resource for a youth and is committed to providing emotional support, advice and guidance to the youth and to assist the youth as the youth makes the transition from foster care to responsible adulthood.

The Chafee Foster Care Independence Act of 1999 provides individual states with the option of allowing young people to remain eligible for Medicaid up to the age of 21. New York State law was amended by Chapter 58 of the Laws of 2008 to provide Medicaid coverage to youth under age 21 who were in foster care on or after their eighteenth birthday without regard to an income or resource test. This provision became effective January 1, 2009.

The federal Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008, (P.L. 110-351), which went into effect on October 7, 2008, includes requirements for a transition plan for youth age 18 and older exiting foster care. Implementing OCFS regulations were filed on an emergency regulations pertaining to the transition plan requirements. OCFS regulations require that whenever a child will remain in foster care on or after child's 18th birthday, the agency with case management, case planning or casework responsibility for the foster child must begin developing a transition plan with the child 180 days prior to the child's eighteenth birthday or, where the child is consenting to remain in foster care after his/her 18th birthday, 180 days prior to the child's scheduled discharge date. The transition plan must be completed 90 days prior to the scheduled discharge, and must be personalized at the direction of the child. The transition plan must include specific options on housing, health insurance, education, local opportunities for mentors, continuing support services, and work force supports and employment services. The transition plan must be as detailed as the foster child may elect.

On October 1, 2010, federal Title IV-E foster care reimbursement became available to otherwise eligible youth between the ages of 18 who remain in foster care. Most recently, New York State legislation, Chapter 342 of the Laws of 2010, which became effective November 11, 2010, permits a former foster youth who exited foster care on a final discharge status at age 18, 19 or 20 to re-enter foster care under certain circumstances, provided the youth is under the age of 21. Local departments of social services are now required to provide notice to such a youth that the youth has the right to request that the local department of social services petition the Family Court to return him/her to foster care provided he or she is under the age of 21. In addition, the notice must inform the youth that he or she also may petition the court to return to foster care.

The local department of social services or youth petitioning the court must prove that no reasonable alternative to foster care exists.

New York State addresses the needs of youth of various ages and at various stages of achieving independence through the following activities/services such as: assessment and case planning activities, after care services, self sufficiency training and room and board services.

OCFS' Supervised Independent Living (SILP) Program assists older youth in making the transition to self-sufficiency. On February 13, 2008, new OCFS regulations were adopted governing the approval and operation of Supervised Independent Living Programs and Supervised Independent Living units. The regulatory amendments implement the legislative change enacted by Chapter 160 of the Laws of 2004. The regulations enable authorized agencies that operated supervised independent living programs approved by OCFS to certify homes or apartments as supervised independent living units. The benefit of authorized agencies operating supervised independent living programs and certifying supervised independent living units, is to facilitate expanded use of supervised independent living programs and increase the number of older youth having access to and placed in these programs. In addition, the regulatory change adds the definition of a Supervised Independent Living Unit. Supervised Independent Living Unit means a home or apartment certified in accordance with OCFS regulations by an authorized agency approved by OCFS to operate a supervised independent living program for the care of up to four youth, including their children. Each unit must be located in the community separate from any of the authorized agency's other congregate dwellings. Youth under supervision live on their own in the community in apartments or homes that more closely approximate the type of living quarters youth will be residing in after they are discharged. To participate in the program, youth must be between 16 and 21 years of age, have been in foster care for at least 45 consecutive days immediately preceding the placement in the program or have been in the care and custody or the custody and/or guardianship of the local commissioner of the social services district in a status of trial discharge. Youth must be visited in their unit at least twice per week. The services must provide youth with opportunities to achieve positive outcomes and make successful transitions to self-sufficiency.

To support the development of these skills by youth, OCFS currently offers its Independent Living Core Curriculum, "Introduction to Self-Sufficiency," to child welfare caseworkers in voluntary authorized agencies and social services districts, working with adolescents in foster care who will be discharged to independent living. This outcome-based training program is designed to give caseworkers and caregivers the knowledge, values, and skills that they need to prepare youth to lead self-sufficient and productive lives after they leave care. The Independent Living Core Training Program was developed in partnership with the Adolescent Services Resource Network staff (formerly known as the Independent Living Training Network), a network of four regionally based training centers, which provides training and technical assistance to those preparing youth 14-21 for self-sufficiency, and an advisory committee of social services district and voluntary authorized agency caseworkers, administrators and caregivers. The Independent Living Core is interactive and focuses on building the skills needed to achieve positive outcomes for youth through the use of case scenarios, group work and

role-plays. The Independent Living Core is comprised of five days of classroom training, pre-training reading, and on-the-job training activities.

In addition to the Independent Living Core Training Program, OCFS provides a series of advanced courses for caseworkers that have completed the Independent Living Core. These programs highlight skill building around issues such as education and employment, and accessing community resources. Regionally requested training and technical assistance are also given through the Adolescent Services Resource Network. The Network offers regional training conferences and an annual "Youth Speakout" that gives foster care youth the opportunity to voice their concerns and feelings about being in placement, to State and local administrators, family court staff, and of course, their peers.

OCFS, in conjunction with the Adolescent Services Resource Network, conducts ongoing needs assessments of social services district and voluntary authorized agency training needs around working with youth in care. Additionally, OCFS Regional Offices provide periodic technical assistance and monitoring of Independent Living service provision. This allows programs to be responsive to emerging needs.

Foster and adoptive parents need many of the same skills and abilities that caseworkers need to prepare adolescents to live self-sufficiently. Using the Independent Living Core concepts, OCFS has developed in-service training that meets the specific needs of this group and the training curriculum for foster/adoptive parents is now available.

Staff working directly with youth in OCFS direct care facilities receives training on how to use the Independent Living Skills Curriculum and in innovative presentation techniques. The Annual Training Symposium provides an additional two-day formal training opportunity for all direct care Independent Living Skills providers.

A practice guidance paper has been issued to provide social services districts and voluntary agencies, and the OCFS Division of Juvenile Justice and Opportunities for Youth with a new framework for practice with adolescents to strengthen services to adolescents and improve their achievement of permanency. A tool for monitoring adolescent services has been revised and is being used by OCFS Regional Offices to help social services districts strengthen services to adolescents. The new practice framework recognizes for adolescents to achieve functional independence they must be provided with life skills development and a connection with at least one adult permanency resource to assist them after they are discharged from foster care. Older adolescents in foster care must continue to be provided with opportunities to identify adoption resources and obtain a permanent home. The new practice framework also recognizes that youth who are discharged from placement settings should be provided with resources to support them moving into the community.

On August 9, 2010, the Office issued 10-OCFS LCM-10 advising local social services districts of the process for applying for FFY 2010-2011 Education and Training Voucher program funds, the process of selecting program participants, and information on eligible expenditures and match requirements. The priorities for selecting eligible participants for

the Education and Training Voucher program for FFY 2009-2010 were as follows: (1) Priority is given to youth over the age of 21 who had received an ETV award in 2009-2010 who continue to be enrolled in and attending a post-secondary educational or vocational training program and making satisfactory progress toward completion of that program; (2) Second priority is for any other youth who received an ETV award in FFY 2009-2010; (3) Third priority is for youth who are 20 years of age and will be 21 by July 1, 2011, and who are enrolled in and attending a post-secondary or vocational training program and are making satisfactory progress toward the completion of that program. These youth would not have received an ETV award in FFY 2009-2010. (4) Fourth priority is for youth who are 17, 18, 19 and 20 years of age who are enrolled in a post-secondary or vocational training program and making satisfactory progress toward the completion of that program.

A White Paper on: Educational Opportunities for Youth in Care has been developed which provides statistics, background and research information on the importance of enhancing post-secondary education and vocational training opportunities for youth in care.

Transition Plans

On August 26, 2009 an Administrative Directive, 09-OCFS-ADM 16 Transition Plan Requirements for Youth 18 and Older Aging Out of Foster Care was issued to districts and agencies transmitting the newly required Transition Plan Form. Districts and agencies are now required to document transition plans on the form for youth exiting foster care who are 18, 19 and 20 years of age. This new Transition Plan form is intended to assist districts and agencies in developing transition plans with youth that are youth driven and cover the areas that are required by law and regulations. The Transition Plan Form consists of two parts: Part One: Transition Plan Discussion and Part Two: Transition Plan Update and Summary. The questions on the Transition Plan Discussion form are intended to be used by a worker, over a period of time beginning 180 days before the youth's scheduled discharge from care, to engage and guide a youth in discussions about the youth's plans after leaving care. The Transition Plan Discussion form must be completed 90 days prior to the youth's scheduled discharge. Part Two: Update and Summary form provides a comprehensive snapshot of a youth's transition plans at 90 days prior to the youth's scheduled discharge. Training has been developed on the transition plan form and is being piloted in districts and agencies.

OCFS is aware of the amended section 475(5)(H) of the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 requiring that prior to the youth's emancipation from foster care, the caseworker must develop a personalized transition plan as directed by the youth. Additionally, with regard to P.L. 111-148, New York State is required to insure that the transition plan, conducted during the 90 day period immediately prior to the date on which the child will turn 18 years of age, or such greater age as the title IV-E agency may elect in accordance with section 475(8)(B)(iii) of the Act, include "information about the importance of designating another individual to make health care treatment decisions on behalf of the child if the child becomes unable to participate in such decisions and the child does not have, or does not want, a relative who

would otherwise be authorized under State law to make such decisions, and provides the child with the option to execute a health care power of attorney, heath care proxy, or other similar document recognized under State law." OCFS insures that it will be in compliance and have a title IV-E Plan amendment submitted reflecting this requirement by December 31, 2010.

Re-entry into Foster Care of Youth between 18 and 21

On March 3, 2011, the Office issued an Administrative Directive, 11-OCFS-ADM-02 on Re-entry into Foster Care By former Foster Care Youth between the Ages of 18 and 21 advising districts and agencies of the provisions of Chapter 342 of the Laws of 2010. Districts are now required to provide notice to a youth transitioning out of care of his or her right to re-enter care. Chapter 342 became effective November 11, 2010. The notice must advise the youth that: (1) the application to return to foster care must be done within 24 months of the youth's first final discharge, provided the youth is under the age of 21; (2) inform the youth that re-entry into foster care will only be available where the youth has no reasonable alternative to foster care and consents to enrollment in and attendance at an appropriate educational or vocational program, unless evidence is submitted that such enrollment or attendance is unnecessary or inappropriate, given the particular circumstances of the child; and (3) includes the name and contact information of the youth's attorney.

The district may use the model written notice transmitted in the ADM or an alternative notice, as long as it includes the required information outlined above. The district must make every effort to provide notice to the youth in person. If this is not possible, the notice must be sent to the youth's discharge address. Additionally, the Transition Plan has been revised to require local department of social services and agencies to document the date the youth was told about and given written notice of his or her right to re-enter care, and the name of the youth's attorney and the attorney's contact information. Since a youth is required to get a copy of his or her transition plan, the youth will be able to contact his or her attorney and/or worker to request to re-enter foster care.

Youth in Progress (YIP)

The OCFS' new framework for practice also supports youth involvement in improving the child welfare system. Youth In Progress, commonly referred to as YIP, is the New York State Foster Care Youth Leadership Team. YIP was established in 2003 and is comprised of teams of youth leaders, each with an adult mentor, from each of the six regional foster care youth leadership groups. Activities of the regional groups are supported by participation of OCFS Regional Office Liaisons, the New York State Adolescent Services Resource Network and other OCFS partners. The motto of YIP is "We are Today's Youth, Tomorrow's Leaders." The mission of Youth in Progress is:

"To enhance and advance the lives of today's and tomorrow's youth by supporting their sense of self and responsibility. To do this, we pledge to educate everyone involved in the various systems. Youth In Progress members represent to the realities of this experience."

The Ongoing Goals of Youth In Progress are to:

- Raise public awareness of the experiences of youth in care;
- Increase youth involvement in all systems that touch their lives;
- Empower youth through the development of leadership and decision-making skills;
- Improve policies and practices to assist youth transition out of foster care; and
- Increase awareness, availability, and participation in services provided to youth transitioning out of care.

From 2003 to the present, YIP has achieved an impressive number of results including:

- co-writing a handbook for youth in foster care;
- holding regional speak-outs;
- participating in the filming of a video to accompany the handbook;
- enacting regional distribution plans for the handbook;
- producing a video on clothing;
- developing a proposal on clothing in partnership with OCFS which was incorporated into an Informational Letter issued by OCFS to social services districts and authorized voluntary agencies on meeting the clothing needs of foster care youth ages 12 through 20 years of age;
- Producing a video to address issues related to the stereotyping of youth in foster care;
- Continuing to meet with state legislators and are participating in local, statewide and national/events featuring Youth Voice.
- Becoming trained and certified by Foster Club, a national organization, to teach other youth about the importance of permanency for older youth in foster care. This training is being used in New York State to train service providers as well as youth.

In addition, each year Youth In Progress in partnership with OCFS, produce four informational resource guides for youth in care. To date, we have developed pamphlets on: the YIP mission; clothing allowances; privacy issues; sibling placement; pregnancy and parenting; law guardians; Chafee Foster Care Independence Program; college/vocational training; and Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual, Transgender and Questioning youth (LGBTQ), Housing, Money Smarts, Adoption and Transition Planning. Youth In Progress participates on the OCFS Adolescent Services and Outcomes Workgroup which meets on a bi-monthly basis to address the needs and challenges of youth in care and former foster youth. Youth In Progress is also represented on the Commissioner's Youth Advisory Board which meets on a quarterly basis with OCFS Commissioner Carríon.

The major efforts in the coming year will be geared to enhancing the implementation of the Chafee Foster Care Independence Act of 1999 (CFCIP), including the Chafee Education and Training Voucher Program, the new Medicaid provisions for former foster care youth and transition planning for older youth exiting foster care. OCFS will

continue implementing the new policy framework through training and monitoring service provision to adolescents in foster care in order to strengthen and enhance positive outcomes for youth in care.

OCFS will be instituting a new, evidenced-based, strength-based Life Skills Training program throughout its direct care system as a key core component of the OCFS residential treatment program. Additional life skills interventions will be identified and prescriptively provided for youth in OCFS direct care programs from the newly developed "Counselor's Toolbox".

OCFS will continue to expand the number of independent living program sites serving youth in its custody and on aftercare status. Those youth who are in residential placement in OCFS operated facilities receive independent living skills as part of the Focus Intervention Process. This process is part of the OCFS counseling program, which addresses those risk factors that may lead youth to recidivate.

Training Provided in Federal Fiscal Year 2010-2011

- Adolescent Services Resource Network for Training and Technical Assistance

  This network provides training and technical assistance to caseworkers, voluntary agency staff, foster parents and DJJOY staff who work with all youth ages 14-21 preparing them for self-sufficiency. A variety of specialized programs address regional needs around independent living services/skills This includes the outcome based Adolescent Services Core Training "Introduction to Self Sufficiency" and the Adolescent Services "Toolbox" Skills Development Training that is delivered statewide. Youth leadership is emphasized through youth forums and speak outs statewide. Additionally, supportive informational and training materials, curricula, videos, etc. are maintained in a central location to be loaned to persons working with youth and their caregivers. The New York State Adolescent Services Resources Network administers the Regional and Statewide Youth Advisory Leadership Team called "Youth in Progress" (YIP). YIP consists of a team of foster care youth, including youth in OCFS facilities who represent each of the six regions in New York State.

699 training days

Adolescent Services Resource Network

The Adolescent Services Resource Network provides resource materials, curricula and individualized training and consultation to support preparation of foster care youth for discharge and self sufficiency. Each regional provider offers services in all competency areas of life skills. They assist workers with the skills needed to engage and motivate youth through the developmental steps required to achieve permanency and self-

sufficiency in the community. Services are provided through training, educational forums, technical assistance, materials distribution, newsletters, curriculum seminars, practicum, etc. The network provides an integrated delivery of coordinated services.

The outcome-based Adolescent Services Core Training called "Introduction to Self Sufficiency" is offered throughout the State. This program gives caseworkers the knowledge, skills, and value base they need to prepare youth to achieve self-sufficiency. Content areas include: using interpersonal skills with adolescents; special needs of youth leaving care; assessment and case planning; developing and enhancing supportive relationships; and identifying and building community supports.

The Adolescent Services "Toolbox" training gives caseworkers, foster parents and DJJOY staff the tools needed to assist youth in developing competencies needed for transition to adulthood. The toolbox provides participants with practical, concrete instruction and materials to engage youth either in groups or individually to assess and promote life skill development.

A training developed in 2010 to address the federally required Transition Plan for youth preparing to be discharged from foster care has been delivered in multiple districts statewide. This training provides participants with comprehensive information about how and when to engage youth in developing their transition plan. This training was developed in consultation with OCFS Youth Summer Interns and is now offered to Child Welfare and DJJOY staff either via ilinc or as a stand up training.

The statewide youth advisory group, Youth in Progress, formed in August 2003, addresses and provides input into improving the CW and DJJOY systems. This group is composed of foster care adolescents and their adult mentors, including youth in OCFS facilities and representing each of the six regions in New York State. YIP focuses on making targeted improvements in the quality of foster care services and improving positive outcomes for children and families. YIP training activities 2010 focused on strengthening the practice around permanency for youth in care. YIP youth continue to be trained by Foster Club which is part of the All American Program, to deliver the course "Getting Solid" which emphasizes permanency for youth, as they define it. YIP youth continue to serve as members of the CFSR PIP Adolescent Strategy Workgroup. As well, foster care and DJJOY youth meet quarterly with the OCFS Commissioner.

Training Planned for Federal Fiscal Year 2011-2012

Plans for 2011-2012 include the following: the Core Adolescent Services Core "Introduction to Self-Sufficiency" and Adolescent Services "Toolbox" Training, customized and regionally specific training and technical assistance in compliance with 1999 Chafee Legislation, These programs are designed to help foster care youth transition from care to self-sufficiency. The trainee population for these programs includes caseworkers, supervisors and foster parents of the local social service district and residential child care facilities, as well as staff of Title IV-E eligible OCFS facilities.

OCFS plans to support the regional and statewide Youth Advisory Leadership Team, "Youth in Progress" (YIP) which consists of a team of foster care youth, including youth in OCFS facilities who represent each of the six regions in New York State. OCFS will accomplish this mission by listening to youth in care and by offering them guidance that will allow them to achieve success in their lives and to realize their full potential.

Through its training contracts, OCFS maintains the statewide Adolescent Services Network Library consisting of nearly 4,000 items. Among them are more than 1,000 videos on various topics and numerous books, teaching games, curricula and a variety of other resource materials used in hands-on teaching of life skills to youth. OCFS also hosts the statewide Foster Care Youth Advisory Team "YIP" website presenting current information and issues as well as links to the websites of the other members. It is anticipated that this function will continue to increase and continue to:

- Assess regional needs around adolescent services and program development.
- Support local adolescent services programs through technical assistance and individualized agency assessment.

Each Network member presents an annual youth speak out and leadership development event that gives youth the opportunity to inform agency and OCFS and LDSS administrators, judges and elected officials of issues of youth in care.

For 2011-2012, training programs that focus on adolescent issues and support state and federal legislation including ASFA and the 1999 Chafee Foster Care Independence Act will continue. In addition, the Transition Plan training, which supports the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act, and the Special Immigrant Juvenile Status Training were developed in 2010 to meet emerging needs. These programs continue to reflect ongoing need and emerging needs. Therefore, all of those training programs, as described in Goal 4 of the CFSP, will be offered in the coming year.

GOAL #5

NATIVE AMERICAN FAMILIES, INCLUDING NUCLEAR, EXTENDED AND ADOPTIVE FAMILIES WILL BE STRENGTHENED AND SUPPORTED IN RAISING AND NURTURING THEIR CHILDREN; IN MAINTAINING THEIR CHILDREN'S CONNECTIONS TO THEIR TRIBAL HERITAGE; AND IN PLANNING FOR THEIR CHILDREN'S FUTURE

ASSESSMENT OF NEED AND CURRENT STATUS

The 79 Native American children in out of home placement on December 31, 2010 lived in nine upstate counties plus NYC and the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe Reservation, with the majority of those children being located as follows: 26.1% in Erie/Niagara counties; 7% in New York City; 24% in St. Regis Mohawk Tribe Reservation; 14% in Cattaraugus County, and 19% in Suffolk County. This number of Native American children represents .3% of the total foster care population.

OCFS is supporting this goal by involving tribal representatives in the Agency/Court Collaboration meetings and inclusion in other OCFS strategies such as Family Connections, which engages extended family to provide sustainable meaningful connections and cultural relevance. The St. Regis Mohawk Tribe has designated a representative for the OCFS Court Collaboration committee and has accepted training on the Family Assessment Response (FAR) model. In 2009-2010, the Seneca Nation of Indians has increased their work with tribal families to include Family Engagement through Family Meetings. During 2010, 79 Native American children were in out of home placement and 24 Native American children were in Institutions or required higher level of care. Of the 49 children in foster boarding homes or kinship placements, 35 (71%) were in foster families whose ethnicity was also Native American.

All of the New York State Tribe's have been invited to participate in CORE caseworker training and other training opportunities to strengthen their skills in the child welfare field. OCFS also continues to build strong networking activities among tribal staff through quarterly stakeholder meetings sponsored by the Native American Services Unit.

PERFORMANCE TARGETS

Indian Child Welfare

- Increase to 50% the number of Native American children who are placed in foster care families of the same ethnicity over a five year period.

Baseline: The number of Native American children who are placed in foster boarding homes or adoptive homes of Native American ethnicity in 2004.

2004: 26 Native American children of the 75 in placement (34.6%)

Current Data:

2005: 36 Native American children of the 80 in placement **(**45%)
2006: 34 Native American children of the 65 in placement (52.3%)
2007: 45 Native American children of the 74 in placement (60 %)
2008: 29 Native American children of the 60 in placement (48.3%)
2009: 36 Native American children of the 73 in placement (49.3 %)
2010: 35 Native American children of the 79 in placement (44.2%)

Projected Targets:

2011: not below 50% *

*It is anticipated that the identification of Native American children will continue to increase based on ICWA trainings from 2006-2010. It is not known if the number of licensed Native American Foster Homes will meet such increase of identified Native American children. Improved preventive efforts and kinship placements may factor into the performance targets.

OCFS reviewed this data by county in year one. Interim benchmarks are incremental: year two - 40%; year three -43%; year four -47%; and year five -50%.

Placement of Native American children and youth in Native American homes and programs whenever possible remains a state policy. Some of the data reported in this target comes directly from the field including contacts with Native American services agencies in New York State. As demonstrated by the data, we have been successful in our efforts to support our goal. The difference in current year data reflects more children properly identified as Native American, but a drop in placement resources that match the child's tribal heritage. Of the 56 Native American youth, 35 were matched with placements to support their tribal heritage. Ten of the 23 were placed in institutional placements, which met their higher level of need. Factoring in the higher level of care required, NYS is actually at 62.5% compliance rate.

Many Native American children are not placed in Native American homes because of the type of placement required. These placements are often for youth and children with special needs. Some placements in non-Native homes have been reviewed by either tribal staff or Native American services agencies, which have approved the placements. These placements, as well as "relative or kinship placements" are included in the data above. It was also found that Native American Service Providers were at 90% compliance in 2010 in placing Native American children in Native American placements (17/19). Tribal consultation meetings held in 2009 and 2010 provided OCFS with input from Tribal leaders and their delegates on what we have done to strengthen this goal. The specific training activities and quarterly stakeholder meetings have also strengthened the ability to serve tribal families under ICWA. Specific target areas needing ICWA training were identified by the Long Island Tribes in October 2010 and were addressed in January and March 2011.

Data Source to measure progress for the performance target above: Data Warehouse and OCFS Native American Services Unit*****

STATE AND LOCAL ACTIVITIES

State/Tribal Relationship

The St. Regis Mohawk entered into a State/Tribal Agreement with the predecessor of OCFS in August 1993 that was effective April 1, 1994. That Agreement contained two specific components: legal terms and conditions; and a service plan for the provision of foster care, preventive services and adoption services. The plan contained in the Agreement outlines strategies to: reduce the need for foster care through intensive preventive services; increase recruitment and certification of foster homes on the Reservation; and promote the provision of foster care services in a way that maintains cultural and Tribal values and permit the earliest return of the child to natural family. Children freed for adoption will be placed in adoptive homes that will meet their personal and cultural needs. The delivery of child and adult protective services is addressed through an amendment to the State/Tribal Agreement and the tribe's updated services plan that became effective in April 2005. On-going meetings between the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe and OCFS to improve and expand services take place on a quarterly basis. The result of the earlier meetings included a cooperative agreement to license the Akwesasne Youth Group Home in March 2001.

The Seneca Nation of Indians and their various administrations have expressed an interest in improving their working relationship with local districts. OCFS Native American Services Unit has been involved in an ongoing dialogue regarding such a relationship. Throughout 2001-2002 OCFS arranged for several training events to meet the needs identified by Seneca Nation. In 2002, the Seneca Nation developed and endorsed a tribal protocol for child protective services. Meetings between OCFS, local districts and Seneca Nation continue to refine this protocol and meet the child welfare staff development needs.

Although the Oneida Indian Nation no longer accepts federal Indian Child Welfare funding, it staffs a Family Services Program and has continued to work closely with Native American Services on ICWA issues and training. OCFS responded to training needs identified by Oneida Nation. OCFS provided on-site Mandated Reporter training for Oneida Nation staff in December 2006 and continues to include Oneida Nation in our training initiatives.

The Tuscarora Nation, Tonawanda Senecas, and the Onondaga Nation do not operate ICWA programs on their reservations or accept federal funds. They do, however, participate in OCFS quarterly trainings and Tribal Consultation meetings.

The Long Island Tribes, the Shinnecock Nation and the Unkechaug Nation, do not receive funds for and do not operate programs for other reasons, including a lack of sufficient numbers on the Reservations to qualify for funding. However, since the Shinnecock Nation received federally recognized tribal status in late 2010, OCFS has initiated dialogue to support their development of child welfare services.

The interactions that take place through Native American Services (NAS) are complemented and strengthened by ongoing interactions between the social services districts, OCFS and those who provide services to Native Americans.

In December 2004, an ICWA desk aid was developed for use by local districts and voluntary agencies. Copies were distributed to the Indian Nations and OCFS Regional Offices in January 2005. An update to include information on use of a Qualified Expert Witness was added to the desk aid in December 2005. The new desk aids were distributed to the local districts through OCFS release 06-OCFS-INF-07 letter in October 2006 along with an updated list of tribal contacts. In 2010, the ICWA desk aid was updated again with correct tribal contacts and posted on our website.

To continue efforts to improve child welfare services in Native American families, additional training events were held to train local districts and voluntary agency staff on ICWA compliance issues throughout 2010-2011.

Description of Native American Population in New York State

The Native American population in New York State resides in every county across the State in urban and rural areas, with concentrations near urban areas and near Reservations. Approximately ten per cent of the Native American population resides on Reservations. The Urban Centers are located in New York City, Buffalo and Niagara Falls, and Rochester. Available data also reports that over 40% of the Native Americans living in New York State resides in the five boroughs of New York City.

The Native Americans who live outside of the reservations seek services and social interaction at the Urban Centers or with other Indian Nations, if they are not located in close proximity to their own Tribe.

Native American Population in New York State as Reported by the Indian Nations/Tribes

Indian Nation	Reservation	Enrollment	Resident Population
Iroquois:			
Cayuga Nation of Indians	Seneca Falls Territory	490	41
Oneida Indian Nation	Oneida Nation Territory	1,000 *	74 *
Onondaga Nation	Onondaga Reservation	1,959 *	900 *
St. Regis Mohawk Tribe	St. Regis Mohawk	13,808	13,808
Seneca Nation of Indians	Allegany/Cattaraugus/Oil Springs (All Seneca Territories)	7,824	22,188
Tonawanda Band of Senecas	Tonawanda Reservation	1,100 *	600 *
Tuscarora Nation	Tuscarora Reservation	1,200 *	1,500 *
Algonquin:			

Shinnecock Tribe	Shinnecock Reservation	250 *	500 *
Unkechaug Nation	Poospatuck Reservation	128 *	250 *

*Approximate estimates based on previous data. OCFS does not collect tribal census figures from these Indian nations.

St. Regis Mohawk Tribe

The St. Regis Mohawk territory, known as Akwesasne, "Land Where the Partridge Drums", is located in northern New York State and crosses the international border and the St. Lawrence River, extending into Canada. The St. Regis Mohawk Tribal Council is the duly elected and recognized government of the Mohawk people. The Tribe provides comprehensive services to the community through four basic divisions: Education, Environment, Health and Human Services, Planning and Economic Development.

Education programs include support for students enrolled in the public schools to encourage their continuation, Head Start, GED programs, higher education and vocational training, including college extension services and Job Training Partnership Act Program services. Health and Human Services include a medical clinic, a Dental Clinic, WIC, alcohol/chemical dependency program, Teen/Women Health program, nutrition services and mental health services, and a program to empower young mothers. Human Services staff addresses the needs of the children, senior citizens, families and disabled residents in the community while maintaining the integrity of the Mohawk family unit. Indian Child Welfare Act services provide support services for families at risk of dissolution, providing a vital link to families while insuring the maintenance of cultural values. The social services program provides mandated preventive, foster care, adoption, child protective services and adult protective services on the Reservation through the State/Tribal Agreement with OCFS. A Family Support program provides respite services for families of the developmentally disabled and supportive apartments provide services to allow residents who are developmentally disabled to transition from home to a sheltered, independent environment. OCFS has licensed a tribally operated Youth Group Home to serve 12 at-risk Native American youth.

Seneca Nation

The Seneca Nation operates with an elected form of government. Elections for Tribal Council members and officers including President, Treasurer and Tribal Clerk occur every two years. The Seneca's judicial elections for Surrogate Judges, Peacemakers, and a Court of Appeals take place every two years opposite the general elections. Most judges serve four-year terms. The Tribal Council administers all Tribal programs on both the Cattaraugus and Allegany Reservations.

The Indian Health Services provides state-of-the-art health clinics on both Reservations. In addition, mental health, alcohol and substance abuse, domestic violence, job training, Head Start and day care programs, Indian education, housing, and a senior nutrition program are provided through staff that spends time alternating between the Cattaraugus and Allegany Reservations.

In addition to the above, the following Indian Nations or Indian organizations provide limited Indian Child Welfare services.

Cayuga Nation

The Cayuga Nation operates a traditional form of government and provides limited ICWA services. The Tribe receives official tribal notification and attends court proceedings involving minor Cayuga children entering foster care or being freed for adoption. OCFS Native American Services unit also maintains trust accounts for minor Cayuga children and distributes tribal annuity payments three times a year.

Summary of Governmental Structures

The Indian Nations in New York State have adopted a number of different forms of governmental and administrative structures. There is interaction and consultation between these structures in the decision making process which also includes the Clan Mothers. This respect and inclusiveness of differences within the communities has an impact on the decision-making process.

Indian Nation/ Tribe	Governing Structure	Administrative
Cayuga Nation of Indians	Hereditary Chiefs	Council of Chiefs One Selected as Chairperson
Oneida Indian Nation	Tribal Appointment	Representative Acts as CEO
Onondaga Nation	Hereditary Chiefs	Council of Chiefs One Selected as Chairperson
St. Regis Mohawk Tribe	Tribal Elections/Chiefs	Chiefs Council
Seneca Nation of Indians	Elections/ Tribal Council	Tribal Council with President
Tonawanda Band of Senecas	Hereditary Chiefs	Council of Chiefs One Selected as Chairperson
Tuscarora Nation	Hereditary Chiefs	Council of Chiefs One Selected as Chairperson
Shinnecock Tribe	Tribal Elections	Trustees Serve as President, Secretary and Treasurer
Unkechaug Nation	Tribal Elections/Trustee	Trustees Elected to 1, 2, 3 year terms

ICWA Funding:

Three of the Indian Nations receive ICWA funds to provide Indian Child Welfare Services. The following outlines the Indian Nations/Reservations that operate ICWA programs and the counties that are included in their service area.

Indian Nation/Reservation	County Service Area
St. Regis Mohawk Tribe/ St. Regis Mohawk Reservation	Franklin, St. Lawrence counties primarily, but also statewide for Mohawk children

Seneca Nation of Indians/ Allegany Reservation Cattaraugus Reservation	Erie, Cattaraugus and Chautauqua counties
Cayuga Nation are served through administrative staff; designated tribal territory Seneca Falls	Cayuga members only, statewide,

Urban Indian Centers

Local non-profit Urban Centers provide a wide range of programs, including job training, alcohol and substance abuse and services for the developmentally disabled. The New York City Urban Center programs include a Youth Council and Health Services. The Buffalo/Niagara Falls Urban Centers provides ICWA services including preventive counseling, foster care recruitment and certification, intervention, AIDS training and outreach, a program for seniors, youth and cultural programs.
Since 1997, the Urban Indian Centers do not receive federal Indian Child Welfare funding, but do provide some services to the following areas:

New York City	Queens, Bronx, Brooklyn, Manhattan, Staten Island, Nassau, Suffolk, Putnam, Westchester and Rockland counties.
Buffalo/Niagara Falls	Niagara, Erie counties (off-reservation)
Rochester	Orleans, Genesee, Wyoming, Livingston counties

The Buffalo Urban Center provides ICWA services including preventive counseling, foster care recruitment and certification, and intervention through a purchase of services contract with the local district.

Accomplishments for 2010 – 2011:

Throughout 2010-2011, the OCFS Native American Affairs Specialist (NAS) met on a formal basis with various Tribal Leaders across New York. A formal protocol for regular and on-going dialogue and consultation with Tribal Leaders was established in 2002. Two formal Tribal Consultation meetings were held in June and October 2010 with the OCFS CWCS Deputy Commissioner.

Regular consultation with the Indian Nations regarding child welfare issues has occurred primarily at the service provider level or as it relates to specific issues and/or children and families. The NAS Specialist and OCFS Buffalo Regional Office staff continued facilitation of a multi-disciplinary workgroup with the Seneca Nation of Indians from 2001-2008, which included Child Protection workers from Erie, Cattaraugus and Chautauqua County. This resulted in the first written tribal protocol for CPS

investigations for Seneca Nation families. The tribal protocol was presented to each county's Director of Services and continues in use. In May 2009, OCFS provided training on Family Meeting Tool-kit for the Seneca Nation Child & Family Services staff. The tribal caseworkers continued to participate in the Regional Family Group Conferencing Implementation workgroup in 2010.

Site visits are conducted to Indian Reservations in New York by the Native American Affairs Specialist. The primary purpose of the site visits is to assess the needs of the Indian Nations and to address concerns related to the delivery of child welfare services. As a result of the site visits, regular follow up meetings are held at the St. Regis Mohawk and Seneca Nation reservations.

The NAS Specialist continues to hold regular Indian Child Welfare meetings throughout New York State with tribal and social services staff members. The NAS Specialist has agreed to continue to chair the meetings of the well-formed network known as the Native American Family Services Commission. The meetings feature guest speakers from OCFS and other agencies that provide information on how to improve services to Indian children and families.

In 2010, OCFS supported Indian Child Welfare compliance through trainings offered at various local districts and OCFS licensed voluntary agencies.

OCFS also sponsored 11 tribal representatives to attend the Adult Abuse Training Institute in Buffalo on November 8-9, 2010 to provide information to strengthen Tribal Adult Protection programs.

NAS offered technical assistance and compliance support to over 300 calls for assistance on ICWA cases identified by the local districts, voluntary agencies and Tribal staff in 2010.

Tribal Recruitment and Retention Activities

On November 30, 2010, OCFS provided a teleconference entitled "Recruiting and Retaining Native American Foster and Adoptive Families." The featured speaker was Kathy Deserly, a national expert on the Indian Child welfare Act and a consultant with CWLA who developed a Native American Foster Care recruitment toolkit for Tribes. The other panelist included the ICWA Coordinator from the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe and the OCFS Native American Specialist. The teleconference was successful in highlighting National and local models of recruitment and was made available in DVD format for the local districts and all of the Tribal Nations in New York.

OCFS will continue to sponsor quarterly meetings with Tribal Stakeholders. In 2011-12, at least one of the quarterly meetings will be dedicated to the topic of Recruitment and Retention of Native American Foster and Adoptive Homes.

As the OCFS Native American Specialist provides Indian Child Welfare Act training to local districts and regional consortiums in 2011-12, a segment on the importance of

recruitment of Native American foster and adoptive families will be incorporated. It is anticipated that at least 5 trainings will be completed in the next year.

OCFS Tribal Consultation

The Deputy Commissioner of Child Welfare & Community Services, the Native American Affairs Specialist and the respective Regional Directors participated in the Tribal Consultation Meetings with Tribal Leaders and delegates in 2010. These meetings provided an opportunity for OCFS to present updates on initiatives for ICWA compliance. The meetings provided Deputy Commissioner Laura Velez the opportunity to meet with various Tribal representatives to discuss OCFS priorities and learn about specific needs of some Indian Nations. The October 2010 Tribal Consultation meeting was held at the OCFS New York City Regional Office to encourage participation from our Long Island Tribes. OCFS Commissioner Carríon and two OCFS Regional Directors participated in a very thorough conversation about the Indian Child Welfare Act's application to state recognized tribal members.

Native American Services also continued hosting quarterly meetings of the Native American Family Services Commission, which provides consultation with tribal stakeholders in both urban and reservation areas throughout New York State. These meetings helped to develop the training initiatives, provide input into the CFSP Title IV-B plan and to strengthen service delivery to Native American children and families. These meetings have also produced tribal volunteers to serve on the Agency/ Court Collaboration committee and support the OCFS Court Collaboration strategy. All planning for training initiatives, conferences and tribal meetings have been initiated through the dialogue with these tribal stakeholders. The members have contributed to the Foster Care recruitment and retention toolkit under development by the CWLA. The meetings have produced action steps for OCFS, including the development of Qualified Indian Expert Witnesses and Positive Indian Parenting trainers. The meetings have also supported OCFS strategies for Engaging Extended Family and Family Engagement through Family Meetings.

With the support of the Center for Development and Human Services (SUCB), Native American Services was able to conduct four meetings with the Native American Family Services Commission in June, September, November 2010 and March 2011. The Commission was expanded to include more tribal caseworkers and administrators from around the state, as well as local districts and voluntary agencies. The quarterly meetings provide an excellent forum to introduce other OCFS supported initiatives such as Court Collaboration, Protective Services for Adults, and Chaffee Independent Living Services to Tribal and agency staff who need program support to serve their respective Tribal and Urban Indian communities. Other guest speakers this year were representatives from OASAS, DOH (FAS), Domestic Violence Unit, Erie County Sheriff's and Children's Justice Act (UTS) Advisory Board. The June 2010 meeting was scheduled over two days to allow attendees to participate in various trainings for caseworkers, as was the November 2010 and March 2011 meetings.

Through support by the National Resource Center, OCFS was able to arrange Positive Indian Parenting training for the staff of the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe on September 28-

30, 2010. Two representatives from the Tuscarora Nation also participated in this training at the invitation of the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe.

The OCFS Native American Specialist joined OCFS Commissioner Gladys Carríon at the 2010 Model Courts All-sites Conference in October. The New York State "team" also included a tribal representative from the Shinnecock Indian Nation. This was the first year that the National Council of Juvenile & Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) invited Tribal representatives to join the conference. OCFS participation at this event resulted in direct collaboration with the New York City Court team to improve ICWA compliance.
OCFS also delivered a live teleconference on Recruiting and Retaining Native American Foster and Adoptive Families in November 2010. The teleconference featured a National expert from the National Resource Center for the Recruitment & Retention of Foster and Adoptive Parents at AdoptUsKids. This presenter is also the Director of the Indian Child and Family Resource Center, and a highly respected trainer in Indian Country. She was joined by the ICWA Coordinator from the St. Regis Mohawk tribe and the OCFS Native American Specialist. The teleconference featured models of successful recruitment models for Native American Foster Parents and highlighted the placement provisions of the Indian Child Welfare Act. The live teleconference was broadcast to all of the Social Services districts, and copies of the teleconference were provided to the NYS Indian Nations as well.

In January 2011, the OCFS Native American Specialist provided Indian Child Welfare Act training to a Suffolk County Department of Social Services. This training was in direct response to issues raised by the Chief of the Unkechaug Nation at our Tribal Consultation meeting. The Chief agreed to participate in the presentation with OCFS, and upon completion, resulted in an open dialogue and draft tribal protocol for access to reservation families.

In March 2011, the OCFS Native American Specialist also met with representatives from New York City's Administration for Children's Services and staff from the American Indian Community House to develop an ICWA training plan for New York City child welfare workers.

Also, in late March 2011, the OCFS Native American Specialist attended the Federal HHS Tribal Consultation Meeting held at Oneida Indian Nation. This full day meeting provided an opportunity for OCFS to hear about broader issues impacting New York State's tribal communities.

Plans for 2011 – 2012:

- OCFS will continue to promote interaction with directors of services from social services districts to reiterate and strengthen awareness regarding the need to identify Native American children and to make the appropriate notifications with assistance from the NAS staff.

- OCFS' Native American Services Unit will continue to participate in quarterly meetings with Tribal and local district representatives in both urban and reservation settings to improve ICWA services to this population.
- OCFS will be available to support efforts of Tribes interested in establishing or expanding services under a State/Tribal Agreement.
- New York State will continue to utilize existing structures to promote that appropriate federal Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) continued goals can be identified in consultation with the Tribal Leadership. There continues to be a need to reinforce social services district requirements to inform Tribes of involvement with Native American children and families.
- OCFS will continue to support regional and statewide training to social services districts, other public and private agencies, tribal staff and community members to develop strategies to keep Indian families intact and to identify Native American resources to support at- risk families.
- OCFS will continue efforts to improve child welfare services in Native American families, regional training events are being planned to address cultural competency and ICWA issues.

Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) Overview

CAPTA Initiatives and Accomplishments

The federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) (42 USC 5101, et seq) supports a number of activities designed to develop and strengthen child abuse and neglect prevention programs in New York State. CAPTA funds continue to support the federal Children's Justice Act programs, and management of the Healthy Families New York (HFNY) Program, the William B. Hoyt Memorial Children and Family Trust Fund and the federal Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention program. In addition, funds support a statewide Prevention Information Resource Center (PIRC) that operates a 24-hour prevention helpline for parents and distributes printed child abuse and neglect prevention materials.

CAPTA project coordination provides that the state's utilization of CAPTA funds is in compliance with federal requirements and guidelines and that CAPTA projects meet stated objectives. The CAPTA Coordinator assumes the role of State Liaison Officer and works with OCFS' policy and legal staff to fulfill that responsibility. The CAPTA Coordinator oversees the Children and Family Trust Fund, and the Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention Grant, and coordinates activities under the Basic State Grant, Children's Justice and Assistance Grant, and the HFNY Program as needed. In this capacity, the CAPTA Coordinator is able to facilitate collaboration and integration with other child welfare and other services for children and families, respond to individual requests for information on programs available in New York State, and respond to complaints from individuals that are brought to the attention of the Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families (ACF). Additionally, as

previously indicated OCFS is the state agency responsible for the administration for both the Title IV-B and the CAPTA Grant funds allowing for improved coordination and collaboration.

Accomplishments in 2010-2011:

OCFS continues a variety of strategies and initiatives to prevent and treat child abuse and maltreatment.

The Prevention Information Resource Center (PIRC) & Parent Helpline is Prevent Child Abuse New York's (PCANY) umbrella program for helping people throughout New York State understand how to prevent child abuse and maltreatment and to support strong, safe, nurturing families. The agency addresses individual, community, and societal responsibility through four inter-related strategies: the Parent Helpline, the NYS Parenting Education Partnership (NYSPEP), prevention education, and an annual professional training conference. PIRC provides direct assistance, in the form of information and referrals, to parents, family members, service providers and other community members. During 2010, 3,840 (a 17% increase from last year) New York families and professionals were directly assisted through the Helpline. 80% of those calls were from or about at-risk families, 50% were from parents themselves, and the others from friends/relatives or service providers. During the coming year, PCANY will institute more intensive follow-up to increase the number of people reached and the depth of information obtained, to better identify outcomes for callers and systemic gaps in services needed.

PIRC's public education efforts include a variety of outreach strategies, including literature development and distribution, presentations and exhibits, media activities, and a parenting education and services database and website. More than 107,000 people received prevention information through these avenues this past year.

The New York State Parent Education Partnership (NYSPEP) is a collaborative of over 800 individuals and is co-convened by PCANY, OCFS through the Children and Family Trust Fund, the New York State Council on Children and Families, and the New York State Office of Mental Health. During 2010, information about family service and parenting education research and practice was received by 800 NYSPEP e-news recipients. There are 415 parenting education programs and 662 other parent support programs are listed in the referral database. Professional development training sessions were provided to 342 child and family service providers at 10 *Strong Roots Last a Lifetime* day-long institutes in locations around the state, and to 81 providers and parents at the *Every Day is Fathers Day Conference* in Steuben County.

The new NYSPEP website launched this year, www.nyspep.org, also provides research information and on-line resource links. There were 302 respondents who completed an on-line NYSPEP survey of parenting education providers; of those 46% used evidence-based curricula. A comparison to the 2008 survey where 51% indicated they used a "recognized' program, was not feasible as a more stringent definition for "evidenced-

based' was used in the subsequent survey that required research citations and/or documentation of widespread use by experienced practitioners based on preference of families. Additional funding related to the State Children's Plan for Social and Emotional Development continues to support the development of a prototype, evidenced-based New Parent Kit to be disseminated to all parents of newborns. Professional development remains a key component to this initiative with work continuing to draft a framework for certifying parent educators. It is anticipated that this process will be piloted in 2011. The NYSPEP Steering Committee continues to lead this effort and through a workgroup process is focused on its mission of enhancing parenting skills, knowledge and behavior through a strong, statewide network that promotes and improves parenting education.

The annual New York State Child Abuse Prevention Conference, co-sponsored with OCFS/Children and Family Trust Fund, built the knowledge and skills of 388 professionals, advocates, community leaders, and parents who are concerned about preventing child abuse and assuring healthy growth and development for children. A total of 97% of returned evaluations agreed or strongly agreed the participant gained new knowledge, skills and tools to take back to the community. All participants agreed or strongly agreed that the conference was relevant and useful for their work.

Federal Family Violence

Federal Family Violence funding continues to provide financial support to residential and non-residential programs experiencing low occupancy or needing health and safety enhancements to their residential program.

Children's Justice Act

The federal Children's Justice Act (CJA) Program Grant continues to enhance OCFS'S ability to develop, establish, and operate programs designed to improve (1) the handling of child abuse and maltreatment cases, particularly cases of child sexual abuse and exploitation, in a manner which limits additional trauma to the child victim (2) the handling of cases of suspected child abuse and maltreatment related fatalities; and (3) the investigation and prosecution of cases of child abuse and maltreatment, particularly child sexual abuse and exploitation.

Children's Justice Act program funds are primarily used to promote start-up and/or improved functioning of local community coordination of the investigation, prosecution and treatment of child abuse and neglect cases, particularly sexual abuse cases and fatality cases. Through the implementation of local multidisciplinary investigation teams, child advocacy centers and child fatality review teams, child protective services, law enforcement, and prosecution, medical and mental health agencies are better able to coordinate, collaborate and communicate on cases. The goals of all funded programs are to reduce additional trauma to child victims after their disclosure and improve the

handling of cases for all agencies involved and improve the skills and knowledge of all professionals involved.

The federal Children's Justice Act Program has allowed OCFS to expand its efforts to develop and maintain multidisciplinary investigation teams, child advocacy centers and child fatality review teams across the State. Beginning in 1996, OCFS funded the NYS Child Advocacy Resource and Consultation Center (CARCC). Services provided by CARCC include specialized and/or interdisciplinary training, team functioning analysis, and coordination of a statewide coalition of child advocacy centers and MDTs wishing to develop child advocacy centers (CACs). CARCC also assists MDTs throughout the state with access to current information and research on: child sexual abuse; child fatalities; child abuse and neglect data from a multidisciplinary perspective; training resources and opportunities, including a directory of discipline specific consultants and technical assistance material to assist in team development.

CARCC has provided information to professionals, students and concerned citizens across the state, and throughout the nation, responding to over 250 requests for information on issues related to child sex abuse, the multidisciplinary approach and especially The NYS Children's Justice Task Force Forensic Interviewing Best Practices (FIBP). CARCC's resource library has expanded and offers users a wealth of printed, audio and video materials.

Training Opportunities for the benefit of professionals involved in multidisciplinary teamwork. CARCC's trainings will be designed to strengthen both investigatory and team management skills. Other services and networks in which CARCC are involved include:

- New York State Children's Alliance
- Case Tracking Database Project
- Forensic Interviewing Project

New York State Children's Justice Task Force Forensic Interviewing Best Practices Train the Trainer

The continued success of the Forensic Interviewing Best Practices Trainings relies on the actual teaching of the curriculum. To confirm the integrity and the reliability of the best FIBP Trainings, CARCC actively recruits professionals to become FIBP Trainers. This relieves some of the training demands and helps to perpetuate the level of skilled trainers as well as interviewers around the state. CARCC has implemented a selection process for all prospective trainers factoring such requirements as expertise, teaching style and demonstrated commitment to the children of New York State.

Child Abuse Prevention Evaluation and Treatment: A Toolkit for Medical Providers

From 2006-2008, CARCC, the Child Abuse Medical Provider Program (CHAMP), and a group of physicians, nurses, nurse practitioners, social workers, and other non-medical

professionals in the child abuse field from across New York State had been working together with Dr. Ann Botash on a Toolkit for primary care, urgent care and emergency providers that addresses the issues of providing care to all types of abused children. This resource continues to provide guidance on prevention methods, recognition, reporting methods, management and referral needs for the abused child. The website www.ChildAbuseMD.com may be accessed for more details.

Child Abuse and Disabilities Training Project

With administrative support from CARCC, the Children's Justice Task Force supported development of a CD-Rom "Child Abuse and Children with Disabilities" for MDT investigators interviewing children with disabilities, one of the most vulnerable populations for all forms of abuse. The CD-Rom was released in 2005, and is still in use today.

Marketing Program

CARCC continues to assist teams and centers with initiatives to support training and awareness events. The project co-sponsors such events by providing financial assistance for promotional materials announcing upcoming events and trainings. Teams and centers are eligible for monetary and in-kind support for promotional and event expenses, including postage and printing.

Mentoring Program

CARCC continues to encourage and support the mutual benefits of mentoring matches between counties. These relationships are vital to the multidisciplinary team process as teams learn from each other and work through practical solutions to problems. To help facilitate this relationship, CARCC matches teams and provides financial support to both the traveling team and the host team by reimbursing for expenses such as travel and lodging.

Toll Free Telephone

CARCC operates a toll free telephone number in order to accommodate those teams who have limited or no long distance access. This has helped facilitate program access to more professionals in the field.

Child Advocacy Center /Multidisciplinary Team Program Standards

The CJA/NYS funds for multidisciplinary investigation teams are currently being used to fund 14 Tier I and 12 Tier II grants to assist counties in establishing or enhancing child advocacy centers and local multidisciplinary teams for the purpose of investigating reports of suspected child abuse or maltreatment--particularly cases of sexual abuse,

physical abuse and family violence--in a manner which limits additional trauma to the child victim(s). Minimally, all teams investigate child sexual abuse cases. These projects have recently been categorized based upon quantifiable and qualifying standards that support New York State expectations and the National Children' Alliance Standards. All projects must have accomplished or demonstrate significant progress towards achieving the 10 program standards for CACs which have been listed in earlier submissions of the APSR.

Child Fatality Review Teams

The CJA/NYS funds for start-up or enhancement of child fatality review teams (CFRTs) are being used to fund three counties. These multidisciplinary review teams minimally include child protective services, police, District Attorney, a medical examiner or coroner**,** and a physician. The CFRTs review fatality cases reported to the Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment and fatality cases where the child's custody has been transferred to an authorized agency. The primary activities of these teams include: developing a mission statement and goals; developing interagency protocols; implementing a review process; actively conducting reviews; and developing a mechanism for collecting and reporting data. Teams may also review all suspicious, unexplained or unexpected deaths, but grant monies may not be used for this purpose. Such reviews are paid for by CFRT agency members. On December 14, 2006, OCFS released 06-OCFS LCM-13 Notification to OCFS of the death of children in open Child Protective or Preventive Services cases.

Children's Justice Act funds are also used to support the annual New York State Police Sex Offense Seminar, which is a five-day comprehensive training program for state and local police officers. CPS workers and other team members who work with police as an investigative team are also invited. The program reaches about 200 professionals a year. Starting in November 2006, this seminar was expanded to include child physical abuse training and will be presented as a two part "Crimes Against Children Training Seminar".

Citizen Review Panels

Chapter 136 of the Laws of 1999, commonly referred to as the Governor's CAPTA (Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act), details the state's compliance with the federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act Amendments of 1996. CAPTA established three citizen review panels. One panel is established in New York City for the purpose of addressing issues particular to the City. The other two panels are located in Buffalo and Albany.

Citizen Review Panel Members*:*

- Must be volunteers who are broadly representative of the community, in which the panel is established, including members who have expertise in the prevention and treatment of child abuse and neglect. No person employed by federal, state,

county or municipal agencies, which directly deliver child welfare services may be a panel member.

- Cannot disclose any identifying information about any specific child protection case to any person or government official. A member who knowingly violates this duty of confidentiality may be subject to a civil penalty not to exceed one thousand dollars and removal from the panel.

- Must elect a chairperson for each of their respective panels.

- Must meet not less than once every three months.

OCFS continues to provide technical assistance. As requested by the panels, each panel will maintain regular meetings and will continue to examine aspects of New York State's child welfare system to evaluate the extent to which the state and local child protective service agencies are effectively discharging their child protective responsibilities. It should be pointed out that the members of the New York State Citizen Review Panels have exhibited an enthusiastic willingness to commit themselves to the task for which they have volunteered, and have gone beyond the minimum federal mandate of quarterly meetings. Citizen Review Panels are required to submit an annual report of their activities, findings and recommendations. A copy of the most recent Citizen Review Panel report is with this plan submission (Appendix A).

Accomplishments for 2010-11:

In 2000, there were a total of only 13 CACs developing in New York State; there are now 24 fully accredited CACs and16 programs working to become accredited CACs. CARCC continues to be an active collaborator in developing several of those new CACs. Over the last three years, eight CACs have gained national status as fully accredited members of the NCA and approved by OCFS as Tier I CACs.

There are now 24 Tier I CACs approved by OCFS and NCA, and 13 projects that are rated as Tier II projects and working diligently to become Tier I's. In addition, OCFS has contracts with three programs that are at the Tier III level.

In December 2010, a new RFP was issued to continue the CARCC Program. In March 2011, a new award was made to Safe Horizon, Inc. to continue the activities of the CARCC Program. The deliverables from this RFP require CARCC to:

- develop work plans for six teams (including MDTs, CACs, and CFRTs) that identify developmental goals to be achieved and attend four county events.
- continue providing technical assistance and answer at least 50 requests per quarter.
- conduct three regional trainings to provide ongoing educational opportunities for CACs, MDTs, and CFRTs. Two of the three trainings will deal with child abuse and disabilities.

- develop an Advanced Forensic Interviewing Best Practices Training curriculum to enhance the existing Forensic Interviewing Best Practices (FIBP) three-day training provided by OCFS.
- continue the mentoring program between MDT/CAC programs and will arrange four mentoring matches during the grant period.
- continue to plan, arrange, and schedule quarterly Children's Justice Task Force (CJTF) meetings. CARCC will also attend the Task Force meetings and take minutes which will be posted on the CJTF Community blog, which is on the OCFS Communities site.
- assist with special projects as requested by the CJTF and OCFS. One project that began as a CJTF initiative is the Child Abuse and Children with Disabilities Project. CARCC will continue to collaborate with Columbia University Teachers College on this project and provide support to continue the Disabilities website. The goal is to add five additional state contacts each year to the site to eventually cover all 50 states.
- maintain CARCC's website (http://www.nyscarcc.org) and listserv. This will provide resource information, networking capacity among local MDTs and CACs, and public access to key information relating to child abuse and maltreatment, child sexual abuse and exploitation, and child fatalities to a worldwide audience. CARCC will continue its secondary research for new trainings, funding opportunities, best practices, resources, statistics, and evaluative reports to share via the CARCC website or CARCC listserv. They will post new updates to both the website and listserv – at least 24 and 12 respectively. They will keep contact information and maps for all New York State CACs and MDTs up to date on the website, and will closely monitor usage activity and develop new strategies to increase the number of visitors to the website and participants on the listserv.
- maintain the database system used by MDT/CAC programs. This will continue to be a mechanism for a statewide uniform system of tracking data and provide teams without a current method of tracking data with an easily accessible database.
- continue to provide webinar trainings to database users. A consultant with extensive experience in the technical aspects of the database will conduct two webinar trainings over the course of the contract period.
- continue its six-month aggregate data collection from all Tier I and Tier II Programs.
- continue to publish bi-annual newsletters to send to all New York State counties, CACs, MDTs, and CFRTs. These newsletters will circulate information from OCFS, updates from teams and centers, training opportunities, and other child advocacy news.
- maintain a comprehensive resource library. The library will include printed, audio, and video materials on all aspects of team development, team functioning, and issues relevant to child abuse and neglect and child fatalities.

In addition, CARCC has created a marketing program that provides financial assistance for event-related expenses, which can include meeting room or speaker fees, promotional

materials, and advertising. CARCC also provides support through its website and listserv, which provides the equivalent of free advertising of events and job announcements. During the contract period, they will assist in at least four marketing events. CARCC has also established a toll-free telephone number. This allows more professionals in the field to have access to their services. To date, they have received more than 1,600 toll-free telephone calls. CARCC will continue to promote the toll-free telephone service to counties, MDTs and professionals.

The New York State Police continued to hold their current comprehensive Crimes Against Children Training Seminar. This two-part initiative included a four-day seminar on child physical abuse and maltreatment related topics and a five-day sex abuse seminar. The physical abuse and neglect seminar was held in November 2010, and the sex abuse seminar was held May 2011. This training has resulted in numerous law enforcement agencies going back to their respective communities and either initiating development of MDTs or participating on a local team. Most attendees came as a part of their MDT.

CJA staff collaborated with the NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services to explore the viability of integration of FIBP information into training curriculums used to train more law enforcement officers across the state. In addition, CJA staff explored the possibility of the FIBP replacing the advanced sexual abuse interviewing training for OCFS. OCFS issued an RFP for development of a revised advanced interviewing curriculum and the FIBP Guideline were included and accepted for statewide training through OCFS.

CJA staff developed improved CFRT Guidelines and Protocols for Child Fatality Review Teams. Development and implementation of guidelines and protocols facilitated standardized practice among CFRTs across New York State.

The following activities have taken place to expand and improve the review of child fatalities:

- Developed Standard Best Practice Guidelines for Child Fatality Review Teams. "The OCFS CFRT Best Practice Guidelines" has been in existence for two years. The guidelines address the scope and purpose of teams; different types of fatality reviews and reports; requirements of CFRTs; confidentiality; the review process; content of reports; preparing issuing and distribution of reports; and membership requirements.
- OCFS staff, in conjunction with DOH and Stony Brook, is reviewing the Guidelines to see that they are fitting the needs of the teams across the state. Teams will be interviewed and surveyed about best practice, things learned over the last two years, issues encountered, etc. Team input will be incorporated into updated Guidelines.
- Developing Standard Template for CFRT Protocols. The OCFS Protocol template for all CFRTs has been in existence for two years. The current template includes the mission, purpose and goals of the CFRT; membership requirements and agency roles; the review process, including notification of fatalities, frequency and purpose of meetings; corrective action plans, access to information,

conduct case reviews; and the preparation and issuance of reports. The new Protocol template includes requirements to collect information for the National Center for Child Death Review Case Reporting System and will incorporate information solicited from teams.

- In 2010, OCFS had 13 approved CFRTs and funded 11 programs. As a result of a Request for Proposal at the end of 2010, two previously unfunded teams became funded and three new teams were awarded contracts. The next few months will be spent working with teams on their Protocols so that they can be fully-approved by September 30, 2011, for a two- year period.
- OCFS representative and NYS DOH representative attended the National Keep Kids Alive Conference in Washington, D.C in May 2009. This inter-agency collaboration helped to establish a "Keeping New York Kids Alive" initiative that provided the foundation for establishing the NCCDR Data collection system and the NYS DOH Request for Applications on "Keeping New York Kids Alive."
- Presented Statewide Teleconference: Safe Sleeping Practices for Infants and Young Children." OCFS, in collaboration with NYS DOH, local CFRT coordinators, pediatric medical experts and child abuse prevention experts presented a teleconference to caseworkers on March 18, 2010. The presentation was made available across the state, and feedback from viewers was very positive.
- Entered into an Agreement with National Center for Child Death Review (NCCDR) to implement its Case Reporting System. New York became the 29th state to implement the NCCDR Case Reporting System on December 14, 2009. Eighty-five OCFS and CFRT staff statewide were trained and most have begun to enter comprehensive fatality information into NCCDR.
- Provided Statewide Training to all OCFS Regional Offices and Local CFRTs on the NCCDR Case Reporting System. Children's Justice staff assisted the Executive Director of NCCDR in providing five virtual classroom training workshops for CFRT Coordinators and regional office staff on the NCCDR system and user responsibilities. Training was an average of four hours long. Feedback and evaluations of the training were very positive, averaging 3.85 out of 4.0, total.
- Collaborated with NYS Department of Health on a Draft "Hospital Pediatric Fatality Protocol" – Children's Justice staff collaborated with NYS DOH staff from Division of Certification and Surveillance and Bureau of Emergency Medical Services; New York State Police; and medical provider agencies. A draft protocol has been developed to provide guidance when a person under the age of eighteen dies from unexpected and unexplained causes either during transportation to the hospital or while at the hospital. The draft protocol will not be distributed for interagency approval until after the CJA application is due.
- OCFS assisted in the review of applications in response to the NYS DOH Request for Applications (RFA) Prevention of Child Morbidity and Mortality in NYS: Keeping New York Kids Alive. SUNY Research Foundation at Stony Brook is the contractor that was awarded funding under this initiative in fall 2010. SUNY Stony Brook will support DOH and OCFS in expanding and improving the quality of the child fatality review process. The contractor will assist in improving the skills of local officials who work in the child fatality review

process to promote improved community services delivery and the development of local public health risk reduction and safety focused prevention programs. Specifically, the contractor will (1) promote the development of new child fatality review teams by offering technical assistance support to local agencies, as they develop and implement child fatality review and prevention efforts as a community-based process to assess and improve services to protect children and adolescents; (2) help refine the practices used by local teams by assisting them with continuous self assessment, effective use of data, and evaluating feedback from communities; (3) support expanded use of the child fatality review process in translating data into policy. Policies concerning other adverse events (e.g., morbidity) affecting the maternal and child health population may also be supported; (4) promote collaboration among local agencies to increase effectiveness of efforts to improve child health and safety and reduce duplication of effort; (5) support operation of a state level multidisciplinary group; (6) serve on local fatality review teams as experts on Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and other sleep related infant injury deaths as staff availability permits and infant case(s) are reviewed; and (7) directly conduct statewide risk reduction activities and services for SIDS and other sleep related infant injury related deaths.

In addition, OCFS with DOH continues to collaborate on the NY Loves Safe Babies Campaign, along with the NYS Shaken Baby Prevention Program, and the Healthy Families New York (HFNY) Program. The HFNY Program 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. Families identified with high risk factors are offered long- term home visiting services, that focus on supporting the parents and building on the inherent strength of families until the child is in school or Head Start.

The New York State Citizen Review Panels continued to be supported through the CJA. The Panels continue to comply with all CAPTA requirements and work in collaboration with the Children's Justice Task Force to avoid duplication of efforts and support initiative(s), when appropriate.

CJA staff worked closely with the New York State Children's Alliance (NYSCA), a network of teams and centers across the state to facilitate communication and enable mentor relationships. Under the guidance of a strategic plan, the regions of NYSCA were expanded and there is now an 11 member Board of Directors. With the strong leadership membership has grown, and to date, 44 MDT/CAC programs have been approved for NYSCA membership.

Since the launching of the *Child Abuse and Disabilities* website (http://online.tc.columbia.edu) on September 27, 2007 there have been 13,633 (as of December 5, 2010) hits to the site and 10,257 unique visitors from 119 countries. In addition, 550 individuals have fully registered on the site, receiving full access to the articles, video clips and resources that are available. The ongoing intent of this next funding phase is to continue to review the content of the site in order to keep it current

and add to the various components and identified segments (e.g. Interview Strategies, Resources (articles, videos, resource links), Jargon, targeted additional content areas, and training module development across disciplines). The site currently has disability resources listed from 37 U.S. states. The goal is to add five additional state contacts with the target to eventually cover all 50 states. Work will also continue in developing a useable online Training Module, incorporating the "pilot" recommendations that continue to be implemented as monies become available. Given the broad outreach of this website with no targeted dissemination, it is clear that the disability focus continues to be of great interest to researchers, forensic interviewers and administrators from federal, state and private social service organizations serving children and their families within child abuse arenas. It is, therefore, critical to continue to keep the site current, fully functioning with greater efforts being made to streamlining information for full access.

Plans for 2011- 2012:

1. A Forensic interview training project will build upon the Forensic Interviewing Best Practices (FIBP) guidelines developed through CJA grant funds. This FIBP initiative is already having a tremendous impact on the quality and effectiveness of investigative interviews. The FIBP is the only comprehensive multidisciplinary interviewing program in the State and the New York State Children's Justice Task Force (CJTF) will strive to determine its efficacy for investigators. The task force will explore the possibility of expanding the curriculum to offer an advanced FIBP training. CJA staff will continue to work with OCFS bureau of training to explore the needs of MDT investigators.

2. The CJTF and CJA staff will continue to support the Child Abuse and Children with Disabilities program and explore ways to continue to expand the knowledge base and resources available to better serve children with disabilities.

3. The New York State Police will continue to hold their current comprehensive Crimes Against Children Training Seminar. This two-part initiative includes a four-day seminar on child physical abuse and maltreatment related topics and a five-day sex abuse seminar.

4. The physical abuse and neglect seminar will be held in November, and the sex abuse seminar will be held in May. This training has resulted in numerous law enforcement agencies going back to their respective communities and either initiating development of MDTs or participating on a local team. Most attendees participate in this training as a team. The training accommodates about two hundred child abuse investigators. The CJTF has decided to continue funding of this program in support of a number of areas around intra-agency collaboration and the enhancement of MDT/CAC's.

5. CJA staff will continue to monitor and review CFRT Guidelines and Protocols for Child Fatality Review Teams as per Task Force recommendations. Development

and implementation of guidelines and protocols will facilitate standardized practice among CFRTs across New York State.

6. OCFS and DOH will continue to meet to collaborate on how to prevent child deaths. The creation of a standardized child fatality review database and fatality report will be used by local review teams. When data from case reviews are analyzed over time, significant risk factors or patterns in child injury may be identified. This data would help with local prevention initiatives and provide a basis for state-level prevention initiatives.

7. OCFS will work with DOH toward the development of a state-level child fatality review team to review aggregate or individual findings of local teams. The DOH program with SUNY Research Foundation at Stony Brook will take the lead on this initiative. It is anticipated that a state level team would make recommendations for improvements to state policies and practices or help to develop best practices and protocols for local CFRTs. Members of the team should include representatives from the following agencies or professions: OCFS, DOH, law enforcement, prosecutors/district attorney's medical examiners/coroners, pediatricians, and emergency medical services, DOH and OCFS.

8. The New York State Citizen Review Panels will continue to be supported through a CJA allocation. The Panels will continue to comply with all CAPTA requirements and work in collaboration with the Children's Justice Task Force to avoid duplication of efforts and support initiative(s), when appropriate. This activity is in response to a CJTF recommendation.

9. CJA staff will continue to provide technical assistance, training and, monitoring to all MDT/CAC programs in order to improve the handling of child abuse and neglect cases per the recommendation of the task force and the federal CJA requirement.

William B. Hoyt Memorial Children and Family Trust Fund and Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention Program

Accomplishments in 2010-2011:

Trust Fund priorities continue to emphasize support for research-based home visiting services such as the Parent Child Home Program, Parents as Teachers, and Parenting Wisely, in addition to training and implementation of evidence-based parenting education curricula including the Incredible Years and Preventing Child Abuse and Neglect (PCAN) curriculum developed by Zero to Three. Funds support development of the NYS Family Resource Center Network, services to support young parents and fathers, crisis respite/parenting education and support services, supervised visitation in domestic violence cases, school-based domestic violence and child abuse prevention programs,

shaken baby prevention education, elder abuse prevalence study, and services for the elderly at risk of abuse in New York State. The Trust Fund continues to collaborate with Healthy Families New York, Kinship Care, TANF Prevention Programs, and various state partners through initiatives such as NY Loves Safe Babies, and the NYS Parenting Education Partnership (NYSPEP).

The Trust Fund supports the Shaken Baby Syndrome (SBS) hospital-based education program with targeted outreach to all maternity and birthing hospitals in the state. The purpose is to educate all parents of newborns to the dangers of shaking and reduce the incidence of SBS. Continued tracking of the incidence of SBS in the Western New York, Finger Lakes and Hudson Valley regions documents a sustained 50% reduction in the incidence of SBS in the Western NY Region. In 2010, over 99,000 parents of newborns received information through the project, close to 90% of live births in the service areas. Collaboration with the DOH continues in an effort to promote child safety and the prevention of SBS. The SBS project staff contributed to a new shaken baby prevention video that typifies families in New York and can be translated into multiple languages. The video is slated for release in 2011. This video will replace "A Portrait of Promise" that was approved to support part of Chapter 219 of the Laws of 2004 signed in October 2004 which requires every birthing and maternity hospital to show the video to all parents prior to discharge and ask them to sign a consent form that they viewed or declined to participate in the educational programs.

Replication of New York's model continues throughout the country and abroad. Pediatricians are partnering with the project to disseminate the same information at the time of the first immunization or pediatric visit. Likewise, each site does follow up telephone surveys to obtain feedback from the target population about the program's effectiveness. The Hudson Valley region replicated the New York Shaken Baby Prevention Program brochure in Spanish and Chinese. The Hudson Valley Region also partners with Darryl Gibbs, a prevention educator, to deliver the nurse training. Mr. Gibbs contributes greatly to the effectiveness of the training by providing the perspective of an advocate/victim.

The Trust Fund continues its support of the NY Loves Safe Babies Campaign with DOH, NYS Center for SID (Sudden Infant Death) and Healthy Families New York Home Visiting Program. The Trust Fund continues other work to reduce child fatalities, prevent injuries and distribute materials to families and child care providers. This work aligns with other efforts with the DOH through the "Keeping Kids Alive" initiative. To augment the OCFS sponsored video conference for child welfare staff conducted in March 2010, the production of a child welfare training video on safe sleeping practices began and is scheduled for release in 2011.

This year was once again highlighted by the availability of a series of safety tips entitled Helpful Tips to Keep Your Baby Safe. Additional materials developed as part of the campaign include a Personalized Safety Tips and Emergency Contact Sheet for Baby Sitters which will be revised to support the training video, a Helpful Strategies for Keeping Infants and Young Children Safe DVD, and a Keeping Sleeping Babies Safer

brochure. These are available in English and Spanish. Requests for materials remain robust. Over 100,000 New York Loves Safe Babies publications are disseminated annually statewide. The campaign will go forward with continued efforts to identify and promote child safety issues as resources allow.

The Trust Fund (OCFS) helps coordinate the NYS Parenting Education Partnership (NYSPEP) initiated through participation at the PREVENT Child Maltreatment Institute in North Carolina in 2006. The convening agencies: Prevent Child Abuse New York, the Council on Children and Families, OCFS, and the newest partner, Office of Mental Health, work to advance the five-year plan promoting the health and safety of our state's children with a focus on parenting education as a primary prevention method addressing child abuse and neglect. The Department of Health, (DOH) state Education Department (SED) and Families Together also partner with NYSPEP and serve on the Steering Committee. As part of the early childhood priorities of the Children's Cabinet, The Children's Plan, focused on the social and emotional development and children's mental health, closely aligns itself with the NYSPEP goals: increasing education and awareness through a social marketing process, promoting the development of a new Parent Kit; increasing the availability and scope of web-based resources for parents and professionals that includes social and emotional development; providing educational opportunities and professional development for early care and education staff including a pilot of a parenting educator certificate; and increasing employment of evidence-based curricula and best practices through training and webinars. During 2010 members participated in training to identify strategies to support Family Assessment Response (FAR), 10 parent focus groups were conducted to better align services with family needs, and 20 skill-building sessions "*Strong Roots Last a Lifetime*" were held for parent educators at locations around the state. Work undertaken to create the new Parent Kit is progressing with support from the Council on Children and Families and a subgroup of the Children's Cabinet. Several parent focus groups were held to solicit feedback on the DVDs being considered for inclusion in the Kit. A Steering Committee and workgroup structure continue to advance the goals of this initiative.

The Trust Fund recognizes the multi-generational nature of family violence and emphasizes primary prevention by supporting domestic violence and elder abuse prevention and intervention programs. Domestic violence prevention programs focus on education of students K-12, trauma counseling and support services for children, and supervised visitation services for families affected by domestic violence. Elder abuse prevention programs focus on educating both seniors and communities regarding the problem/risks of elder abuse, outreach and services to reduce these risks, providing coordination, counseling, and advocacy services to victims of elder abuse, a public awareness campaign, and a prevalence study on elder abuse. Programs funded in 2010-11 included: (1) Cattaraugus Community Action, Salamanca, NY (2) Oswego County Opportunities, Inc, Oswego, NY (3) Putnam Northern Westchester Women's Resource Center, Mahopac, NY (4) The Salvation Army, Jamestown, NY (5) Equinox, Inc., Albany, NY (6) Family Justice Center of Erie County, Buffalo, and (7) Lifespan of Greater Rochester, Rochester, NY.

The federal 2010 Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention funding is in keeping with the mission of the Trust Fund, which administers the federal program to support child abuse prevention and domestic violence services. Trust Fund initiatives also support some of the strategies of the OCFS Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) Program Improvement Plan such as increased efforts to support strength-based and family centered practices that engage parents, evidence-based and evidence-informed programs and practices, and efforts to promote safety, permanency and child well being through enhanced family support services. This past year CBCAP funding was also used to support the Family Assessment Response (FAR) Initiative for wraparound services.

In 2010-11, federal and state funded child abuse prevention and family support services included: Statewide Public Education targeting all parents of newborns (1) Kaleida Health/Women Children's Hospital of Buffalo, Buffalo, NY, (2) Children's Hospital Foundation at Westchester Medical Center, Valhalla, NY; Parenting Education and Support services targeting families at risk including young parents and fathers (3) Gateway Longview, Buffalo, NY (4) Women's Prison Association, Brooklyn, NY (5) SCO Family of Services, Bronx, NY (6) Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County, Ithaca, NY (7) Homes for the Homeless, Bronx, NY; School-based prevention education targeting elementary students and school personnel; (8) Child Abuse Prevention Services, Long Island, NY; Family Resource Centers providing early and comprehensive support to parents and caregivers of young children; (9) North Country Prenatal/Perinatal Council, Watertown, NY, (10) Child Care Coordinating Council of the North Country, Plattsburgh, NY, (11) Child & Family Resources, Penn Yan, NY, (12) Cornell Cooperative Extension of Cortland, Cortland, NY, (13) Catholic Charities of Fulton and Montgomery Counties, Amsterdam, NY, (14) Chinese American Planning Council, New York, NY, (15) Mothers and Babies Perinatal Network of SCNY, Binghamton, NY, (16) Pro Action of Steuben and Yates, Bath, NY, (17) Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tioga, Owego, NY, (18) Niagara Falls City School District, Niagara Falls, NY (19) Family Resource Centers of Crestwood Children's Center, Rochester, NY, (20) Phipps Community Development Corporation, Bronx, New York, (21) Association to Benefit Children, East Harlem, NY.

During 2010, state and federally funded programs administered under the Trust Fund served approximately 109,000 children, parents, caregivers and professionals through direct services, training and educational opportunities. OCFS applied for and received federal CBCAP grant funds to complement Trust Fund child abuse and domestic violence prevention efforts in 2010. A grant award of $1,560,021 will allow OCFS to continue existing programs implemented in January 2008 and/or other initiatives to be determined, support evaluation and data analysis for the Family Resource Center Network's increased efforts to engage and retain high risk families, and contribute to New York's annual child abuse prevention conference. The 2011 Conference, "Strengthening Families: Connecting Prevention and Intervention" held in April, once again afforded the opportunity to showcase best practices and to recognize parent partners who demonstrate their leadership as a result of participation in local programs. The National Alliance of Children's Trust and Prevention Funds (Alliance) hosted a Community Café Institute, "Changing the lives of Children through Conversations that Matter" during the 2011

conference. The training provided teams of community agency staff and parent partners with information and skills necessary to plan their own Community Cafés. Further technical assistance and support will be provided by the National Alliance and through NYSPEP to gather outcomes and help to sustain these efforts. Trust Fund-sponsored programs and staff are regular presenters at the conference. Funds also support networking activities, training and technical assistance, family engagement and leadership training opportunities, and the Program Self-Assessment and Peer Review Process, a required activity under CBCAP.

The Trust Fund-sponsored Family Resource Center (FRC) Network meets on a quarterly basis for the purpose of receiving technical assistance and training related to program development, service delivery, evaluation, and data analysis. Training and networking opportunities this past year focused on assisting the Network with developing more intensive outreach efforts to engage and retain high risk families. This included training on the use of CFSR data to determine priorities, incorporating racial equity and cultural competence into planning and service delivery, and working collaboratively with local social services districts to design new outreach strategies to engage and retain families at risk. Each FRC will receive small grants to support this effort. Lessons learned, challenges and participant outcomes will be disseminated in 2012. Where applicable, FRCs also reached out to Family Assessment Response (FAR) staff to enhance community supports for families diverted from the investigative track.

The Network continues to use the Protective Factor Survey (PFS) to assess changes for all new participants. Additionally, technical assistance and consultation for the research-based Incredible Years FRC Network of trainers continued through quarterly conference calls. This provided trainers the opportunity to address common protocols for delivering the program, effective facilitation skills, and offered strategies to engage participants. Many of the Network members participate in the NYS Parenting Education Partnership (NYSPEP) "*Strong Roots Last a Life Time"* professional development workshops and several conducted a Train the Trainer session also offered in October 2010. This involvement included development of the *Strong Roots* curriculum, and creating a parent educator certification. It is anticipated the certification will be piloted in 2012.

Two Self-Assessment and Peer Reviews were held at the Parents as Leaders FRC in Binghamton, and the Families First FRC in Essex County. A consultant continues to assist with Center planning and conducting the self-assessment, in addition to preparing for the peer review site visits. Instruments used for the review included the Outreach Booklet from "How Are We Doing?" toolkit and questions from the Program and Activities subscale. Challenges addressed during the reviews included improved outreach efforts including creating a Facebook page and welcome postcards asking new families for feedback about their first experience at the Center. The focus on outreach is aligning welcome for each of the programs as they develop their Outreach and Retention Plans for the coming year. Feedback from the self-assessment and peer review teams continue to indicate that the process provides the opportunity for stepping away from the day to day work and focusing specifically on programming and areas for improvement. Creative ideas continuously surface during the Peer Review that help the each program

problem solve the challenges they are facing. Parent participation also remains a valuable component to this process.

Research conducted in 2010 relevant to child abuse prevention included:

- The Family Resource Center (FRC) Community Study documented the integration of FRCs into the social service safety net. In each FRC community, at least nine organizations such as local departments of social services, Head Start, child care, Family Courts and libraries were aware of the FRC and 78% referred families to FRC programs. A copy of the report is available upon request.
- The FRC Outcomes Study showed that all caregivers who accessed FRC services over time improved some factors that protect against child abuse. Areas assessed included appropriate parent-child roles, avoiding harsh discipline and parental empathy. Participants with lower baseline scores, as well as those with lower income and fewer years of education, were most likely to improve on these and additional protective factor measures.
- The FRC Dosage Analysis focused on the type of services accessed by families, and how often they were accessed. This information identified utilization patterns both at individual sites and across all funded FRCs and provided data leading to program enhancements. The final Dosage Analysis Report will be available in 2011.

Efforts to strengthen families through early care and education by engaging child care providers in preventing maltreatment continues through dialogue with ZERO to THREE (ZTT) and the state leadership team created through the Preventing Child Abuse and Neglect (PCAN) Project. The leadership team committed to continuing conversations through conference calls and creating opportunities for sustaining the program at state level conferences and through funding opportunities. The leadership team is comprised of OCFS, ACS, the Council on Children and Families, Prevent Child Abuse NY, the state Education Department, and the NYS Early Care and Learning Council.

New York was selected to participate in the Promoting Responsive Relationships Initiative along with South Carolina and Virginia to implement a 3-year grant funded by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation. Three PCAN trainers from the cadre trained in 2007 were selected to develop an in depth coaching relationship with one child care center and work with them over time. It is designed to develop a model of training and coaching that leads to measurable changes in the capacity of child care programs and their staff to reduce the risk of child maltreatment among families with very young children. The three New York teams are from Wayland (Steuben County), Queens, and Lower Manhattan. A national evaluation team is following the project and training and technical support for the teams includes monthly team and individual calls, and as well as full day training sessions during the year. The overall goals of this effort are to impart skills in addressing the five protective factors, improve practice in early childhood settings, learn new outreach strategies to engage families, and build a stronger partnership between providers and parents.

Plans for 2011-2012:

The 2010-11 CAPTA funds will be utilized to support a number of initiatives aimed at improving the child protection system in New York State. The areas that will be targeted include:

- The use of Citizen Review Panels to review policies, procedures and practices of State and local agencies to evaluate the extent to which the agencies are effectively discharging their child protective responsibilities. The contract for Administration was awarded to the Schuyler Center for Advocacy and Analysis (SCAA). SCAA has taken a proactive role in helping the three Panels develop specific work plans.
- Implementing Program Standards for all Child Advocacy Centers and Multidisciplinary Child Abuse Teams in New York State. The Standards were developed through input from New York State Children's Alliance, Multidisciplinary Team/Child Advocacy Center projects, and the Children's Justice Task Force
- Developing and enhancing the capacity of community based programs to integrate shared leadership strategies between parents and professionals to prevent and treat child abuse and neglect at the neighborhood level which is a focus of all of OCFS' program development efforts including the Healthy Families New York Home Visiting Program, the Trust Fund, and the Community Based Child Abuse Prevention Grant Program. These efforts are described below and throughout this plan.

The 2010-2011 CAPTA Basic State Grant funds will continue to support initiatives related to the OCFS Performance Improvement Plan, including New York's Family Assessment Response (FAR) Initiative. CAPTA funds will continue to support the Parent Information Resource Center and the statewide Prevention Conference sponsored by Prevent Child Abuse New York. The funds also support the development of materials for the Safe Babies Campaign, an initiative of OCFS in collaboration with DOH and local community based organizations. In addition to these existing initiatives, OCFS may use funds for additional child protective improvements, which have yet to be determined.

The Children's Justice Act funds will support a number of new initiatives including the following:

Multidisciplinary Training Program on the New York State Forensic Interviewing Best Practices

A three-day training program, New York State Children's Justice Task Force Forensic Interviewing Best Practices has presented 21 regional training sessions over the last three years. A one day training course will be developed and introduced to professionals not directly involved with interviewing of child victims, but who should be aware of the components of a sound forensic interview. The training will be targeted to County Attorneys, prosecutors, judges and members of local multidisciplinary teams.

Child Abuse and Children with Disabilities: Reporting, Investigation and Intervention

The success of the CD-ROM *Child Abuse and Children with Disabilities: A New York State* Perspective lead the NYS Children's Justice Task Force to recommend development of a website to provide more information and easier accessibility to professionals involved with reporting, investigating and interventions with disabled children. The New York CJA program will reach out to other States to link with this program and include service providers and experts from their respective States on the website as well. The website will outline basic information which should be known by all members of the various multidisciplinary teams related to characteristics of these children that might impact upon interviewing, data gathering or "reasonable accommodations" that may be needed in investigative and/or support procedures. It will also describe the current policies and federal/state specific guidelines that exist to date which directly affect the appropriate handing of these cases so that these children are not further victimized on any level.

The website will provide sample case studies and a listing of other statewide resources available. This site will also include short interviews with a variety of experts from New York State and its consultants over the years, who share their work and suggestions related to enhancing the provision of appropriate reporting, investigation and intervention of child abuse involving children with disabilities.

Other initiatives such as Child Abuse Training for Prosecutors and Multidisciplinary Teams, Multidisciplinary Team Management of Children Who Act Out Sexually and The CAC/CASA Partnership Project: Improving Advocacy for Children will also continue to receive support.

William B. Hoyt Memorial Children and Family Trust Fund and Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention Grant Program

2010-11 SFY funding in the amount of $1,243,700 will support existing Trust Fund programs, including the Family Resource Center Network. Current programs can be continued for a 5th year based on performance achievement. The 2011-12 SFY funding in the amount $621,850 will also support continuation of existing programs. Key programs worthy of note are the Elder Abuse Prevalence Study conducted by Lifespan of Greater Rochester in partnership with NYC Department for the Aging and Cornell Institute for Translational Research on Aging (CITRA). It is the first of its kind in the country and examined prevalence rates among reported and unreported cases, characteristics of victims, types of abuse reported and current referral patterns. The Study is expected to be released later this year and includes recommendations for shaping future policy and funding priorities. Some preliminary outcomes include:

- A total one-year incidence rate of 76 per 1,000 older residents of New York State for any form of elder abuse. Applying the incidence rate to the general population of older New Yorkers, an *estimated 260,000, or one in thirteen,* older adults in

the state were the victims of at least one form of elder abuse in a one-year period in 2008 and 2009.

- The survey of "documented cases" identified just 11,432 victims in all service systems in New York State in 2008 – meaning for every known case, 24 were unknown.
- The highest one-year rate of elder abuse occurred for major financial exploitation (theft of money or property, using items without permission, impersonation to get access, forcing or misleading to get items such as money, bank cards, accounts, power of attorney) with a rate of 41 per 1,000 surveyed.
- The Study also found that 141 out of 1,000 older New Yorkers have experienced an elder abuse event since turning age 60.

Promotion of the highly successful New York Shaken Baby Prevention program launched in June 2008 will continue targeting all maternity and birthing hospitals in the state. This joint effort reinforces the 2004 State law requiring hospitals to talk to parents about the dangers of shaking a baby and to have a plan for coping with infant crying. Close to 250,000 parents of newborns (approximately 90% of all live births) are expected to be reached each year.

Further tracking of the incidence of SBS will continue in the Western New York, Finger Lakes and Hudson Valley regions with a sustained 50% reduction in the incidence of SBS in the Western NY Region. The SBS project staff contributed to a new shaken baby prevention video which is slated for release and distribution later this year. It is expected that OCFS and DOH will jointly announce release of the new video to all birthing and maternity hospitals.

A continuing partnership with DOH, other state agencies and local providers will assist with OFCS's expanded efforts to promote *Safe Sleeping Practices for Infants and Young Children.* Building on the teleconference held for child welfare staff in 2010, a shorter training video that can be used as a teaching tool with individual families is in production and will be released later in June. In addition, a Local Commissioners Memorandum (LCM), 10-OCFS-LCM-15, was issued in 2010 to provide guidance to Child Protective Services (CPS) staff regarding factors to consider and evaluate when investigating a report of death, or serious injury, of an infant that may have been caused by or related to unsafe sleeping conditions. An Administrative Directive Memorandum (ADM) is now in development to support the continuing concerns around infant safety and prevention.

The 2011 CBCAP grant will support high performing programs and LDSS priorities for programs that can help to improve outcomes for families most at risk of child abuse in communities where there are not sufficient resources. It will also support evaluation activities including maintenance of the Family Resource Center Network web-based data system and data analysis, along with a proposed evaluation of the CPS/DV collaborations supported by OCFS. The FRC Network developed action plans for addressing outreach and retention of higher risk families. Data will be collected on these retention efforts and analyzed along with the Protective Factor Survey (PFS) data that measures participant improvements.

The Trust Fund will continue to promote the use of research-based evaluation to support reliable outcome data, and the use of evidence-based curricula and program models. The Incredible Years' (IY) FRC training staff will continue to network and share experiences to strengthen their facilitating skills and increase participation by families at higher risk for child abuse. Common tools (PFS) are in place to enable the Centers to collect data not only for new families but all those that participate in the program. Bi-monthly conference calls, coaching, a webinar, and consultation with the national trainer to support effective delivery of the curriculum are planned for the coming year.

The Trust Fund will continue its role as part of the NYSPEP Steering Committee contributing to enhancing the NYSPEP website for use by parents and providers to easily access parenting education programs; determine gaps between what parents need in terms of parenting education and what is being offered; and enhance professional development by providing information regarding parenting education components associated with effectiveness, as well as technical assistance and learning opportunities across the state.

Viewing child abuse through the lens of family violence positions the Trust Fund to be an integral part of coordinated child abuse prevention resources and activities, and provide leadership in supporting the continuum of child abuse prevention efforts to better align with the CFSR and local PIPs. Trust Fund community-based programs located in Family Assessment Response (FAR) counties are encouraged to link with their LDSS to discuss how they can support local needs. Programs in non-FAR counties were also encouraged to strengthen their connection to LDSS to collaborate when appropriate and to lay the groundwork as FAR expands.

Chafee Foster Care Independence Program

The major efforts in 2010-2011 were geared to continue the implementation of the Chafee Foster Care Independence Act of 1999 (CFCIP), including the Chafee Education and Training Voucher Program, the Medicaid option available to states under Chafee, the new requirements for a transition plan under the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008, and new legislation under Chapter 342 permitting a former foster youth who exited care on a final discharge status at age 18, 19 or 20 to re-enter foster care under certain circumstances, provided the youth is under the age of 21. OCFS has developed a transition plan form and training for districts and agencies on the new transition planning requirements as noted in Goal 4 under Transition Plan.

OCFS is refining its strength-based Life Skills Training program throughout its direct care system as a key core component of the OCFS residential treatment program. Additional life skills interventions will be identified and prescriptively provided for youth in OCFS direct care programs from the "Counselor's Toolbox".

OCFS continued to oversee the remaining period of a federal Department of Labor grant to prepare and support eligible youth with lifelong learning skills to enhance their

educational and employment prospects. The PASSport (Preparation, Access, and Support Services) system will link youth with comprehensive services designed to help in the transition to adulthood and self-sufficiency. OCFS received continued funding from Casey Family Programs for the same purpose during 2007-2008, since federal funds no longer will be available.

The following pages provide information about the in-care population in receipt of Independent Living Services. The data is presented for 16-21 year olds and for the previously State-funded population 14-15 year olds. The data for 14-15 year olds includes only those children who have a goal of APLA. It does not capture information about other children who, because of the service needs identified, are receiving Independent Living Services, even though their primary goal is not Independent Living.

Children in Foster Care Receiving Independent Living Services

Age	Frequency	Percent
14	1770	12.3
15	2439	17.0
16	2870	20.0
17	2572	17.9
18	1814	12.6
19	1179	8.2
20	1527	10.6
thru 21	170	1.2
Total	14341	100.0

Sex	Frequency	Percent
F	6801	47.4
M	7540	52.6
Total	14341	100.0

Race/Ethnicity	Frequency	Percent
Native Amer-Alaskan	55	.4
Asian	119	.8
African American	6645	46.3
White	3219	22.4
Unk	1361	9.5
Latino	2942	20.5

Total	14341	100.0

Current Living Arrangement	Frequency	Percent
ADOPTIVE HOME	6	.0
RUNAWAY SHELTER	7	.0
INSTITUTION	4184	29.2
GROUP RESIDENCE	345	2.4
GROUP HOME	1380	9.6
SILP	268	1.9
AOBH	421	2.9
FOSTER HOME	5481	38.2
APPVD REL HOME	1901	13.3
SNF	2	.0
RTF	110	.8
URBAN HOME	1	.0
NON-SEC DET FAC	40	.3
SEC DET FAC	3	.0
CFR DEV CENTER	5	.0
ICF-DD	69	.5
VOL COMM RES	19	.1
PROP RES SCHOOL	15	.1
VOL RES SCHOOL	5	.0
UNION FREE SCHOOL	3	.0
PSYCH CENTER	4	.0
SUPERVISED LIV	6	.0
SUPPORTIVE LIV	1	.0
INTENSIVE SUPPOR	1	.0
PSYCH HOSP	6	.0
OTHER-NONSANC	53	.4
Total	14336	100.0
System	5	.0
	14341	100.0

Duration of Foster Care	Frequency	Percent
UP TO 6 MOS.	2498	17.4
7-12 MOS.	2190	15.3
13-18 MOS.	1410	9.8
19-24 MOS.	1031	7.2
25-36 MOS.	1573	11.0
37-48 MOS.	1289	9.0

49-60 MOS.	1015	7.1
61+ MOS.	3335	23.3
Total	14341	100.0

OCFS will continue to provide technical assistance and support to independent living program sites serving youth in its custody and on aftercare status. Those youth who are in residential placement in OCFS operated facilities receive independent living skills as part of the Focus Intervention Process. This process is part of the OCFS counseling program, which addresses those risk factors that may lead youth to recidivate. In addition, OCFS will work to enhance Life Skills programming through training, site visits including group observations and the provision of various materials to support this program (See Goal 4 for additional Chafee information). As per P.L. 111-148 of the Act, OCFS will be submitting a certification by the chief executive officer of the State in accordance with amended section 477(b)(3) of the Act no later than September 30, 2011.

Education and Training Vouchers

New York State's Education and Training Voucher program is designed to help youth aging out of foster care to make the transition to self-sufficiency and receive the education, training and services necessary to obtain employment. Under this program, eligible youth may receive up to $5,000 per year to attend a post-secondary education or vocational training program. The following categories of individuals may be eligible to receive vouchers under the Education and Training Voucher program: (1) youth otherwise eligible for services under the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program; (2) youth adopted from foster care after attaining age 16; and (3) youth participating in the voucher program on their 21st birthday, until they turn 23 years old, as long as they are enrolled in a post-secondary education or vocational training program and are making satisfactory progress toward completion of that program.

OCFS will continue to contract with the Orphan Foundation of America (OFA) to administer and serve as New York State's fiscal agent for the Education and Training Voucher Program. Social services districts continue to be responsible for determining program eligibility. Priority for funding will be given to former foster care youth who are participating in the voucher program on their 21st birthday, until they turn 23 years old, as long as they are enrolled in a post-secondary education or vocational training program and are making satisfactory progress toward completion of that program.

New York State's Permanency legislation, Chapter 3 of the Laws of 2005, brought about many changes to laws that will affect adolescents. The law includes a requirement to provide life skills services to foster care youth beginning at age 14, regardless of permanency goal. Regulations were filed on an emergency basis to implement the new law. With these new regulations, the discharge-planning goal of independent living has been renamed "Discharge to another planned living arrangement with a permanency resource." This permanency planning goal is to assist foster care youth in their transition to self-sufficiency by connecting the youth to an adult permanency resource, equipping

the youth with life skills and, upon discharge, connecting the youth with any needed community and/or specialized services. An adult permanency resource is a caring committed adult who has been determined by a social services district to be an appropriate and acceptable resource for a youth and is committed to providing emotional support, advice and guidance to the youth and to assist the youth as the youth makes the transition from foster care to responsible adulthood.

Accomplishments

834 youth received ETV awards during FFY 2009-2010

Almost half (413) of the students were returning students and 421 were new to the ETV program

Female 551 (66%)
Male 283 (34%)

Age and Number of students:

18	204	24%
19	200	24%
20	157	19%
21	149	18 %
22	124	15%

Ethnicity:

African-American	478	57%
Asian-American	22	3%
Caucasian	107	13%
Latino	136	16%
Mixed-Race	85	10%
Native-American	3	less than 1%
Pacific-Islander	3	less than 1%

Funding awarded to New York students: $2,756,568.00

All eligible New York youth who completed the application and attended school were funded. Students who applied, but were ineligible to receive funding include those who were not in foster care, did not attend school, were first time applicants over the age of 21, or previous recipients who are older than 23.

* Data is derived from the Orphan Foundation of America's report (Appendix D)

OCFS will continue to build on the education work we began in 2007-2008. In 2008 six regional educational forums were held around the state for caseworkers in local districts and authorized voluntary agencies and foster parents. In 2009 six regional forums were again held around the state. Recognizing that not all youth will go to college, the 2009

forums built and expanded upon the previous years' forums and included a career planning and job readiness component. Resource materials will also be developed and distributed at the forums. In 2010 and 2011 regional forums were again held and the target population included youth.

Plans for 2011-2012

OCFS will continue to contract with the Orphan Foundation of America (OFA) to administer and serve as New York State's fiscal agent for the Education and Training Voucher Program. Social services districts continue to be responsible for determining program eligibility. Priority for funding will be given to former foster care youth who are participating in the voucher program on their 21st birthday, until they turn 23 years old, as long as they are enrolled in a post-secondary education or vocational training program and are making satisfactory progress toward completion of that program.

Supporting Information

Inter-Country Adoptions

On October 6, 2000, the federal Inter-country Adoption Act (ICAA) of 2000 (P.L. 106-279) was signed into law. The ICAA provides for the implementation by the United States of the Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect to Inter-country Adoption. At this time, twenty (20) New York State authorized voluntary agencies have been accredited by the Council on Accreditation to provide adoption services for Hague adoption cases. Three (3) of the twenty (20) accredited agencies have the authority to provide adoption services for incoming and outgoing adoption cases. The remaining seventeen (17) agencies are accredited to provide adoption services for incoming adoption cases only. In 2009, OCFS issued Administrative Directive 9-OCFS-ADM-12 Inter-country Adoptions. This ADM informs local districts and voluntary agencies of the impact of the Hague Convention and provides the circumstances under which non-Hague Convention inter-country adoptions may take place.

As residents of New York State, children adopted from other countries have access, if they otherwise satisfy the eligibility standards to mandated preventive services. In addition, all New York State authorized agencies providing inter-country adoption programs are regulated and supervised by OCFS. Prospective adoptive parents are evaluated for suitability to adopt through a home study process, which includes a criminal history record review and a check against the Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment data base.

OCFS directive 04-OCFS-LCM-05 requires social services districts to collect and maintain information on foster placements of children who are adopted from other countries. During the reporting period for 2009-2010 of the districts reporting there was one temporary placement of a child into foster care pursuant to a Voluntary Placement

Agreement for a period of 4 months. Adopted from Liberia in 2006, the child was exhibiting behavior issues and the parents reported difficulty maintaining the child in their home. The anticipated resolution was return to parent at the end of the 4 month period.

Child Welfare Demonstration Projects

New York State is not participating in a Child Welfare Demonstration Project

Health Care Services Overview

Health care services: The Federal Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 (P.L. 110-351) amended the section 422(b)(15) of the Act which previously required an update regarding ongoing efforts by the State agency to actively involve and consult physicians or other appropriate medical professionals in assessing the health and well-being of foster children and determining appropriate medical treatment. The law now requires States and Tribes, in coordination with the State title XIX (Medicaid) agency, and in consultation with pediatricians and other experts in health care, and experts in and recipients of child welfare services, to develop a plan for ongoing oversight and coordination of health care services for children in foster care. States are required to submit a copy of the Health Care Services Plan with their CFSP.

New York State has a state-supervised, locally administered system of foster care. As such, provision and oversight of the medical care received by these children is the responsibility of the social services districts, that are the legal custodians and case managers, and the authorized foster care agencies with which these departments contract to provide foster care services. Over 80% of NYS children in foster care are cared for by non-public foster care agencies (voluntary authorized agencies) rather than local departments of social services. OCFS routinely conducts site visits and provides technical assistance to departments and agencies to monitor the quality of services provided.

The models of delivery for health care services to children in foster care vary significantly across New York State. Some authorized foster care agencies deliver primary health care directly through on-site clinics. Some agencies have contractual agreements with health care providers; for example, an agency may contract with one psychologist in the community to conduct mental health evaluations on all new admissions. Most agencies have medical staff that provide some tracking and oversight of routine and specialty health services. Children residing in foster homes often use community health providers.

While OCFS does not provide direct clinical services to children in foster care, OCFS promulgated regulations regarding appropriate medical care [18 NYCRR 441.22]. OCFS regulation 18 NYCRR 441.22 sets forth the schedule for initial and follow-up health screenings for children in foster care. New York State Social Services Law (SSL) provides the statutory authority for OCFS to supervise social services districts and promulgate regulations. The regulations require that licensed medical professionals assess

the health and well-being of children in foster care and determine appropriate medical treatment. OCFS has also provided practice guidance on necessary and optimal health services for children in foster care with our comprehensive manual, "Working Together: Health Services for Children in Foster Care". This manual was developed in close collaboration with our medical director (a pediatrician), and a representative group of foster care agency and social services staff that included medical professionals.

To support optimal health services for children in foster care, social services districts and voluntary authorized agencies use the services of licensed medical practitioners to inform policy and practice. For example, the NYC Administration for Children's Services (ACS) has a Medical Services Office that is led by a physician. This office provides policy guidance and oversees the health services provided to NYC children in foster care. They meet regularly with medical staff from the authorized foster care agencies to discuss new policies and address concerns.

NYC has a local coalition, the Committee of Mental Health and Healthcare Professionals in Child Welfare, which provides a forum for members to consult with each other on common concerns around health services for children in foster care. This group has also advised OCFS on the contents of CONNECTIONS, New York's SACWIS system. The Health Care Workgroup of the Council of Family and Child Caring Agencies (COFCCA) was instrumental in development of the Foster Care Initiative (FCI). FCI is a project in 2 NYC agencies that demonstrated new approaches for mental health services for children in foster care, including addressing trauma.

In the Albany area, a foster care agency has contracted with Albany School of Pharmacy to advise their medical staff on medication matters. In central New York, several counties have contracted the services of a child psychiatrist, who must approve all prescriptions for psychotropic medications for children in foster care before the prescriptions can be filled. This psychiatrist has also conducted chart reviews of medication usage for children in congregate care settings in Onondaga County and advised the county on the appropriateness of the prescribing practices.

The NYS Coalition for Children's Mental Health Services, headed by foster care agency directors, holds annual Public Policy Forums. These forums attended by community health providers as well as foster care agencies, sponsor speakers and workshops that advance optimal, innovative care. The Office of Mental Health (OMH) has held regional, public forums on their children's mental health plan throughout 2008. This allows our service providers to fully understand and provide input into the state plan.

The Coordinated Children's Services Initiative (CCSI) legislation requires that counties employ a collaborative approach to children with intensive cross-system needs. These collaborative vary in accordance with local government and community resources, and typically include representatives from social services, mental health, developmental disabilities, substance abuse services, schools, and community providers. The goal is to implement a comprehensive, coordinated, individualized service plan for each child.

At the state level, the OCFS medical director is involved in any regulatory or guidance documents disseminated on health issues. OCFS employs psychologists and a consultant psychiatrist. OCFS routinely engages local and national experts, including psychiatrists, physicians, pharmacists, and psychologists to assist in health-related initiatives. Activities in 2008 included a series of 3 teleconferences on trauma, the development and distribution of a guidance document on the use of psychiatric medication for children in out-of-home care, and an interagency collaboration to address Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD). OCFS has used an expert consultant to customize the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) assessment tool for use in our Bridges to Health foster care waiver program.

OCFS implemented a four year pilot of health care coordination for children in foster care in eight agencies across the state. The purpose of this pilot, which was conducted from 2003 - 2007, was to identify models for care coordination in a variety of settings and determine the impact of care coordination on the delivery of optimal health care to children in foster care. In addition to an evaluation component, now posted on our website, a white paper is being written on lessons learned at each site. Project directors and participants at the agencies included pediatricians, psychiatrists, nurses, and physician assistants. By their participation in this pilot, these medical professionals have helped us to define how care coordination can be successfully implemented in a variety of foster care settings. All pilot sites experienced positive outcomes, including the development of a Medical Passport at a Buffalo agency, and the creation of an on-site clinic for primary health care at a foster care agency in the Bronx. (Additionally, see Bridges to Health (B2H) noted in Goal 2).

On September 17, 2010, OCFS issued Administrative Directive 10-OCFS-ADM-12 Health Care Proxy for Youth Transitioning out of Care to Directors of Services, Child Welfare Supervisors, and Staff Development Coordinators to address the federal Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 requirement of a transition plan for youth exiting care at age 18, 19, or 20. The federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, (P.L. 111-148) signed into law on March 23, 2010, amended the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 to require "*information about the importance of designating another individual to make health care treatment decisions on behalf of the child if the child becomes unable to participate in such decisions and the child does not have, or does not want, a relative who would otherwise be authorized under State law to make such decisions and provides the child with the option to execute a health care power of attorney, health care proxy, or other similar document recognized under State law*."

During the completion of the transition plan, the case worker is required to inform and educate youth exiting care at age 18, 19, or 20 of the importance of having a health care proxy, and provide the youth the opportunity to execute a health care proxy by helping the youth obtain and complete the form.

These efforts by OCFS with active collaboration and coordination with sister agencies resulted in our development of a health care services plan for coordination and oversight

of health care for children in foster care. As required per P.L. 111-148 of the Act, OCFS submitted an updated Health Care Oversight and Coordination Plan on September 29, 2010.

Disaster Planning

Emergency Preparedness/ Disaster Plans:
OCFS continues to refine and test its disaster plan to identify, locate and service children in care in the event of disaster. The approach will include responding to new cases as needed, maintaining communication with essential personnel, and how to maintain records and coordinate services under such circumstances.

OCFS plans address state and local needs as well as federal requirements to:

• identify, locate and continue availability of services for children under State care or supervision who are displaced or adversely affected by a disaster;

• respond to new child welfare cases in areas adversely affected by a disaster, and provide services in those cases;

• remain in communication with caseworkers and other essential child welfare personnel who are displaced because of a disaster; and

• preserve essential program records and coordinate services and share information with other States (Section 422(b) (16) of the SSA).

OCFS' paramount priority has been to protect the health and safety of our employees, stakeholders and the children and families we serve. As part of this commitment, OCFS has developed plans to strengthen the agency's ability to prevent, respond and recover from any type of emergency disruption. The following agency plans are available:

- An updated copy of the OCFS Business Continuity Plan (BCP). This Plan formalizes the policies and procedures developed by the agency and serves as a foundation for all OCFS staff to continue to provide essential services during emergencies. There are four divisional program BCP plans which focus on directing resources to support the essential services required to maintain the health and safety of OCFS stakeholders. There are two support units' plans which identify critical functions to support program divisions in the reestablishment of services.

- An updated copy of the OCFS Business Continuity Plan Light. This Plan is an action document used to reestablish essential services during emergencies. It includes listing of agency critical functions, organizational structure, notification chart, 24 hour contact information, relocation sites, and stakeholder contact information.

- An updated copy of the OCFS Division of Child Welfare and Community Services (CWCS) Business Continuity Plan. This Division has the primary responsibility for the oversight of child welfare services delivered by local departments of social services.

- A copy of the template used by OCFS juvenile facilities to develop a "Ready Emergency Data Book", which details each facility's plan in the event of an emergency.

- Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP) in an internal agency management tool which sets forth basic information necessary to prevent, mitigate, respond to and recover from emergencies.

- Emergency Response Plans (ERP) which are individual office plans needed to effectively react to building emergencies.

- OCFS Pandemic Influenza Plan: Established in response to the outbreak of the H1N1 virus in New York State.

The BCPs provide the foundation for OCFS staff to continue to provide essential services during emergencies, and to facilitate an orderly recovery from emergency situations. In support of this, they:

- Outline key concepts of business continuity operations;
- Identify roles and responsibilities of key OCFS staff;
- Describe how the agency and its four programs and two support units will function in the event that their essential services are disrupted;
- Outline the mechanics and flows of communication within and outside the agency;
- Identify when and by whom the plan is activated and provides procedures for relocation and for a return to normal operations;
- Outlines agency requirements for BCP awareness training and exercises;
- Establish procedures to update and maintain the BCPs.

In relation to OCFS' role in oversight, OCFS issued 07-OCFS-ADM-10: "New York State Disaster Plan – Local Department of Social Services Requirements," on July 30, 2007. This ADM outlines the requirements for local departments of social services pursuant the federal Child and Family Services Improvement Act of 2006, P.L. 109-288. The submitted local plans will be incorporated into state planning.

Every year OCFS staff members are sent to a State Emergency Operations Center course sponsored by the New York State Office of Emergency Management (SOEM). This

training ensures that in response to and support of disasters or major emergencies, personnel from partner agencies are appropriately briefed on their respective responsibilities when assigned to work at the OCFS desk at the Emergency Operations Center.

OCFS keeps and active volunteer list to assist in disaster response with approximately 275 volunteers.

OCFS remains compliant with the National Incident Management System (NIMS) required by the federal government which establishes standardized incident management processes, protocols, and procedures that all responders -- Federal, state, tribal, and local -- will use to coordinate and conduct response actions.

In keeping with OCFS core mission of keeping youth in our facilities safe, OCFS participated in a multi-agency regional food adulteration emergency management exercise with county, state and federal partners.

There is no additional information to add or changes to the disaster plan currently. The New York State Disaster Plan was submitted with the 2010-2014 CFSP in June 2009.

Activities and Accomplishments 2010-2011:

An exercise was held at the State Central Registry (SCR) which provided participants the opportunity to practice and evaluate exiting plans, policies and procedures to be followed in the event of an emergency disruption.

OCFS participated in a Radiological Exercise involving the evacuation of all residents in the emergency planning zone around the Indian Point Nuclear Energy Center in Westchester County.

OCFS participated in a Radiological Exercise involving the evacuation of all residents in the emergency planning zone around the Ginna Nuclear Power Plant in Wayne County.

OCFS participated in a Radiological Exercise involving an incident at the James Fitzpatrick Nuclear Power Plant in Oswego County which resulted in the release of radioactive material into the atmosphere over a 50 mile ingestion pathway.

OCFS has created a Geographic Informational Center (GIC) mapping computer application which is widely used as a tool to identify impacted areas for disaster response.

OCFS is a member of the New York State Disaster Preparedness Commission (DPC).

OCFS serves on the New York State Human Services Task Force under the DPC and is the Co-Lead of the NYS Disaster Assistance Center Group.

OCFS is a member of the Regional Catastrophic Planning Team (RCPT) which brings together NY,NJ, PA and CT to collaborate on Human Service response should a catastrophic event occur in the region.

OCFS has been deployed to assist in several NYS emergency response efforts:

- Buffalo NY Plane Crash: Identify stakeholders located in accident proximity
- Binghamton NY Shooting Incident: Deployed to assist in establishment of Family Assistance Center
- Champlain Bridge Closure: Deployed to assist in identifying and provide assistance to affected stakeholders
- Haitian Earthquake Resource Center: Deployed to establish center in response to the American families of earthquake victims in Port au Prince Haiti

Adoptive Incentive Payments

New York State did not receive Adoption Incentive funding in 2010-11