



# Office of Children and Family Services

## New York State's Child and Family Services Plan FY 2015 - 2019

### Annual Progress and Services Report Submitted June 2015

Submittal 15-02

#### 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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### **New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) Overview**

In New York State (NYS), services are locally administered through 58 social services districts (including the five boroughs of New York City), the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe (hereinafter included in the term social services district), and county youth bureaus. Additionally, state dollars are allocated to fund services at the community level. A framework of regulation, policy and procedures is established by the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) and operationalized by the 58 social services districts. While OCFS has responsibility for direct oversight of some services and program development, the daily responsibility to serve clients accessing the various services available within the social services environment rests with the social services districts. Approximately one-third of NYS's districts 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 NYS 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, NYS 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 and activities 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 NYS. Additionally, the state does support various programs such as Healthy Families New York, post-adoption services, kinship programs, safe sleep efforts, and primary prevention programs with other federal and state funds that by definition fall under these categories. This Plan is further evidence that NYS 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) are 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.

The Annual Progress and Services Report (APSR) is made available on the OCFS website here: [http://ocfs.ny.gov/main/sppd/state\\_plans.asp](http://ocfs.ny.gov/main/sppd/state_plans.asp)

### **Annual Progress and Services Report (APSR)**

This Annual Progress and Services Report is the first update to the 2015-2019 Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) submitted on June 30, 2014.

### **Child and Family Services Plans – Counties (County Plans)**

All counties in the state are required to submit a single county plan from Local Departments of Social Services (LDSS) and county Youth Bureaus. Counties were required to submit a new multi-year plan in the fall of 2011, effective January 1, 2012. Counties are then required to submit Annual Plan Updates through 2016. OCFS reviews and approves the plans, and in conjunction with the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS), Office of Probation and Correctional Alternatives (OPCA) approves the Person in Need of Supervision (PINS) Diversion Services Plans. The plans are reviewed by individual program areas for trends in strategies being implemented with an eye towards “bright spots” that can be replicated in other counties. Likewise, challenges are noted, and this helps inform needed technical assistance and additional training needs. An example of a “bright spot” is the work being done in Nassau County around young infants, called “Babies Can’t Wait”. Nassau has presented on this program at various OCFS events in an effort to help other counties replicated the program.

### **Accomplishments for 2014-2015:**

- OCFS continues to listen to feedback collected from the local districts and regional offices during current and prior year’s planning cycles and continues to streamline the county plan submission and reporting requirements, which includes an on-line Annual Plan Update process.
- New York State Division of Probation and Community Alternatives (DPCA) continues with its partnership to jointly review and approve the PINS Diversion Services Plan Component of the plan. The review and approval process was completed by way of phone conferences between OCFS staff and DPCA staff allowing for shared dialogue, coordinated review/approval of plans, and direct support to districts.
- OCFS has involved local districts, voluntary agencies, and cross departmental staff in the development, review, and approval of the county plans.
- OCFS, as indicated later in this APSR, has begun work on a corresponding Child Welfare Practice Logic Model that will also be utilized to further improve state and local planning.

### **Plans for 2015-2016:**

- OCFS has begun revision of the county plan template to capture county CQI infrastructure.
- OCFS has developed a workgroup including home office, regional office and LDSS representation for revision of the county plan template.

### **Child and Family Services Review**

OCFS is currently planning and preparing for the next Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) that will occur in 2016. Staff have designed collection tools that will be used to gather additional data related to the systemic factors.

### **Title IV-E Plan**

New York State submitted a Comprehensive Title IV-E State Plan in accordance with ACYF-CB-PI-13-05, issued April 17, 2013. On September 3, 2013, New York State submitted a plan

amendment documenting procedures for the transfer of responsibility for the placement and care of children under a State title IV-E program to a Tribal title IV-E agency or an Indian Tribe with a title IV-E agreement. The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Administration for Children and Families approved the amended plan effective July 1, 2013. Further, as a result of the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act of 2014 (Public Law (P.L.) 113-183), and as required by ACYF-CB-PI-14-06, New York State submitted a Title IV-E State Plan Amendment (Submittal 15-01) on January 20, 2015. DHHS approved New York State's plan amendment with an effective date of January 1, 2015.

## **2016 Annual Progress and Services Report (APSR)**

### **1. General Information**

The Office of Children and Family Services (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 (NYSCB) 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 New York City), 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, preschoolers, and school-age children and their families.

The Executive Office of OCFS, encompassing the Office of the Commissioner, the Office of the Executive Deputy Commissioner, the New York City 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 (CWCS), Division of Juvenile Justice and Opportunities for Youth (DJJOY), and the New York State Commission for the Blind (NYSCB). The support divisions/offices include: Division of Administration (Admin), Division of Legal Affairs (Legal), Office of Communications (Communications), Office of Strategic Planning and Policy Development (SPPD), and the Office of Special Investigations (SIU).

OCFS is responsible for all elements of state-operated juvenile justice programs, including administering and managing residential facilities, a reception center for male and female adolescents, adjudicated as juvenile delinquents by family courts.

OCFS operates 12 juvenile justice facilities (one of which has a reception unit), one reception center, for youth placed in the custody of the OCFS Commissioner. There are also 12 Community Multi-Services Offices (CMSO) and three satellite offices, statewide, that are responsible for the provision of services to the youth and his/her family from day one of OCFS placement. OCFS staff also work with local detention and community providers including local social services districts, probation, parole, mental health, schools, and others to implement DJJOY initiatives at the county and regional level.

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

#### *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.

#### *Collaboration*

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 12 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.

The OCFS Native American Services (NAS) unit actively interacts with the Indian Tribes/Nations to offer general forums for discussions of issues, as well as to address specific child/family circumstances and consult with the Tribal/Nation communities. Monthly meetings with Tribal representatives provide the opportunity for ongoing dialogue. NAS is active in supporting and sharing feedback from the Tribes/Nations and for facilitating meetings for direct feedback to OCFS 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 as we work to address safety, permanency, and well-being for the children, youth, and families of New York State. 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.

Additionally, OCFS meets frequently with the New York State Office of Court Administration (OCA) on three levels. There is the OCFS/OCA Leadership Team, which consists of high level staff from OCA and OCFS; Specifically, from OCA: Deputy Chief Administrative Judge for outside of New York City, the Administrative Judge for New York City, and the Supervising Judge of Family Court in the Ninth District, the coordinator for the Court Improvement Project; and from OCFS: the Deputy Commissioner for Child Welfare, the Deputy Counsel for Legal, the Associate Commissioner for Prevention, Permanency and Program Support, the Associate Counsel for Legislation and Special Projects, and the Assistant Commissioner for Regional Operations and Practice Improvement. This group oversees the implementation of New York State's collaborative efforts to improve safety, permanency, and well-being at the state level and at the local level through the work of county multidisciplinary collaboration teams. The OCFS/OCA Leadership Team contributes to improved child safety, permanency and well-being by identifying systemic obstacles to improving child welfare outcomes and engaging in joint planning to address these concerns. A major achievement of the team was OCA's decision in 2010 to begin sharing the court's child welfare data with OCFS. The leadership team's system analysis and decision-making is now based on data from both systems. The members of this team also bring an historical perspective to the understanding past policy decisions by each system. Team members attend national convenings and bring a national perspective to the work. Finally, by working together over time team members have developed good relationships so that now there is greater freedom to pick up the phone or send an email to solve problems or answer questions quickly and directly.

The second level is the Statewide Multidisciplinary Child Welfare Work-group – this work group consists of selected commissioners of local departments of social services or their designees, Family Court judges, Court Attorney Referee, attorneys for the parents, attorneys for children, Executive Directors, county attorneys, and coordinators from the counties with the highest foster care populations. Work group members are selected based on their reputation for excellent work and depth of knowledge. The group operates as a “think tank” and strategic planning body, providing information to the Leadership team, as well as to the local collaborative teams, pertaining to improving collaboration between Family Court, local departments of social services, attorneys for children and parents, and other stakeholders. The work-group identifies systemic issues that need to be resolved at the leadership level and programmatic issues that need to be resolved on the local level. Training and technical assistance to the local collaborations is arranged by the work-group.

The workgroup developed a logic model that identified system gaps. These gaps became the focus of team meetings in which we looked at the historical trauma experienced by the Native American community and its impact on childrearing; the need for trauma informed lawyers, judges and caseworkers; and misunderstanding about the roles and responsibilities of the players in child welfare proceedings. The meeting on Native American children resulted in requests from several counties for updated ICWA training.

A curriculum was developed and trainings provided to multidisciplinary audiences in four counties on the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders in child abuse and neglect proceedings. The training was developed to address a lack of civility among attorneys and child

welfare staff due to a poor understanding of the legal and ethical obligations of the stakeholders. The incivility resulted in low worker morale, poor communication among stakeholders and the failure to identify common goals and resolve cases without recourse to lengthy litigation. Training evaluations have been very positive, indicating increased knowledge and understanding of the other stakeholders' roles and indicating that the trainees plan to make practice changes based on the training.

A training on trauma will be provided to a multidisciplinary audience of representatives from counties in October of 2015.

The third level is the Regional Collaborative Work that groups representatives from county collaborative teams and composed of administrators and staff from local departments of social services, Family Court Judges, attorneys for children and parents and any other local entity that supports the work of the local collaborative from a particular region. Training is often offered at the regional level and includes opportunities for networking with peers from nearby counties. Regional meetings allow county teams to learn from each other and share successes and challenges. The Regional collaborative meetings/events are supported by OCFS and OCA staff relative to training, data, and technical assistance.

#### *Examples of ongoing collaborations*

OCFS has continued the practice of involving both agency staff and state stakeholders in discussions regarding the delivery of services to children, youth and families.

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.

#### **Accomplishments for 2014-2015:**

Since December 2007, a meeting of state agency commissioners (or their designee) 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 for 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). The Commissioners meet quarterly to continue the discussion and to develop and implement joint solutions to improve the lives of children, youth, and families. One accomplishment of this process is the Regional interagency Technical Assistance Teams (RTATs). RTATs are teams that are comprised of representatives from many different systems and are crucial to New York's cross-systems work. Currently there are five RTATs in New York State in the regions of Central New York, Hudson River, Long Island, New York City, and Western New York.

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

#### Child Safety

On November 18, 2014 OCFS and OCA co-sponsored a statewide training “Encircling Children with Safety: Using Child Safety and Risk Assessments to Protect Children”. The training brought together family court judges; attorneys for parents, children and local department of social services districts; and child welfare administrators to deepen their understanding of the behaviors and conditions that create immediate or impending danger to children and how to respond effectively. This training was developed after hearing feedback that many judges and attorneys representing parents and children were unaware of the structured decision-making tools used by CPS workers to make child safety decisions. The training explained the internal CPS process used to assess risk and make safety decisions. It also provided a presentation by a Family Court judge about the legal standards and obligations used to make decisions in court. A panel representing various stakeholders discussed how they each approach their job in child abuse and neglect cases. The training resulted in a great deal of dialogue among participants and the evaluations showed that participants increased their knowledge in the area of risk assessment and child safety. The training was videotaped so it could be used for wider audiences at the county level and several counties have requested it for 2015 and 2016. Moreover, feedback from the training has resulted in OCFS working to update and improve its risk and safety assessment model.

#### Child Fatalities

The NYS DOH and OCFS have continued to work collaboratively on prevention of child deaths, and to promote multidisciplinary review of child fatalities. DOH, as lead agency in the National Institute for Children’s Health Quality Collaborative Improvement & Innovation Network to Reduce Infant Mortality (ColIN), has invited OCFS to participate and to co-chair the subcommittee to address unsafe sleep deaths of infants across NYS. The ColIN is expected to identify and implement preventive strategies to reduce sudden unexpected infant deaths at least 10 percent by September 2016.

OCFS has funded local programs to distribute portable cribs to families who have no safe place for their infant to sleep. This program is expected to continue in 2015. OCFS will work closely with the ColIN to identify and implement other preventive initiatives identified by the multidisciplinary statewide team.

OCFS continues to fund 18 Child Fatality Review Teams, required to review all child deaths occurring in families receiving child protective or preventive services, when a child dies in foster care or if the child’s death is suspected to be due to abuse or maltreatment. Teams are encouraged to review all child deaths and complete data entry for the purpose of identifying risk factors and prevention strategies.

Commissioners from OTDA and OCFS have established operational work teams to address various 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.

#### Kinship

In May 2014, OCFS and OTDA began conducting quarterly conference calls to assist local department of social services districts and providers working with kinship families. The purpose of these sessions is to share information about recommended practices, resources and benefits; and to clarify questions and concerns.

In October 2014, OCFS issued a Local Commissioner's Memorandum titled, *Accurate Reporting of Kinship Foster Care Placement*, (14-OCFS-LCM-15). The policy requires that LDSSs enter a new field into the CONNECTIONS system for foster care placements that indicates if the foster parents are a relative to the child placed with them. This field was added so that more accurate data could be collected on the number of children placed with relatives in foster care placements.

In January 2015, OCFS issued an Administrative Directive titled, *Definition of Siblings and Expansion of the Relative Notification Requirements*, (15-OCFS-ADM-01) as part of the implementation of the federal P.L. 113-183 Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act. This law expanded the relative notification requirements to include the birth or adoptive parents of a child's sibling, with legal custody of such sibling, among the adult relatives who must be identified and, with limited exceptions, notified when a child is removed from his or her home. The policy provides information to LDSSs and VAs on the law and expansion to the relative notification requirements.

In January 2015, OCFS issued an Administrative Directive titled, *Continuation of the Kinship Guardianship Assistance Program (KinGAP) to a Successor Guardian*, (15-OCFS-ADM-02) as part of the implementation of the federal P.L. 113-183 Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act. This law allows for the continuation of KinGAP payments to a successor guardian upon death or incapacitation of the KinGAP relative guardian. The policy provides information to LDSSs and VAs on the law and process for this continuation of KinGAP to the successor guardian.

OCFS created and announced a new Kinship Request for Proposals (RFP) on March 3, 2015, scheduled to begin services effective September 1, 2015. In addition to promoting statewide access to kinship services, this RFP seeks to establish a cohesive model for OCFS kinship programs by researching evidence based-practices, emerging practices and promising practices in the field of Kinship Care.

#### **Plans for 2015-2016:**

OCFS plans to reissue an updated version of the *Continuation of the Kinship Guardianship Assistance Program (KinGAP) to a Successor Guardian* policy to provide additional information on clearances of the prospective successor guardian that was received through ACF guidance. In addition, OCFS plans to update KinGAP materials to reflect the successor guardian option.

OCFS is currently working to provide a shortened version of the relative handbook *Having a Voice & a Choice, New York State Handbook for Relatives Raising Children* with tools to assist relatives and workers in making the best caregiving choice for their family. OCFS received feedback from relatives and the field that the handbook is too lengthy to effectively present the options to relatives in caring for their kin. In an effort to meet the need of a shortened version but yet not losing the essential information that is needed to make important placement decisions, OCFS is working to revise the handbook to provide the information needed in a more concise manner. OCFS is developing a tool to be used to assist relatives with the questions they need to ask themselves to make the best choice for their family and are making a chart that highlights key information for each option they have for initial placements.

#### **Human Trafficking**

Throughout 2014 and 2015, OCFS made presentations/trainings on human trafficking to various audiences throughout the state that included migrant educators, child protection and foster care supervisors, voluntary agency executive staff, Family Resource Center staff, SUNY Albany social work students, and youth. OCFS collaborated with the Office of Victim Services (OVS) and the Albany County Crime Victims and Sexual Assault Center to provide a taped human trafficking training for the curriculum they use for their rape crisis staff. OCFS also collaborated with the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) to deliver inlc training to the LDSS Human Trafficking Liaisons on the NYS Anti-trafficking law and confirmation/certification of victims protocol.

In July 2014, OCFS was invited to participate in OTDA's New York Public Welfare Association (NYPWA) presentation titled, *Human Trafficking Victims: The Local District Response*. The presentation focused on the protocol for referral and local district response to confirmed human trafficking victims in New York State. OCFS specifically provided information on the intersection between child welfare and trafficking and child trafficking issues.

In December 2014, OCFS staff from the Office of Strategic Planning and Policy Development (SPPD), the Division of Legal Affairs, the Division of Child Welfare and Community Services (CWCS)/ and the Division of Juvenile Justice and Opportunities for Youth (DJJOY) met with four representatives from Brazilian state and governmental municipal agencies, including a judge, to discuss the intersection between human trafficking and child welfare. The meeting was coordinated by the International Center of the Capital Region through the Promoting Citizens' Security By Confronting Trafficking in Persons Project. Attendees discussed the similarities and differences between the anti-trafficking efforts in Brazil and New York. The Brazilian guests were particularly interested in services to trafficking victims and the perception of victims by law enforcement and the general public. Meetings like this with our international counterparts assist in our understanding of the global impact of human trafficking and fosters collaborative efforts to combat trafficking.

In January 2015, the following events took place:

- OCFS policy staff was invited by DHHS to participate in Project Work Group of the Health and Human Services (HHS) Region II Training Initiative on Human Trafficking Prevention. The goal of the initiative is to develop training curricula in English and Spanish to address the health and social service needs of women, children, and youth at risk for human trafficking across the jurisdictions of Puerto Rico, US Virgin Islands, New Jersey and New York. The purpose is to provide prevention education on the crisis of human trafficking; develop greater awareness of the health and social service needs of trafficking survivors and identify local resources to respond to them; and build a network of governmental agencies and nongovernmental partners to better respond to the crisis of human trafficking. The project is expected to take about a year.
- OCFS marked Human Trafficking Awareness Month with several awareness activities including, turning the lobby light blue, posting human trafficking posters in regional office buildings and DJJOY facilities, publishing an op-ed in a local newspaper, promoting awareness information through our Facebook and Twitter accounts, screening a movie on trafficking with a discussion after for OCFS staff, and highlighting human trafficking for an awareness day. During the awareness day we had OCFS staff wear blue and set up a display table with information and resources about human trafficking.
- OCFS participated with our state partners from the New York State Interagency Task Force on Human Trafficking to debut a poster to raise public awareness and bring

attention to the issue of human trafficking in New York. The posters provide information to those who may be victims of human trafficking as well as to concerned citizens to urge them to report suspected incidents of such exploitation. The posters are being displayed at service areas along the New York State Thruway with information and a toll-free hotline number for the National Human Trafficking Resource Center.

- OCFS presented at the NYPWA Winter Conference on the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act (P.L. 113-183). The presentation included the requirements that impact local departments of social services, preliminary implementation ideas that OCFS has identified, and a solicitation of discussion and feedback from the districts.

### **Plans for 2015-2016:**

OCFS will continue the work to implement the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act. OCFS has several workgroups working on different parts of the federal act. One workgroup is on the identification, documentation, reporting and providing appropriate services for child sex trafficking victims requirements. OCFS is developing a protocol and will issue a policy to address these requirements by September 2015. Once the policy is issued, OCFS will be providing training on child trafficking and the policy that was developed. In addition, by September 2015, OCFS will be implementing a protocol to respond to children who have runaway from care and to screen them for sex trafficking upon return to care. By September 2016, there are other requirements that must be implemented such as reporting child sex trafficking to law enforcement within 24 hours and expanding the current notification process for AWOL youth to include a notification to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC).

OCFS will continue to work with the Statewide Interagency Task Force on Human Trafficking partners to try to bring the interactive child trafficking/*Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children* (CSEC) play *Kourtney's Choice* to New York schools. *Kourtney's Choice* is a US adaptation of a play that has been very successful in promoting awareness and prevention among school-aged children in the U.K. Taskforce members have been working with the U.K company, AlterEgo, LTD. to sponsor a showcase of the play for interested parties.

OCFS is planning to issue an Informational Letter on the Safe Harbour laws titled *Laws to Address Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC)*. This letter will provide information to LDSSs and VAs on the legal protections that CSEC children have due to NY's safe harbour laws and the intersection with the family court.

There is currently some state trafficking legislation proposed that if passed, will result in the need for changes to the state protocol on referring individuals for confirmation, as well as some other changes that will have an impact on social services. If the legislation passes, there will be a need to revise policies and training to LDSSs and voluntary agencies.

### Close to Home Initiative

The State Fiscal Year 2012-13 enacted budget included authorization for a sweeping reform on the juvenile placement system for youth from New York City. The *Close to Home Initiative*, allowed New York City to gradually assume custody of juvenile delinquent youth sent first to state operated non-secure facilities. In 2015, Phase II of the Close to Home Initiative is expected to be implemented, which will allow NYC to take custody of youth sent first to limited

secure facilities as a result of delinquency. OCFS will continue to operate secure facilities for all youth statewide. This significant reform will fundamentally restructure the delivery of residential rehabilitative services for New York City justice - involved youth, providing an opportunity for the implementation of evidence informed models of care that address the risks and needs of young people in the context of their families and their communities. OCFS continues its collaborative effort with New York City on this initiative.

#### Initiatives with Sister State Agencies

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, OMH, OPWDD, and DOH continue to work to provide comprehensive services to children with cross-system's needs.

#### Bridges to Health Home and Community Based Medicaid Services Waivers (B2H)

OCFS, with support from DOH, continued to implement the B2H Medicaid Waiver Program 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 across New York State. 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. As of July 1, 2015, 3,054 children were enrolled, 1,115 (36.5 percent) of these children are actively in care, and 2,110 children who were enrolled in B2H and adopted (January 2008 – July 1, 2015).

#### 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 provide training and support to 21 teams in six counties and in 2015 brought four Family Support Units from Staten Island into the project. All teams are 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. Two regional based one-day symposiums were held in 2014, one in the lower Hudson Valley in June and the second in the Capital Region in September. OCFS is planning a one day regional symposium in the lower Hudson Valley region for October 2015. Efforts are underway in 2015 to align Teaming with the KEYS (Keys to Excellence in Your Supervision) model of supervision and the FAR (Family Assessment Response) practice model to better support caseworkers and supervisors, and improve safety, permanency and wellbeing outcomes for children and families.

Statewide System Reform Program: Nationally, Family Treatment Courts (FTC) are a growing and promising response to the challenge of families impacted by parental substance use disorders and child abuse and neglect. FTCs have shown that the integration of treatment and other health related issues, social services and court practice can produce superior child welfare and treatment outcomes than those achieved by the core collaborative partners—child welfare, treatment and the courts—operating in relative isolation of one another. Unfortunately, in NYS FTCs suffered a tremendous set back in 2011 when NYS experienced a severe fiscal crisis that resulted in the layoffs of over 500 court staff statewide. Many FTC employees lost their jobs, which resulted in the closure of many FTCs around the state.

Recently, New York State was one of five jurisdictions around the country chosen to receive funding from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) under the Statewide System Reform Program (SSRP). Through this grant, New York has a unique opportunity to move towards full scale statewide changes throughout the child welfare, treatment and court systems. The primary goal of the SSRP grant is to increase the scale and scope of FTCs in NYS. This will be accomplished by infusing and institutionalizing the FTC general processes into the daily courtroom operations at the local level.

Although the Office of Court Administration's Child Welfare Court Improvement Project (CWCIP) is the lead coordinating entity in this system change project, OCFS and the Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS), are mandated partners and are fully participating in designing this innovative reform to the three systems.

Throughout the two year time period of the SSRP grant, the project will receive in-depth technical assistance from Children and Family Futures (CFF). CFF will work with the three agencies in order to produce a plan in the first year, which includes statewide policies and procedures and performance measures that serve to increase the number of families served and infuse FTC practices and principles into general child welfare practice in order to achieve statewide systemic reform. CFF will continue working with NYS in the second year in order to effectively implement the systems reform plan, with the goal being to create a five year strategic plan that reforms the state's handling of cases involving substance use disorder and child abuse and neglect.

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 the OCFS Commissioner, other members include judges, lawyers, advocates, physicians, legislators, and state and local officials.

The New York State Child Welfare Court Improvement Project (CIP) began in 1994 and was administered by the Permanent Commission on Justice for Children until 2006. At that time, 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. OCFS and OCA

have built a strong partnership to support effective collaboration between the family courts and the social services districts with the highest foster care populations in the state. The Statewide Court Collaboration Team, made up of stakeholders from across the state, designs and oversees the implementation of court collaboration initiatives on the state, regional and local levels. This includes sponsoring regular local and regional multi-disciplinary training events and supporting the development of enhanced family court and child welfare practices. The project also provides a process by which data maintained by both local social services districts and courts can be shared to evaluate the impact of innovations that promote improved outcomes for children.

The Seneca Nation Peacemaker Courts Collaboration began in 2005 and includes judges and court personnel from the 8<sup>th</sup> 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 Seneca Nation of Indians took part in the Federal-State-Tribal Courts Forum meeting held on October 23, 2014. Both OCFS and the Seneca Nation of Indians are scheduled to attend the next Federal-State-Tribal Court Forum on April 30, 2015.

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.

In 2014, OCFS released a Request for Proposals (RFP) which included CPS/DV collaborations as a preferred model. As a result of the RFP, 16 CPS/DV projects in five regions are now being funded: four in the Albany region; three in the Buffalo region; one in the Rochester region; three in the Spring Valley region; and, five in the Syracuse region.

New York State Department of Education and the Courts: Since 2010, OCFS, the State Education Department (SED) and the Courts have been working with OCFS to support educational stability and improve educational outcomes for children in foster care. All three systems have issued “memos to the field” to educators, child welfare workers and family court judges across the state to inform them about the importance of educational stability and explain their obligations under the law. Additionally, OCFS and SED have entered into an information sharing agreement to ease the transfer of school information for children in foster care. A collaborative workgroup continues to meet to address school transportation and other areas of concern.

Nassau, Westchester and The New York City Administration for Children’s Services (ACS) are working with OCFS to pilot a model of educational collaboration for foster children by conducting collaborative meetings, assigning specific educational liaisons in the child welfare agencies and foster care liaisons in the school districts and by working with the family court judges. The pilot includes efforts to reduce the numbers of children placed outside of their home school district through targeted foster parent recruitment. OCFS has adapted the Casey Family Program’s Endless Dream, educational liaison curriculum to make it NYS specific. The first offering of this training will be in June 2015. In addition, OCFS and SED have finalized the data share testing phase. In June 2015, OCFS will begin to receive education data for the more than 14,000 school aged children in care.

Children of Incarcerated Parents Initiative: OCFS' release 11-OCFS-ADM-7 "Incarcerated Parents and Parents in Residential Substance Abuse Treatment with Children in Foster Care: Termination of Parental Rights and Other Issues" provided direction on Chapter 113 of the Laws of 2010. OCFS created training for local districts and the New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (DOCCS) on the implications of the law and assisting parents with maintaining meaningful relationships with their children and providing districts and correctional staff with resources. In addition, OCFS created posters pertaining to parents' rights despite being incarcerated or in a residential substance abuse treatment center. These materials are available on the OCFS website at [http://ocfs.ny.gov/main/policies/external/OCFS\\_2011/](http://ocfs.ny.gov/main/policies/external/OCFS_2011/).

Currently, OCFS remains an active member of the Osborne Association's New York Initiative for Children with Incarcerated Parents, a member of the steering committee. OCFS continues to provide transport for youth with incarcerated parents to meet with legislators in Albany. In 2014, the New York Initiative for Children with Incarcerated Parents (Initiative) had significant accomplishments via collaboration and has it pertains to the well-being of children impacted by parental incarceration:

NYS Office of Probation and Correctional Alternatives now highlights Family Responsibility Statements (the needs of children are considered during sentencing decision-making and parole hearings) as a best practice in Fundamentals Training delivered to all new probation officers in New York State.

Ashley's Law was signed into law in New York State in August 2014. This law requires DOCCS to make visiting rules and requirements for each facility publicly available on their website and via a toll-free number. As of November 2014, DOCCS has visiting rules for each facility posted on their website.

The Initiative was a collaborative effort between the NYC and Albany Police Departments regarding the development of child sensitive arrest protocols.

In 2015, the Initiative will continue to prioritize capacity building amongst partners in the initiative to inform public and policy decision, improve data collection and research on the population, and work with the International Association of Chiefs of Police on Arrested Parents protocol. Ongoing priorities are that NYS DOCCS considers proximity in placing parents and protecting the rights of children with incarcerated parents.

#### Racial Equity and Cultural Competence Initiative

Since 2007, OCFS has implemented the Disproportionate Minority Representation (DMR) Initiative, renamed the Racial Equity and Cultural Competence (RECC) Initiative in 2009. The RECC work was 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 2009, we began to include Native American children and families in our data collections and in the work. The initiative examined 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 and services to the blind). Each OCFS division has staff representatives on this committee. OCFS is also engaging local partners in this effort.

The OCFS Division of Child Welfare and Community Services now includes the Bureau of Strategic Partnerships and Collaboration. The Race Equity and Cultural Competence work is

managed and lead by the Bureau. The Division continues to work with regional office staff to begin to develop their capacity to provide leadership and technical support and assistance to the counties. Technical assistance takes the form of coaching and mentoring regional office staff in their efforts to work with county DSS and other stakeholders to address the high and sometimes extreme rates of foster care placement for Black, Native and Latino children. Technical assistance can also include providing access to input and support from experts including but not limited to Casey Family Programs, and the Center for the Study of Social Policy.

During 2014, 13 New York counties continued to work with OCFS on local efforts to reduce the extreme and high rates of disparities for black children in out-of-home placements. OCFS continued to work with family court judges in Westchester County, Monroe County, and the Bronx, and supported these efforts by providing presentations on data, promising practices, and access to national experts. Our work with the judges has included sharing data on race and ethnicity, attending and participating in meetings that they convene locally, and making presentations to their staff on promising strategies and approaches. There has been some progress in two counties that have experienced lower rates of foster care placements for Black children.

During this period, Casey Family Programs (CFP) sponsored a strategic peer planning meeting for the representatives from the involved counties and OCFS regional office staff. OCFS began work with the schools of social welfare and social work to encourage their consideration to add and emphasis on race equity, racial and ethnic disparities as part of the curriculum.

National expert Khatib Waheed continued to work in New York State and provided several two day Race Equity Learning Exchanges for the managers and staff of the Division of Child Welfare and Community Services. Race Equity Learning Exchanges have been one of the tools that OCFS has embraced in an effort to prepare staff at different levels in the organization to understand the history and context that resulted in many of the racial disparities that we now contend with in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems, as well as in other systems that have an impact on the child welfare and juvenile justice systems including the educational, health and mental health systems. As a result of these sessions, the staff have additional tools, skills and competencies that will enable them to use a race equity lens when doing their work with children, youth, families and communities.

The Race Equity and Cultural Competence steering committee met during the period and were convened by the assistant commissioner for the OCFS CWCS. A white paper is being developed by staff from the Bureau of Strategic Partnerships and Collaborations and it is expected to be finalized during 2015. A Racial Impact process and tools were pilot tested during the period and a presentation to the RECC steering committee is planned for 2015. The Racial Impact process and tools were developed so that OCFS leadership, through the Race Equity Cultural Competence Steering Committee, have an option to consider using RIS as part of the policy development process and when considering regulations and legislative proposals that may come from external sources, such as the legislature. Racial or Equity Impact statements are being used in several states across the nation to avoid the unintended disparities that can result from policy development that has adverse impact on certain communities and neighborhoods.

### Fatherhood Initiatives

OCFS continues to encourage and support the development of responsible fatherhood initiatives.

The OCFS Division of Juvenile Justice and Opportunities for Youth (DJJOY) continued to implement and develop its fatherhood initiative. The Brookwood Secure Center continued to convene fatherhood group sessions throughout the reporting period. MacCormick Secure Center program continued to lead the effort within DJJOY. Highland Residential Center father's group met as needed since the numbers of young men who are fathers remains relatively small.

OCFS, OTDA and other stakeholders sponsored and provided leadership for the of the "Dads Take Your Child to School" initiative. OCFS continued efforts to expand the program, which is now active throughout the state, and included more than 500 schools and child care centers.

A Fatherhood Summit is being planned for November 2015 in collaboration with Casey Family Programs and will be open to local department of social services, voluntary agencies, and community preventive programs.

### Advantage After School Program

New York State created the Advantage After School Program (AASP) in 2000, to provide quality youth development opportunities to school-age children and youth for the hours directly after school. These programs are supported by school, community, public and private partnerships. AASP offers a broad range of educational, recreational and culturally diverse, age appropriate activities that integrate what happens in the school day. Youth and family involvement in program planning and implementation is a key component. Programs may also extend hours into the evening hours, particularly when serving older adolescents. AASPs are a true representation of community partnering for kids and their families.

As of July 2014, OCFS contracted with 112 community-based organizations to provide AASPs to approximately 15,000 children and youth. In SFY 2014-15, OCFS issued a Request for Proposals to incorporated not-for-profit, community-based organizations and faith-based organizations to serve school-age children. Awards were announced in July of 2014, with a contract start date of September 2014. OCFS currently has 117 contracts as part of the \$19,255,300 appropriated for the AASP for SFY 2015-16.

The AASP partnered with the New York State Association of Youth Bureaus on October 28-29, 2014, for the 44<sup>th</sup> Annual Youth Development Training Conference, theme "Engage. Encourage. Empower Youth!" The keynote address was delivered by William Kellibrew, international advocate for civil, human, women, children, and victims' rights. Mr. Kellibrew is a sought-after speaker and expert on violence, trauma, trauma-informed care, and children exposed to violence. The AASP delivered a workshop on "The Nuts & Bolts of Contract Development." OCFS had 82 Advantage contractors represented with approximately 120 people in attendance at the conference. All 39 workshops offered were eligible for School Age Child Care (SACC) training credits.

The main audience for this conference was:

- County and Local Youth Bureaus, whose main function is administering and monitoring youth development funding to youth serving programs.

- Advantage After School programs, which are directly providing services to school age children in the after school hours.

## **2. Assessment of Performance**

### **Monitoring Outcome Performance**

The outcome data cited within this APSR is based on the performance indicators promulgated by the federal Children's Bureau in October 2014.

Since the release of the outcome data, OCFS has taken several steps to better understand the State's performance on the new CFSR metrics and to promote a data informed CQI process. Prior to the release of the new CFSR metrics in October 2014, OCFS produced and disseminated county level data packets twice a year. Packets summarized both statewide and local performance on a wide array of permanency and safety related measures, providing both recent snapshots and multi-year trends. Counties were encouraged to use these packets to monitor performance and formulate plans for system improvement.

With the adoption of new federal metrics, NYS has had to revisit and update these data packets. As a state-supervised, county-administered child welfare system, disseminating and examining how performance varied across localities on the new measures was a crucial first step. Unfortunately, while the federal government provided state level calculations for each of the new metrics across a three year period, neither county level breakouts nor the tools to create them were shared. As a result, OCFS has invested considerable time and resources into creating its own "CFSR baseline" analysis files, using the AFCARS/NCAND submissions and outcome definitions broadly specified within the Federal Register as a road map.

While not an exact match, these OCFS analytical files closely approximate the State's federally reported performance and have enabled OCFS to take a more nuanced look at four of the five CFSR permanency metrics on both a state and local level. From a statewide perspective, the data have been broken out by jurisdiction and child demographics (e.g., age, gender, race/ethnicity) in hopes of identifying both "bright spots" – those localities and/or sub-groups of youth in foster care that are achieving higher permanency rates and may act as models for change, and those areas where improvement is particularly needed. This data has been reviewed by OCFS senior management and regional offices and is being used to guide statewide planning discussions. Copies of the statewide county comparison, as well as county specific demographic breakouts and performance have also been shared with local districts so that LDSS commissioners can begin their own local planning discussions. To facilitate those efforts, the State has held a series of data calls with the districts that outline the new metrics and their measurement, and provide an overview of the results.

Concerted efforts have also been made to embed this information into the State's existing infrastructure for data informed practice. Through a contractual relationship with OCFS, the Chapin Hall Center for State Child Welfare Data has developed a longitudinal file that incorporates the AFCARS foster care rules, thus allowing counties to drill down to the types of cases that are driving their performance on a particular permanency measure and to begin to identify practices impacting which groups of children achieve permanency. Moreover, the incorporation of federal outcome definitions into the Center for State Child Welfare Data

provides both the state and county leadership with a mechanism for on-going monitoring of permanency outcomes with samples beyond the CFSR baseline period.

In the upcoming months, the State will turn its efforts to the replication of the new safety outcomes. As with the permanency metrics outlined above, OCFS intends to generate safety data packets that describe how observed performance varies across localities and subgroups of youth in foster care.

In addition to the CFSR metrics, OCFS produces a number of data products to assist counties in improving outcomes associated with disproportionate minority representation (DMR). These include annual county level data packets of DMR at key decision points in the child welfare system – intakes, indications, admissions to foster care and in foster care. Additionally, OCFS produces zip code level maps of DMR at each of the decision points and that are shared with districts. Counties can also utilize the OCFS data warehouse to obtain individual child level information on race/ethnicity and a number of other factors that would assist districts in effective case management to achieve DMR reduction.

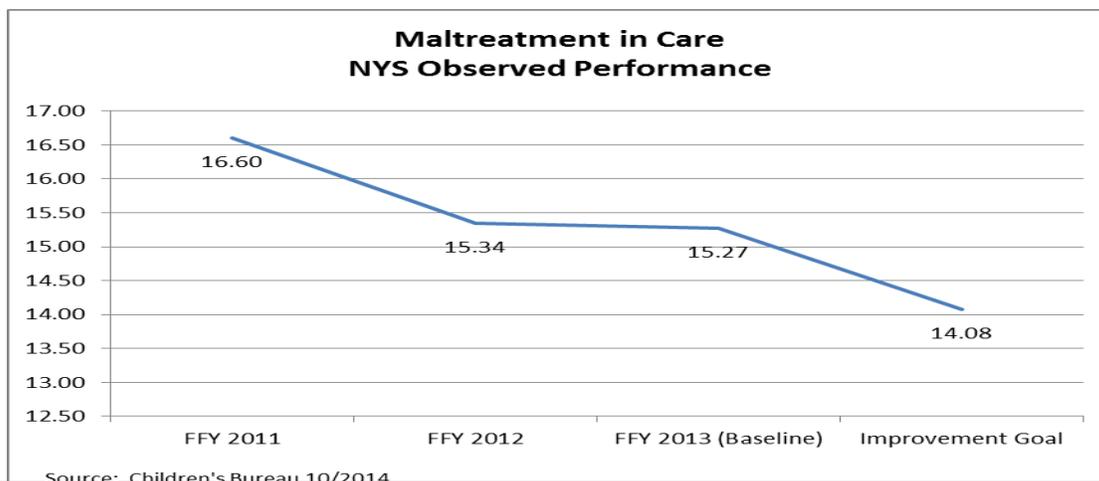
**CFSR Outcome Indicators:**

**Safety Outcome 1: Children are first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect;**  
**Safety Outcome 2: Children are safely maintained in their own homes whenever possible and appropriate.**

OCFS has reached out to the Children’s Bureau several times requesting the syntax by which state’s performance was calculated. The syntax is needed in order to allow OCFS to replicate measures on a county specific level. As a jurisdiction that is state supervised, locally administered, the absence of the syntax prevents OCFS from being able to share county specific data using the same methodology. OCFS again asks that the Administration for Children’s and Families make the syntax available to all states immediately.

**Federal Indicator: Maltreatment in Foster Care:** Of all children in foster care during a 12 month period, what is the rate of victimization per day of foster care? (Baseline: FFY 2013)

According to the Children’s Bureau’s federal indicators, in NYS for the 2013 federal fiscal year, the total number of foster care days used was 7,722,797 and within those 7.7 million days, there were 1,205 indicated child abuse/maltreatment reports involving foster children. The baseline rate of victimization per day of foster care (times 100,000 days) for NYS was 15.6, which is above the national average of 8.5 victimizations per (100,000 foster care) days. The rate of maltreatment in foster care in NYS has steadily declined (improved) since FFY 2011.



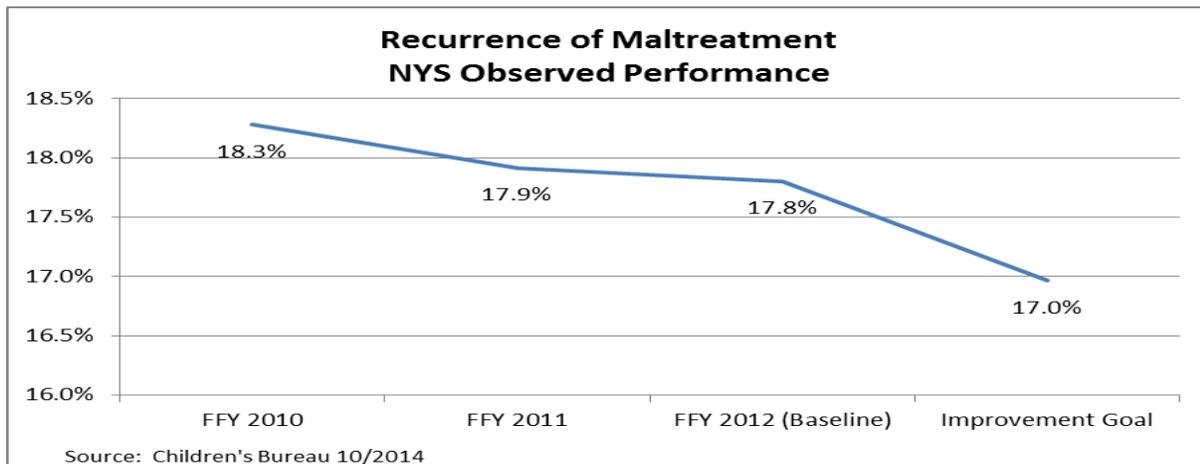
In an effort to understand practice factors related to this performance, OCFS will be reviewing indicated reports for children in foster care, which represents the numerator in the new federal “Maltreatment in Foster Care” indicator. It is expected that this review will assist NYS in understanding the state’s practice around consolidating reports, documenting incident date, and identifying incidents that are policy related, versus abuse or maltreatment and an examination of the reports of abuse and maltreatment whereby the subject of the report is the parent.

For example, OCFS does not consistently use the incident date, and therefore we anticipate that some of the incidents included in this measure do not occur while the child is in foster care, but rather prior to their coming into care, and a prior incident is disclosed weeks or months after the child’s foster care entry.

Recurrence of Child Abuse and Maltreatment

**Federal Indicator: Recurrence of maltreatment:** Of all children who were victims of an indicated report during a 12 month period, what percent were victims of another indicated report within 12 months? (Baseline: FFY 2012)

According to the statewide data promulgated by the Children’s Bureau in May 2015, NYS’ observed baseline performance was 17.8 percent. This rate is higher than the national average; however, it represents a steady decline (improvement) in recurrence of



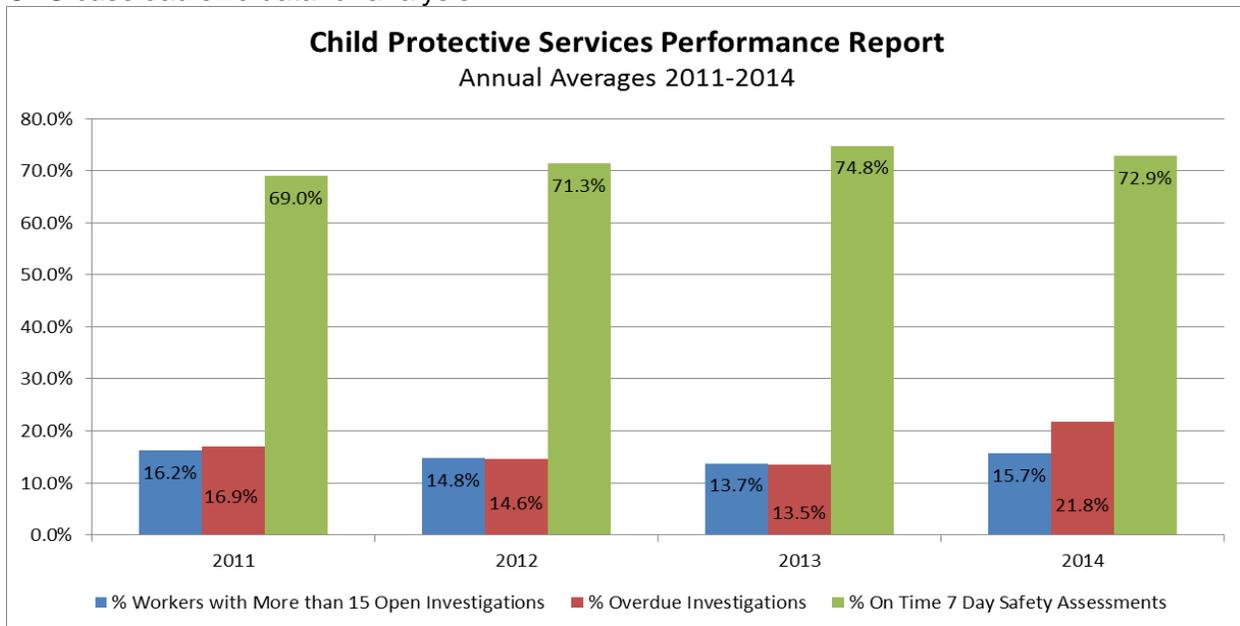
maltreatment.

Child Abuse/Maltreatment Reports to the Statewide Central Register (SCR)		
	Report Count	Child Count
2011	164,330	268,581
2012	160,059	261,026
2013	156,312	251,965
2014	156,134	253,016

Source: OCFS DW Allegations by Type (LDSS),

Following a decline in SCR reports in 3/30/15  
2013, the number of reports have remained relatively flat in 2014.

In the most recent two years, the number of children and the number of reports has remained relatively stable. However, in 2014, it appears that local districts were struggling with their ability to maintain caseload size. Although it is too early to determine if the 2014 increase in caseload size is a one year anomaly or the beginning of a trend – or what factors are contributing to this change. However, in 2015, OCFS will continue to prepare monthly average CPS caseload size data for analysis.



It is likely that many factors impact the recurrence measure, including but not limited to CPS caseloads, timeliness and quality of the investigations. Through OCFS' On-going Monitoring and Assessments (OMA) case reviews, reports are critically reviewed to identify the quality of the child protective investigations.

In 2014, OCFS conducted a review of 454 CPS case records in seventeen counties. At least 90 percent of the cases were found to have the following strengths:

- The CPS investigation included contact with source (90 percent)
- The CPS investigation included at least one home visit (97 percent)
- All children were observed (95 percent)
- Determination was appropriate when sufficient info gathered (97 percent)

Overall, the 2014 OMA results indicate that in some local department of social services enhancements to CPS investigations are needed. Specific themes identified through the OMA process as needing enhancements fall within the areas of collateral contacts and the adequacy of collecting sufficient information needed for quality safety assessments and risk assessments.

One area that has received OCFS focus is the relationship of domestic partner abuse on CPS outcomes. Recently, as part of the CPS/DV Program evaluation, OCFS' Bureau of Research and Performance Analytics developed a prototype analysis of seven and sixty-day safety

assessments. This prototype provided information on the prevalence of the types of safety factors, the safety decisions, and interventions found at those two key points of time (seven and sixty-days). Also provided was information regarding changes between the seven-day and sixty-day safety assessments. This analysis research was conducted with six pilot counties that have CPS/DV programs. OCFS plans to expand scope of the research pilot to include additional counties. Those results will be analyzed and provided in the CFSR Statewide Assessment.

Additionally, as NYS continues to explore factors that may contribute to recurrence of maltreatment, OCFS is exploring other updated models of safety and risk which may positively impact and improve caseworker's understanding of the information needed to assess safety and risk.

#### Child Protective Services: Family Assessment Response (FAR) Track:

In late 2008/2009, six counties began accepting families to the FAR track. As required by Chapter 452 of the Laws of 2007, OCFS evaluated the pilot counties and submitted a report to the Governor's Office in January 2011. The evaluation included all families who were referred to FAR between August '09 and February '10. In addition to reporting on families and caseworkers' experiences with FAR, the evaluation report included short-term child welfare outcomes (new child protective services (CPS) reports, service cases, and petitions by six months). Based on the promising findings (most importantly that children on the FAR track were at least as safe as children on the investigative track), permanent legislation was signed into law in 2011 allowing FAR to be used as a child protective service statewide.

A 24 month follow-up to the FAR pilot county evaluation showed that FAR had positive impacts on reducing foster care placements and the filing of family court petitions. In July 2014, CONNECTIONS (NYS' system of record) was modified to better capture information about FAR operations, allowing FAR workers to record information on the strengths and needs of families assigned to the FAR track as well as some service information. Operational and descriptive information and outcome data about subsequent reports and Family Court involvement will be included in an analysis of families involved in reports assigned to the Far track. This analysis will include information from more than 20 districts. Results are expected to be ready by late 2015 and to be reported in the Statewide Assessment.

#### Child Protective Services and Preventive Services:

OCFS developed a research study to begin understanding the population of children who received preventive/protective services and to develop a baseline of key child welfare outcomes for this population.

These outcomes sought to answer the following questions:

Of all the children involved in a child protective or preventive services case at opening,

- What percent were alleged or confirmed victims in reports to the Statewide Central Register?;
- What percent were included in an abuse, neglect, JD or PINS petition filed in Family Court?; and
- What percent entered foster care?

The pilot study sample included children tracked in all local districts outside New York City who received preventive/protective services in 2010, and who had never been in foster care before receiving such services.\* The outcome variables were measured in a two-year follow-up period from the date preventive/protective services case was open. (\*Note that this study sample was developed as a pilot to determine the feasibility of developing statewide data. Key outcomes are listed below:

The study sample followed 18,600 children who received preventive/protective services in 2010 and had never been in foster care prior to the focal service case opening.

**Demographics:**

- Fifty-three percent of the children in the study sample were male and 47 percent were female, with an average age of eight.
- About half of the sample (51 percent) was white, 23 percent were African American, 15 percent were Hispanic, and six percent were identified as “other.”

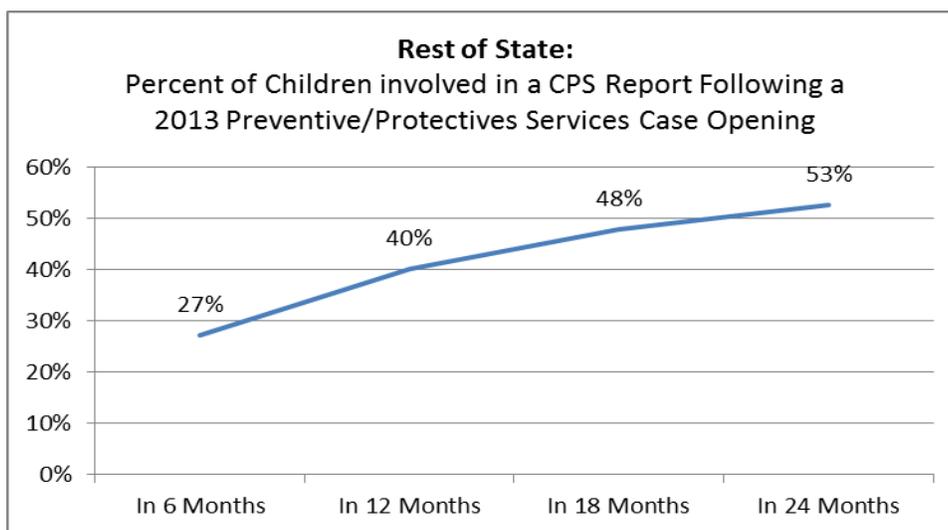
**Child Welfare History**

- Seventy-nine percent of children in the denominator were alleged or confirmed victims in child abuse and maltreatment reports prior to the opening of the services case.
- Fifteen percent of children were named in Abuse, Neglect, PINS, or JD petitions prior to the opening of this services case.

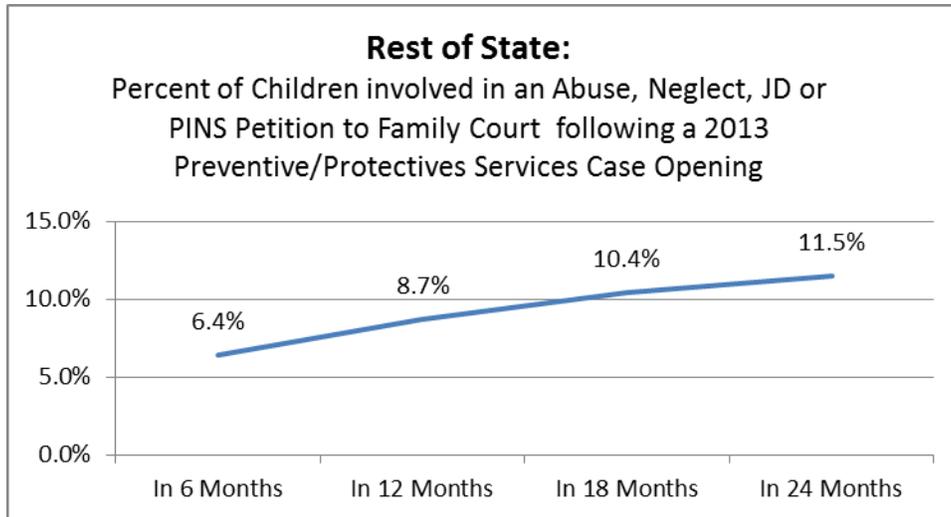
**Outcomes**

1. Of all the children involved in a child protective or preventive services at case opening, what percent were later involved in a report to the Statewide Central Register?

Within six months, 27 percent of the children were alleged or confirmed victims in child abuse and maltreatment reports; this increases to 53 percent in a two-year follow-up period.

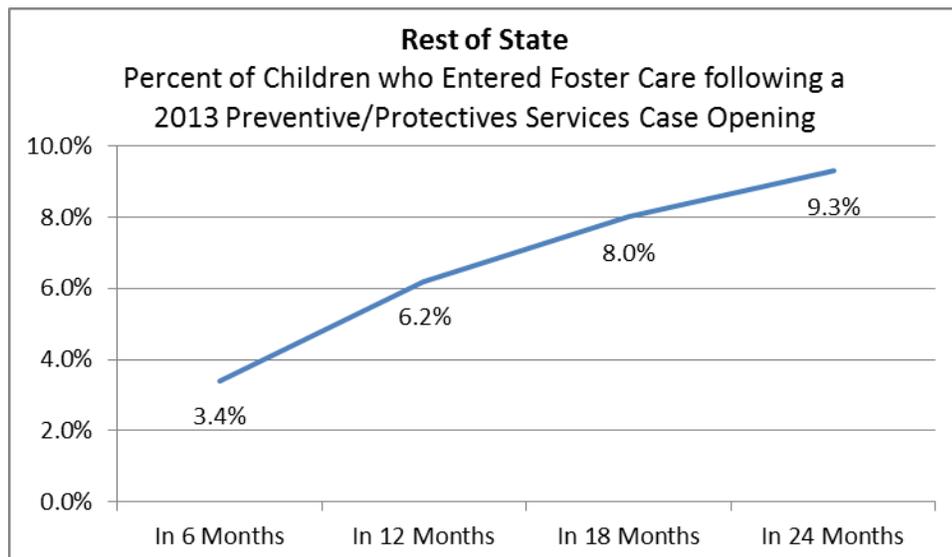


- Of all the children involved in a child protective or preventive services case at opening, what percent were later involved in an Abuse, Neglect, PINS, or JD petitions filed in Family Court?



Eleven and a half percent of children had an Abuse, Neglect, PINS, or JD petitions filed in Family Court after the opening of the services case in a two-year follow-up period.

- Of all the children involved in a child protective or preventive services at case opening, what percent entered foster care, following the opening of the services case?



Nine percent of children entered foster care after the opening of the services case in a two-year follow-up period.

It is important to note that this initial research study was an exploratory pilot, and should not be used to examine the effectiveness of preventive services in preventing foster care placements, child abuse and neglect reports or family court petitions. In order for those conclusions to be reached, OCFS must establish a proper comparison group.

Rates of First Admission into Out-of-Home Care

In addition to the federal indicators, OCFS believes that an additional measure, the rate of first admissions into foster care, must also be considered. As noted by the chart below, from 2010-2013, the number of children entering foster care in New York State has decreased in a similar trend as the CPS workload. The number to children entering foster care for the first time in 2014 remains steady.

Statewide: Number and Rate/1,000 of First Admissions into Foster Care (all ages)		
Admission Year	Number of First Admissions	Rate/1,000
2010	9,866	2.3
2011	8,576	2.0
2012	8,069	1.9
2013	7,622	1.8
2014	7,594	1.8
Source: Chapin Hall data through 12/31/2014		

**Permanency Outcome 1: Children have permanency and stability in their living situations.**

The federal data packets include three indicators related to timely permanency, one for stability, and one re-entry measure. NYS performed better than the national average on the stability indicator and did not meet the national average for the remaining permanency measures. NYS' performance is graphed below.

- Federal Indicator: Permanency in 12 months for children entering foster care:** Of all children who enter foster care in a 12 month period, what percent are discharged to permanency within 12 months of entering foster care? (Baseline: 2011B& 12A) A higher percentage, which represents more permanent exits, is desirable. The Children's Bureau has established NYS' improvement goal at 35.7%.

According to the data distributed in May 2015 by the federal Children's Bureau, NYS' performance on this measure is:

Year 1 (4/1/2009-3/31/2010 cohort): 37.1% of the children entering foster care achieved permanency within one year of foster care entry.

Year 2 (4/1/2010-3/31/2011): 37.8%

Year 3 (baseline – 4/1/2011-3/31/2012): 33.6%

In an effort to identify additional child and case characteristics, such as placement type, OCFS attempted to create a list of children included in the performance baseline rate of 33.6 percent. However, without the syntax used to develop these measures; significant time was spent attempting to re-create the measure.

Made possible through a contract with Chapin Hall Center for Children and Families' Foster Care Data Archive service, OCFS is able to pull a list of children that are believed to be included in the federal measures. Although there are some significant differences in the numerator and denominator, OCFS expects to proceed with analysis using that data source.

The chart below details the permanent exit by type. Reunification is the predominant permanent exit.

Permanency within 12 Months of Foster Care Entry - by Permanent Exit Type (Entries: 4/1/2011 – 3/31/2012)					
	Adoption	KinGAP	Reunification	Exit Relative to	Total
Percent of Total	1%	0%	76%	22%	100%

Based on OCFS's ability to re-create the numerator and denominator, OCFS will continue to work to disaggregate the remaining permanency measures by exit type and child and case characteristic. Information such as zip code, may inform a need for services designed to prevent entry into care or to hasten a child's return home. OCFS will look to obtain this information by district, agency, and unit that appear to have the best outcomes, thereby identifying potential opportunities for replication. When OCFS has county-level information with drill-down ability, OCFS will engage in a CQI-based analysis to identify what practices, services, policies, etc., lead to permanency within 12 months.

**2. Federal Indicator: Permanency in 12 months for children in care 12-23 months:** Of all children in foster care on the first day of a 12 month period, who had been in foster care (in that episode) between 12-23 months, what percent discharged to permanency within 12 months of that first day? (Baseline: 2013B & 14A) A higher percentage, which represents more permanent exits, is desirable. The Children's Bureau has established NYS' improvement goal at 28%.

According to the data distributed in May 2015 by the federal Children's Bureau, NYS' performance on this measure is:

Year 1 (4/1/2011): 28.1% of the children in foster care for 12-23 months achieved permanency

Year 2 (4/1/2012): 23.8%

Year 3 (4/1/2013 in-care date): 25.9%

Data for this measure indicates that NYS is improving with this group of children. Further analysis of these children to understand the underlying conditions that keep them in care is needed to see if with additional or more appropriate services we can effectively and safely reduce length of stay. Using child-level data available through the Foster Care Data Archive, and a structured CQI process, OCFS will be working with local departments of social services (counties) to improve this outcome.

**3. Federal Indicator: Permanency in 12 months for children in care 24 months or more:**

Of all children in foster care on the first day of a 12 month period, who had been in foster care (in that episode) for 24 months or more, what percent discharged to permanency within 12 months of that first day? (Baseline: 2013B & 14A) A higher percentage, which represents more permanent exits, is desirable. The Children's Bureau has established NYS' improvement goal at 28.6%.

According to the data distributed in May 2015 by the federal Children's Bureau, NYS' performance on this measure is:

Year 1 (4/1/2011): 26.1% of the children in foster care for 24 or more months achieved permanency

Year 2 (4/1/2012): 26.1%

Year 3 (4/1/2013 in-care date): 27.4%

In the baseline year, NYS showed improved performance. Further exploration into the individual children's cases is needed to see what barriers may be addressed that will result in earlier exits, potentially to KinGAP or adoption.

It should be noted that OCFS shared with districts targets for improvement on adoptions and KinGAP. Each district received a list of children who were eligible for adoption or KinGAP and have been asked to focus on those children during 2015.

**4. Re-entry to foster care in 12 months:** Of all children who enter foster care in a 12 month period who were discharged within 12 months to reunification, relative or guardianship, what percent re-enter foster care within 12 months of discharge? (Baseline: 2011B& 12A) A lower percentage, which represents fewer re-entries to foster care, is desirable. The Children's Bureau has established NYS' improvement goal at 9.4%.

According to the data distributed in May 2015 by the federal Children's Bureau, NYS' performance on this measure is:

Year 1 (4/1/2009-3/31/2010 cohort): 10.3% of the children who entered foster care and exited to reunification/relatives within one year, re-entered foster care within one year of exit..

Year 2 (4/1/2010-3/31/2011): 10.6%

Year 3 (baseline – 4/1/2011-3/31/2012): 10.5%

Between 2005 and 2013, the total number of children in foster care has decreased from about 26,600 to 19,400 – a 27 percent decrease. The families of children who ultimately enter foster care, therefore, are more likely to have complex issues that prevent early exits to permanency. Given that the safety of children in NYS is a primary child welfare goal, as NYS works to improve permanency, the re-entry rate will be monitored. NYS made a modest gain on this measure.

Further comprehensive analysis of quantitative and qualitative data will be conducted to fully understand performance and inform New York State's CQI process. Data related to the length of time between discharge and re-entry will be reviewed as well as the age of those children re-entering care. Further analysis around service delivery will also be explored.

### **Process Indicators:**

The Office of Court Administration's (OCA) Child Welfare/Court Improvement Project (CW/CIP) prepares data that supplements information used in OCFS's practice improvement planning process. This data, the Child Welfare Court Data Metrics report, is published annually. Although the population that is captured in OCA's data collection system, Universal Court Management System (UCMS) differs slightly from those captured in New York State's child welfare system of record, analysis of the data shows similar trends.

When termination of parental rights is in the best interests of the child, timely filing of a petition is essential when addressing a child's need for permanency. Given the court's impact on this measure, many local CQI efforts utilize the CW/CIP data, which indicates:

- The median time (in months) from initial TPR petition to disposition is as follows:
  - 2009: 9.93
  - 2010: 9.77
  - 2011: 10
  - 2012: 8.66
- Of all TPR filings in 2010, by 12/31/2011, the dispositions are as follows:
  - Termination of parental rights: 65 percent
  - Suspended judgment: 16 percent
  - Not yet disposed: 10 percent
  - Other: eight percent
  - Withdrawn: two percent

Source: New York State Child Welfare Court Data Metrics: Key Indicators 2014.

**Federal Indicator: Placement Stability:** Of all children who enter foster care in a 12 month period, what is the rate of placement moves per day of foster care? New York State's baseline (2013B & 14A) is 2.93 moves per 1,000 days of care, whereas the national average is 4.12 moves. According to the federal Children's Bureau, children in foster care in New York State experience significantly fewer moves (2.93). Given that the state's performance on this measure was better than the national average, trend data was not provided to NYS by the Children's Bureau.

## Permanency Outcome 2: The continuity of family relationships is preserved

The timely establishment of a permanency planning goal (PPG) is a key first step in effective casework practice. For sixty percent of the children entering foster care in 2014, a permanency planning goal (PPG) was set within 30 days of entry into foster care. There is some slight variation by age. For children aged two to nine years, the percentage was higher at 67 percent compared to those aged 14 to 17 being the lowest at only 52 percent.

Statewide: 2014 Admissions			
Age Groups	Total Admissions	Goal Set in 30 Days	
		Number	Percent
Younger than 2	2,300	1,298	56%
Ages 2-5	1,825	1,222	67%
Ages 6-9	1,288	865	67%
Ages 10-13	1,386	886	64%
Ages 14-17	2,622	1,376	52%
Older than 17	95	59	62%
Total	9,516	5,706	60%

New York State's standard is that all children in foster care have a PPG established within 30 days of entering care. Therefore, additional analysis is needed to determine the impact of timely establishment of a PPG on permanency outcome performance.

Preserving family is a primary focus of New York State's permanency and well-being agenda. On December 31, 2014, there were approximately 20,276 children in foster care in NYS. The PPG for over half of those was reunification. Additional permanency goals are listed below.

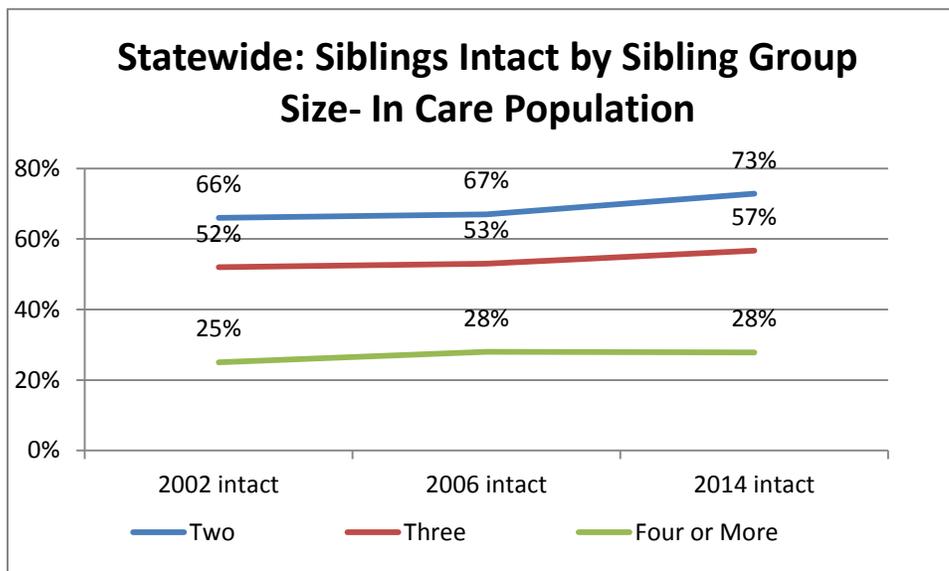
Statewide: Permanency Planning Goal for Children in Care on 12/31/2014		
Discharge to Parents/Legal Guardian	10,250	51%
Discharge to Independent Living	2,812	14%
Discharge to Adoption	5,161	25%
Discharge to Adult Residential Care	209	1%
Discharge to Other Relative	409	2%
Other Goal	685	3%
No Goal	750	4%
Total	20,276	100%
Source: Data Warehouse In Care Summary (3/30/2015)		

**Placement Type:** Nearly 80 percent of the children in foster care on the last day of 2014 were placed in foster homes, and over 20 percent were placed in relative foster homes.

Statewide: Placement Type for Children in Care on 12/31/2014		
Foster Boarding Home	11,658	57%
Approved Relative Home	4,525	22%
Congregate Care	3,693	18%
Institution	2,489	12%
Group Residence	253	1%
Group Home	710	4%
Supervised Independent Living	0	0%
Agency Operated Boarding Home	241	1%
Other	400	2%
Total	20,276	100%
Source: Data Warehouse In Care Summary (3/30/2015)		

Direct placement in the legal custody of relatives was a placement type for approximately 1,450 children removed by Family Court. This is a placement with a relative when the child is not in the legal custody of the local department of social services. A child/family in direct placement (under Article 10 non-LDSS custody), receives the same case management and case planning services as children and families where the child is in LDSS legal custody.

**Placement with Siblings:** Statewide, the percentage of siblings placed together when there was a sibling group of two or three children has shown improvement; 73 percent and 57 percent respectively, were placed together. As the data graphed below shows, it is more difficult to keep siblings together as the size of the sibling group increases, and continues to be an area of focus.



**Out-of-State Placements:** In recent years, significant strides have been made to reduce the number of out-of-state residential care placements. At the end of the 2005, there were 294 New

York State foster care children placed in congregate care settings outside of the state; at the end of 2013, there were 73. Preliminary data shows that on 12/31/2014; approximately 92 children were in a out-of-state residential care setting.

**Case Reviews:** OCFS, through the Quality Assurance process, engages local districts in a variety of case reviews that offer opportunities to delve deeply into practice surrounding the preservation of children’s connections to their family and community. The OCFS Safety and Permanency Assessments (SPA) case review instrument contains a set of questions that explores the adequacy of the visitation plan and the consistency of visiting events. It also contains review questions related to notification and participation by the family in Service Plan Reviews and Court Permanency Hearings. Additional research, including a comprehensive analysis of quantitative and qualitative data will be conducted during the development of the Statewide Assessment.

**Well-Being Outcome 1: Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs.**

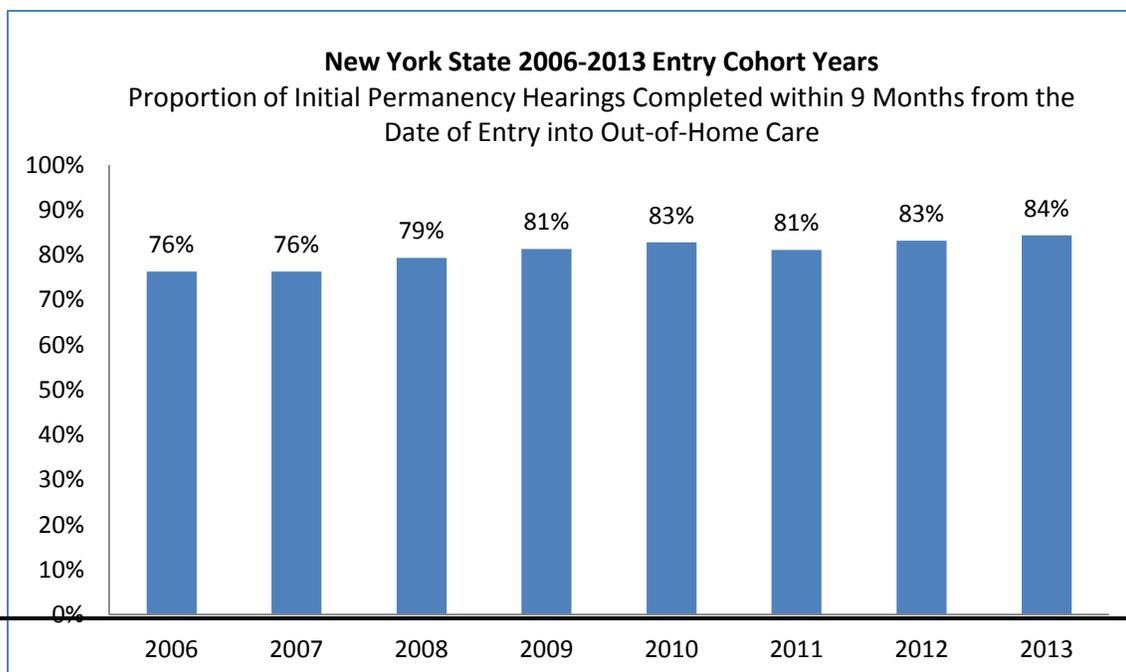
**Service Plan Reviews, Family Assessment Service Plan, and Permanency Hearings**

Various OCFS case review instruments (OMA, SPA, and VAR) explore the adequacy of assessment and service planning throughout the life of the case. They capture the level of family and/or youth involvement in planning, as well as the adequacy and availability of service provision.

Timely case planning is essential. OCFS’ Data Warehouse maintains many pre-defined reports designed to help supervisors and managers monitor and assess timeliness of the Family Assessment and Service Plan, Casework Contacts, Service Plan Reviews, Permanency Hearings, etc. Districts and voluntary agencies have access to this data system. A complete listing of pre-defined reports can be provided upon request.

**Casework Contacts with Children:** In Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2014, 94.4 percent of all children in care were contacted each month. This represents continued improvement (FFY 2011: 81.5 percent), and NYS surpassed the 90 percent mandate established by ACF.

During the permanency hearing, the case circumstances, the appropriateness of the permanency goals, and the efforts made to achieve permanency are reviewed; these permanency hearings must occur in a timely manner. The CW/CIP data metrics identified the



proportion of *initial* permanency hearings that have been completed within nine months of the entry into out-of-home care; their data indicate improvement over time, from 76 percent in 2006 to 84 percent in 2013.

The CW/CIP data also identifies that 95 percent of *subsequent* child permanency hearings are completed within seven months from the date of the prior completed permanency hearing. (2013 Entry Cohort)

In an effort to fully understand the quality and timeliness of these three various case review processes, additional information will be compiled and reviewed.

**Well-Being Outcome 2: Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs; and**

**Well-being Outcome 3: Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health.**

Some limited case-level educational information is available via a detailed report in data warehouse. However, a need in New York State is to have direct access to contemporaneous New York State Education Department (SED) data for children in foster care. OCFS and SED are actively working on a process, and have recently executed a MOU that will allow for the transfer of data for all school aged children in foster care. OCFS and SED are testing the technical aspects of the transfer. Once complete, caseworkers will have student-specific educational data for all children on their caseload. In addition, OCFS will begin conducting research to help understand how children in care are performing as compared to their peers not in foster care. This information will put OCFS on a path to understand the educational needs of youth in foster care.

In 2013, Council of Family and Child Caring Agencies in cooperation with the New York State Department of Health (DOH) and OCFS commissioned Chapin Hall Center for Children and Families to provide analytic support to a project examining Medicaid expenditures for children in foster care in New York State. The purpose of the study was to generate information about patterns of healthcare needs, service delivery, and cost as the state prepared to transition from a fee-for-service health care system to a managed care program.

The report "Raising the Bar for Health and Mental Health Services for Children in Foster Care: Developing a Model of Managed Care" details the analysis, the findings, and the implications for New York's evolving policy and practice.

According to the October 2013 report "*Raising the Bar for Health and Mental Health in Foster Care: Developing a Model of Managed Care*," "the study revealed that Medicaid expenditures for children in foster care are exponentially higher than those for the general pediatric population. It was also discovered that the health improvements children experience during

their placement in foster care are not regularly sustained [after discharge] and that the patterns of inadequate care that children experience before placement often resurface after discharge.”<sup>1</sup>

OCFS anticipates that as the transition to Medicaid managed care reaches full implementation, further analysis of the adequacy of physical, dental and mental health services will be carefully reviewed.

## **Systemic Factors:**

### **Statewide Information System**

CONNECTIONS is New York’s Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS). In 1993, the federal government provided financial incentives for states to develop statewide automated child welfare processes to provide more efficient and effective administration of programs. To this end, OCFS has continued to work toward incorporating child welfare automation into CONNECTIONS, including the “Legacy” Systems, which contains CCRS.

Until November 2014, CCRS was the system of record for tracking, placement, movement, legal, adoption and level of difficulty activities. In 2014, those functions were transferred to a new Activities window in CONNECTIONS, which is now the system of record for these functions.

The creation of a new Activities window, improving CONNECTIONS functionality, positions New York State even closer to the goal of having a single, fully integrated, statewide automated child welfare information system.

The OCFS Data Warehouse system, with roughly 5,000 users statewide, pulls a wide array of information from OCFS’ CONNECTIONS. Information that identifies the status, demographic characteristics, location and goals for the placement of every child who is in foster care (or was within the immediately preceding 12 months) is available via predefined reports and/or user-developed reports.

### **Written Case Plan, Periodic Reviews Permanency Hearings, and Quality Assurance System:**

NYS participated in a pilot of the CQI assessment instrument and through that comprehensive process, the functioning of many of the systemic factors were assessed. Information related to CQI are located below and throughout the Annual Progress and Services Report.

### **Foundational Requirements:**

#### ***Strengths***

- Having a Child and Family Services Plan.
- Collecting and distributing data on a scheduled basis.
- Conducting case reviews.

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<sup>1</sup> Johnson, Cyndy; Silver, Phyllis; Wulczyn, Fred. “Raising the Bar for Health and Mental Health Services for Children in Foster Care: Developing a Model of Managed Care”. October 2013. <http://www.cofcca.org/pdfs/FosterCareManagedCare-FinalReport.pdf>

- Working with LDSS and VA partners in performance reviews as well as improvement action planning and implementation.
- Existing CQI responsibilities are embedded throughout OCFS.
- OCFS has written guidance documents for several CQI activities, most notably Case Record Review processes, which communicate basic expectations for uniformity in the implementation of those activities.

#### **Opportunities to Enhance this Component**

- LDSS are strongly encouraged but not required to have a CQI systems. The state may consider strengthening training in other CQI components.
- The state does not have an overarching written policy that connects the existing CQI elements into an integrated structure.
- Resources and capacity to support the operation of a comprehensive CQI process are not confirmed.

#### **Data and Analysis:**

##### **Strengths**

- In-house Data Warehouse and participation in the Chapin Hall Data Center assist OCFS to develop a number of pre-defined and ad-hoc data reports.
- Electronic access to data, including the ability to create reports, is available at tiered levels including to external stakeholders at the LDSS, voluntary agencies (VA) and courts.
- Guides for understanding the data are available.
- Qualitative and quantitative data are used to understand practices and trends at the local level.

#### **Opportunities to Enhance this Component**

- National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) data collection and limited preventive services data is available statewide.
- Need to systematically access the data needs of its stakeholders.

#### **Case Record Review:**

##### **Strengths**

- Case Record Review processes provide case level and contextual.
- The state has practices to train reviewers, address conflict of interests and verify consistency of review ratings.

#### **Opportunities to Enhance this Component**

- Reviews are not applied in all counties with similar frequency.
- Case-related interviews are only conducted in voluntary agency reviews
- Multiple case record review instruments could be consolidated and streamlined.

#### **Feedback and Adjustment:**

##### **Strengths**

- Data is available to stakeholders at various levels to LDSS and VA and posted on the website.

- New York State has a variety of opportunities to develop feedback, including through the Regional Office (RO) quarterly meetings with each LDSS and VA, court collaboratives, and through the LDSS development process.
- Case review results and data are used by the RO and LDSS to inform planning, monitoring, and adjustment at the local level with the primary focus on practice.

**Opportunities to Enhance this Component**

- The volume of data may render the information non-user friendly. OCFS may consider periodically assessing its communication mechanisms to confirm they are varied, accessible, and reaching their intended targets.
- Lack of formalized, consistent feedback process statewide with stakeholder participation.

Staff Training:

For information regarding initial and on-going staff training, refer to the Training Plan located under “*Specialized Plans within the CFSP*” section.

Service Array:

The array of services is located in the “*Child and Family Services Continuum*” section of this CFSP. In the CFSR Round 2, New York State’s ability to individualize services to meet the unique needs of children and families was noted as a strength.

Agency Responsiveness to the Community:

The Round 2 CFSR process identified this systemic factor as one of New York State’s strengths. OCFS continuously works with other agencies, both state and federal, to establish services that are coordinated across agencies to promote effective service delivery. Additional services coordination information is located under the “*Child and Family Services Continuum – Services Coordination*” section of this plan.

Foster and Adoptive Home Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention:

The 2014 Recruitment and Retention plans, submitted by each LDSS and voluntary agency that directly serves children in family-based foster care, provided detailed information about their current successes and challenges regarding recruitment and retention, and described activities planned to enhance their efforts. During the year one assessment phase of this CFSP, the information from the Recruitment and Retention plans were compiled and reviewed in relationship to the work being done through our Diligent Recruitment and Retention award. Additional information related to this systemic factor is located within the “*Foster and Adoptive Parent Diligent Recruitment Plan*” section of this CFSP.

**Plan for Performance Assessment of Systemic Factors**

As NYS strives to improve outcomes, the Statewide Assessment serves as an opportunity for OCFS to study our performance, look for bright spots and areas needing improvement. In preparation for a comprehensive statewide assessment document, OCFS has created a plan for the development of qualitative and quantitative evidence to demonstrate performance with the

seven systemic factors outlined in the Statewide Assessment Instrument instructions. Below is an abbreviated draft of the data collection plan.

### **Statewide Information System**

- Percent of data that is verified as accurate compared to case record readings.

### **Case Review System**

- Written Case Plan:
  - Percent of cases reviewed that show parents (father and/or mother as appropriate) were involved in developing case plans. (Source: OCFS Case Review Results)
- Periodic Reviews:
  - Administrative data related to timeliness of service plan reviews (SPR) (Source: OCFS Data Warehouse)
- Permanency Hearings:
  - Percent of initial permanency hearings completed within nine months from the date of entry into out-of-home (source: CW/CIP Administrative Data)
  - Percent of all subsequent, non-freed child permanency hearings completed within seven months from the date of the prior completed permanency hearing (source: CW/CIP Administrative Data)
  - Qualitative information:
    - CW/CIP Narrative from CIP Annual Assessment on Project to Enhance the Quality of Permanency Hearings
    - Focus Group results from the PPH Project conducted by the CW/CIP
    - PowerPoint of Judicial Training on “Conductive Effective PPHs”
- Termination of Parental Rights (TPR):
  - Timely Termination of Parental Rights (source: Case Review Results)
  - Percent of initial freed-child permanency hearings completed within 60 days from the date of freeing and Percentage of all subsequent, post-freed child permanency hearings completed within seven months from the date of the prior completed permanency hearing (source: CW/CIP)
- Notice of Hearing and Reviews to Caregivers:
  - Focus group/interview results
  - Foster parent survey results
  - Guidance/training provided to courts (source: CW/CIP)

### **Quality Assurance System**

- Summary of findings/example report to local department of social services/voluntary agencies
- Summary of implementation of corrective action plans

### **Training**

- Initial Staff Training and Ongoing Staff Training:
  - Assessment of skills needed and of knowledge gained through various training and coaching events (source: survey results and course evaluation results)
- Foster and Adoptive Parent Training:
  - Quality and availability of training to foster and adoptive parents (source: survey and focus groups)
  - Outputs and outcomes from diligent recruitment grant

### **Service Array and Resource Development**

- Array of Services and Individualizing Services:
  - Assessment of adequacy of services to meet individual needs (source: survey to youth and caretakers)

### **Agency Responsiveness to the Community**

- State Engagement and Consultation with Stakeholders Pursuant to CFSP and APSR and
- Coordination of CFSP Services with Other Federal Programs (source: CFSP/APSR)

### **Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention**

- Standards Applied Equally
  - Percent of foster homes that met full certification/approval standards; and
  - Percent of voluntary agencies that met full licensing standards (source: review of licensing records)
- Requirements for Criminal Background Checks
  - Percent of foster parents, relative home, etc.,) that received criminal background checks (source: sample case record reviews)
- Diligent Recruitment of Foster and Adoptive Homes and State Use of Cross-Jurisdictional Resources for Permanent Placements:
  - Percent of foster home recruitment plans that include targeted recruitment strategies within jurisdictions that reflect the population (source: review of recruitment plans)
  - Recruitment plan instructions provide instruction related to assessment of racial and ethnic diversity within the jurisdiction (source: review of recruitment plan instructions)

## **3. Plan for Improvement**

New York State's last CFSPR was in 2008 followed by an extensive Program Improvement Plan (PIP) process which concluded in 2011. In October 2014, OCFS received its performance data on the seven key outcome measures which demonstrated that NYS ranked in the lowest 25 percent on six of the measures, and exceeded the national standard on one measure (stability). OCFS has spent much of the last six months analyzing the data, producing information to share with counties and training state and local staff to access and analyze the data. The goal for improvement over the next five years will be consistent with the identified federal targets regarding safety, permanency and well-being.

OCFS is strategically prepared for addressing performance through the newly established Practice Model. In response to the growing need to improve safety, permanency and well-being outcomes for children and families in early 2013, OCFS began development of a child welfare practice model. With the assistance of a national consultant and the input of local department of social services, court and other stakeholders, New York State's Practice Model articulates the vision and values that create a foundation to guide work within OCFS and county departments of social services. The Practice Model is designed to articulate the practices inherent in child welfare and the services that improve outcomes for children and families. The implementation of the Practice Model will improve outcomes for children and families by strengthening casework practice and bringing consistency to practices that enhance the safety, permanence and well-being of children.

OCFS has aggressively responded to the performance data and during early 2015 began implementation of the Model. The implementation framework is based on a CQI approach which includes assessing data, selecting strategies for improvement, developing implementation plans, monitoring fidelity and impacts, and making adjustments as needed.

Below is a description of the progress made towards implementing the Practice Model over the past year.

#### Complete and Distribute NYS Child Welfare Practice Model

- Much of the year was dedicated to communicating with local departments of social services and other stakeholders about the Practice Model, to get input and buy-in.
- The Practice Model was initially developed by the OCFS Child Welfare Management Team with the assistance of a national consultant. The plan was subsequently vetted with:
  - all OCFS Child Welfare staff through a division -wide meeting, followed up by Bureau specific meetings
  - Local Social Service District Commissioners through two conference calls
  - Directors of Service at the annual White Eagle conference
  - Youth Bureau staff at the annual Youth Bureau conference
  - university partners at the Keys cabinet meeting
  - voluntary agencies through COFFCA meeting
  - Citizen Review Panel member through three regional meetings
- The final version, reflecting the input of the internal and external stakeholders, was posted on the OCFS internet and distributed in March 2015.

#### Analyze Data

- Using the CQI approach, one of the first steps in implementation of the Practice Model, is understanding the data and the conditions contributing to the results. Because the federal syntax was not shared with states, OCFS staff re-created the Permanency Measures as close to the federal measures as possible in order to provide each county with their individualized measures.
- Data packages were provided to each county on February 10 and March 4, 2015, for the four Permanency Indicators measured through the CFSR. The first distribution included Permanency Indicators 1 through 4 rank ordered from strongest performance to weakest for each of the four Permanency Indicators; and by region and size so that counties can compare their performance to similar counties. The second distribution included the same data indicators by gender, race and age. Each distribution was followed up by a conference call to assist counties in understanding the data and its implications and to brainstorm strategies for improvement.
- OCFS management staff held conference calls with three other county administered, state-supervised states to share ideas for understanding and improving outcomes.
- OCFS has contracted with Public Catalyst (PC), a national organization that partners with child welfare stakeholders who want to improve outcomes for children and their families. PC provides assistance with helping to diagnose barriers and create effective solutions for better outcomes; design and implement new approaches that improve outcomes, and identify bright spots in local practice which can be leveraged into system change. PC plans to work with the state's four largest counties in an effort to improve the state's overall performance levels.
- OCFS staff are providing training in each region of the state and to the largest counties in an effort to assist OCFS regional office staff and local department of social services to access and understand how to analyze and use the data to impact practice. Two OCFS staff members have been providing assistance in using Chapin Hall website tools including introducing pivot tables and accessing the OCFS Data Warehouse.

### Identify Strategies

- Through the annual county plans and information from OCFS strategy leads, information was collected and catalogued regarding the strategies currently employed in each county as they relate to the Practice Model.
- Next steps will include assessing the fidelity of implementation and the impacts of these strategies as they relate to outcome measures.
- Long term goals include expanding those strategies associated with positive impacts and eliminating investments in those that are not producing outcomes.
- Monthly practice calls are being conducted with OCFS Home Office and Regional Office staff to continuously assess the data and the assistance counties need to improve outcomes; to share recommended practices and to improve the quality of practice.

### Develop Resource Guides

- After analyzing their individual data and factors contributing to the results, the next step in the CQI process is to select and implement strategies to improve outcomes. The Practice Model includes the Child Welfare Practices and Strategies supported by OCFS. To assist counties in this process, a “Resource Guide” is being made available for each strategy in the Model. The Guide includes an overview of the key elements, indicators of success, and contact information for further assistance. The intent is to provide districts and agencies with a brief summary of the strategy and guidance on where to go for additional information, should they be interested in implementing a particular strategy.

### Principles of Practice

- In order to promote OCFS partnership with local departments of social services and voluntary agencies to improve the quality and outcome of child welfare services, OCFS contracted with Barium Springs Training Group to train all OCFS staff in the Division of Child Welfare and Community Services in the Principles of Partnership. This training will further staff’s understanding of how to partner effectively,. In this two-day training, staff have the opportunity to experience, explore, and take away tools that help to improve interactions with colleagues, supervisors, customers and clients. The goal is to train all CWCS staff over the next year.

### **Planned activities for 2015-2016**

Over the next year, OCFS will continue to collaborate with internal and external stakeholders to implement the Practice Model and improve outcomes. Specific plans for the next year include:

- Working with Public Catalyst to conduct an in-depth analysis with three counties and develop strategies to improve outcomes;
- Revise the annual County Plan templates to capture individual county goals and strategies selected to improve outcomes;
- Reassess the foundational components of the training plan to align with the Practice Model;

- Identify practice issues and themes from case reviews, fatality reports, and other data and prepare recommendations for improvement;
- Collaborate with the Office of Court Administration to review data and address process issues;
- Establish key data users in each county and regional office to assist in accessing and analyzing data;
- Prepare county specific data packets for safety and permanency measures; and
- Disseminate strategy inventories and Resource Guides.

#### 4. Services

##### Child and Family Services Continuum

OCFS and its Local Social Service District and community-based partners provide an array of services designed to achieve the prevention, safety, permanency and well-being outcomes outlined in the Practice Model. Services are available beginning prenatally and through adulthood, and range from primary prevention to permanency and adult services. Below is a brief description of some of the significant services on the continuum; additional information is available on the OCFS website:

- Family Resource Centers (child abuse prevention programs) – Through state Children and Family Trust Fund dollars and the federal Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention fund, OCFS supports Family Resource Centers (FRCs) across the state. FRCs offer evidence-based parenting training and other formal and informal supports to families. FRCs focus on families with children under five years of age aimed at improving parent resiliency, parenting skills, social connections and child development.
- Healthy Families NY Home Visiting Program (HFNY) – HFNY is an evidence-based prevention program which offers systematic assessments for pregnant women and new parents. Trained paraprofessionals from the community served provide home visiting services weekly for the first six months and less frequently until the child enters kindergarten or Head Start. Services include parenting, family support and linkages to community supports.
- Prevention Services – mandated and optional Preventive services offered directly by the Local Department of Social Services and/or through a purchase of service agreement are designed to prevent child abuse and maltreatment and prevent out of home placements. Supportive and rehabilitative services for children and adults include, but are not limited to; day care, homemaker services, parenting training, transportation, clinical services, respite and 24-hour access to emergency services.
- Protective Services for Children – investigation, assessment, counseling, therapy, training for adults, emergency shelter, rehabilitation services, case management and other support services as needed for children named in a report of child abuse and/or maltreatment.
- Protective Services for Adults – for individuals over 18 with mental or physical impairment including investigation, needs assessment, counseling, alternate living arrangements and assistance accessing medical, legal and other service needs.

- Domestic Violence Services – emergency shelter and supportive services including shelter, hotline assistance, information and referral, advocacy, counseling, community education/outreach, children’s services, support groups, medical support, transportation, and translation.
- Bridges to Health Home and Community-Based Waiver program – provides expanded services to children with serious emotional disturbance, development disability and/or who are medically fragile.
- Kinship Services – OCFS directly funds eight Kinship support programs which address the multiple needs of Kinship caregivers including financial stability, respite, parenting education, family support, and legal information and support groups.
- Foster Care – assessing needs and providing placement and services to children under 18 in a foster home or group care facility; medical services, alternatives to placement, counseling, independent living services, therapeutic services, after-care services and support for youth up to age 21.
- Adoption Support Services – assistance in securing an adoptive home and the provision of legal services, recruitment and training of adoptive parents, pre-placement planning, counseling, information and referral, respite and crisis services.
- Post-Adoption Services – provided directly by Local Departments of Social Services (LDSS) and through purchase of service agreements, these services address the unique needs of adoptive families and include respite, parenting support, support groups and counseling. OCFS administers TANF funds directly to community-based programs to provide services to pre and post-adoptive families to support adoption finalizations and reduce disruptions.
- Independent Living Services – the Independent Living Program for current and former foster care youth is offered directly by the LDSS or through a purchase of service agreement. The program provides youth in facilities with assessment services, counseling, educational, vocational and life skills services and other supports as needed.
- Youth Development - programs are designed to prevent juvenile delinquency and promote positive youth development through programs which provide general development, recreational and youth services for the young people under 21 years of age.
- Aftercare Services - assisting children, youth and families to reduce the likelihood of those children or youth returning to either child welfare or juvenile justice placement. Aftercare consists of an array of supervision and support services.

#### *Services Coordination*

Local Departments of Social Services are required to submit annual Child Welfare plans which address Child Protective Services, Preventive Services, Foster Care Services and Adoption Services and in doing so, must consult with other government agencies concerned with the welfare of children residing in the districts, authorized agencies and other concerned individuals and organizations. Examples of these agencies/organizations include: Youth Bureaus,

Departments of Probation, Family Court judges, mental health agencies and legal and law enforcement agencies.

As a state-supervised, county-administered system, effective collaboration is imperative. In the upcoming five years, OCFS will focus its resources on those collaborative efforts most likely to achieve the desired outcomes as outlined in the Practice Model.

One of the significant strategies included in the Practice Model is the statewide implementation of a CQI process. In order for the process to be effective, stakeholders must be informed and the data must be applied to practice improvement. OCFS continued to expand on its communication methods with internal and external stakeholders to inform policy and practice.

Additional collaborative initiatives planned over the next five years include:

- Bridges to Health - The Bridges to Health (B2H) Medicaid Home and Community Based Waivers were authorized through 2015. OCFS fully intends to reauthorize B2H and will do so with New York State's strong desire to enroll all Medicaid recipients into Medicaid Managed Care.

OCFS Quality Management and Oversight activities, including significant data collection and analysis, will continue to inform and improve performance and practices.

OCFS anticipates hosting the Regional Forums and annual B2H Summits. The B2H Summits provide an opportunity to recognize the success of the B2H Waiver Program and to share effective practices and develop creative strategies.

B2H requires CMS reauthorization effective January 1, 2016. To prepare for this, OCFS worked with the Department of Health and submitted the required Evidence-Based Report in summer 2014, and is currently working on the re-authorization packets. Upon approval, B2H will be authorized through 2021.

- CPS/DV Collaboration Projects – OCFS will continue to support CPS/DV Collaboration Projects whereby a DV advocate is out-stationed at the local CPS office. These collaborations are designed to improve safety for families experiencing both domestic violence and child abuse/maltreatment. Other anticipated outcomes include preventing recurrence of child abuse/maltreatment and reducing out-of-home placements of children. OCFS will be implementing quality assurance reviews of these programs and will continue to assist in the provision of domestic violence training and guidance for child protective workers and other child welfare workers across the state.
- Educational Stability – With support from Casey Family Programs, OCFS is engaging Local Departments of Social Services to develop and implement liaisons in both child welfare and education systems. The goal of the liaisons is to increase awareness of the unique educational needs of youth in foster care. By developing liaisons in child welfare and education, both systems become well-versed in the policies, procedures, and practices of the other and create common understandings of the needs of youth in care. Moreover, the liaisons will serve as a point of contact and ongoing dialogue between child welfare and the educational institution with the goal of improved academic performance.

In 2014, OCFS worked with Nassau County, Westchester County, and ACS to create a collaborative model, with participation from child welfare, education, and family court, which can be replicated across New York State. The respective collaborative met continually throughout 2014, providing training and guidance about the roles and responsibilities of the respective systems.

In 2015, OCFS with support from Casey Family Programs and the American Bar Association (ABA) began to train school and child welfare personnel to the competencies needed for school liaisons. In addition, OCFS, with local districts, education, and family court began to adapt the Casey national education liaison training to make it New York State specific. OCFS and SED have entered the final testing phase for sharing education data. OCFS will begin analysis, on the state level, of the performance of foster care youth as compared to their peers not in care. This will afford OCFS the information needed to tailor program and practice and training to the educational needs of our youth across New York State. OCFS will also begin to provide case workers with student specific education data. This will enable local districts to begin developing plans and strategies to help improve educational outcomes for the youth in their care.

- Human Trafficking - OCFS remains an active partner in the Statewide Interagency Task Force. Together with the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance, Division of Criminal Justice Services, Department of Labor and Department of State, OCFS created a website for the Statewide Interagency Taskforce to house information about the Taskforce's efforts, anti-trafficking laws and referral information. (<http://ocfs.ny.gov/main/humantrafficking/>)

OCFS continues to contract with the International Organization for Adolescents (IOFA) to deliver training and technical assistance to 17 counties (as of 2015). With support from OCFS and IOFA these counties are developing and enhancing local service continuums for Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC) and/or trafficked youth who are able and entitled to receive the specialized services. OCFS has collected and analyzed partner feedback on the Rapid Screening Tool created in 2014 to help child welfare professionals identify trafficked and sexually exploited youth. In 2015, OCFS will host a Safe Harbor summit to bring county partners together to engage in discussion around challenging practice issues and to discuss successful child trafficking initiatives. Additionally, OCFS will finalize a Blueprint for an OCFS Operational Framework for Addressing Child Trafficking and CSEC in New York State and a Child Trafficking and CSEC Handbook to provide a plan for scaling up Safe Harbor and best practice guidance in responding to child trafficking. The overall goal of the blueprint is to align the plan with the "Federal Strategic Action Plan on Services for Victims of Human Trafficking in the United States 2013-2017."

- Kinship Support Services - OCFS in cooperation with OTDA will continue quarterly conference calls with Local Department of Social Services and voluntary agency and community-based service providers in an effort to increase Kinship care as a permanency option. OCFS and OTDA will collaborate to address challenges in supporting Kinship caregivers. A new RFP will be released in early spring 2015, with the goal of funding thirteen kinship provider contracts.

- Parenting Programs - In partnership with New York State Parent Education Partnership (NYSPEP), the OCFS Children and Family Trust Fund will continue efforts to improve the quality and access to parenting education and to promote skill development for parenting educators. Dissemination of resources and information on the impact of evidence-based and evidence-informed parenting programs to local districts, community-based programs, and other key partners remains a priority. Results from local “Community Cafés” will be compiled into a final report, identifying best practices, lessons, learned and barriers, with recommendations for continued promotion of this family engagement strategy.
- New York State Teaming Model - OCFS will continue to support counties in the implementation of the Teaming Model designed to provide supports to the child welfare workforce, reduce turnover and support quality decision-making. OCFS and its training partner, the Center for Development of Human Services (CDHS), continue to adapt its Teaming Model and expand to additional counties. During 2014, the New York City Administration for Children’s Services (ACS) expressed interest in Teaming and four (4) Family Support Units (FSU) in Staten Island were brought into the training delivery that began in January 2015. OCFS is currently developing a training and staff development proposal to facilitate a Teaming train-the-trainer model for ACS’s training vendor, James Satterwhite Academy.

In addition to the federal funds which support the mandated child welfare programs, OCFS administers CAPTA funding which includes the Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention Grant Program (CBCAP), the Children’s Justice and Assistance Act (CJAA) and the Federal Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FFVPSA) as described below.

#### CBCAP

- Promotion of the Safe Babies New York program, which includes parenting education of all parents of newborns with information on shaken baby syndrome and safe sleeping practices, will continue in all maternity and birthing hospitals in the state. Further tracking of the incidence of shaken baby syndrome in the Western New York, Finger Lakes and Hudson Valley regions as well as efforts to assess the effects of this combined message will be undertaken. OCFS will continue to track child fatality data as it relates to unsafe sleeping practices, requests for our child safety publications, and feedback from family service agencies as a means to monitor the geographic incidence and community response to this child safety issue.
- In an effort to reduce the number of child fatalities due to unsafe sleeping practices, OCFS partnered with a media consultant to promote the “Safe Sleep for your baby” campaign in 2014. Wallboards promoting the “ABC’s of Safe Sleep” were placed in laundromats, and hair and nail salons in fifty locations in the month of November. Six counties were targeted for this campaign where recent data indicated a high percentage of infant fatalities were due to unsafe sleep conditions. OCFS will continue to track child fatality data as it relates to unsafe sleeping practices, requests for our child safety publications, and feedback from family service agencies as a means to monitor the geographic incidence and community response to this child safety issue.

- In 2014, CBCAP funds supported innovative strategies to meet the needs of individuals served, to build protective factors within families and communities, and to promote the well-being for children by providing both evidence-based and innovative parenting education strategies to build parents' skills, confidence and knowledge. Family Resource Center (FRC) staff will continue to network and share experiences to strengthen their engagement skills and increase participation by families at high risk for child abuse. FRC's and child abuse prevention programs continue to implement evidence-based and evidence-informed programs which will be supported with federal funds including the Incredible Years' (IY), Parents as Teachers, Triple P, the Nurturing Parenting Program, the Parent/Child Home Program, Parenting a Second Time Around and other parent education programs and strategies.

Support for Prevent Child Abuse New York's (PCANY) Parent Helpline included a continued focus on the internet and technologies to improve service access and delivery, as well as staff efficiency. A total of 5,465 service requests were filled through the online parenting education database. The iCarol web-based platform was identified to bring numerous improvements to the Helpline. The system offers a one-stop online portal where staff and volunteers can log calls, access and manage the referral database. iCarol also provides a web-based public access database of programs and resources which enables the Helpline to reach more people. Private funding for the first year of services was secured through a family foundation. Work to fully implement the system will continue into 2015.

#### CJAA

- The CJAA program in collaboration with the New York State Children's Justice Task Force (CJTF) has developed a new set of three-year recommendations for 2015 through 2018. The recommendations are:
  - A Regional Child Advocacy Center (CAC) should be established in order to reach the Rural and historically underserved regions in New York State.
  - Improve upon the reliability of data collection and develop the ability to assess state-wide trends.
  - Assess the recording of forensic interviews of children state-wide and how that practice may support better outcomes.
  - Improve upon the collaboration efforts between the CJTF and the court appointed attorneys and guardians ad litem for children.
  - Improve collaborations with stakeholder agencies to increase the number of trained medical providers available to child abuse victims.
  - The CJTF will become familiar with the New York State Child and Family Service Review (CFSR) and the Annual Program Service Review (APSR).
  - An Invitation for Bid (IFB) will be issued to provide services currently supported through the CARCC program. CARCC will continue to serve as a resource for CJA staff and multi-disciplinary team (MDT)/CAC programs across the state. Services and resources provided by CARCC are available upon request. CARCC has developed an Advanced Forensic Interviewing Best Practices Training (Advanced FIBP) curriculum building upon the existing Forensic Interviewing Best Practices three-day training, to respond to the growing need for the development of advanced forensic

interviewing skills in New York State. The training was initially piloted on April 2-4, 2014, at the McMahon Child Advocacy Center in Syracuse. Throughout the last year, the feedback provided from the multidisciplinary experts attending the training has been used to finalize the curriculum. An additional advanced training has been completed since the pilot, and CARCC presented two additional trainings in 2014. The complex task of conducting effective forensic interviews of children requires a comprehensive knowledge base and skill set. Forensic interviewers must have flexibility in interviewing each individual child and knowing what questions will elicit what types of answers. They must utilize best practices in accordance with New York State law, and have the ability to discern external factors that affect the child and the case including developmental and cultural characteristics, trauma, support system, and circumstances of disclosure. This advanced training is designed for experienced professionals who have already completed the Forensic Interviewing Best Practices Training. The advanced FIBP will address sixteen different types of cases dealing with recantation, difficult cases, multiple victimization, the commercial sexual exploitation of children, mock trial and court, linguistics, narrative practice, children with special needs, and issues with time. Training will include researched based teaching points through the use of slides and small group activities.

- Now that the advanced project has been piloted, it has become apparent that the basic FIBP curriculum requires updates. CARCC is working with the National Children's Advocacy Center to update the basic FIBP curriculum, and will present the changes to OCFS for approval. The basic and Advanced FIBP curriculums will be reviewed for consistency to ensure that the two curriculums provide adequate information for their respective audiences. In addition, CARCC will assist CJA staff in initiating the state-wide database system to all CAC's in New York State. During 2015, all CAC's will be utilizing the NCA trak system as well as collecting data based on the definitions set forth by CJA staff.
- OCFS will continue to implement program standards for all Child Advocacy Centers (CACs) and Multidisciplinary Child Abuse Teams (MDTs) 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. All 40 MDT/CAC's are currently approved according to the OCFS standards. OCFS staff now verifies and documents that all MDT/CAC programs are functioning as Tier 1, fully functioning CAC programs. CAC Programs demonstrate compliance with OCFS Multidisciplinary Team/Child Advocacy Center Program Standards and NYS Social Services Law Section 423-a. OCFS staff continues to make tremendous strides in the development and approval of CAC programs across the state. OCFS staff continues to receive inquiries from other counties and agencies looking to develop programs modeled after existing Tier 1 programs. Additionally established CAC programs have been providing guidance and sharing resources with contiguous counties that lack a CAC.
- OCFS staff will continue to provide technical assistance, training and, monitoring to all MDTs/CACs in an effort to improve the handling of child abuse and neglect cases. There will be a stronger focus on providing identification, investigation, treatment and management of child exploitation cases. In 2014, OCFS staff assisted in the development of training with Safe Horizon and International Organization for Adolescents (IOFA) specifically for MDT/CACs to guide their identification and response to the commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC). Five regional

trainings were held across the state. Collaboration efforts will continue with identified stakeholders in order to provide a more informed response to the cases.

- OCFS will continue to support the Citizen Review Panels which 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 of the panels is held by the Welfare Research Institute (WRI). WRI has taken a proactive role in helping the three panels develop specific work plans. Further, it is expected the panels will work in collaboration with the Children's Justice Task Force to avoid duplication of efforts and support initiative(s), when appropriate.

#### FFVPSA

- FFVPSA funds are allocated to states on an annual basis in accordance with a population driven formula. New York State receives approximately \$4 million annually, up to five percent of which supports OCFS administrative expenses. OCFS issued a RFP for the FFVPSA funds for the first time in over 15 years. The RFP priority models funded include: CPS/DV collaboration projects, trauma-informed services models and services for underserved populations. Funds will also be allocated on a non-competitive basis to approved providers located in NYS counties in with the smallest overall populations.

New York engages in strong and extensive efforts to include input and consultation with a broad array of stakeholders to assist in informing and improving the child welfare agenda. In addition to those partners noted above, OCFS will continue to participate in regular and on-going coordination with:

- COFCCA – Council of Family and Child Caring Agencies
- NYPWA – NY Public Welfare Association
- YIP - Youth in Progress
- NYSCADV – NYS Coalition Against Domestic Violence
- NYS DDPC – Developmental Disabilities Planning Council
- OCA – Office of Court Administration

#### *Service Description*

OCFS allocates Title IV-B, Subpart 2 funds to four categories of services; reunification services, adoption and post-adoption services, family support, and family preservation services. The Title IV-B funds are one of several sources of funding supporting child welfare. These services are provided directly through Local Department of Social Services and/or through purchase of services agreements. Twenty percent of the funds are applied to each category with an additional 20 percent applied to Family Support Services.

In an effort to improve safety, permanency and well- being outcomes, services supported through IV-B Part 2 are focused on family engagement strategies. 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 since there is, by definition, a

questioning of a parents' 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 assessing safety and risk of the child) and the impact of that relationship on influencing change, several family engagement strategies will be supported and further evaluated over the course of the next five years.

#### Family Meetings

In a Family Meeting, parents, children if age appropriate, and relevant extended family or others identified as important to finding solutions, come to the table to plan for protecting the children and keeping them safe. Extended family and fictive kin are vital to developing a web of informal supports around the family and the child(-ren) which can be kept in place long after the case is closed. These meetings will help elicit information from the family which will be used in making better safety decisions and risk assessments both initially and on an ongoing basis. If out-of-home placement becomes necessary, the focus of the Family Meeting will include addressing the child's permanency and well-being. Once the family has decided what they need to keep their children safe, they can ask the service provider to assist them in achieving their goals. Included in these meetings is the identification of any services the child and parents/caregivers need, a review of the child's stability, the geographic proximity of the placement, whether it is appropriate to place the siblings together, the appropriateness of the child's permanency goal, and a review of the child's educational, medical, and mental health needs. Copies of written case plans and notices of reviews and hearings are shared with the family.

#### Locating and Engaging Fathers

Fathers, who too frequently have been "invisible" in the child welfare planning process, are an essential resource to their child, not only psychologically but also as a resource for helping a caseworker make better safety and risk assessments as well as being a potential permanency resource. Engaging fathers may begin with locating an absent father. Bringing the father into the case planning process requires sensitivity to complex family dynamics. Once engaged, the father may be able to develop a meaningful relationship with his children, provide a safe home for them, and can model effective parenting to his children. Consideration of not only the father, but his entire extended family, broadens the opportunity for the child to experience meaningful family connections and potential permanency resources.

#### Coached Family Visiting

When a child is placed in out-of-home care, focused visiting is essential to expediting a successful return home. Utilizing visiting coaches, the caseworker and the parent identify together what the parent needs to learn and use during visiting in order to bring their child safely back home. Coached visiting focuses on the presenting issues that brought the child into care, and may include practicing a skill, developing awareness of child developmental needs, or healing a wounded relationship. An individualized visitation plan is a key part of the overall case plan to support the child's permanency goal.

### Child-Centered, Family-Focused Practice using Solution Focused Techniques

When a child is placed in out-of-home care, the caseworker addresses the child's need for permanency with a sense of urgency. This requires the caseworker to engage the parents in developing a plan to return the child home, including identifying an alternative placement resource in the event the child is not able to return home. The caseworker must work concurrently, not sequentially, with the parent and with the identified alternative placement resource.

### *Service Decision-Making process for Family Support Services*

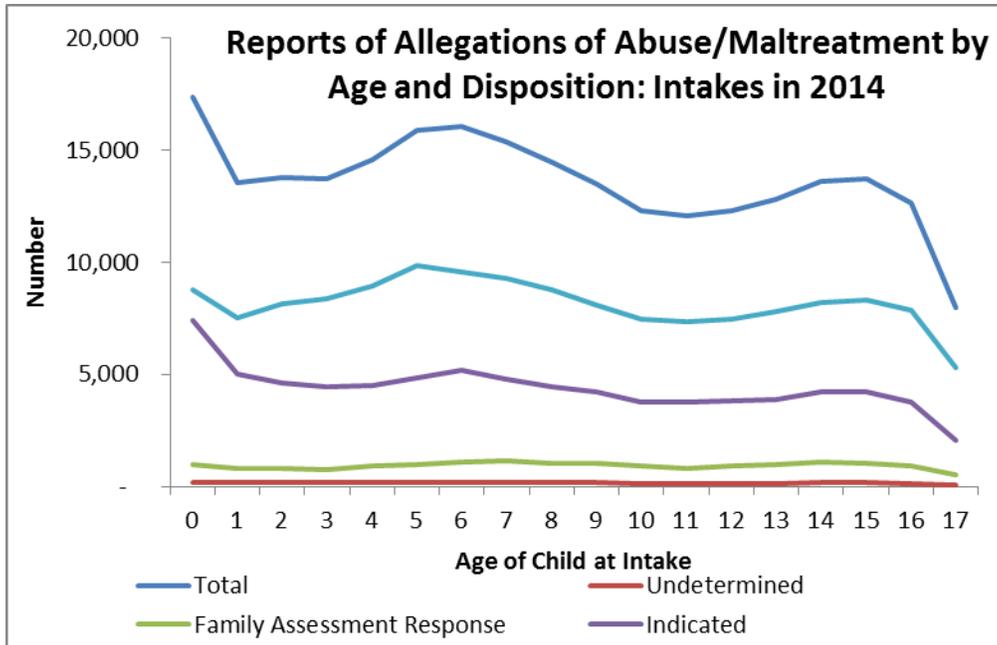
Title IV-B, subpart 2 funds are available for all local departments of social services to fund family support services. All LDSSs submit claims for expenses incurred which are then reimbursed through the state. As local social service departments determine the need for specific family support strategies, OCFS Regional Office staff will assist in determining county readiness and resource needs and will work the county on an implementation plan. As needed, local departments of social services may choose to purchase services from a community-based organization and/or voluntary agency based on a procurement process.

### ***Populations at Greatest Risk of Maltreatment***

New York State utilizes performance and outcome measures to identify children at greatest risk. Child welfare data is made available to districts and agencies for their use in monitoring their own progress towards improving practice.

Many factors are likely to impact maltreatment risk, age, geographic area, cultural risk factors, availability of services, to name a few. Statewide, approximately five percent of New York State children are involved in a report to the Statewide Central Register of Abuse and Maltreatment (SCR). The percent of children from nine of the ten largest counties is between 2.6 percent and 6.8 percent of the county's child population; which is below the statewide median of eight percent.

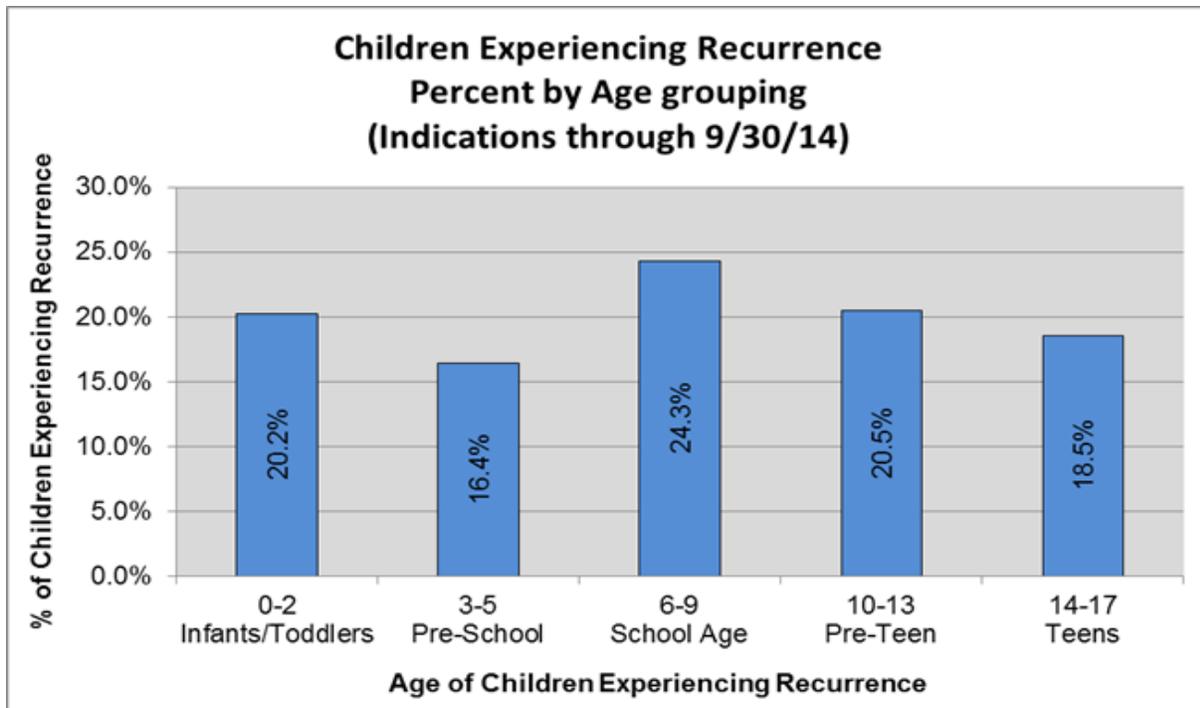
Data indicated that children less than one year of age are most likely to be involved in a report to the SCR, and the allegations within those reports are most likely to be substantiated.



New York State also compiles data on the frequency of risk factors identified in during the preliminary risk assessment profile for indicated reports. Statewide, the top five most frequently noted factors that place a child at risk of abuse/maltreatment within the next two year period are:

- Domestic violence or other dysfunctional adult relationship;
- Unreasonable expectations of children by the caregiver;
- Prior foster care placement;
- Primary caregiver’s mental health problems; and
- Drug problem by caregiver.

***Services for Children Under the Age of Five***



OCFS, with the support of Casey Family Programs, has been holding Permanency Roundtables to assist local departments of social services in identifying children in foster care who would benefit from a review of their case to assist in identifying activities that can be taken to find permanency for the child. Counties with a large number of children under the age of five in care, and for who they are struggling to obtain permanency would be included in the roundtable. In 2014 permanency roundtables were held in Saratoga, St. Lawrence, Steuben and Wyoming counties. OCFS plans to continue Permanency Roundtables in 2015. In 2014, OCFS set adoption targets, and again in 2015 targets were established (see Section 8 for details)

OCFS is committed to using preventive programs to reduce risk factors and develop protective factors, thus reducing the likelihood of maltreatment. OCFS will continue to fund Healthy Families New York programs as preventive services to pregnant and parenting mothers and fathers. Additionally, OCFS will continue funding Family Resource Centers (FRC). FRCs are accessible to all families in their communities without screening or other eligibility requirements, with a focus on families at risk with children age five and under. OCFS will continue to work closely with the FRCs to focus on high risk families and to make valuable connections with the local social service district priorities and strategies as funds allow.

OCFS will also continue to offer Bridges to Health waivers for children with serious emotional disturbance, development disability and/or who are medically fragile, in hopes that services will also aid in their being returned to their parent/caregiver or adopted.

### ***Services for Children Adopted from Other Countries***

For all adoptive families, including international adoptive families, OCFS maintains the Parent Connection Helpline, 1-800-345-(KIDS). The Helpline continues to receive nearly 300 calls monthly and is available during normal business hours providing information and referral services to foster and adoptive families. Additionally, the OCFS website has a number of webpages providing information on support services for families. From the Adoption tab you will find a link to *Post-Adoption Help for Families* which provides; crisis and hotline numbers, resources and information and services for children and families. From the Parents & Families tab there is a link to *Find Services for Children and Families* including a link to *Compendium of Services* where services are listed by selecting your county.

*Describe the activities that the state plans to take over the next five years to support children adopted from other countries, including the provision of adoption and post-adoption supports.*

In 2015, OCFS updated the Family Services Intake module in CONNECTIONS in order to collect data on post-adoption services provided to children and families seeking post adoption support. The data is intended to identify the type of adoption, the services offered and the services received by the child and/or family. This data will be used to inform OCFS and others on the types of post-adoption services utilized for consideration of allocation of resources for post adoption services in the future.

OCFS has developed a proposed methodology for calculation of savings based on delinking Title IV-E adoption assistance eligibility from the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) eligibility requirements. Upon DHHS Children's Bureau approval of the methodology, OCFS plans to use the calculated savings for post adoption services for any New York State family of an adopted child including children from international adoptions and post guardianship services.

### **5. Program Support**

OCFS Bureau of Training, and the Division of Child Welfare and Community Services maintain ongoing contact with local districts and contract agencies through a variety of venues, including monthly meetings with directors of services, and quarterly meetings with the statewide Staff Developers Advisory Committee, CPS, Preventive, and Foster Care Supervisors, and contract agency training directors. Through these contacts and those of training contractors who work directly with the SDCs, OCFS is able to keep abreast of emerging training needs.

#### **Technical Assistance Requests**

OCFS has a program liaison who works directly with the Children's Bureau (CB) Regional Office to secure supports identified through training needs assessment. In previous years, OCFS has worked with a number of National Resource Centers (NRC) (Child Protective, Organizational Improvement, Permanency and Family Connections, Youth Development, Adoption, Recruitment and Retention of Foster and Adoptive Parents). In 2012-13, OCFS received extensive support from the NRC for Child Protective Services (CPS). To date, the NRC for CPS consulted with OCFS to develop guidelines for working with families affected by domestic violence, and guidelines to safely engage families affected by domestic violence in family meetings, coached family visits, and engaging absent fathers. As well, the NRC for CPS consulted with OCFS to revise the mandated domestic violence training for CPS staff. The revised program will provide guidance on the "how to" of CPS investigations and assessments

with families affected by domestic violence. Current work with the CB National Resource Centers focuses on Multi-Ethnic Placement Act (MEPA) training, and the NRC for Organizational Improvement on CQI.

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 supports the development of outcome-focused practice skills. OCFS updated its foundation level outcome-based training program in 2011 and the companion program for experienced staff in 2012. OCFS also integrated the principles of partnership and solution focused practice, foundational to its differential response program (Family Assessment Response/FAR). The overall training system includes greater emphasis on interviewing children; solution focused trauma-informed 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. The Common Core program was redesigned in 2009-2010 and was fully implemented in 2011. The Supervisory Core was implemented in 1999 and revised in 2007. Additional revisions were made based on OCFS' work with the HHS Children's Bureau Northeast and Caribbean Implementation Center on a three year grant to design a model of supervision for New York State with a system of sustainable supports for the state's 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; major revisions to foundation level training are planned for 2104. 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 Child Welfare Adoption (NRCCWA) to adapt the Adoption Competency Curriculum for use in New York State. The NRCCWA conducted a series of train the trainer programs 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 program is designed to build practice skills in more experienced staff, and mirrors the Common Core training. Final revisions to the 2012 redesign were completed in 2013.

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 casework 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 web-based and distance learning technologies to enhance accessibility to child welfare staff.

## **OCFS Evaluation and Research**

The OCFS Bureau of Research, Evaluation and Performance Analytics (BREPA) 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.

Most of the recent work by BREPA has been focused on developing instruments and measures to assess the effectiveness of interventions included in the OCFS practice model. Some examples include designed a new methodology to assess the effectiveness of the Family Assessment Response program, developing pre and post intervention tools to assess protective factors in families participating in community prevention programs, and revising the CANS\_NY instrument that will be used in the transition to managed care for children.

Formal evaluations that continue include the Evaluation of Healthy Families New York (HFNY) and Close to Home.

### **Evaluation of HFNY:**

The 15 year follow-up study is underway and activities are on-schedule. Several dozen in-depth interviews with mothers and their adolescent children have been completed. Staff are actively working to locate additional families according to a phased schedule of interview assignments.

The current continuous quality improvement activities for HFNY include: (1) an analysis of fathers' involvement in home visits and its impact on families' retention in services, (2) analyses to better understand how home visiting content and activities support the initiation and continuation of breastfeeding, (3) a statewide examination of factors that influence service delivery and job satisfaction, with a specific focus on worker needs and competencies as they relate to various challenging issues that may arise during home visits, and (4) the development and pilot testing of a strategy to streamline the assessment and enrollment of families into HFNY services.

### **Close to Home (CTH) Performance Metrics and Evaluation**

In April 2012, the New York State Legislature passed legislation authorizing the Close to Home (CTH) initiative. Recognizing that the well-being of youth, families, and their communities would be best served by "minimizing the dislocation of youth from their families and building on positive connections between young people and their communities," the law required the shifting of responsibility for the residential care of New York City youth adjudicated as juvenile delinquents (JDs), from state to local custody. The transfer of responsibility was to take place in two phases. Phase I was to involve the creation of a non-secure system of care and was initiated as planned in September 2012. Phase 2, which requires New York City to assume responsibility for JD youth placed into limited secure settings, is anticipated to begin in 2015. Once both phases are complete, all JDs residing in non-secure or limited secure settings will be

in the custody of New York City Administration for Children's Services (ACS) and served through the foster care system.

OCFS' role in this new system is threefold. As the state supervising and regulatory agency charged with promoting the safety, permanency, and well-being of New York State's children, the agency is responsible for overseeing and monitoring: 1) New York City's overall implementation of the CTH plan, 2) ACS' direct provision of case management and aftercare services, and 3) the licensing and functioning of the voluntary agencies providing residential care.

OCFS routinely collects information on the recidivism rates of juvenile justice youth released from OCFS custody. This year, data collection efforts will be expanded to include information on juvenile justice youth released from local district custody, including youth served under the CTH program.

## **6. Consultation and Coordination Between States and Tribes**

As indicated in the Final Report, OCFS has used several means to consult and coordinate with, as well as gather input from New York's federally recognized tribes. These tribes are identified in the Final Report, as well as the outcomes and activities accomplished. Additionally, this report provides a description of the child welfare services provisions for tribal children.

OCFS Bureau of Native American Services continues to host quarterly stakeholder meetings with Tribal and local district caseworkers in both urban and reservation settings. The primary purpose of these meetings is to support and improve compliance with the Indian Child Welfare Act. These meetings also serve in the development of training initiatives; provide input into the CFSP Title IV-B plan and to strengthen service delivery to Native American children and families. 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.

Site visits are also planned to continue 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.

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.

OCFS will look to continue to improve its data collection within CONNECTIONS in order to assess ongoing compliance with ICWA.

Consultation with tribes will continue to address the following:

- Notification of Indian parents and tribes of state proceedings involving Indian children and their right to intervene;
- Placement preferences of Indian children in foster care, pre-adoptive, and adoptive homes;

- Active efforts to prevent the breakup of the Indian family when parties seek to place a child in foster care or for adoption; and
- Tribal right to intervene in state proceedings, or transfer proceedings to the jurisdiction of the tribe.

### *ASSESSMENT OF NEED AND CURRENT STATUS*

Based on a review of data collected on Native American children in out-of-home placement as of December 31, 2014, it was found that 108 children were found to be subject to the provisions of the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA). These children lived in various parts of New York State, both on and off reservation territories. The geographic breakdown of these placements is as follows: 24.07 percent of these placements were in the five Western New York counties adjacent to or near Indian Nation reservations (Tuscarora, Seneca, and Tonawanda Seneca Nations). An additional 18.51 percent of the placements were in three Central New York counties near the Onondaga and Oneida Indian Nation territories. The northern portion of New York State accounted for 32.40 percent of Native American out-of-home placements, with a majority of those placements on the St. Regis Mohawk Reservation. With the knowledge that our largest Native American population resides in the five boroughs of New York City and Long Island, we found 24.99 percent of the Native American placements in this area of the state. The total number of Native American placements represents 0.5 percent of the total foster care population of New York State.

During 2015, OCFS reviewed 108 of the 253 Native American placements. Eighteen of the Native American children achieved permanency by returning to their parents or through adoption. Of the 108 Native American children remaining in out-of-home placement, five children required a higher level of care, including therapeutic foster homes or group home institutional settings. Two additional placements were categorized as Independent Living and Foster Care child in college. The remainder of the foster care placements is as follows; there are **50** in kinship placements and 33 in certified foster homes that were consistent with ICWA placement preferences.

OCFS is supporting this goal by involving tribal representatives in collaborative meetings with our administration, court personnel, and regional initiatives for Family Assessment Response (FAR) and Disproportionality Minority Representation (RECC) trainings and education. New York's Tribal staff has been invited to participate in CORE caseworker and other training opportunities to strengthen their skills in the child welfare field and to develop better partnerships with local districts involved in their communities. 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 percent 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 2014.

Data Analysis:

2013: 42 Native American Children of the 93 in placement (45.1 percent)  
2014: 35 Native American Children of the 90 in placement (38.8 percent)

Projected Targets:

2015: not below 50 percent \*

\*It is anticipated that the identification of Native American children will continue to increase based on ICWA trainings in 2014-2015. 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.

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 local districts in New York State. As demonstrated by the data, we have been successful in our efforts to increase the proper identification of Native American children. The data demonstrates a drop in placement resources that match the child's tribal heritage. Of the 108 Native American youth in placement, 50 were matched with placements to support their tribal heritage. An additional five youth were placed in residential placements, which met their higher level of need. Factoring in the higher level of care required and the increased number of kinship placements, New York State is actually at 60 percent compliance rate in meeting ICWA requirements.

Some 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 direct Tribal ICWA placements (27/27) were at 100 percent compliance in 2014 in placing Native American children in Native American placements. The specific training activities and quarterly stakeholder meetings have also strengthened the ability to serve tribal families under ICWA.

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 regular basis.

The St. Regis Mohawk Tribe also submits its Child and Family Services Plan (County Plan) and Annual Plan Updates (APU) to OCFS for approval. OCFS will maintain the New York State 2010-2014 Final Report and 2015-2019 CFSP on OCFS website, as well as make it available upon request.

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. 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. OCFS also provided training to Seneca Nation of Indians to support the development of their tribally approved foster homes in 2014. The tribally approved foster homes are exclusively funded and regulated by the tribal nation, and service only those children under their jurisdiction. This was the result of collaborative efforts throughout 2013-2014.

The Seneca Nation Child and Family Services Program provide a variety of child welfare services including preventive and foster care services. In addition, Indian Health Services provides state-of-the-art health clinics on both Reservations. 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 2013, the Seneca Nation Tribal Council established a process to certify tribal foster homes. To date, there are 26 Seneca foster families.

Onondaga Nation hired staff to support at-risk families on their tribal territory in 2010. They do not wish to enter into a formal agreement with the state at this time. The Onondaga County DSS has assigned a liaison to work directly with the tribe on ICWA cases. The Onondaga Nation Family Protective staff has participated in OCFS Core Training for caseworkers and other staff development trainings offered by OCFS. They also participate in OCFS quarterly trainings and Tribal Consultation meetings.

Although the Oneida Indian Nation no longer accepts federal Indian Child Welfare funding, it staffs a Family Services Program and has continued to work with Native American Services on ICWA issues. OCFS continues to include Oneida Nation in our training initiatives.

Neither the Tuscarora Nation nor Tonawanda Seneca Nation accepts the available federal funding to operate ICWA programs on their reservations. In most instances, the Tribal Leadership, including clan mothers of these Nations, engage the services of OCFS Native American Specialist. The Specialist serves as a liaison to the local districts and courts, to support ICWA compliance.

Of the two Long Island Tribes, the Unkechaug Nation is not eligible to receive federal funds to operate ICWA programs. 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. Most of the OCFS training initiatives on Long Island support the cultural needs of children from both tribes.

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.

To support compliance with the Indian Child Welfare Act, an ICWA desk aid was developed by OCFS for use by local districts and voluntary agencies. Copies were distributed to the Indian Nations and OCFS Regional Offices. An update to include information on use of a Qualified Expert Witness was added to the desk aid along with an updated list of tribal contacts. In 2012 and 2013, the ICWA desk aid was updated to include the federally recognized status of the Shinnecock Nation and correct tribal contact information. The OCFS website also contains the ICWA desk aid.

A training DVD titled “ICWA: What Caseworkers Need to Know” was developed by OCFS and continues to be used extensively as a training tool. Three of the Tribal Nations participated in the filming and production of this DVD.

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 10 percent 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 percent 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
<b>IROQUOIS:</b>			
Cayuga Nation of Indians	Seneca Falls Territory	507	40
Oneida Indian Nation	Oneida Nation Territory	1,000 *	500 *
Onondaga Nation	Onondaga Reservation	1,959 *	900 *

St. Regis Mohawk Tribe	St. Regis Mohawk	14,779	14,779
Seneca Nation of Indians	Allegany/Cattaraugus/Oil Springs  (All Seneca Territories)	7,978	22,796
Tonawanda Band of Senecas	Tonawanda Reservation	1,100 *	600 *
Tuscarora Nation	Tuscarora Reservation	1,200 *	1,500 *
<b>ALGONQUIN:</b>			
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 10 basic divisions: Education, Economic Development, Environment, Community and Family Services, Planning, Justice, Health, Office of the Aging and Department of Social Services.

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 Workforce Investment Act Program services. Health 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. Community and Family Services staff addresses the needs of developmentally disabled children, families and disabled residents in the community while maintaining the integrity of the Mohawk family unit. The Community and Family Services 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. The Department of Social Services provides support services for families at risk of dissolution, providing a vital link to families while insuring the maintenance of cultural values. The social services programs provide intensive preventive, foster care, adoption, child protective services and adult protective services on the Reservation through the State/Tribal Agreement with OCFS. The St. Regis Mohawk Tribe has incorporated the Family Assessment Response (FAR) as an alternative approach to providing protection to children by focusing on engaging families in support services to increase their ability to care for their children. OCFS has licensed the tribally operated Awkesasne Youth Group Home to serve 12 at-risk Native American youth which also operates under the Tribe's

Department of Social Services. The Tribe's Indian Child Welfare Act staff advocates for Mohawk children throughout New York State and the United States.

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 Seneca Nation Child and Family Services Program provides a variety of child welfare services including preventive and foster care services. In addition, Indian Health Services provides state-of-the-art health clinics on both Reservations. 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. Within New York State, all of Tribes/Nations receive Tribal notification letters.

Cayuga Nation

The Cayuga Nation operates a traditional form of government and provides limited ICWA services. When the Cayuga Nation receives official tribal notification they attend court proceedings involving Cayuga children entering foster care or being freed for adoption. OCFS Native American Services unit also distributes tribal annuity payments three times a year.

Onondaga Nation

The Onondaga Nation initiated a Family Protective Services program approximately **five** years ago. The tribal staff assigned to provide protective and support services to families residing on the Onondaga Nation territory, participate regularly on child welfare training offered by OCFS. The tribal staff also participates in quarterly workgroup meetings and OCFS Tribal Consultation Meetings.

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.

<b>Indian Nation/ Tribe</b>	<b>Governing Structure</b>	<b>Administrative</b>
Cayuga Nation of Indians	Hereditary Chiefs	Council of Chiefs
Oneida Indian Nation	Tribal Appointment	Men's Council

Onondaga Nation	Hereditary Chiefs	Council of Chiefs
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
Tuscarora Nation	Hereditary Chiefs	Council of Chiefs
Shinnecock Tribe	Elections/Tribal Council	Tribal Council with Chairperson
Unkechaug Nation	Tribal Elections/Trustee	Trustees Elected to 1, 2, 3 year terms

ICWA Funding:

Three of the Indian Nations receive federal 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

Franklin, St. Lawrence counties

St. Regis Mohawk Reservation

primarily, but also statewide for Mohawk children

Seneca Nation of Indians

Erie, Cattaraugus and Chautauqua

Allegany Reservation

counties

Cattaraugus Reservation

Cayuga Nation

Cayuga members only, statewide,

Seneca Falls Territory

are served through administrative staff;  
designated tribal territory Seneca Falls

### 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 provide 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 Act funding, but do provide some support 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 2014-2015:**

Throughout 2014, the OCFS Native American Affairs Specialist met on a formal basis with various Tribal Representatives across New York. A formal protocol for regular and on-going dialogue and consultation with Tribal Leaders was established in 2002.

OCFS Native American Services (NAS) 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. 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. More recently, two formal Tribal Consultation meetings were held in May and October 2014, with the OCFS CWCS Assistant Commissioner presiding.

In early 2013, OCFS developed “A Family’s Guide to ICWA” brochure for dissemination to families who may be in various Family Court proceedings. The first concentrated distribution of the brochure was in New York City courts and will support from the court’s LIFT (Legal Information for Families) advocates. This brochure continues to be a requested item for counties and is disseminated during ICWA trainings.

NAS has also been diligently involved in supporting OCFS Racial Equality and Cultural Competency and addressing Disproportionality Minority Representation in the foster care system.

ICWA signage continues to be placed throughout New York City Courts, since their installment in 2013. NAS has provided cultural competency trainings to various state agencies and local service providers.

In addition to these trainings, the Native American Services Specialist presented at the New York City Administration for Children’s Services Leadership Forum in February 2014.

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.

From March 2014 – March 2015, OCFS participated in site visits to three of the nine Indian Nation territories. As a result of the site visits, child welfare protocols were strengthened, staff training needs were identified and family court personnel were introduced to tribal officials.

NAS continued to host quarterly meetings with Tribal and local district caseworkers in both urban and reservation settings. The primary purpose of these meetings was to support and improve compliance with the Indian Child Welfare Act. Such meetings were held in Buffalo in April and Rensselaer in June 2014, Syracuse in September 2014, and New York City in December 2014. OCFS hosted the first 2015 quarterly meeting in Buffalo in March.

Also in 2014-2015, OCFS supported Indian Child Welfare compliance through trainings offered at various forums including local districts, voluntary agencies and OCFS regional meetings. Approximately 120 workers attended the various trainings. OCFS also sponsored eight tribal representatives from four Tribal Nations to attend the Adult Abuse Training Institute in Albany on September 16-18, 2014, to strengthen Tribal Adult Protection programs.

NAS offered technical assistance and compliance support to over 140 calls for assistance on ICWA cases identified by the local districts, voluntary agencies and Tribal staff in 2014-2015. OCFS distributed over 300 desk aids and an additional 430 through April 2014.

In early 2013, OCFS developed and published “A Family’s Basic Guide to ICWA” brochure. This brochure was distributed to all nine Tribal Nations, Urban Native American Centers in Buffalo, Niagara Falls and New York City. The largest dissemination of the informational brochure was sent to New York City for use by the Legal Information for Families Today (LIFT) staff that provide advocacy in New York City’s Family courts. To date, over 2,200 brochures have been distributed.

## **Tribal Recruitment and Retention Activities**

OCFS recognizes that the lack of certified Native American foster homes can hinder compliance with the Federal Indian Child Welfare Act. OCFS will continue to support recruitment efforts with Tribal Stakeholders.

In April 2014, the OCFS Native American Specialist and representatives of the Federal Region II Administration for Children met with Seneca Nation officials to discuss federal funding to support a tribal foster care recruitment program. In 2013, Seneca Nation Child and Family Services began recruitment of Seneca families. In 2014-2015, 26 families were tribally certified foster parents. In March 2014, OCFS provided a trainer to present an additional curriculum "Caring for our Own" to support the Nation's recruitment efforts.

As the OCFS Native American Specialist provides ICWA training to local districts and regional consortiums in 2014-15, the importance of recruitment of Native American foster and adoptive families will be presented. More than half of the previous year's trainings emphasized the need for recruitment of tribal families.

### **Plans for 2015– 2016:**

- 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 support social services districts to inform Tribal Nations of Native American children and families in preventive and child protective caseloads.
- 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 Native families intact and to identify resources to support at-risk families.
- OCFS will continue to make the New York State CFSP available to Tribes, as it will continue to support and provide assistance to the St. Regis Mohawks Tribe in its CFSP-County Plan submission.
- 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 related issues.

- St. Regis Mohawk Tribe has previously participated in CFSR review process and is encouraged to continue. Our goal is to recruit more tribal nations to participate in upcoming reviews. ICWA trainings are provided by OCFS throughout the state as requested.

## 7. Monthly Caseworker Visit Formula Grants and Standards for Caseworker Visits

**New York State has specific regulations on casework contacts with the parent or relative, with child and with the child's caretakers.**

### **Casework Contact with Parent or Relative**

***Content and purpose:*** Casework contacts are for the purpose of assessing whether the child would be safe if he or she was to return home, and the potential for future risk of abuse or maltreatment if he or she was to return home. These contacts are also for the purpose of guiding the child's parents or relatives towards a course of action aimed at resolving problems or needs of a social, emotional, developmental or economic nature that are contributing to the reason(s) why such child is in foster care. In the case of children with the permanency planning goal of another planned living arrangement with a permanency resource or adult residential care, such contacts are for the purpose of mobilizing and encouraging family support of the youth's efforts to function independently, and to increase his/her capacity to be self-maintaining; evaluating the ability of the parents or relatives to establish or reestablish a connection with the youth and serve as a resource to the youth; and, where appropriate, encouraging an ongoing relationship between the parents or relatives and the youth.

***Casework contacts must be made by one of the following individuals:*** (a) the case manager; (b) the case planner<sup>2</sup>; (c) a caseworker<sup>3</sup> assigned to the case, as directed by the case planner; or (d) a parent advocate<sup>4</sup> when the contacts are directed, arranged, or otherwise coordinated by the case planner.

***Frequency:*** (a) During the first 30 days of placement, casework contacts are to be held with the child's parents or relatives as often as is necessary but at a minimum, must occur at least twice unless compelling reasons are documented why such contacts are

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<sup>2</sup> The case planner is the caseworker with the primary responsibility for providing or coordinating and evaluating the provision of services to the family. Case planning includes referring the child and his or her family to providers of services as needed, and delineating the roles of the various service providers. The case planner also must require collaboration among all the case workers assigned to the case so that a single family assessment and service plan is developed. Case planning responsibility also includes documenting client progress and adherence to the service plan by recording in the uniform case record that such services are provided, and making casework contacts or arranging for casework contacts as required.

<sup>3</sup> Case worker is any additional Department or Agency staff other than case manager or case planner directly involved in a child welfare case who provides services to any family member, or assesses, evaluates, makes casework contacts, and/or arranges or coordinates one or more aspects of service delivery. The case worker contributes to the development of the family assessment and service plan as directed by the case planner. There may be multiple case workers assigned to a family services stage.

<sup>4</sup> Parent advocate means a person who has previously been a recipient of child welfare services, has successfully addressed the issues which brought the family to the attention of child welfare, has been reunified with his or her children, if applicable, and has subsequently been trained as a parent advocate to work within the child welfare system.

not possible. Such initial casework contacts within 30 days of placement must be made by the case manager, the case planner or a caseworker assigned to the case, as directed by the case planner; (b) After the first 30 days of placement, casework contacts are to be held with the child's parents or relatives at least once every month unless compelling reasons are documented why such contacts are not possible. Such monthly casework contacts made after the first 30 days of placement must be made by one of the approved types of individuals listed above. However, no more than two of the monthly casework contacts in any six-month period may be made by a parent advocate.

### **Casework Contact with Child**

***Content and purpose:*** The purpose of the contacts is to assess the child's current safety and well-being, to evaluate or re-evaluate the child's permanency needs and permanency goal, and to guide the child towards a course of action aimed at resolving problems of a social, emotional or developmental nature that are contributing towards the reason(s) why such child is in foster care. The focus of the initial contacts with the child must include, but need not be limited to, determining the child's reaction to the separation and his/her adjustment to the out-of-home placement and arranging for services necessary to meet his/her needs.

***Casework contacts must be made by one of the following individuals:*** (a) case planner; (b) the caseworker assigned to the child, as directed by the case planner; or (c) the case manager. These should be individual or group face-to-face contacts with the child.

***Frequency:*** (a) During the first 30 days of placement, casework contacts are to be held with the child as often as is necessary to implement the services tasks in the family and children's services plan but must occur at least twice. At least one of the two contacts must be held at the child's placement location. (b) After the first 30 days of placement, casework contacts are to be held with the child at a minimum of once a month. At least two of the monthly contacts every 90 days must be at the child's placement location. If the youth is age 18 or older and is attending an educational or vocational program 50 miles or more outside the local social services district, the casework contacts may be made by telephone or mail.

### **Casework Contact with Child's Caretakers (Person Immediately Responsible for the Child's Day-to-day Care)**

***Content and purpose:*** The purpose of these contacts is obtaining information as to the child's adjustment to foster care and for facilitating the caretaker's role in achieving the desired course of action specified in the child and family services plan.

***Casework contacts must be made by one of the following individuals:*** (a) the case planner; (b) the caseworker assigned to the child, as directed by the case planner; or (c) the case manager. These must be face-to-face contacts.

***Frequency:*** (a) During the first 30 days of placement, casework contacts are to be held with the child's caretaker as often as is necessary, but at a minimum must occur at least once at the child's placement location. (b) After the first 30 days of placement, casework

contacts must be held with the child's caretaker at least monthly, and at least one of the monthly contacts every 90 days must be at the child's placement location.

### **State Plans for the use of the Monthly Caseworker Visit Grant FY 2015-2019.**

New York State will utilize the funding provided for monthly casework contact visits to improve caseworker engagement and decision-making skills, as well as to provide IT support, in order to accurately capture and report on caseworker visits so that compliance with federal standards can be documented.

OCFS is contracting with Barium Springs Training Group to provide Principles of Partnership Training to both OCFS staff and Local Department of Social Services staff. This training will further staff understanding of how to partner effectively with each other and with the children and families we serve, and supports the NYS Child Welfare Practice Model's core values. The Principles of Partnership model coincides with the goals of the Social Security Act (SSA) § 436(b)(4)(B), which states a portion of the discretionary funding shall be used to improve the overall quality of monthly casework visits with children who are in foster care under the responsibility of the state, with an emphasis on improving caseworker decision making on the safety, permanency, and well-being of foster children and on activities designed to increase retention, recruitment, and training of caseworkers.

OCFS is also contracting with six Business Analysts to promote accurate, consistent documentation of caseworker contacts. New York City (NYC) and Spring Valley account for the largest percentage of the statewide foster care population, and, thus, the largest percentage of the state's compliance with the mandatory 95 percent caseworker contact rate. Numerous voluntary agencies, each with its own business processes, are contracted to provide caseworker services for NYC and Spring Valley. Five Business Analysts will work with the NYC OCFS Regional Office (NYCRO) and one Business Analyst will work with the Spring Valley OCFS Regional Office to coordinate and oversee the voluntary agencies' compliance with federal requirements. Business Analysts focus on providing training, technical assistance, business process analysis/enhancement, etc. in order to achieve standardization in documentation and reporting.

OCFS is contracting with a seventh Business Analyst to work with OCFS staff to improve the accuracy and functionality of the foster care data in the Data Warehouse. This person is tasked with improving the processes to extract and import data, define requirements for data and reporting, develop data design and modeling, create custom data extracts, and develop reports.

### **8. Adoption and Legal Guardianship Incentive Payments**

In 2014, OCFS established statewide adoption targets for children freed less than one year and children freed more than one year. These groups were broken out further into subcategories of children over age 14 and children in facilities licensed by the Office of Mental Health or the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities. Each local department of social service received a county specific list with identified target percentages. Counties reported finalizations on a monthly basis to OCFS regional offices. With targets established at 80 percent of the total for children freed less than one year, four out of the six regions exceeded 100 percent of the

target. With targets established at 65 percent of the total for children freed more than one year, three of the six regions exceeded 100 percent of the target.

For 2015, OCFS has aligned adoption targets with the structure of the adoption incentive categories established in the “Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act” (P.L. 113-183). A file identifying every child freed for adoption with a goal of adoption as of the end of 2014 was developed. The subsets of the file are; children eight and under, children nine to 14 years old and children older than age 14. Targets of 90 percent finalizations in each category have been established and each local department of social service received a county specific list. Further study at the statewide level identified the number of children who are photo listed and the number of children placed in an out-of-state adoptive placement. OCFS regional Adoption Specialists will be supporting the local district work in achieving target goals especially in cases where barriers are identified that require intervention and or collaboration at a higher level. Success in achieving permanency for these children through the use of targets is intended to advance statewide success in achieving adoption incentive payments and if successful in that regard, OCFS will determine appropriate distribution of the funds to supplement services for adoptive families.

Additionally, OCFS has established similar target categories based on a file of the children residing with approved/certified relatives for a period of six months or more. These are children who do not have a goal of adoption or return to parent. Targets to move 30 percent of the children toward final approval of a KinGAP application would also advance statewide success in achieving guardianship incentive payments. OCFS plans to create a desk aid in 2015 which will provide caseworkers with an easy to follow guide for completing the KinGAP process with relatives. OCFS regional staff will be supporting county efforts as needed to achieve permanency in KinGAP cases.

February 2015, OCFS issued an Informational Letter policy titled, *Re-homing of Children* (15-OCFS-INF-01). The policy provides information on the re-homing of children to non-relatives and how it intersects with child welfare. In addition, this INF makes recommendations on how to prevent re-homing and provides suggested steps when a re-homing case is identified. Re-homing means the non-temporary placement or replacement of a child, usually an adopted child, with informal caregivers who are not related to the child through blood, marriage or adoption. In these situations:

- the parent or guardian of the child knows little or nothing about the replacement caregiver; and
- a home study or court review is usually not completed prior to the placement.

Re-homing can occur in both adoptive and birth families, although most cases identified to date have involved children who have been internationally adopted.

In March 2015, OCFS issued an Administrative Directive policy titled, *Multiethnic Placement Act of 1994 as Amended by the Interethnic Adoption Provisions of 1996* (15-OCFS-ADM-05). The policy provides updated information on the requirements of the Multiethnic Placement Act of 1994 (MEPA), as amended by the Interethnic Adoption Provisions (IEP) of The Small Business Job Protection Act of 1996. In June of 2014, the New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) received technical assistance from the federal Children’s Bureau National Resource Center for Adoption that included a train-the-trainer course for understanding and complying with MEPA and IEP. OCFS staff who participated in the train-the-trainer are equipped

to provide MEPA training. The guidance and best practice information provided in this ADM are based on that training.

Upon further guidance from ACF, OCFS will be issuing a policy to be compliant with the data collection on adoption and legal guardianship disruptions and dissolutions requirement of the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act. This requirement is to collect certain data on children who enter foster care after such disruption or dissolution. Once the data is further defined by ACF, we will create the data fields in CONNECTIONS and issue the policy.

## **9. Child Welfare Waiver Demonstration Activities**

New York State's Title IV-E waiver demonstration project granted under section 1130 of the Social Security Act focuses on foster care children who are at risk of more restrictive settings and long-term foster care as well as on their families. At this time, New York City's Administration for Children's Services (ACS) is the only district currently participating in New York's project.

New York State's waiver is aimed at improving stability, enhancing well-being, and expediting permanency for children in foster care. The project is intended to accomplish the following goals that fully align with New York State outcomes.

- a. Increase permanency** for all infants, children, and youth by (a) increasing the likelihood of a permanent exit, (b) reducing the time in foster placements when possible and (c) promoting a successful transition to adulthood for older youth.
- b. Increase positive outcomes** for infants, children, youth, and families in their homes and communities, including tribal communities, and improve the safety and well-being of infants, children, and youth.
- c. Prevent child abuse and neglect** and the re-entry of infants, children, and youth into foster care.

In 2014, ACS began a gradual implementation of the IV-E waiver allowing ACS to provide and enhanced rate to the voluntary agencies that was used to hire supervisors and case planners necessary to achieve the new staffing ratios, and receive training on the CANS-NY assessment. The gradual implementation allowed for a more stable organizational context – establishing firmer ground on which to add the identified interventions beginning in 2015. This process allowed ACS to establish implementation and saturation of the CANS-NY instrument, gather some baseline well-being and assessment data, and make any data system or quality assurance improvements necessary, either within the local jurisdiction or its contractors, to support both the CANS-NY instrument and any broader data collection efforts necessary under the waiver.

### *Case Planner Caseload and Supervisory Ratio Reduction*

Regular Family Foster Care providers continued to meet the caseload and supervisory ratio reduction expectations established as part of the Title IV-E Waiver Demonstration Project. Each case planner should not have a caseload to exceed 12 children. It is suggested that breakdown of cases should include ten active cases and two children on suspended payment status, which includes trial discharge, hospitalization, or other long-term absences from care. Supervisors are

required to supervise no more than four case planners. Agencies consistently monitored caseloads of case planners and provided monthly updates to New York City Administration for Children's Services Implementation and Monitoring (I & M) Unit. At times the caseloads and supervisory ratios were impacted due to vacancies for the following reasons:

- Case planners resignations;
- Internal promotions or transfers of case planning staff; and
- In very few circumstances, the termination of case planning staff due to performance concerns.

The I & M Unit reviewed monthly caseload and supervisory compliance reports to monitor caseload distribution. Corrective plans were requested in any instance when case planners' caseloads exceeded the prescribed waiver guideline. The plan documented the agencies' efforts and timeframe to address. The foster care providers did not experience turnover in the supervisor positions, therefore, the supervisory ratio requirement was consistently met. During this review period, ACS created an internal tracking system to verify the agencies' self-reported data, drawing on information found in CONNECTIONS, New York State's SACWIS system.

#### *Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths – New York (CANS-NY)*

Starting on July 1, 2014, all new ACS placements into regular family foster care require the completion of the CANS-NY within 30 days of placement. All children in foster care placement as of July 1, 2014, were required to have a CANS-NY completed by December 31, 2014. Each provider was asked to integrate the completion of the CANS-NY with the due date of the upcoming Family Assessment Service Plan (FASP). Six months after the initial CANS-NY, a Reassessment CANS-NY is to be administered and every six months thereafter until the child safely exits from foster care. If the child experiences a placement change or any other remarkable event, an amendment CANS-NY is to be completed. At report writing 8,698 CANS-NY were completed for children in regular family foster care. As of March 19, 2015, 11,431 CANS-NY have been completed for 9,298 children, of whom 47 percent were males and 53 percent were females.

Working with Dr. Alison Metz through 2014, ACS re-evaluated the additional interventions they planned on implementing in early 2015. ACS applied for and received a technical assistance grant, "Partnering for Success, from the National Center for Evidence-Based Practice in Child Welfare."

Partnering for Success is a cross-system, competency building program that requires collaboration between child welfare and mental health professionals to improve outcomes for children and their families involved in the child welfare system. Partnering for Success provides for training and coaching to organizational leadership and practitioners to develop and sustain the ability to implement Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Plus (CBT+). CBT+ is an evidence-based treatment that uses cognitive behavioral treatment modalities that address depression, anxiety, trauma, and conduct problems. Additionally, there is a parent management component providing parents with specific techniques to handle more challenging child behaviors. The goals for Partnering for Success are:

- a. Address mental health conditions and impacts of trauma, leading to improved well-being for all children who participate in the program.

- b. Strengthen each case planner and supervisor's ability to effectively work with families, which will lead to increased permanency for children.
- c. Provide parent management training and education for foster and birth parents, which will shorten length of time in foster care and reduce foster care re-entry of children and youth.

Two agencies, Heartshare and Mercyfirst will begin implementing CBT+ in early 2015, with other agencies coming on board in the fall of 2015 into 2016.

Additionally, ACS will be implementing Attachment and Bio-Behavioral Catch-Up (ABC), an evidence based, attachment-focused, strengths-based parent coaching model. The ABC model coaches foster and birth parents for 10 weeks to improve the caregiver's ability to respond to emotional cues and the developmental needs of infants and toddlers aged six to 36 months.

## **10. Quality Assurance System**

*For Quality Assurance/CQI status please see page 36, as well as other sections, and Appendices H and I.*

## **Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) State Plan Requirements and Update**

### **Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) Overview**

#### **New York State CAPTA Coordinator:**

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#### **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 (Trust Fund) and the federal Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention program. In addition, funds supported scientific research; training and technical assistance, public awareness, and data collection and analysis to support development of best practices and to better serve children and families of New York State.

Through CAPTA project coordination, OCFS verifies 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, legal and regional office staff to fulfill that responsibility. The CAPTA Coordinator oversees the Trust Fund, and the Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention Grant, as well as contributes to 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 2014-2015:**

OCFS continued a variety of strategies and initiatives to prevent and treat child abuse and maltreatment which are described below.

#### *Services to Support Youth with Disabilities*

Currently, approximately 600 OCFS-licensed beds are targeted to serve youth with a developmental or intellectual disability who may have co-occurring mental health/medical or chemical dependency issues. OCFS staff charged with oversight responsibility of voluntary agencies serving this population need additional technical assistance and training to fully assess the adequacy of staffing capacity and qualifications, treatment needs and behavioral support planning considerations for this vulnerable population of youth in residential care.

OCFS contracted the services of Dr. Deborah Napolitano, Assistant Professor and Co-Director of the Community Consultation Program in the Department of Pediatrics in the Division of Neurodevelopmental and Behavioral Pediatrics at the University of Rochester to provide technical assistance to staff in the oversight of these specialized programs. During 2014-15, Dr. Napolitano assisted OCFS staff in reviewing OCFS licensed residential care programs that serve youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities and reviewed proposals from voluntary agencies seeking to establish new programs to serve this specialized population. Dr. Napolitano also developed an oversight module for regional office staff to use when conducting a review of a voluntary agency to assess the adequacy of agency programs to meet the needs of youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

#### *Child Welfare Data System*

In the coming year, Chapin Hall Center for Children (Chapin Hall) will provide the OCFS with access to information management and research tools that can improve outcomes for the children and families OCFS serves. Chapin Hall provides a service in which certain information regularly maintained by OCFS (and other state welfare agencies) is reformatted into a database for tracking child welfare service careers longitudinally. Chapin Hall offers computer programs and internet-based tools it has developed for accessing the database and generating reports, including reports amenable to such federal outcomes as: time to adoption, time to reunification, placement stability, and foster care reentry. Chapin Hall provides technical assistance on extracting, interpreting and using information from the database to help understand child welfare system performance. Chapin Hall provides OCFS with up to five hours of training and technical

assistance annually on how to access and read the database, and to generate and interpret reports.

#### *Healthy Families New York –Randomized Controlled Trial - 15 Year Follow Up*

Research Scientist Dr. Miranda-Julian, will collaborate with the HFNY Research Team and the HFNY Central Administration Team to research, identify and develop instruments for collecting and coding data; develop and document data collection methods; analyze and interpret data; and present the results obtained from key informants for the 15 year follow-up of the HFNY randomized controlled trial. Dr. Miranda-Julian will also play a substantial role in obtaining data from New York State administrative data sources for the study's key informants, coding the data in accordance with study developed procedures, and analyzing the data in conjunction with the information obtained directly from key informants. She will also be involved with the ongoing HFNY program evaluation activities that are used to assess whether or not HFNY programs are being implemented with fidelity to the HFA model and to improve the quality of services provided. This position benefits the HFNY program and New York State in that it provides the internal support necessary to engage in high-quality research and evaluation activities that contribute to understanding the short and long-term effectiveness of the HFNY program.

#### **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' 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; (3) the investigation and prosecution of cases of child abuse and maltreatment, particularly child sexual abuse and exploitation; and (4) the handling of cases involving children with disabilities or serious health-related problems who are victims of abuse or neglect.

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. Through the implementation of local multidisciplinary investigation teams (MDTs), child advocacy centers (CACs) and child fatality review teams (CFRTs), child protective services, law enforcement, prosecution, medical, mental health, and advocacy 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, 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 MDTs, CACs and CFRTs across the state. The New York State Child Advocacy Resource and Consultation Center (CARCC) provides services that include specialized and/or

interdisciplinary training, team functioning analysis, technical assistance, resource development, and coordination of a statewide coalition of CACs and MDTs wishing to develop 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.

One of the primary programs funded through CJA has been the CARCC Program. During the last year, CARCC was instrumental in assisting the CJA staff with providing technical assistance for many innovative programs as well as provision of assessment and consultation services; a mentoring program; marketing and co-sponsorship; the CARCC website; the CARCC listserv; the Case Tracking Database; a toll free telephone number; the Child Abuse and Disabilities website; an enhanced website and training module development. These activities are described in more detail below.

#### *Assessment and Consultation Services*

CJA staff worked closely with CARCC staff to provide more individualized consultation services to MDTs and CACs throughout the state. At the request of CJA staff five on-site consultation sessions/county events/collaboration with New York State Child Advocacy Resource were provided. These events include such activities as participating in a webinar, and attending training workshops on human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation of children. CARCC provides on-going consultation by phone, email, and additional site visits as necessary. Common issues and goals included:

- Obtaining accreditation for a CAC
- Fund development and awareness
- Education on key organizations and how they overlap
- Providing an overview of the different CAC models used in each county covering similarities and differences

CARCC also provides information to professionals, students and concerned citizens throughout the nation, responding to over 213 technical assistance requests in the past 12 months. Technical assistance included, but was not limited to, current Child Advocacy Center policies and procedures, information on the recording of forensic interviews nationwide, legal and educational advocacy referrals, and the New York State Children's Justice Task Force Forensic Interviewing Best Practices. CARCC's resource library has expanded and offers users a wealth of printed, audio and video materials. In addition, CARCC's website, listserv, and resource guides have aided in the provision of this service.

#### *Mentoring Program*

Of the several approaches used by CJA staff to improve team building, one of them is team-to-team mentoring. Mentoring sessions between counties has proven to be mutually beneficial. These are essential connections as teams learn from each other and work through useful solutions to shared problems. This concerted effort also encourages ongoing associations between counties. In the past 12 months, CJA staff has again requested four mentoring sessions to be facilitated by CARCC. Several key areas that have been addressed through the mentoring program include prevention programs to reduce child sexual abuse, board development, and case review guidelines.

### *Marketing and Co-Sponsorship Program*

CARCC's marketing and co-sponsorship program is utilized by CJA staff in order to assist MDTs and CACs with initiatives to support training, awareness events, and team-related needs. The co-sponsorship program is comprised of initiatives designed for an audience of multiple counties. Both programs serve as an additional benefit to the MDTs and CACs of New York State by making possible collaborative events where expertise is openly shared. Support is made available in the form of financial reimbursement for event-related expenses, such as but not limited to promotional materials, meeting rooms, and honorarium fees. In addition, the marketing program provides support to MDTs and CACs via the CARCC website and listserv, which offers the equivalent of free advertisement of events and employment posting services. In the past 12 months, CARCC has again supported two events in counties throughout the state, with one of those trainings being a multi-city co-sponsorship with over 600 people in attendance. The other event sponsored by CARCC was the Southern Tier Child Advocacy Center Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy training. This two-day training plus one year of monthly consultation clinical calls will increase access to effective evidence-based treatment for the children and families impacted by trauma. The conference included professionals throughout New York State such as psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, and licensed counselors.

### *CARCC Website*

A valuable tool for sharing and collecting information is through CARCC's website ([www.nyscarcc.org](http://www.nyscarcc.org)); New York State's child abuse response efforts receive a worldwide audience and can offer resources and information to virtually anyone with access to the Internet. Professionals from academic institutions and nonprofits as well as concerned citizens worldwide often learn of CARCC via the website, which includes technical assistance materials, up-to-date training opportunities from across the country and program outcome data on CACs. The site is linked to numerous relevant government, private and public websites addressing a wide range of topics of interest to child abuse professionals.

Not only are CJA staff able to reach a wider audience through this website, but this technology also provides for a means of dissemination and information sharing for the teams themselves. The Directory of MDTs and CACs provides a detailed profile report of all the teams in New York State, highlighting demographic information, case criteria, funding sources, and interagency partners. A photographic virtual tour of CACs highlights the various designs that support a child-friendly setting and offers a perfect opportunity for those CACs to showcase their dedicated efforts. Teams also utilize the website to post job announcements and training opportunities.

The website is currently being transferred to a new web management service through Safe Horizon. These changes will allow for a more user-friendly site, and give CARCC staff the opportunity to easily attain technical assistance in order to keep the website updated and accurate. This transition will also allow for simple navigation and easier access to information that is most often requested by website visitors.

### *CARCC Listserv*

CJA staff often use the CARCC listserv to reach out to professionals in the field. By inviting professionals to join crucial discussions concerning issues such as investigation, prosecution, medical and mental health treatment we have extended our ability to provide considerable information and knowledge on a larger level. There are 196 members currently on the listserv. The members participate in a forum for exchange of information and ideas. The listserv is

designed to provide an opportunity for electronic dialogue and facilitate information sharing. Members have the ability to pose questions, request feedback or join a discussion regarding funding or other pertinent discourse. Information continues to be exchanged at an active rate on the listserv, with over 75 messages posted in the past year.

#### *New York State Case Tracking Database for Child Advocacy Programs*

In order to meet the growing need for sound data collection methods, CJA staff continues to use CARCC to assemble MDT/CAC data through the Case Tracking Database (CTDB). This system can be used by all MDTs/CACs throughout the state. With the database, a MDT or CAC can track some of the most common demographical information of children seen and services provided, as well as generate common reports, such as NCA statistics and Crime Victims Board services. There is also a feature that allows a MDT or CAC to produce a specialized report tailored to their individual queried needs. Because the database is provided free of charge, there has been a welcomed response and now all New York State CAC programs use this format or the NCATrak data collection instrument. Technical assistance is always provided either by CJA staff, CARCC staff or a technical consultant, and this past year over 213 requests for assistance were answered by CARCC staff alone.

#### *Toll-Free Telephone*

Programs are encouraged to use CARCC services when CJA staff is not available. To facilitate this option, a toll-free telephone number has been established in order to accommodate those teams who have limited or no long distance access. CARCC received 249 calls on the toll-free number from 40 different counties in New York State, in addition to two international calls and calls from 10 other states. This has helped facilitate program access to more professionals in the field. The toll-free number is (866) 313-3013.

#### *Child Abuse and Disabilities: Enhanced Website and Training Module Development*

CJA staff continues to work with CARCC and Columbia University on expanding the *Child Abuse and Disabilities* website (<http://online.tc.columbia.edu>). Since the website's launch in 2007, there have been more than 29,000 hits to the site and visitors from over 154 countries. More than 800 individuals have fully registered on the site, receiving full access to the articles, video clips and other resources that are available. During 2014, the Project Team continued to work with website consultants and colleagues in the field to assess the content and facilitation of the full website once the LOGON feature is formally launched in April, 2015. The Team continued to discuss ways to sustain at least the current site once the contract year ends. Updating will continue until the end of the contract period. Discussions and meetings were held with staff from OCFS who have supported this Project throughout these years.

#### **Accomplishments for 2014-2015**

As of FFY 2014, all CAC programs are approved as Tier I programs by OCFS. There are now 40 OCFS-approved programs serving 43 counties, involving over 18,000 physically and/or sexually abused child victims. In addition, the first Regional Child Advocacy Center (CAC) is now preparing to open with the established Clinton County CAC serving as the hub for additional satellites throughout the North Country, including Franklin County, Essex County, and the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe. This formerly underserved area will now have access to child-focused environments where joint investigations, specialized evaluations, trauma-informed

treatment, and prosecution of child physical and/or sexual abuse cases are provided by a Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT).

The National Children's Alliance (NCA) has accredited 34 of the programs through their national standards. CJA staff continues to provide technical assistance to the remaining six programs in their application for NCA accreditation.

All MDT/CAC Programs are required to submit annual Program Standard Evaluation Instruments. The instrument is a key tool in the annual evaluation and assessment process conducted by CJA staff. All programs receive a comprehensive review that includes attendance at an MDT case review meeting, individual interviews with key MDT members and a follow up site review letter that identifies the strengths and weaknesses of the program. This letter is then used as a foundation for performance targets and/or corrective actions.

CJA staff conducted 49 on-site technical assistance and/or monitoring reviews during 2014. Some programs required numerous visits to provide necessary program development services. Staff also provided an average of three technical assistance phone consultations per month. Many consultations can be very lengthy and/or require considerable follow up.

Staff also provided an average of seven technical assistance phone consultations per month. Many consultations can be very lengthy and/or require considerable follow up.

CJA staff worked to develop of 43 contracts during the year. They include:

- 40 county or regional specific work plans, performance targets and budgets;
- Three statewide initiatives through the Children's Justice Act Program;
- Two contract reassignments to other MDT members agencies to improve or expand ability to provide services;
- Assisting contractors in contract development; and
- Assisting contractors in budget revisions and/or amendments.

CJA staff continued to collaborate on intra-agency initiatives with the Bureau of Training, Continuous Quality Improvement; Strategic Planning and Policy Development, and Program and Community Development. Activities included participation on curriculum design for Forensic Interviewing Best Practices and the piloted curriculum for Advanced Forensic Interviewing Best Practices. CJA staff also provided technical assistance to the Child Fatality Review Team Program, OCFS Regional Offices, the NYS Safe Harbour program, child sexual abuse prevention initiatives, and written directives related to investigation, treatment or management of child abuse cases.

CJA staff has been actively involved with development of two training initiatives supported by the New York State Chapter of the NCA and the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services. They are the "Less is More" and "First Responders" trainings.

The purpose of the "Less is More" training is to equip mandated reporters with the knowledge and skills needed to effectively recognize and respond to allegations of child abuse. This training is designed to give school and child care personnel, along with medical, mental health and other therapeutic providers the tools needed to optimally respond when a child discloses or indicates that he or she may be a victim of child abuse. The response from a mandated reporter can impact a child's ability to move forward with the "First Responder" or system response.

The purpose of the “First Responder” training is to equip first responders with the knowledge and skills needed to respond to child abuse when an allegation comes to light. Responding to child abuse allegations is a challenging undertaking. It can be difficult during an investigation to find the balance where children are kept safe, while at the same time minimizing the potential for negative effects. This training was developed to break down common misconceptions and clearly explain the correct procedures for response. As a result, more children will receive the help they need, in a timely and sensitive manner. The training had been piloted through the Genesee County Justice for Children CAC, the Putnam County CAC, and the Otsego County CAC program. In 2014, Ontario, Chenango, Clinton, Broome, Madison, Rockland, Ulster, Schoharie, and Schenectady counties all received the training. For this year the training was offered at the Prevent Child Abuse New York conference - April 15, 2015, at the Division of Criminal Justice Service training Center - April 16, 2015 (train the trainer), and the annual Bivona Summit – April 30, 2015. April 2015 “Less is More” was released online.

CJA staff is actively involved with supporting the Safe Harbour initiative in New York State. In January 2012, OCFS received funding in the New York State Budget to support the Safe Harbour Legislation. The New York State Safe Harbour for Exploited Children Act protects sexually exploited children by recognizing them as victims, and offers services that pave the way for better outcomes.

Through this funding, OCFS launched and implemented what was formerly known as Child Right: New York, now known as Safe Harbor, New York, a statewide child welfare-based response to the commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) and trafficking. OCFS contracted with International Organization for Adolescents (IOFA) to adapt their Child Right model for New York and craft a statewide response. OCFS currently funds seventeen pilot project areas: the counties of Nassau, Suffolk, Westchester, Rockland, Orange, Ulster, Putnam, Dutchess, Albany, Oneida, Onondaga, Broome, Monroe, Erie, and Niagara, the five boroughs of New York City, and the St. Regis Mohawk Reservation.

Through this coordinated, statewide response, Child Right: New York aims to increase identification of CSEC and trafficking victims and provide services through New York’s child welfare and allied youth service systems.

Key elements of Child Right: New York include:

- Developing a regional- and county-based action plan to enhance or create specialized services for child victims of CSEC and trafficking.
- Training child welfare professionals and key responders on child trafficking.
- Providing technical assistance to all training participants and their agencies on identifying, assessing, and referring child and youth CSEC and trafficking victims.
- Increasing services across the state responsive to the needs of youth with CSEC/trafficking histories and experiences.
- Developing a statewide blueprint with key stakeholder input, which will guide a comprehensive and sustainable statewide response to CSEC and child trafficking.
- Developing a Building Child Welfare Response Handbook to guide service providers as they respond to the needs of CSEC and trafficked children and youth.
- Developing and integrating a rapid screening CSEC and child trafficking tool into existing OCFS and local social service system protocol.

In 2014, IOFA subcontracted with Safe Horizon to offer trainings to CAC and MDT programs across the state. Five regional trainings were offered and 160 participants attended. CJA staff

assisted IOFA in the development and implementation of these specialized training during FFY 2014.

IOFA and CJA staff met periodically during 2014 to identify additional program areas where anti-CSEC and trafficking work can be integrated into CJA activities, and IOFA presented on child trafficking to the Children's Justice Task Force twice during this time. Ideas for consideration include incorporating child trafficking information into Less Is More and hosting additional offerings of IOFA's specialized CAC trainings. IOFA and CJA staff have attended a number of conferences together to foster future collaborations on providing a MDT response to child victims. This partnership will continue to strengthen during 2015.

CJA staff assisted in the development of numerous specialized training initiatives for MDT/CAC investigations, treatment, management and prosecution of child abuse cases, particularly those involving sexual abuse and exploitation. Many CAC programs have collaborated with local YMCA programs across the state to present Darkness 2 Light: Steward of Children training programs to schools, church congregations, Healthy Families NY staff and many other child serving community groups. Some of the trainings have included:

- Working with Autism, Children and Their Families-Bivona Child Advocacy Center on January 14, 2014
- 3rd Annual Southern Tier Multidisciplinary Team Trauma Education Summit- Southern Tier Child Advocacy Center on January 31, 2014
- Stewards of Children Training by the Chautauqua County Child Advocacy Center on February 6, 2014
- Advanced Forensic Interviewing Workshop- Child Advocacy Center Program of Chautauqua County on February 6-7, 2014
- Preventing Child Abuse – CHAMP Program and Bellevue Hospital on March 12, 2014
- 30th National Symposium on Child Abuse Huntsville, AL Mar 24-27, 2014
- 6th Annual Bivona Summit on Child Abuse – Bivona Child Advocacy Center on April 22-23, 2014
- Protecting our Children: Advice from Child Molesters- Schenectady County Child Advocacy Center on April 28, 2014
- Less is More / First Responders Oneonta, NY Apr 30, 2014
- ATSA Albany, NY May 19-21, 2014
- The Right Path: Interventions for Youth with Sexual Behavior Problems June 19, 2014
- Fighting Trafficking with the Power of Forensic Science June 23, 2014
- Hearing the Silence of the Drug Endangered Child July 24, 2014
- Darkness to Light Stewards of Children Authorized Facilitator Workshop July 25, 2014
- Model Case Review-Hartford, MD August 4, 2014
- Understanding Perpetrators August 14, 2014
- Exploring the Complexities and Opportunities: The Overlap of Domestic Violence and Child Abuse and Neglect August 27, 2014
- Helping the Non Offending Parents in Child Sexual Abuse Cases August 28, 2014
- Beyond Leaving: Working with All Families Impacted by Domestic Violence September 3, 2014
- Assessing and Accounting for Domestic Violence in Custody Cases September 12, 2014
- One with Courage on Crimes Against Children September 3-5, 2014
- Child Fatality Review Team Annual Meeting September 9-10, 2014
- Adolescents with Illegal Sexual Behavior: How Dangerous are they. Southern Tier Health Care Center CAC September 20, 2014
- Restorative Justice Training with Duke Fisher October 17<sup>th</sup> 2014

- The Emotional & Psychological Trauma of Abuse & Maltreatment in Children & Families sponsored by OCCAN October 20, 2014
- National Victim Assistance Academy Leadership Institute October-December 2014

CJA staff continued to establish and maintain linkages with other national, state and local organizations that support inter-agency and multidisciplinary collaboration on child abuse cases, particularly child sexual abuse cases. These collaborations included attending meetings and/or teleconferences with:

- NYS Coalition Against Sexual Assault
- NYS Association for Treatment of Sexual Abusers
- NYS Alliance of Sex Offender Service Providers
- New York State Children's Alliance
- NYS Prevent Child Abuse
- National Center for Missing and Exploited Children
- Child Abuse Medical Provider Program
- National Children's Alliance
- American Prosecutors Research Institute/National Center for Prosecution of Child Abuse
- National Child Protection Training Center
- International Organization for Adolescents
- National Children's Justice Act Program Coordinators Grantee's meeting and webinars
- Keeping New York Kids Alive
- NYS Sudden Infant and Child Death Resource Center
- National Center for Child Death Review

CJA staff continued to work closely with the New York State Police Special Victims Unit to conduct an annual comprehensive training seminar for training professionals in investigation of sex offenses. The training included a four day comprehensive training on physical abuse and serious neglect cases. The sexual offense seminar was held in May and the physical abuse seminar was held in November. These annual seminars encouraged professionals to participate as members of their MDT. The seminars were attended by approximately 200 professionals from law enforcement, child protective services (CPS), probation, parole, corrections, prosecution, victim advocacy, Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) Program, Child Abuse Medical Provider (CHAMP) Program and mental health disciplines throughout the State. The collaboration between the State Police, OCFS and the CJTF members has produced a training seminar recognized across the State as a model of excellence. Due to increases in personnel service related costs and reductions in the federal grant award amounts, the CJTF had agreed to consolidate the two training programs into one 5-day training called "Crimes Against Children Training Seminar" The training was held in May 2014. It included many of the same training topics but provide a stronger focus on commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) and children with disabilities.

CJA staff manages the contract for the New York State Citizen Review Panels. New York State has three Citizen Review Panels (CRP), meeting CAPTA requirements. One panel was established specifically for New York City to address the issues particular to the City. The New York City panel also established one subcommittee for each borough. The other two panels meet in Buffalo and Albany with jurisdictions representing the rest of the State. Panels are required to examine the practices (in addition to policies and procedures) of State and local agencies to evaluate the extent to which the agencies are effectively discharging their child protective responsibilities. The panels are authorized to:

- review the procedures, policies and practices of the State and local agencies relating to child protective services;
- examine specific cases to evaluate the effectiveness of the agency's discharge of its duties and responsibilities;
- have access to pending and indicated cases reported to the SCR;
- have reasonable access to public and private facilities providing child welfare services within their respective jurisdictions. OCFS is required to assist the panels to have reasonable access to public facilities that receive public funds and are providing child welfare services;
- provide for public outreach and/or call public hearings on issues within their jurisdiction;
- review and evaluate any criteria that the panel considers important to provide for the protection of children; and
- issue an annual report, setting forth a summary of the panel activities and the findings and recommendations of the panels.

The panels provide for public outreach and comment in order to assess the impact of current procedures and practices upon children and families in the community. The panels also submitted their 2014 recommendations which included ways to possibly improve the child protective services system at the State and local levels. These recommendations were submitted prior to the required statutory deadline of February 1, 2015. This is attached as Appendix 2. The response from OCFS will include a description of whether or how the State will incorporate the recommendations of the panel (where appropriate) to make measurable progress in improving the State and local CPS systems.

### **New York State Children and Family Trust Fund (Trust Fund) and Federal Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention Program**

#### **Accomplishments in 2014-2015:**

In December 2012, OCFS released the Trust Fund Request for Proposals (RFP), combining state-allocated funds to the Trust Fund and federal Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) grant funds aimed at improving the safety and wellbeing of children and families who may be at risk of and/or experienced some form of family violence. In 2014, additional Federal CBCAP funds were made available to fund programming and two additional programs were selected from the 2012 Trust Fund RFP and awarded grants.

Due to the complex issues facing families, better aligning public and private resources to support effective neighborhood-based interventions can create a continuum of care to improve outcomes for all community residents. OCFS relies on both community-based services and the local departments of social services (LDSS) to help strengthen and support families. This partnership is critical to improving the safety and well-being for children, adults and families in New York's highest need communities.

In keeping with the mission of the Trust Fund to engage families before the system intervenes, funded programs address the following outcomes:

- To strengthen families by building protective factors to reduce the risks of child abuse and maltreatment;

- To improve safety and well-being of children and families affected by domestic violence;
- To improve the safety and well-being of the elderly at risk of abuse by family members.

State and federally funded child abuse prevention programs include:

- Family Resource Centers providing early and evidence-based support to parents and caregivers of young children – 1) Association to Benefit Children, East Harlem, 2) Niagara Falls City School District, Niagara Falls, 3) Hillside Children’s Center, Rochester, 4) Child Care Coordinating Council of the North Country, Plattsburgh, (also serves Franklin and Essex counties), 5) Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tioga County, Owego, 6) Pro Action of Steuben and Yates, Inc., Bath, 7) Leake Watts Services, Inc., Yonkers;
- Programs offering home visiting, evidence-based parenting education and kinship services – 8) Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County, Ithaca, 9) Jewish Family Services of Buffalo and Erie County, Inc., Buffalo, 10) Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Albany dba Community Maternity Services, Albany, 11) The Family Center, Brooklyn, 12) Sunset Park Health Council dba Lutheran Family Health Centers, Brooklyn, 13) Inwood House, New York City; and
- Programs offering trauma-informed therapeutic services for families affected by domestic violence – 14) Westchester Jewish Community Services, Inc., Mt. Vernon, and 15) Edwin Gould Services for Children and Families, Central and East Harlem.

The Trust Fund continues its support of the New York State Shaken Baby Prevention hospital-based education program now known as Safe Babies New York, which targets 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 abusive head trauma or Shaken Baby Syndrome (SBS). Continued tracking of the incidence of SBS in the Western New York, Finger Lakes and Hudson Valley regions documents a sustained 40 percent reduction in the incidence of SBS in the Western New York region, a 52 percent reduction in the Finger Lakes region, and a 75 percent reduction in the Hudson Valley region of the state.

In 2014, more than 175,000 parents of newborns received information through the project, close to 89 percent of live hospital births. Collaboration with the New York State Department of Health (DOH) continues in an effort to promote child safety and the prevention of SBS. The new shaken baby prevention video was released in April 2014, by DOH. This video meets the requirements of Chapter 219 of the Laws of 2004 signed in July of 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 the video or declined to participate in the educational programs.

Kaleida Health/Woman and Children’s Hospital of Buffalo, which oversees the program in Western New York, Finger Lakes and Capital regions, and WMC-NY (Westchester Medical Center) which educates all maternity nurses in the Hudson Valley Region, New York City and Long Island, remain committed to sustaining this educational program. Similarly, with additional resources through the Trust Fund, the scope of the program will expand to educate parents about safe sleeping practices, to further strengthen OCFS and DOH efforts to reduce child fatalities where unsafe sleeping environments are a factor. Data indicates that of those child death notifications reported to OCFS in 2010-12, 51 percent cited unsafe sleep conditions. (Source: OCFS reviewed fatalities). “A Guide for Parents” brochure developed for the hospital-based program offers strategies for coping with a crying baby and stresses the importance of safe sleeping practices. The brochure has been translated into the six languages in which it is

required to be available under the Governor's Executive Order on Statewide Language Access: Spanish, Chinese, Haitian-Creole, Korean, Russian, and Italian, and all versions are available for download on the OCFS website.

In 2014, a "Safe Sleep for Your Baby" video was distributed to child welfare staff and community-based programs to reinforce safe sleeping practices for families engaged through preventive or protective services as well as family-serving programs. The Missouri Children's Trust Fund agreed to partner with OCFS and the Trust Fund to replicate the video produced in Missouri to appeal to New York families. The simple message conveys that babies sleep safest ALONE, on their BACKS, in a CRIB. Since 2012, requests from the local departments of social services (including New York City) tripled, with over 50 percent of the local districts requesting publications. In 2014, local districts, health agencies, child care agencies, and community-based programs distributed over 136,000 publications and videos, reaching families in 48 counties.

OCFS, in an effort to reduce the number of child fatalities due to unsafe sleeping practices partnered with a media consultant to promote the "Safe Sleep for your Baby" campaign in 2014. Wallboards promoting the "ABC's of Safe Sleep" were placed in laundromats, and hair and nail salons in fifty locations for the month of November. The following six counties were targeted for this campaign: Onondaga, Clinton, St. Lawrence, Fulton, Warren, and Niagara.

Helpful Tips to Keep Your Baby Safe are posted on the OCFS website and available in six languages. Other materials developed include Personalized Safety Tips and Emergency Contact Sheet for Caregivers, a Helpful Strategies for Keeping Infants and Young Children Safe video, and a Keeping Sleeping Babies Safer brochure. These are both available in English and Spanish. Efforts to identify and promote child safety issues will continue as resources allow.

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 therapeutic visitation and abusive partner intervention services, and child protective services and domestic violence collaboration and joint safety planning. Elder abuse prevention programs focus on educating both seniors and communities regarding the problem/risks of elder abuse, special outreach to the Hispanic community, and coordination, counseling, and advocacy services to victims of elder abuse. Programs funded in 2013-14 included: (1) Orange County Safe Homes Project, Inc., Newburgh, (2) The Children's Aid Society, New York City, (3) Family Services of Westchester, Inc., Mt. Vernon, (4) Lifespan of Greater Rochester, Inc., Rochester, and (5) Victims Information Bureau of Suffolk, Inc. (VIBS), Islandia and (6) My Sister's Place, Westchester.

OCFS/Trust Fund continues its role as convener and member of the Executive and Steering Committees for the New York State Parenting Education Partnership (NYSPEP) along with the New York State Council on Children and Families, Prevent Child Abuse New York, and the New York State Office of Mental Health. NYSPEP includes direct service providers from communities across the state, other state agency staff and other organizations that serve families and children.

During this reporting period, NYSPEP conducted a special one-day training institute on parents' role in early literacy, and how parenting educators can support this role. One hundred educators and related service providers attended "Planting the Seeds for Early Literacy" which included a panel representing statewide literacy resources. *Strong Roots* "Vicarious Trauma" institutes were repeated in four new locations in 2014 to further spread information on trauma. A total of

365 providers have received this training across New York State since 2013. In addition, NYSPEP hosted a webinar on the negative effects of corporal punishment and presented extensively on the Parenting Educator Credential, with five webinars to introduce and describe the Credential process. NYSPEP provides small grants to program providers to help surmount barriers and increase access for parents to participate in parenting education. Preference is given to evidence-based and promising programs. During the first three years, this grants program supported nearly 800 parents' participation in 120 class/course offerings. NYSPEP's website and bi-weekly e-news routinely alerts NYSPEP members to professional development resources and training opportunities. [www.nyspep.org](http://www.nyspep.org)

The federal 2014 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 including families affected by domestic violence. Trust Fund initiatives also support some of the strategies of the OCFS Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) 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 wellbeing through enhanced family support services.

The 2014 CBCAP federal grant award of \$1,392,915 allows OCFS to continue funding programs awarded grants under the 2012 Trust Fund RFP, including the Family Resource Center Network and other evidenced-based parenting education programs engaged in efforts to support high risk families, and work collaboratively with local departments of social services where appropriate. Funds will also support the PCANY's Prevention and Parent Helpline, and New York's annual child abuse prevention conference, along with providing training and technical assistance.

During 2014, state and federally funded programs administered under the Trust Fund served approximately 169,000 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 prevention efforts in 2014-15.

Prevent Child Abuse New York (PCANY) is a long standing partner of the Trust Fund with a shared mission to promote the safety and well-being of all children and families. The agency addresses individual, community, and societal responsibility through four inter-related strategies: the Parent Helpline, the New York State Parenting Education Partnership (NYSPEP), prevention education, and an annual professional training conference. The Helpline provides direct assistance, in the form of information and referrals, to parents, family members, service providers and other community members.

During 2014, 1,705 New York families and professionals were directly assisted through the Helpline. Sixty-six percent of the calls were from or about at-risk families. Parents comprise the largest number of people who contacted the hotline (43 percent, followed by professionals who work with children and families (34 percent). Callers representing friends, relatives and community members who are concerned about a particular child and family make up 11 percent. Of the parents in at risk families who called, 43 percent were involved with child welfare and/or court, 24 percent were overwhelmed and 14 percent indicated a mental health issue for themselves or their child. Fifty-four percent of people who use the Helpline are known to be from the five boroughs of New York City and 32 percent of the callers are known to be from counties outside of New York City. The most frequent requests for information or assistance received in 2014 included:

- Parenting education and support;
- Preventive services including supervised visitation, respite care, substance abuse services and mental health evaluation family counseling;
- Services for out of control adolescents and questions about child custody and legal information;
- Questions and complaints about CPS or ACS; and
- Emergency goods/concrete services.

PCANY's database of programs and services, which is used to refer families, is continually being updated. Service information is included for every county in New York State. In addition to reviewing all records over a two-year cycle, ongoing research seeks new and revised information for current requests. As of December 2014, the resource referral database contained records of 2,915 programs, of which 2,760 are programs in New York State and 155 are information and referrals on programs being offered nationally. More than 982 services are offered in languages other than English, most often in Spanish.

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 60,282 people received prevention information through these avenues this past year. Prevention information went to 38,673 website users, 9,339 blog users, 6,133 e-newsletter subscribers, 2,359 Facebook fans, and 173 Twitter followers.

PCANY launched the New York State Enough Abuse Campaign (NYSEAC) to address the epidemic of child sexual abuse. Based on the campaign initiated in Massachusetts, EAC was piloted in three communities in New York - Broome, Suffolk and Tompkins counties. Strategies include mobilizing communities to establish public awareness efforts and infrastructures to implement prevention response programs, and educating professionals and members of the public about prevention strategies and responses to disclosures of sexual abuse. Seventy-seven individuals are trained to deliver EAC trainings in these counties. Fifty-four trainings were held throughout New York State with 1,068 people trained in the Enough Abuse curriculum during 2014. Evaluations from the trainings reflect a high degree of satisfaction with the quality, content, and knowledge gained. Each county continues to receive technical support from the leadership team of EAC to advance their local campaigns. The campaign will expand into two to three additional counties in 2015.

PCANY will continue its efforts to identify outcomes for Helpline callers and systemic gaps in services needed, increase the knowledge and skills of those attending the annual training conference, and educate the public to take action to prevent child abuse and strengthen families.

The 2015 Conference, "Building Resilient Families, Celebrating Successes," held in April, once again inspires and equips participants with skills and strategies to strengthen families, prevent child abuse and maltreatment, and promote children's healthy development. Trust Fund-sponsored programs and staff held several workshops. There were also several parent partners who participated and had the opportunity to showcase their leadership as a result of participation in local programs. Funds also support networking activities, training and technical assistance that focused on trauma-informed care, family engagement, working with families affected by domestic violence, implementing Community Cafés, peer mentoring in the delivery of the Incredible Years, as well as FRC regional networking. The 20 year anniversary of the

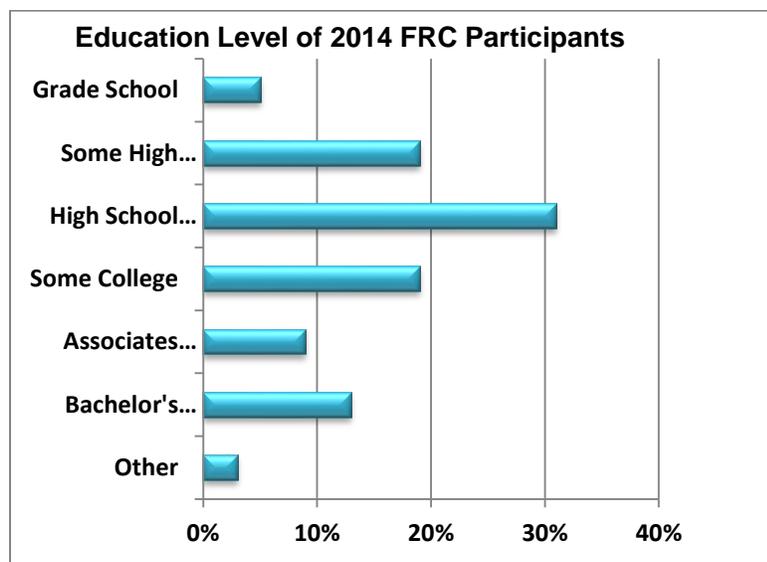
Healthy Families program was also recognized at this conference, and a reception was held to celebrate the success of this program in New York State.

The Trust Fund-sponsored 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 included building on efforts over the last two years to engage and retain high risk families; strategies to deepen connections to local departments of social services, understanding the culture of poverty, infant mental health and trauma-informed care, and identifying opportunities to support families in New York's alternative response to allegations of child abuse and maltreatment known as Family Assessment Response (FAR).

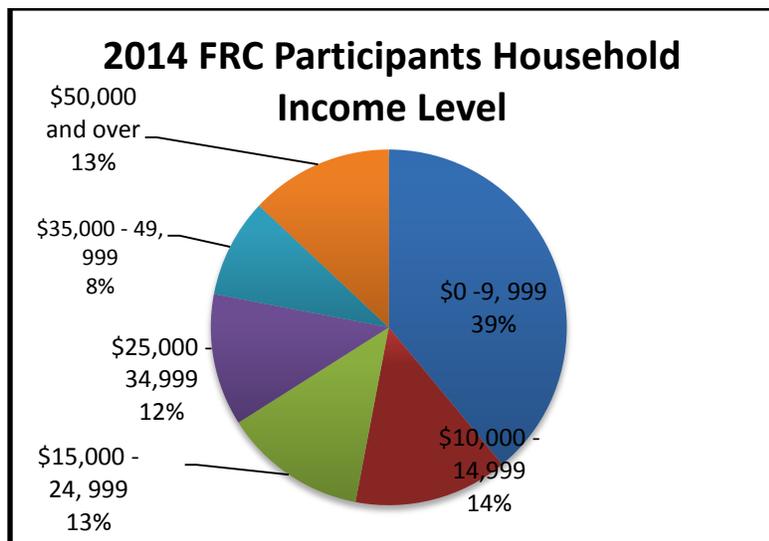
In addition to quarterly meetings, the Network continued to meet in regional groups. Regional meetings allow for deeper discussions and opportunities to include local partners and department of social services staff to focus on specific issues. Additionally, more FRC staff can participate in regional meetings than statewide meetings because of reduced travel expenses. OCFS regional office staff and other experts in the field are included in these regional discussions.

In 2014, FRCs continued their efforts to engage families at high risk. Specific populations targeted were low income families, teen parents, families with military ties, families with caregivers or children with special needs and families exiting the child welfare system. A review of utilization data from FRCs indicates that all of the centers have shown sustained improvement in their engagement and retention of these targeted populations. In 2014, 75 percent of families registered at FRCs presented with at least one risk factor; 32 percent had three or more risk factors.

One risk factor is low educational attainment. In 2014, 56 percent of participants reported no additional education beyond high school completion; and 28 percent did not complete high school. The chart below delineates education levels of FRC participants in 2014.



Another risk factor is low-income. In 2014, almost 40 percent of FRC participants had household incomes below \$10,000, regardless of family size. The proportion of participants with incomes below \$15,000 was 53 percent in 2014, and 66 percent of families had incomes below \$25,000.



The Family Resource Center Network continues to use the Protective Factor Survey (PFS) to assess changes for all new and returning participants. Analysis of PFS scores showed that Family Resource Center services strengthened families. Among those who completed a follow up PFS, scores rose in all subscales. Forty two percent of caregivers who scored four or below in two or more protective factors when they began services improved their scores to pass that benchmark after services. These increases pointed to a reduced risk of child abuse and maltreatment through increases in protective factors.

Programs implementing The Incredible Years trainings communicated regularly through conference calls. Meeting by phone addresses the challenges of demanding schedules, diminished travel budgets and geographic distances between programs. This group shared strategies, developed a common participant evaluation tool, and standardized their approach to service delivery issues such as adapting program to specific populations and keeping at risk families engaged. In 2013, more than 200 caregivers were engaged in building their skills, with 38 percent mandated by court or the local department of social services. Incredible Year program participants demonstrated similar improvements to all other FRC participants in building family protective factors.

In October of 2014, the Trust Fund extended an opportunity for 15 experienced trainers from across the state to attend a training of trainers: **Bringing the Protective Factors Framework to Life In your Work**. This training was developed and delivered by the National Alliance of Children's Trust and Prevention Funds (the Alliance). The Alliance certifies trainers locally to deliver trainings, with the intention of giving communities the tools and supports needed to embed this framework into their work with families. Over the course of three days, trainers were exposed to the curriculum which prepares them to cover seven training modules: an overview of the Protective Factors Framework, one module for each of the five protective factors, and a course on moving from knowledge to action. Trainers were recruited from diverse regions of the state, and from various fields, including parenting education, child welfare, mental health, child care, home visiting, and Family Resource Centers. A framework has been established to

provide support and networking opportunities to this community of trainers, and to track the progress of this initiative.

In 2014, The Alliance also continued its technical support to the Trust Fund to spur local level engagement of families and community partners in an approach based on the World Café process, which engages parent leaders and community members in spirited conversations. Community Cafés are planned, facilitated and monitored by trained parents and community members who can relate to the participants and build on the assets of their community or neighborhood. This technique “harvests” collective knowledge and transforms it into action. Built on the protective factors necessary for children to thrive, questions posed during the Café can spark leadership development, effective partnerships with parents, and strengthen families in the context of the cultures represented at each café. The Community Café Leadership Team, including the Trust Fund, Council on Children and Families, the Alliance consultant and two Parent Leaders, continued its support of community members and parents from sixteen community organizations. The Parent Leaders conducted final interviews with the local teams to capture the experience of building parent partnerships, and to compile the outcomes from over 60 local cafés that occurred statewide. The results of those interviews will be shared at the annual child abuse prevention conference with the participants attending the workshop institute entitled “Community Cafés: Building Community Leadership.” Trust Fund programs sending Parent Leaders to the conference are encouraged to participate. For more information about community cafés, go to: [http://www.ctfalliance.org/initiative\\_parents-2.htm](http://www.ctfalliance.org/initiative_parents-2.htm).

Efforts to strengthen families through early care and education by engaging child care providers in preventing maltreatment continued through a partnership with ZERO to THREE (ZTT) and the state leadership team created through the PCAN Project. The leadership team remains committed to supporting this initiative and creating opportunities for sustaining the program at state level conferences and through future training and networking opportunities for trainees. [www.zerotothree.org](http://www.zerotothree.org)

## **Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP)**

### ***Agency Administering CFCIP***

OCFS is the state agency responsible for administering the John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP), including the 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 Design and Delivery***

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 currently directly administered by Foster Care to Success, under contract with OCFS, with the cooperation of local social services districts.

### **Independent Living Program**

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.

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.

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.

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 transition plan. The transition 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 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 foster care 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 30 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.

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 implemented 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 to 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.

### *Services to Youth Across the State*

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 OCFS direct care residential centers.

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 provisions. 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.

### **OCFS Direct Residential Care**

A career interest inventory is initiated and often completed at Ella McQueen Reception Center by all youth placed in OCFS DJJOY facilities. The assessment uses the New York State Department of Labor CareerZone ONET interest assessment web portal. Currently, career preparation is conducted in our education program where youth take part in a Career and Financial Management course.

Youth at select residential facilities are able to participate in a variety of training programs from culinary arts to automotive. Life skills programming is offered during a range of program activities within DJJOY residential facilities.

Transition planning is conducted with youth in DJJOY residential facilities and documented using the integrated Support Team Plan and Community Reentry Plan in DJJOY Juvenile Justice Information System (JJIS). This planning will guide the services and programs offered to youth in residential placement and the community.

OCFS Division of Juvenile Justice and Opportunities for Youth (DJJOY) continues to refine its strength-based Life Skills Training program throughout its direct care system as a key core component of the OCFS residential programming. Additional life skills interventions are being identified and integrated within OCFS direct care programs to better engage youth.

DJJOY has implemented a new transition plan form that will allow staff to better document and track the services that will be offered to youth as part of their permanency planning. The new form is an electronic based record which will allow all staff working with youth to know their transition plan.

OCFS continues to use New York State Department of Labor CareerZone as its career interest tool. This resource is used to help engage youth to gain information about planning for careers in preparation for self-sufficiency.

A life skills assessment and career interest inventory are completed at Ella McQueen Reception Center by all youth placed in OCFS DJJOY facilities. These assessments are conducted using the following tools: Ansell Casey Life Skills Assessment and New York State Department of Labor CareerZone ONET interest assessment web portal. Currently, career preparation is conducted in our education program where youth take part in a Career and Financial Management course.

Through the new Bureau, 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 continue to receive independent living skills (life skills training) as part of a Focus Intervention Process and an integrated model. This two-pronged approach will better prepare youth and offer more opportunities to develop life skills. In addition, OCFS will work to enhance Life Skills programming through community partnerships, training, site visits including group observations, and the provision of various materials to support this program.

#### Fatherhood Program

In facilities around the state with young fathers, a Bureau of Education and Transition Services (BETS) team member meets with these young fathers individually to explain their parental rights while they are placed with OCFS. A BETS team member discusses the importance of education, future plans, and assists with identifying community resources with them. Lastly, the young father is given responsible parenting brochures/literature; videos; and the Inside Out Dads Curriculum to better prepare them for fatherhood upon return to the community.

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 continue to receive independent living skills (life skills training) as part of a Focus Intervention Process and an integrated model. This two-pronged approach will better prepare youth and offer more opportunities to develop life skills. In addition, OCFS will work to enhance Life Skills programming through community partnerships, training, site visits including group observations, and the provision of various materials to support this program.

#### 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 Advisory 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.

NYS will cooperate in any national evaluations of the effects of our programs in achieving the purposes of CFCIP.

### **Accomplishments 2014-2015**

OCFS has developed a monthly NYTD newsletter for LDSS, Voluntary Agency, Tribes, and OCFS staff to provide updates about our NYTD data collection. In addition, we have created a quarterly youth newsletter which is a vehicle to communicate directly with our youth about NYTD, and services available within the state. Updates are also provided on our OCFS website. We also include NYTD as an agenda item as part of our youth speak outs and Youth In Progress convening's. We have NYTD liaisons in each LDSS as well as each Voluntary Agency, and the OCFS regional offices.

OCFS, through the network of LDSS and Voluntary Agency liaisons as well as the infrastructure within OCFS, will continue to collect high quality data. OCFS has made expansions to CONNECTIONS, our child welfare system of record, which has already begun to improve our data collection abilities. The efforts around NYTD have served to raise awareness about the unique needs of this population. Additionally, OCFS has developed an adolescent youth unit specifically to examine the data, find gaps in our data collection, and support the needs of this age group.

OCFS conducted 90 minute focus groups in three regions ( Buffalo, Syracuse, and Albany) of New York on April 14, April 15, and April 16, 2015. Discussions centered around the federal law P.L. 113-183, the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act and required changes to the child welfare system. The primary purpose of the focus groups was to seek input from current foster youth from various agencies by way of feedback on OCFS' plan to promote normative experiences through a reasonable and prudent parent standard, why youth may go AWOL, approaches for reducing the likelihood of youth running away from care, and the advocacy and support youth need for case and permanency planning.

### **Plans for 2015-2016**

OCFS currently contracts with the Foster Care to Success 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 21<sup>st</sup> birthday, until they turn 23 years old, as long as they are enrolled in a institution of higher education, post-secondary education or vocational training program and are making satisfactory progress toward completion of that program. In 2016, OCFS is looking at addressing the needs of students under the age of 23 that are enrolled in graduate school. OCFS, in collaboration with local districts, will do a needs assessment to determine the cost of amending the current policy to include a possible statement like "Students who previously received ETV funding while in undergraduate school may continue to receive funding in graduate school if they are below the age of 23".

OCFS is also in the process of assessing the Adolescent Services Resource Network (ASRN) and YIP contracts for currency and responsiveness to youth and staff/foster parent needs on the ground. OCFS expects to have a finalized reconfiguration of services through those contracts by 2017, if review indicates a need for changes. In 2016, the focus will require a sustained presence in the regions and local districts where youth are being served. The Youth in Progress Program will be youth driven, and adult supported. It will not only provide youth with a voice in identifying issues with the policies and practices of the system of their care, but the support and skills needed to raise those issues up and take an active role in the solutions. Additionally, OCFS is utilizing data from the NYTD surveys to inform it on the effectiveness of the current life skills supports available to youth in care over the age of 14.

OCFS will continue to work on normative experiences for youth in care and make the necessary connections to the work described above and the implementation of The Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act (P.L. 113-183). The Act has two primary goals: to take steps forward in protecting and preventing at-risk children and youth from becoming victims of sex trafficking, and to make changes to the child welfare systems to improve outcomes for children and youth in foster care. Since The Act authorizes use of Chafee funds for youth to engage in age and developmentally appropriate activities, OCFS plans to issue policies and guidance on reasonable and prudent parenting, case and transition plans and providing youth in care critical documentation and youth credit reports.

## **Statistical and Supporting Information**

### **a. CAPTA Annual State Data Report Items**

*Information on Child Protective Service Workforce:*

*information on the education, qualifications and training requirements established by the State for child protective service personnel, data on the education, qualifications and training of personnel, and demographic information of personnel (sections 106(d)(10)(A-C))*

#### Education and qualifications

- a) Social Services Law §421(4)(b) states that child protective services supervisors must have a minimum of a baccalaureate or equivalent college degree and three years of relevant work experience in a human services field.
- b) New York State regulation 18 NYCRR 432.2(e)(5)(iii) requires “Each child protective service worker must have a baccalaureate or equivalent college degree and/or must have relevant human services experience.”

#### Training

- a) New York State regulation 18 NYCRR 432.2(e)(5)(ii) requires that “Each child protective worker, including supervisors, must satisfactorily complete a basic training program in child protective services within the first three months of his/her employment in the child protective service. Such program must be approved by the OCFS and must focus on the skills, knowledge, and attitudes essential to working in the child protective service. Such training program must include, but need not be limited to: basic training in the principles

and techniques of child protective service investigation, including relationships with other investigative bodies; legal issues in child protective service matters, diagnostic assessment of child abuse and maltreatment cases; methods of remediation, treatment and prevention of child abuse and maltreatment; and case management and planning of child protective service cases, including the relationship of the child protective service issues to permanency planning for children who remain at home or who are in out-of-home care.”

- b) Social Services Law §421(5)(b) requires that all persons employed by a child protective service must complete six hours of annual in service training, beginning in the second year of their employment.
- c) Social Services Law §421(5)(c) requires that all persons assigned to be a supervisor, within the first three months of employment as a supervisor, must satisfactorily complete a course on the fundamentals of child protection. Such training course shall, among other things, strengthen and expand current training procedures for child protective service supervisors; provide the skills, knowledge and standards to practice effective case planning and case management; provide comprehensive assessment tools needed in critical decision making; require participation in the existing common core training required by child protective service case-workers; strengthen recognition and response to safety and risk indicators; improve skills to promote consistent implementation of training and practice; provide the necessary tools and assistance to build the ability to coach and monitor child protective service caseworkers and model effective investigation practice; increase cultural competency and sensitivity. OCFS must establish an annual in service training program specifically focused on child protective service supervisors.
- d) New employees of the OCFS New York Statewide Central Register for Child Abuse and Maltreatment (SCR) must complete an intensive five week training program comprised of three weeks of instructor-led classroom and two weeks of on-the-job training. The curriculum includes but is not limited to:
  - NYS Social Services Law
  - Child abuse and maltreatment allegations and definitions
  - Interviewing public and mandated callers
  - Decision-making/evaluating information against the law
  - Criteria for registering a CPS report
  - Decision-making and criteria necessary for taking a law enforcement referral
  - Jurisdiction and assigning CPS reports for investigation
  - Report narrative construction
  - Use of CONNECTIONS for recording report information and searching the database for prior CPS history
  - Use of SCR Business Continuity Application (BCA)

#### Data on the education, qualifications, and training of such personnel

Please see Appendix “D” for specific information regarding training taken in 2014 by child protective services staff who work in social services districts throughout New York State. The data shows that 5,480 individual CPS caseworkers attended 32,425 classes in 2014, for a total of 261,045 class hours, or an average of approximately 48 hours of training per worker.

OCFS does not track data on the education or experience of child protective service workers throughout the state. Because child protective services are locally administered, these staff persons are hired by each county and their personnel records are maintained by the counties. Each county may establish its own hiring requirements, **subject to the minimum state**

**requirements**, which are described above. In 2006, OCFS surveyed all counties regarding their minimum requirements for education and qualifications for CPS supervisory staff. All responding counties required significantly more than the state minimum requirements. Of 30 counties (out of 58) responding to this question, all but three required at least a bachelor's degree. Those three required up to seven years' experience for those with less formal education. All counties required new supervisors to have experience, with all but three requiring three years or more.

New York continues to work with the OCFS training unit and CWCS in order to more readily capture and produce the required CAPTA tracking data for the CPS worker education and demographic information aggregated by county. In addition, New York will reach out to a representative sample of local districts directly in order to provide a snap shot at the local district level as we continue to work to implement a system to annually obtain this data.

#### Demographic information

Information on the location of child protective service personnel, i.e. the number of caseworkers in each county of the state, can be found in Appendix "D." OCFS does not track other demographic information on its child protective services workers. As stated above, each county is responsible for its own hiring of such personnel; OCFS has no role in the hiring or supervision of individual local staff members.

#### Caseload or workload requirements for child protective service workers

Aside from the requirement in Social Services Law §423(1)(c) that the CPS unit must have sufficient staff of sufficient qualifications, New York State does not have statutory or regulatory caseload requirements for child protective service workers. OCFS issued an informational letter in 2006 (06-OCFS-INF-08, New York State Child Welfare Workload Study) in which it presented the results of a workload study it had commissioned. That study recommended that each child protective service set a caseload goal of no more than 12 investigations per month per CPS worker. Child welfare caseload sizes and staffing ratios are determined at the local level.

The New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) provides performance data to each local department of social services (LDSS) regarding their caseload sizes. This data helps support local decisions regarding staffing and resources. This data is an aggregate of the monthly caseloads averaged over six months for each LDSS for the percentage of workers with more than 15 investigations on their caseload on the last day of each month for the period indicated. When considering caseload data, it is important to note that multiple factors impact CPS caseloads, including the fluidity of the investigative process, and the complexity and severity of the individual CPS reports.

The average caseload (number of cases per caseworker) at the end of each month statewide for 2014 was 9.4. This is the average of the 12 months in 2014 (see Appendix "J" for county breakdown).

#### *Juvenile Justice Transfers:*

The number of youth transferred to juvenile justice facilities in FFY 2013-14 was 123 youth, a decrease from FFY 2012-13 which was 136. This population consists of children who:

- Were in CONNECTIONS (formerly CCRS, now activity window in CONNECTIONS) shown as in the custody of a social services district as a result of a judicial dispositions

of PINS (Person in Need of Supervision), JD (if placed, and placement not exceeding 12 months), JD (initial placement exceeds 12 months), and do not have a disposition of OCFS custody within the same hearing; or

- Have a judicial disposition of transfer custody and guardianship (Surrender or Terminated Parental Rights only) or care and custody to a social services district; or
- Have a voluntary or emergency removal; and
- Have a subsequent hearing with a disposition of OCFS custody during FFY 2013-14 (the two events must occur between the track open date and the first discharge date, if any that lasts more than one day); plus
- Children that were discharged to an OCFS Facility during FFY 2013-14; and
- Do not have an open admission in the juvenile justice system between the last movement and discharge in CONNECTIONS.

#### **b. Sources of Data on Child Maltreatment Deaths**

##### Child Maltreatment Deaths Reporting

By state statute, all child fatalities due to suspected abuse and neglect must be reported by mandated reporters, including, but not limited to, law enforcement, medical examiners, coroners, medical professionals, and hospital staff, to the *Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment*. As of June 30, 2013, fatality reports involving vulnerable persons must go to the Justice Center's Vulnerable Persons Central Register (VPCR).

Under New York law, the cases for which fatality reports must be developed and issued are limited to the following categories of fatalities:

- Deaths reported to the Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment;
- Deaths reported to the Vulnerable Persons' Central Register;
- Deaths of children with open CPS cases;
- Deaths of children with open preventive services cares; and
- Deaths of foster children.

#### **c. Education and Training Vouchers:**

##### Education and Training Voucher (ETV) Program

Over the past year, OCFS has been working with other state and local partners to address barriers to applications, acceptance and retention in post-secondary educational settings for youth in foster care. Specifically, OCFS has been working with the NY State University and City University of New York to create better pathways for youth in foster care to attend those schools. In 2015, a symposium was held with key leadership from the Judiciary, State and City University partners, including their chancellors and admissions directors, national funders, providers and advocates to create an agenda to address barriers and facilitators for youth in care. The focus included changing the culture in care to signify to youth in care the importance of educational achievement and to support them in aspiring to educational attainment, starting when youth are in elementary school and sustaining those messages throughout a youth in care's educational trajectory. Specific strategies will be developed to identify youth in schools to guidance counselors to support these messages; to engage and work with case planners and

case managers to encourage SAT and ACT preparatory work; to visit colleges with youth and foster families or programs; to be fully aware of the financial support available to youth; and to develop pathways to application to post-secondary education. In addition, OCFS and its partner agencies are seeking to leverage the current mechanisms by which vulnerable youth are supported for educational retention on campuses, and look into what gaps may exist that need to be filled for youth in care.

OCFS is working with Youth In Progress (YIP), the mechanism voice for youth in care, to reach out as mentors and provide peer-to-peer support for college achievement, to increase knowledge of the existence of ETV and how to utilize it.

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 the lesser of \$5,000 per year or the cost 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, or entered into a kinship guardianship assistance (KinGap) agreement from, foster care after attaining age 16; and (3) youth participating in the voucher program on their 21<sup>st</sup> birthday, until they turn 23 years old, as long as they are enrolled in an institution of higher education, post-secondary education or vocational training program and are making satisfactory progress toward completion of that program.

OCFS currently contracts with the Foster Care to Success (FC2S) to administer and serve as New York State's fiscal agent for the Education and Training Voucher Program in accordance with federal guidelines. 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 21<sup>st</sup> 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.

Prior to funding students:

- FC2S confirms that post-secondary institutions are Title IV-E compliant as per the Higher Education Act.
- Each semester, students grant their school permission to verify in writing directly to FC2S their enrollment and financial aid information including the Cost of Attendance (COA), financial aid awarded – grants, scholarships and work study as well as student loans offered and accepted.
- The student's unmet need is calculated based on information provided by the institution.
- As needed, students who receive benefits such as child care assistance, a housing subsidy, etc. complete a budget form that is used to determine whether ETV funding would duplicate or supplant other federal funding or exceed unmet need as per the Higher Education Act.
- Each semester, in compliance with the Higher Education Act, the student's Financial Aid Office is sent an award letter detailing the amount of the ETV grant and how and when it will be disbursed. This coordination with the institution prevents duplication of funding, reduces student loan amounts and confirms that with the ETV funding the student will not exceed the COA.

The NY ETV Program uses an online secure portal that collects, stores, and processes accurate data that documents the number of unduplicated ETVs awarded each school year. Data includes, but is not limited to:

- The number of applications received annually – July 1- June 30<sup>th</sup>
  - Each applicant is assigned a unique Program ID Number the first time they apply
- The Program ID filters applicant data to confirm
  - New/1<sup>st</sup> time applicant
  - Previous applicant
  - Previously funded student
    - Continuous enrollment
    - Returning after leaving school for one semester or more
- Amount of funding students receive, for what purpose, and when funding is disbursed
- Names of schools and institution type including two- or four- year, public or private
- Academic progression as documented in submitted official transcripts
  - the number of credits students successfully achieve
  - the number of remedial classes taken and passed
- Retention and graduation (students are tracked in cohorts to determine outcomes)
  - the number of students who reapply annually because they are continuing their studies and making progress toward graduation.
  - the number of students who return to the program after leaving school for one semester or more

NYS ETV and FC2S are aligned regarding a joint mission to support foster youth in postsecondary programs and address their unique educational challenges. OCFS works in partnership with FC2S to develop performance outcomes. NYS students and caseworkers, along with FC2S, provide input/feedback to the OCFS ETV Program Manager to strengthen and improve the current NYS ETV program.

### **Accomplishments**

857 youth received ETV awards during FFY 2013-2014

356 (42%) were New 2013-2014 Students and 501 (58%) were Returning 2012-13 Students

Male: 264 (31%)

Female: 593 (69%)

Age and Number of students:

18	255	30%
19	215	25%
20	199	23%
21	121	14%
22	67	8%

Ethnicity:

African-American	422	49%
Asian-American	31	4%

Caucasian	126	15%
Latino	166	19%
Mixed Race	108	13%
Native-American	1	<1%
Pacific Islander	3	<1%

\*in some cases this might be an estimated number since the APSR is due June 30, 2015.

Funding awarded to New York students: \$2,670,717

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 were previous recipients who are older than 23.

\* Data is derived from the Foster Care to Success report (Appendix C)

OCFS will continue to build on the education work we began in 2007-2008. Beginning in 2010, and continuing through 2014, the regional forums target population include youth.

#### **d. Inter-Country Adoptions:**

Under the Universal Accreditation Act of 2012, adoption service providers working with prospective adoptive parents in non-Hague Convention adoption cases need to comply with the same accreditation requirement and standards that apply in Hague Convention adoption cases. Only those adoption service providers who have been accredited or approved by the Council on Accreditation may provide any of the defined adoption services for Convention adoption cases (unless an organization or individual is operating as an exempt provider or under the supervision of an accredited or approved adoption service provider). Currently sixteen (16) New York State authorized voluntary agencies and one New York State private attorney have been accredited or approved by the Council on Accreditation (COA). Three (3) of the 16 accredited agencies have the authority to provide adoption services for incoming and outgoing adoption cases.

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.

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 2013-2014, of the 39 districts reporting there were three (3) placements of children into foster care who had been adopted from other countries. One child was adopted from the Ukraine and placed as a juvenile delinquent. One child was adopted from Romania and was placed through a voluntary placement agreement where her current goal is return to parent. The other child was brought into foster care because the parent could not provide adequate supervision. That child's current plan is to be discharged to a relative.

In 2015, the Family Services Intake (FSI) module in Connections was modernized to include a new tab which will allow for collection of information on adopted children and the services the family is seeking and the services provided.

**e. Monthly Caseworker Visit Data:**

In Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2014, OCFS continued its year-over-year improvement in contacting Foster Children. OCFS achieved a FFY 2014 Contact percentage of 94.5 percent. As of November 29, 2014, OCFS was .5 percent below the required 95 percent Foster Children Contact mandate for FFY 2015 established by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF).

In FFY 2014, the primary metric used to measure Foster Children Contacts is 'In Care Contact %'.<sup>5</sup> OCFS has done well with the 'In Care Contact %' metric; OCFS tracked this metric for FFY 2011 and achieved an 'In Care Contact %' = 81.5 percent. Interim data for FFY 2015 (October 2014 - March 2015) Foster Children contacts showed an 'In Care Contact %' = 93.9 percent. There is usually a data entry lag of up to two months and this is expected to be higher once caseworkers enter all data. For FFY 2012-2014, the ACF mandate for Foster Children contacts, remains at 90 percent.

Target percentages: 10/1/10 75%, reported actual 67.5%  
10/1/11 90%, reported actual 81.5%  
10/1/12 90%, reported actual 94.6%  
10/1/13 90%, reported actual 94.2%  
10/1/14 90%, reported actual 94.3%

As of FFY 2015, the mandate increases to 95 percent and work continues in order to reach this target. Bureau of Research, Evaluation and Performance Analytics (BREPA) staff conducted analysis on casework contact files to identify locations and/or characteristics of children short of casework contact target of 95 percent. Results from these analyses will be utilized by the OCFS Division of Child Welfare and Community Services (CWCS) to increase casework contacts.

OCFS implemented a Foster Children data mart and created production reports that provide Foster Children Contact summary and detail information. These reports measure monthly performance and access has been expanded to social services district and voluntary agency staff. This data mart is updated weekly; these timely updates enable districts, voluntary agencies, and OCFS staff to monitor progress and to take action to improve child contacts.

OCFS is working toward increasing the Child Care Review System (CCRS) and CONNECTIONS Foster Children data available in Foster Children Contact reports. Data relating to Case Manager and Case Planner, including associated organizational codes (i.e., site-unit), will enable agencies to monitor and improve accountability by work units.

The New York City Regional Office has five contractors and an administrator to work with agencies that provide child and family services to New York City (in New York City most services for foster children are subcontracted to voluntary agencies). These contractors have

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<sup>5</sup> The denominator is, for the applicable period, the total number of in care months for children in the custody of the Local Departments of Social Services (LDSSs). This includes children that are on trial discharge or absent, but in the LDSS custody. Numerator is the number of children that had at least one casework contact per each contact month identified in the denominator.

worked collaboratively with voluntary agencies resulting in measurable improvements to agency foster children contacts.

In Albany, one contractor works with the Data Warehouse Information Technology team and BREPA to develop requirements, perform data analysis, testing, and provide assistance to OCFS, district, and voluntary agency staff.

Monthly workgroup meetings are 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. These workgroup meetings are utilized to explore ways of achieving the 95 percent target by FFY 2015.

## **Targeted Plans within the CFSP**

### ***Foster and Adoptive Parent Diligent Recruitment Plan Update***

In 2014, OCFS required and received from each of the districts and voluntary authorized agencies who provide foster care services their three-year Recruitment and Retention plans. The plans, which were Multiethnic Placement Act (MEPA) compliant, were reviewed and approved by OCFS Regional Offices. These plans included detailed data of their needs and assessment of their current successes and challenges to recruitment and retention, and described activities planned to enhance their efforts. Adoption Specialists within each Regional Office consistently work with each county to provide technical assistance and support related to their efforts.

Additionally, New York State received a federal Diligent Recruitment Cooperative Agreement grant. Awarded on September 30, 2013, the first year has been a planning year. OCFS subcontracted with the Welfare Research Inc. (WRI) to manage and coordinate the grant, including the hiring of 2.5 full time equivalent project staff. WRI subcontracted with Child Trends to provide the evaluation, and with Fostering Hope Foundation to provide support to foster and adoptive families.

The purpose of the grant, as defined by the Children's Bureau, is to "implement comprehensive, multi-faceted diligent recruitment programs for resource families, including kinship, foster, concurrent and adoptive families for children and youth served by public child welfare agencies; effectively identify, engage and support resource families as a means of improving permanency outcomes and building lasting connections for children in foster care." The work done through this Cooperative Agreement will be integrated into OCFS' Child and Family Service Plan and with other agency programs, including foster care case planning and permanency planning processes. The program evaluation done by Child Trends, Inc. will document processes and potential linkages between diligent recruitment strategies and improved outcomes.

### ***Early Learnings from the Diligent Recruitment Grant Work***

During 2014, information was collected through project staff's discussions with the implementation counties, as well as Child Trends' initial evaluation site visits to these counties. Additionally, a careful review was conducted by both WRI and Child Trends of all counties' three-year recruitment and retention plans statewide to identify themes in the strengths and

challenges in diligent recruitment. Since New York is a county-administered state, practices and resources vary among counties; generally identified themes do not apply to every county.

Albany, Schenectady and Nassau are the implementation counties and the counties of focus for 2015. Their engagement in the diligent recruitment project was based on each county being initially interested in applying for the federal diligent recruitment grant themselves. Through a process of discussion and consultation, it was decided that OCFS would apply on behalf of the entire state, and that Albany, Schenectady and Nassau would be the initial implementation counties. Most counties in New York State, apart from New York City (Administration for Children's Services) and a few other local departments of social services (e.g. Broome), directly recruit and certify foster/adoptive homes. Moreover, most counties that recruit foster homes also rely on homes certified by the contracted voluntary agencies serving their area.

Many counties report not having sufficient staffing resources for the recruitment work they would like to do, and in some counties the staff responsible for recruiting foster and adoptive families have additional responsibilities. Budgets for recruitment resources, in addition to staff, are limited as well. Counties understand the importance of a strong recruitment process and are committed to doing the best they can within their finite pool of resources. Counties want to better understand their data about the recruitment milestones; e.g., the rate at which persons who inquire about becoming foster/adoptive parents attend orientation, start and complete training, go on to certification, and have their first child placed with them. This data is collected on paper in many counties; project staff are working with counties to enter this into spreadsheets, analyze it, and use the findings to direct resources toward the most effective recruitment strategies and away from those that do not work as well. There is a significant need for improved data tracking of this process in New York, as in many other states. Through the diligent recruitment work, New York is in contact with other states, our Federal Project Officer, and the National Resource Center for Diligent Recruitment to identify solutions that have proven effective, although many states are dealing with similar challenges.

Counties would like a larger pool of foster and adoptive homes available for children within specific demographics and with specific needs. While the demographics and needs vary among counties, and can change over time within a county, many counties identified the need for additional foster and adoptive homes for teens, large sibling groups, and children with significant mental health and/or behavioral issues. Some counties have recently had to work quickly to increase their pool of foster families for newborns and very young children due to parental heroin abuse. Counties are working to increase the pool of foster/adoptive parents who live within the communities from which children come into foster care, to promote educational stability for the child, and the child's connections to his/her birth family in a safe manner.

Most counties in New York contract for some or all of their foster family homes with private non-profit (referred to in New York as "voluntary") agencies. Through the diligent recruitment work, project staff will continue to identify best and promising practices in these contract relationships, as well as work done in voluntary agencies that counties might consider replicating, and vice versa.

During 2015 - 2018, the following activities are planned:

#### 2015

Implementation of the strategic action plans developed in the last quarter of 2014 will begin in three counties within the identified regions, supported by project staff. Project staff will also work

with at least two additional counties to guide and support a blueprint approach to assessing the strengths and weaknesses of their recruitment strategies, followed by the development of strategic action plans.

The compendium of evidence-based, best and promising recruitment practices will be distributed statewide to increase the knowledge of counties and agencies and to promote sustainability of the project beyond the grant. These materials will include models of professional foster parenting that have been identified. These materials will be updated in Year 5 so they are current at the end of the project.

#### 2016

Work will continue with participating counties in Regions IV (Albany) and V (Spring Valley), with a new focus on steps that can be taken across the regions to promote recruitment and inter-jurisdictional placements. These could include regional adoption exchanges; cross-county agreements to complete home studies based on the location of prospective parents, and jointly held orientation sessions for prospective parents.

The project will distribute the recruitment blueprint to counties and agencies in all regions of the state through a series of regional forums and written materials. Counties and agencies, in addition to those already working with the project, will be encouraged to undertake a systematic review of their recruitment process using the blueprint model and will be supported by project staff and OCFS regional office staff.

In Spring 2016, one or more counties in another part of New York State (Region III, Syracuse) will be engaged as additional implementation counties.

#### 2017

On-site support from project staff will continue for counties in Regions IV-Albany and V-Spring Valley, and will begin for at least two counties and/or agencies in Region III-Syracuse to support the blueprint process for data collection. A strategic action plan will be developed by the end of the third quarter to allow for implementation during the final five quarters of the project, with plans for sustainability beyond the project.

#### 2018

Support for participating counties and agencies will continue. There will be a plan in place for sustainability in each county of at least one strategy they are implementing beyond the end of the project.

The compendium of evidence-based, best and promising recruitment practices will be updated and redistributed statewide.

Regional trainings for counties, agencies and OCFS regional office staff will be held to disseminate information about lessons learned in the project and potential for replication in other counties and agencies. The emphasis will continue to be on selecting strategies and practices only after a careful data assessment so the “solution” is aligned with the underlying causes of poor performance.

### ***Health Care Services Plan Update***

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 percent of New York State 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. OCFS has developed draft regulations to 18 NYCRR 441.22 so that the periodicity schedule will match the most current version of the American Academy of Pediatrics: Recommendations for Preventive Pediatric Care. The proposed draft regulations are still pending approval in the required administrative process. New York State Social Services Law (SSL) provides the statutory authority for OCFS to supervise social services districts and promulgate regulations. OCFS 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 in 2009.

The Coordinated Children's Services Initiative (CCSI) legislation requires that counties employ a collaborative approach to children with intensive cross-system needs. These collaborations 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. In 2002, the Center for Governmental Research, Inc. (CGR) concluded that CCSI is a viable model that should be continued and

strengthened, and presented a number of recommendations designed to strengthen the state-local partnership. Many of the recommendations in the report were subsequently implemented. In addition, a coordinated children's services statute that amended state Executive Law went into effect subsequent to the report and incorporated a number of issues raised in the report.

At the state level, the OCFS medical director is involved in any regulatory or guidance documents disseminated on health issues. OCFS employs a chief treatment officer, chief psychiatrist and psychologists. 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 three 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.

Bridges to Health (B2H) (*Working Together Manual B-21, B-175*) continues to assess for service needs and plan for goals; B2H utilizes the Childhood Adolescent Needs and Strengths Assessment (CANS). Recently, OCFS and the Office of Mental Health collaborated to update the CANS for use across both systems. The new CANS-NY includes a wider range of domains to better identify and address the multi-system needs of children.

### **Medicaid Managed Care Transition**

The New York Medicaid Redesign Team (MRT) was created to further the vision of restructuring New York's Medicaid program. The MRT has developed a multi-year action plan to improve patient experience of care, improve health of the population, and control costs. This includes the foster care population, whose medical needs, and therefore Medicaid expenditures, are *exponentially higher than the general pediatric Medicaid population*. Evidence suggests that children who have been placed in foster care have significantly higher rates of unmet health needs compared to children in the general population, and use of inpatient and outpatient mental health services at a rate of 15-20 times higher than the general pediatric Medicaid population – therefore this is a small, discrete population of children with high needs.

The NYS Medicaid Redesign impacts children in foster care in two key ways with two key dates:

1. ***Direct Care Foster Care:*** Children placed in foster homes licensed by the LDSS, which includes approximately 3,500 children, moved into Managed Care between April 1, 2013 – September 2013. OCFS and DOH created a Policy Paper that outlines the following guidance: Enrollment and Dis-enrollments, Access to Care, Complaints and Appeals, as well as a Summary of Critical Policy Changes. OCFS held a series of conference calls with LDSS and Managed Care Organizations (MCOs) to review the contents of the Policy Paper.
2. ***Children placed with Voluntary Foster Care Agencies are intended to move into Managed Care in January 2016:*** The Children's Health Subcommittee of the MRT Behavioral Health Workgroup, which includes representatives from DOH, OCFS, OMH and OASAS, and is to transform care for children and redesign services for children. This includes approximately 16,500 children who are served by Voluntary Foster Care Agencies. This group of children represents a significantly more complex set of health

and behavioral health care needs. Voluntary Foster Care Agencies have a long standing proven track record of being responsive to the multi-faceted needs of children, their families and the regulatory mandates of local and state governments. The NYS Child Welfare system is a highly complex set of relationships that includes LDSS, Voluntary Foster Care Agencies and the health care system. This set of relationships requires a highly coordinated approach to achieve desired outcomes. NYS recognizes that the movement of children in foster care into Managed Care represents an opportunity to improve the current system and outcomes for children, and that this must be done in a highly orchestrated fashion.

OCFS is working in tandem with DOH to design a system of care for Children in Voluntary Foster Care Agencies. OCFS and DOH envision a system that builds on the strengths and expertise of Voluntary Foster Care Agencies, Health Homes and Managed Care Organizations. The following activities are currently underway:

- Voluntary Foster Care Agencies will continue to receive and operate a “Residual Medicaid Per Diem” to include services that are vital to the Voluntary Agencies infrastructure: examples include Nursing and Social Work.
- Health Homes Care Coordination: Health homes will be integrated into current Managed Care provider networks and will be a permanent fixture of the state’s care management strategy. Health home networks will always include community based organizations because they are uniquely positioned to meet the social needs of patients that often transcend health care needs. DOH and OCFS agree that Voluntary Foster Care Agencies will be the Health Homes for the foster care population.
- Managed Care Organizations (MCO) contract for clinical services, such as: behavioral health, primary care, specialty health care, pharmacy and lab care, and dental services. OCFS and DOH are working to define the MCO Per Member Monthly premium to account for the high needs, high costs of children in foster care. In addition, OCFS and DOH are updating the model contract between DOH and the MCOs to take into account the unique needs of children in foster care.

As per the expectation of the Health Services Plan, this provides further direction in securing Medicaid for transitioning youth and continuity of health care coordination.

Effective January 1, 2014, the Affordable Care Act (ACA) required states to provide Medicaid coverage to eligible Former Foster Care Youth (FFC), if otherwise eligible, through the end of the month of their 26<sup>th</sup> birthday without regard to income. FFC Youth are those youth who were under the responsibility of the State (in the care and custody of the commissioner of a LDSS or the commissioner of OCFS) on the date of attaining 18 years of age or higher *and* who were in receipt of Medicaid while in foster care (P.L. 111-148 §§ 2004 and 10201; 42 U.S.C. § 1396a, see also SSL § 366(1) (c) (9)).

OCFS has collaborated with New York State Department of Health (DOH) and the Office of Temporary Disability Assistance (OTDA) in creating processes and comprehensive system support whereby youth can enroll per ACA. This involved outreach to youth that are eligible but may have been discharged. OCFS collaborated with the Schuyler Center for Advocacy in creating website announcements of the developed process for enrollment, video vignettes of FFC speaking to the advantage of ACA and how to enroll, and a list of potential eligible youth was provided to DOH to cross reference any youth that may emerge and request enrollment in

any LDSS. In addition, OCFS, DOH and Schuyler Center for Advocacy presented on the issue at the NYPWA conference in 2014.

These efforts by OCFS with active collaboration and coordination with sister agencies resulted in our continuous development and improvement of a health care services plan for coordination and oversight of health care for children in foster care.

### **Child Passport**

The goal of the Children's Passport for Foster Care (CP-FC) project is to assemble and make available a read-only summary of Medicaid claims for each child as they are placed in foster care. This will be accomplished via the secure, electronic transfer of Medicaid claims and encounter data from Department of Health (DOH) information systems. This read-only summary of health information will be displayed in the CONNECTIONS child welfare information system.

The strategy to design, develop and implement the CP-FC is based upon the extensive reuse of technical assets developed as part of the Children's Passport for Juvenile Justice (CP-JJ) application project and minimization of any impacts on CONNECTIONS to provide a readily available CP-FC application. CP-JJ system documentation and training materials are also available for review and revision to support the CP-FC implementation.

The intended use of health information presented in the CP-FC application is to support caregiver assessment. While not designed to serve as a comprehensive electronic medical record (EMR) containing a child's complete health history, access to this information will serve as one of several potential sources of information regarding the child's health history. Caregivers will have early access to a summary of previously unavailable health information. This access will help improve the quality of initial assessments, the development of more complete individual treatment plans and the overall quality of care.

In addition to the Medicaid information, the passport will also address key pieces of information from a variety of sources (Education Records, Vital Records, Credit Reporting, etc.) that will eventually be available to the workers who have a right to view the information. The ultimate goal is the Children's Passport (CP) portal, which will provide the children leaving care with a place to access all of their relevant information.

### ***Disaster Planning Update***

#### 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
- Reserve 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 Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP). 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 COOP 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 Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) 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) Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP). This Division has the primary responsibility for the oversight of child welfare services delivered by local departments of social services plan
- A copy of the template used by OCFS juvenile facilities to develop a "Ready Emergency Data Book," which details each DJJOY facility's continuity of operations 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 COOP provides 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 COOP awareness training and exercises;
- Establish procedures to update and maintain the COOPs.

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 are prepared when assigned to work at the OCFS desk at the Emergency Operations Center.

OCFS keeps an active volunteer list to assist in disaster response.

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.

OCFS has maintains 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 New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Connecticut to collaborate on Human Service response should a catastrophic event occur in the region.

OCFS is a member of the Homeland Security Senior Advisory Council which helps coordinate strategic planning efforts and programmatic requirements related to the homeland security grant funding.

**Accomplishments 2014-2015:**

OCFS staffed the State Emergency Operations Center (EOC) for 36 hours for Winter Storm Juno, which impacted down state New York, including the New York City Metro area on January 26 -27, 2015.

Several other winter storms forced the shutdown of state offices in portions of New York State, including OCFS regional offices in Western New York, on November 19, 20 and 21, 2014. Non-essential staff in the affected counties was not required to report to work on these days. Other than these closures there were no other significant issues reported as a result of these storms.

OCFS administers the SSBG Superstorm Sandy supplemental grant funding that helped select providers continue services and make repairs to damaged facilities impacted by Superstorm Sandy.

The OCFS Acting Commissioner, other Executive Staff and other agency staff participated in a series of conference calls on the Federal Humanitarian Response to Unaccompanied Children entering the United States along the southern border with U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, U.S. Department of Defense, U.S. Department of Homeland Security and other Federal and State agencies.

The OCFS Agency Emergency Management Coordinator participated in several conference calls with human services partner agencies regarding the potential effects of Ebola on the state and contingency planning.

#### **OCFS NY-Alert**

OCFS has successfully rolled out OCFS NY-Alert, an all hazards notification system, which allows the agency to contact employees in an efficient and simultaneous manner when emergency notification is necessary. The agency successfully completed an agency wide test of the system on October 22, 2014. OCFS used the system for three separate regional events for closures due to the impacts of weather.

#### **Emergency Management Certification and Training (EMC & T) Academy**

OCFS emergency management staff completed the Emergency Management Certification and Training (EMC & T) Academy Program, coordinated by the Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services (DHSES). This 3 ½ day training is the result of the Governor's initiative to unify, strengthen and better coordinate emergency management protocols throughout New York State. All DPC agencies were invited to participate along with local governments from County Executives to Local Emergency Managers.

#### **Disaster Mental Health Training and Conference on Whole Community Communicating in a Crisis**

OCFS staff attended the annual Institute for Disaster Mental Health Training and Conference on Whole Community Communicating in a Crisis on April 25, 2014.

#### **Disaster Preparedness Commission (DPC) Training/Exercises/Meetings**

- OCFS staff participated in the DPC Category Two hurricane Exercise: July 23, 2014
- OCFS staff participated in the State Office of Emergency Management (State OEM) Hurricane Exercise at the State Emergency Operations Center (EOC): September 30, 2014.

#### **OCFS participated in the following Radiological Emergency Planning (REP) Exercises/Drills:**

- Indian Point Hostile Based Action Exercise State Practice Exercise: August 20, 2014

- Indian Point Hostile Based Action Exercise Federally Evaluated: October 7, 2014
- R. E. Ginna State Practice Plume Exercise: March 24, 2015

### **Indian Point Emergency Planning Zone (EPZ) Child Care Seminar**

OCFS partnered with Westchester County to offer emergency planning training to child care providers located within the 10 mile EPZ surrounding the Indian Point Nuclear Power Plants. The training held on December 9, 2014, provided information on how to plan for the evacuation and relocation of children, the risks the power plant presents to the community, and the role of the child care provider in the county's emergency plan. Planning resources were made available to participants including Tone Alert Radios, Potassium Iodide supplies, facility plan templates and emergency brochures.

### **OCFS serves as a member/participant in the following:**

- NYS Human Services Branch Executive Steering Committee
- DHSES Homeland Security Senior Advisory Committee (HSSAC)
- Radiological Emergency Preparedness Working Group (REPWG)
- NYS Nuclear Safety Sub Committee Power Pool bi-annual Meeting
- National Reunification Planning Workgroup
- Regional Catastrophic Planning Team (RCPT)
- NYS Forum Business Continuity work group
- NYS Human Services Annex review

### **New York Public Welfare Association Presentation (NYPWA)**

OCFS presented with OTDA and the Tioga County Commissioner of Social Services a disaster scenario based workshop during the January 29, 2015 winter NYPWA conference.

### **2014 Staff Development Coordinators Annual Meeting**

OCFS presented with the NYS Human Services Group on Emergency Management and Planning for Local Emergencies at the 2014 Staff Development Coordinators Annual Meeting on June 19.

### **E-FINDS**

OCFS's juvenile justice facilities participate in the Governor's e-FINDS initiative and in the event of an evacuation; the agency will affix a tracking bracelet to assure the accounting of all youth being evacuated.

### **Disaster Assistance Service Center Activity**

#### **Suffolk County Record Flooding Event**

OCFS, in our role as the Co-Lead of the Disaster Assistance Center Group with OTDA, coordinated the opening and overall state operations of a Disaster Assistance Service Center (DASC) in Suffolk County, as a result of a record breaking severe weather event. The DASC is remained open through August 22, 2014, to provide a single location to 350 residents to obtain information, services and resources to assist in their recovery.

## **Yates County Disaster Recovery Assistance Program**

In support of the Governor's 2014 Yates County Disaster Recovery Assistance Program initiative, led by NYS Homes and Community Renewal, OCFS staff deployed to Yates County to assist in the recovery effort.

### **Disaster Assistance Center Training Projects**

OCFS and OTDA as leads to the Disaster Assistance Center Group of the Human Services Committee are currently working on a four-part training project to enhance the response capabilities of the Disaster Assistance Center Group for future response. Through the corrective action process from recent disasters including the response to Hurricane Irene, Tropical Storm Lee, and Super Storm Sandy, it was identified that there is the need to provide a more detailed training to personnel that may be involved in the management of Disaster Assistance Center sites established following a disaster declaration.

New York's responses to the past disasters have included hundreds of volunteers and man-hours committed by OTDA, OCFS and other partner agencies to help individuals recover from the aftermath of a disaster.

Listed below is a summary of the four training projects. The first three trainings have been developed and are in the final approval stages. The fourth training is in development and is planned to be finished this year. OCFS is looking to have approval and roll out to facilitate recruitment and retention of trained staff to assist with disaster recovery in 2015.

- **DRC Training for Local Jurisdictions** - This training provides an overview of Disaster Recovery Center (DRC) considerations that local jurisdictions should be aware of in advance of the opening of these centers. It covers materials related to the services offered at the DRCs, requirements related to the site location selection, and role of the local jurisdictions to prepare and participate in this process, promoting timely and cost-effective operations.
- **DRC Training Overview (Volunteer Recruitment)** - This training provides an overview of the DRC environment. This training is geared towards OTDA and OCFS audiences planning, or considering volunteering to deploy to a DRC to support operations, specifically in the intended capacity as site managers. This training provides information related to the role of the DRC to help the community, details about the layout and flow of the centers, and focuses on the skills needed to successfully complete this task. Emphasis will be placed on flexibility, responsiveness and commitment to service.
- **DRC Training Provider Agencies** - This training will be geared towards partner agencies from other state, federal, local and non-governmental partners that will be supporting DRC operations. This training will focus on what providers should expect at the DRC and will provide an overview of the services commonly offered at the DRCs. This training will cover the expectations for service providers from preparedness to demobilization, and should provide them with an understanding of some of the challenges related to DRC operations specifically involving staffing.

- **DRC Training for Site Management (OTDA/ OCFS specific)** - This training provides detailed information about DRC Operations and Management to the OTDA/OCFS Site Management audience. This training will serve as a “How-To” Guide to help Site Managers understand the expectations of them from preparing the site for opening, supporting daily operations, and through the demobilization process and closure of the centers. The training will focus on their role as Liaison with Group Supervisors and working as part of a combined federal/state leadership team, and resources available to support their center operations.

**Plans for 2015-2016**

OCFS will continue to build capacity for preparedness, response and recovery activities in the future through continued planning, trainings, and exercises. As a member of the Disaster Preparedness Commission, OCFS will continue to keep preparedness an agency priority and stay the course in our current roles and responsibilities on the various workgroups mentioned above.

OCFS Divisions will continue to update Divisional Plans to address changing needs of the agency and our stakeholders going forward.

***Training Plan Update***

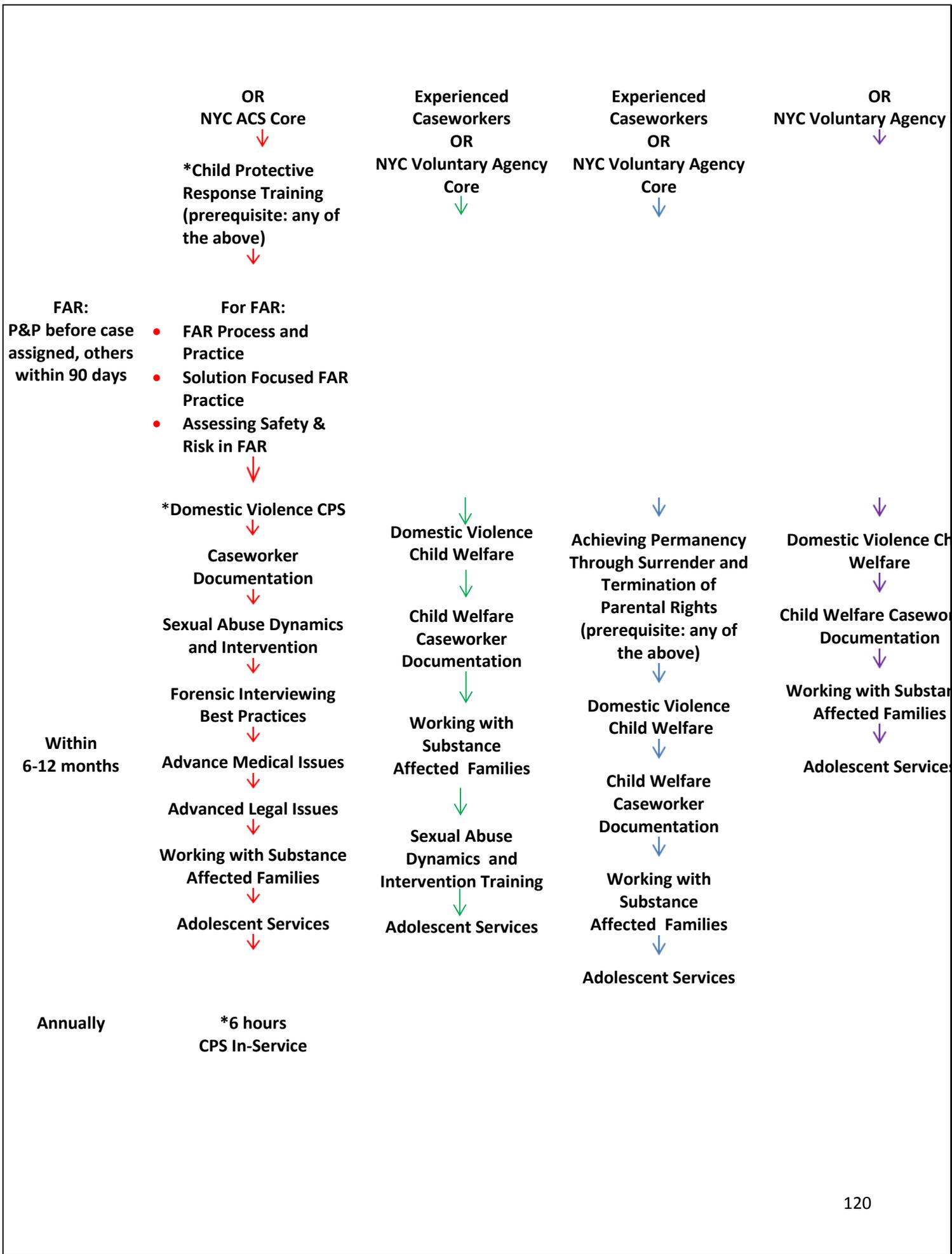
**Training Planned For Federal Fiscal Years 2015-2019**

**Training Conducted in Federal Fiscal Year 2014-2015 and Proposed in 2015-2016**

It is expected that many of the training programs provided in 2014, as described in the Program Support section of the Final Report, will be offered again during the 2015, based upon OCFS’ Practice Model and subject to the availability of funding and vendor contracts. The following trainings are planned for 2015:

**CW CASEWORKER TRAINING PATH**

Time Frames For CPS track only	CPS	(*Mandated)		
		Foster Care (no required training; foundation training recommended)	Adoption (no required training; foundation training recommended)	Preventive (no required training; foundation training recommended)
Within 90 days	CW/ CPS Common Core for New Caseworkers	CW/ CPS Common Core for New Caseworkers	CW/ CPS Common Core for New Caseworkers	CW/ CPS Common Core for New Caseworkers
	OR Core Essential Skills for Experienced Caseworkers	OR Core Essential Skills for	OR Core Essential Skills for	OR Core Essential Skills for Experienced Caseworkers



## Foundation Courses

The Training Plan is composed of foundation level and specialty training programs for Child Welfare/Child Protective Services (CW/CPS) supervisors and caseworkers. The *Child Welfare/Child Protective Services Common Core for New Caseworkers* provides all new caseworkers with a common set of knowledge and skills to achieve the goals of safety, permanency, and well-being for children. It is the foundation for all subsequent training. Subsequent training builds upon this foundation and advances knowledge and skill development in the child protective, preventive, foster care and adoption services. The *Child Protective Services Response Training* program, when coupled with Common Core\*, is the required minimum training program for CPS investigation/CPS Family Assessment Response (FAR) staff. CPS FAR staff must also complete the FAR training sequence.

In some cases, an alternative to Common Core may be accepted as part of the approved CPS foundation training:

-*Core Essential Skills for Experienced Caseworkers* for caseworkers who have at least one year of experience, but did not attend Common Core.

-*Child Welfare Core Training for Voluntary Agencies* for New York City voluntary agency caseworkers.

## **Child Welfare/Child Protective Services Common Core for New Caseworkers**

*Child Welfare/ Child Protective Services Common Core for New Caseworkers*, referred to as the *Common Core*, is the foundation training program for new caseworkers hired by local districts and contracted preventive and foster care services agencies. It is strongly recommended for all Child Welfare (preventive, foster care, adoption) caseworkers. The objective of the training is to equip new workers with the knowledge, attitudes and skills to practice effectively, 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. The training provides local district CPS and Child Welfare caseworkers and voluntary agency caseworkers with a framework for their practice that emphasizes strengths based, solution focused practice and family engagement skills.

Common Core is part of the approved training path for CPS caseworkers (with the exceptions as noted above).

The program consists of four sequential highly skills-based classroom modules (16 days), as well as mandatory web-based training (approximately 3 days) prior to and between weeks of classroom training (total of 19 days). It also includes mid and post-classroom On-the-Job/Transfer of Learning activities conducted in the district or agency.

Training is provided by the University Partner SUC Buffalo - CDHS.

Estimated cost per delivery is \$314,240.

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2014-2015 (actual)	488	17	356
2015-2016 (proposed)	400	16	304

As an improvement effort New York State is taking a closer look at some of the evaluation data collected on the foundation course. The following is an example of pre/post-test analysis on the above course.

There were 412 trainees in pretest and 399 trainees in posttest.

T-test showed that average score of trainees in posttest group was statistically higher than average score in pretest group.

Table 1. Comparison of Trainees' Average Scores in Pre and Post Tests

Pretest Average	Posttest Average	Post-Pre difference
36.58	54.33	17.75

\*\* statistically significant at type I error of 1%.

$d \geq 0.2$  is small effect,  $d \geq 0.5$  is medium effect and  $d \geq 0.8$  is large effect by Cohen's convention.

#### Common Core Follow-Up Survey:

A 21-item course specific follow-up instrument was used to gather transfer of learning on the Common Core participants and their supervisors. Roughly 90 days after the completion of common core training, an online survey was distributed to participants and supervisors to assess how well participants had been able to incorporate the knowledge and skills learned in training into their work.

The survey was designed to reflect the training content and job responsibilities of the new child welfare workers. In 2014, 314 follow-up email invitations were successfully sent to participants, and 287 to their supervisors.

202 follow-up responses were received from participants, while 131 were received from their supervisor before the deadline date. The overall response rate for participants was 64% while the overall response rate for their supervisors was 46 percent.

On each item, the participants rated themselves higher than their supervisors did. Each group gave their highest respective rating to the item "Correctly assess the conditions that necessitate child welfare involvement." Likewise, each group gave their lowest respective rating to "Use critical thinking skills to take actions regarding abuse, maltreatment, safety, and risk."

The results from this evaluation will be used to assess the related areas in the training program.

#### **Core Essential Skills for Experienced Caseworkers**

This program provides foundation training for experienced Child Welfare and Child Protective Services caseworkers. Like the Common Core for New Caseworkers training

program, this training focuses on building skills most likely to result in positive outcomes for clients and the achievement of child welfare outcomes, including an emphasis on the impact of trauma, basic child welfare legal practice, child development, and interviewing children. This program consists of eight days of classroom training and 1.5 days of web-based training.

For experienced caseworkers, Core Essential Skills is an alternative to Common Core as a prerequisite for CPSR Training.

It is provided by two University Partners: SUNY Albany – PDP, and SUNY Stony Brook.

Estimated cost per delivery is \$58,000.

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2014-2015 (actual)	194	14	134
2015-2016 (proposed)	195	13	123.5

The following is an example of pre/post-test analysis on the above course.

### **T-test and Effect Size**

There were 176 trainees in pretest and 128 trainees in posttest.

- T-test showed that average score of trainees in post-test group was statistically higher than average score in pretest group.

Table 2. Comparison of Trainees' Average Scores in Pre and Post Tests

Pretest Average	Posttest Average	Post-Pre
16.76	24.42	7.66

1. *\*\* statistically significant at type I error of 1%.*

2. *d >= 0.2 is small effect, d >= 0.5 is medium effect and d >= 0.8 is large effect by Cohen's convention.*

**The results from this evaluation will be used to assess the related training components**

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

The Voluntary Agency Core curriculum is designed for caseworkers and supervisors who work in New York City 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 New York City as well as the policy and regulatory framework that guides practice in New York State. The Core training consists of four 3-day modules of classroom training. Currently, each module is treated as a separate course for the

purpose of tracking the number of offerings, trainees, and training days. It is recommended that all trainees attend all four modules.

Supplemental training is also provided for experienced caseworkers and supervisors. These one to two-day classroom trainings include topics such as Adolescent Issues, Domestic Violence, Supervisory Skills, and Working with Young Fathers.

Training is provided by a non-profit organization: the Council of Family and Child Caring Agencies (COFCCA).

Estimated cost per delivery for Core training is \$2,525.  
 Estimated cost per delivery for Supplemental training is \$825.

**Core Training**

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2014-2015 (actual)	456	23	69
2015-2016 (proposed)	400	20	60

**Supplemental**

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2014-2015 (actual)	227	17	21.5
2015-2016 (proposed)	700	35	35

**Child Protective Services Response Training**

This course completes the mandated core training for Investigative/FAR and On-Call 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. The training consists of eight days of classroom training supplemented by web-based training.

Training is provided by University Partner SUC Buffalo - CDHS

Estimated cost per delivery is \$93,200.

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2014-2015 (actual)	328	13	91
2015-2016 (proposed)	300	12	84

This course is directed by policy as a foundation course for all CPS Caseworkers, the evaluation data is collected and analyzed. The following is an example of pre/post-test analysis on the above course.

### T-test and Effect Size

There were 322 trainees in pretest and 314 trainees in posttest.

- T-test showed that average score of trainees in posttest group was statistically higher than average score in pretest group.

Table 3. Comparison of Trainees' Average Scores in Pre and Post Tests

Pretest Average	Posttest Average	Post-Pre
13.16	19.42	6.26

3. *\*\* statistically significant at type I error of 1%.*

4. *d >= 0.2 is small effect, d >= 0.5 is medium effect and d >= 0.8 is large effect by Cohen's convention.*

The results from this evaluation will be used to assess the related training components.

### Adoption Specialty Training

This training currently consists of one course, "Achieving Permanency through Surrender and Termination of Parental Rights." This six-day classroom 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 also includes 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 Learn Linc or comparable technology.

This is an elective training. However, participants must first take one of the three foundation training programs: Common Core, Core Essential Skills, or Core Training for Voluntary Agencies.

The training is provided by the University Partner SUC Buffalo - CDHS.

Estimated cost per delivery is \$107,700

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2014-2015 (actual)	78	5	30
2015-2016 (proposed)	60	4	24

### CHILD WELFARE SUPERVISORY TRAINING PROGRAMS

Sections 412(5)(c) of the Social Services Law stipulates specific types of required training for LDSS CPS supervisory staff. OCFS has developed courses that fulfill the requirements of the law to prepare supervisors to fulfill their roles and responsibilities in Child Protective work. As part of the requirement, all LDSS CPS supervisors must complete a training course on the fundamentals of Child Protection. These fundamentals are provided through the *Child*

*Welfare/Child Protective Services Common Core for New Caseworkers* and the *Child Protective Services Response Training*. These courses must be completed prior to completion of the supervisory core program. All CPS Supervisors must complete a two module training course on CPS supervision that includes *KEYS Core*, a foundation module for all Child Welfare supervisors, and *Supervising CPS Investigations*, for Child Protective Services supervisors.

**Keys to Excellence In Your Supervision (KEYS) CORE Training Sup**

KEYS Core Training focuses on the development of leadership and supervisory effectiveness skills and the competencies that new supervisors most need within the first six months of assuming a supervisory position. KEYS CORE topics include Transitioning from Worker to Supervisor, The Process of Supervision, and Case Consultation. This training consists of three 2-day modules of classroom training that is enhanced and supported by web-based training, specialized skills clinics, coaching and peer networking, as well as supplemental supervisory topics.

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2014-2015 (actual)	68	3	18
2015-2016 (proposed)	100	5	30

Training provided by University Partner SUC Buffalo – CDHS.

Estimated cost per delivery is \$39,500.

**Keys Coaching Meetings**

The KEYS Coaching model is for front line child welfare supervisors and their supervisors to enhance their ability to implement all dimensions of the KEYS: NYS Model of Supervision; to provide deliberate, targeted feedback and support to staff; support consistent implementation of supervisory skill sets and competencies; develop effective learning and support strategies for front line child welfare supervisors and their supervisors across areas such as workload management, developing staff through feedback and coaching, managing conflict, use of individual and group supervision, and modeling of solution focused practice approaches. Coaching plans are determined by county priorities within the KEYS framework and are tailored to respond to those priorities.

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2014-2015 (actual)	622	68	42.5
2015-2016 (proposed)	612	102	102

Training provided by University Partner SUC Buffalo – CDHS.

Estimated cost per delivery is \$5,000.

### **Keys Skills Clinics**

In order to build internal capacity for sustainability of the KEYS Model of Supervision, it is necessary to provide OCFS Child Welfare and Community Services Regional Office Staff with skill sets and competencies to assist local district staff in standardizing the supervisors' knowledge and skills necessary for effective child welfare supervision.

Behaviorally-based skills clinics are participant-focused and provide knowledge and skill base for KEYS. The skills clinics are a half to full day of classroom training, and may include, but are not limited to: Structure and Content of Individual Supervision Sessions; Supervisors as Staff Developers; Feedback; Managing Conflict; Difficult Conversations; Professional Boundaries; Ethical Decision-Making; Identifying and Responding Effectively to Signs and Symptoms of Secondary Trauma; Compassion Fatigue and Burnout; Management of Multi-Generational and Multi-Cultural Units; Techniques of Group Supervision/Case Consultation.

Training provided by University Partner SUC Buffalo – CDHS.

Estimated cost per delivery is \$8,625.

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2014-2015 (actual)	120	6	22
2015-2016 (proposed)	180	12	12

### **Supervising CPS Investigations (aka Supervisory Core Module 11A)**

This mandatory course is for supervisors who have successfully completed Child Protective Services Response Training and KEYS Core Training. This four-day classroom training builds supervisors' ability to coach and monitor child protective services caseworkers through the CPS investigative process, safety and risk decisions, decisions about ongoing services and any Family Court involvement. The course was revised in 2014 for a better fit and flow with KEYS Core Training.

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2014-2015 (actual)	19	2	8
2015-2016 (proposed)	45	3	12

Training provided by University Partner SUC Buffalo – CDHS.

Estimated cost per delivery is \$44,460.

### **Directors of Services Leadership Training Forum**

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).

The main topics for 2014 were “Shifting from Surviving to Thriving: Understanding Vicarious Trauma and Building Resilience for Child Welfare Leaders and Staff” and “Diligent Retention of Foster and Adoptive Parents.”

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2014-2015 (actual)	80	1	2
2015-2016 (proposed)	75	1	2

In 2015 possible topics may include, but not be limited to: measuring outcomes; practices to support and indicators to measure child well-being; assessing and providing services through a race equity lens; 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.

Training provided by University Partner SUC Buffalo – CDHS

Estimated cost per delivery is \$107,700

### **New Improvements in 2015**

#### **KEYS Supervision Essentials Training**

KEYS Supervision Essentials Trainings, (three two-day classroom modules) will be offered to experienced supervisors to support their implementation of the KEYS Model of Supervision. Training topics will include: Supervision Structure and Process (module one); Communication, Monitoring and Providing Feedback (module two); Case Consultation (module three). Based on needs assessment to determine which modules are most needed.

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2015-2016 (proposed)	300	12	24

Training provided by University Partner SUC Buffalo – CDHS.

Estimated cost per delivery is \$9,800.

### **Ongoing Staff Training**

### Special Topics Days

Special Topics days are delivered in person to groups or on a one-on-one basis and supplement training on the Common Core, Supervising CPS Investigations, Core Essential Skills, Child Protective Services Response Training, and Achieving Permanency through Surrender and Termination of Parental Rights. Supervisors and caseworkers receive training support to maintain the Outcome-Based Training system in their local districts. Special Topics days may also include training of trainer activities and providing training and follow-up training.

Training provided by the University Partners: SUC Buffalo – CDHS, SUNY Albany – PDP, SUNY Stony Brook.

Estimated cost per delivery is \$11,800.

Year	Training Days
2014-2015 (actual)	47
2015-2016 (proposed)	68

### Child Welfare Casework Documentation Training

This classroom 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 New York State. The program provides a structure for the management of the case through assessment, service planning, implementation, evaluation, and documentation. One component of this project focuses on Progress Notes and the other involves the Family Assessment and Service Planning (FASP) instrument where caseworkers document casework practice. The Progress Notes curriculum was updated in 2014.

Year	Trainees	Training Days
2014-2015 (actual)	1970	197
2015-2016 (proposed)	1100	220

Additional changes to course materials may be necessary in 2015-16 to align with updated assessment practices. The new progress notes curriculum has an increased focus on skills practice.

Training is provided by University Partner SUNY Albany – PDP.

Estimated cost per delivery is \$4,100.

### 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 and Interviewing Children: A Skills Clinic. For those acting in a CPS On-Call capacity, an online iLinc class is offered.

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days	Tele-Training
2014-2015 (actual)	1186	44	94	1
2015-2016 (proposed)	1510	55	109	1

Training is provided by

Estimated cost for Interviewing Children Skills Clinic per delivery is \$11,000.  
 Estimated cost for Advanced Medical and Legal Issues per delivery is \$13,200.  
 Estimated cost for Forensic Interviewing per delivery is \$32,600.

### **Sexual Abuse Dynamics and Intervention Training**

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.

Training provided by University Partners SUNY Stony Brook/Fordam University.

Estimated cost per delivery is \$19,000.

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2014-2015 (actual)	436	17	51
2015-2016 (proposed)	400	16	48

### **Working with Alcohol and Substance Affected Families**

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. This program includes Working with Alcohol and Substance Affected Families as well as Special Topics classroom deliveries. This is a one-day classroom training.

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2014-2015 (actual)	555	37	37
2015-2016 (proposed)	1300	45	45

In 2015 a course on Opiates is expected. Additionally, OCFS will be assessing the impacts of stand-up versus web-based training.

Training provided by University Partner SUNY Albany – PDP.

Estimated cost per delivery is \$2,700.

### **Safety and Risk Refresher Training – Upstate**

The purpose of this two-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.

Training provided by University Partners: SUNY Albany – PDP and SUNY Stony Brook.

Estimated cost per delivery is \$10,580.

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2014-2015 (actual)	170	8	16
2015-2016 (proposed)	120	6	12

### **Family Engagement Specialist Training**

This program is designed to provide training and consultation to districts and provider agencies to support their ability to initiate and maintain ongoing engagement with families. The focus of the project is to support the transfer of learning, enabling districts and agencies to fully integrate family engagement processes and practices learned in foundation level training. This is done through the use of the Family Engagement Toolkits:

Locating and Engaging Fathers Toolkit begins with an exploration of attitudes and barriers related to locating and engaging fathers. There is a focus on the importance of fathers in the lives of children, including the impact of fathers on child development and the prevention of high risk behaviors as well as strategies for locating fathers, and an overview of legal terminology and considerations.

-Family Meetings Toolkit takes participants through an instructional process that includes the philosophy and beliefs that support family meetings as well as its benefits to families and caseworkers. The toolkit presents strategies for partnering with family members. The toolkit presents the steps and processes for conducting a family meeting including standard agendas, managing conflict and facilitation skills and strategies.

Coaching Family Visits Toolkit presents coaching visits as an effective alternative to traditional supervised visits. Participants learn about how to partner with parents, and about how to engage parents to focus on identifying and meeting each child's needs. Participants learn strategies and tools to help parents explore the feelings, needs and strengths that a child may be expressing through their behavior during visits. Finally, the toolkit focuses on the end of the visit, a challenging aspect of visits, plus a process for debriefing and planning the next visit. Participants practice all aspects of visit coaching during a skills coaching session.

Child-Centered Family-Focused Practice Toolkit focuses on developing and enhancing staff capacity to engage families, especially around family preservation and reunification. The toolkit focuses on the skills, strategies, and techniques caseworkers need to engage family members in planning and achieving safety, permanency, and well-being.

The implementation of a toolkit is a process that is unique to each district or agency and is initiated as both staff and organizational development strategy. However, there are two activities that are required for the implementation process for every toolkit: Implementation Meetings and Toolkit Training.

Implementation Meetings activities include Preparation Meetings, Workgroup Meetings, and Support Meetings. Through the Implementation Meetings, districts and agencies are prepared to initiate and sustain the philosophies and practices of the toolkit.

Toolkit Training has three parts. The first part of the toolkit is a classroom day of orientation. The second part is an on-line component. Trainees post answers to questions on material they read or view, and the trainer responds. The final part of the training is a classroom day of skills practice, where the trainees apply what they have learned.

Training provided by University Partner SUC Buffalo – CDHS.

Estimated cost per delivery is \$6,450.

***Implementation***

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2014-2015 (actual)	982	286	136
2015-2016 (proposed)	1960	280	140

***Toolkit Training***

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2014-2015 (actual)	1212	217	191.5
2015-2016 (proposed)	900	60	150

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

OCFS supports a model of service delivery by casework teams, with 13 teams in 7 local districts: Albany, Columbia, Orange, Schenectady, Richmond, Rockland, and Westchester. 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 2015 along with team expansion in districts already having one team or more.

Training provided by University Partner SUC Buffalo – CDHS

Estimated cost per delivery is \$3,500.

## Family Assessment Response Training

FAR became a permanent child protective service in June 2011. Currently, there are 22 counties implementing FAR, they are: Allegany, Cayuga, Chemung, Columbia, Madison, Monroe, Nassau, Niagara, Onondaga, Orange, Oswego, Queens, Rockland, Suffolk, St. Lawrence, St. Regis, Tioga, Tompkins, Ulster, Washington and Westchester . The FAR training series consists of three foundational courses, two supervision courses and a supplemental course. The *FAR Process and Practice* course provides trainees with a thorough overview of the philosophical and practice framework for FAR within NYS. *Solution-Focused FAR Practice* orients trainees in the core principles, values and practices of solution-focused casework practice as well as in how this practice aligns with FAR. *Assessing Safety and Risk in FAR* enhances workers' ability to integrate the critical thinking processes and protocols for safety and risk assessment into the core principles and values of family engagement and partnership required for effective FAR Practice. *Supervising to a Practice Shift in FAR and Advanced Supervision in FAR* trainings will prepare supervisors to engage themselves and their workers in a solution focused approach to supervision and consultation within a FAR response. The training *Increasing the Voice of Children and Youth in FAR* facilitates leadership through family-led processes that encourage the involvement and participation of children and youth in the process so that they are safe and families are supported. Coaching continues to be provided to all FAR counties to increase their level of skill in delivering FAR. OCFS continues to build New York State capacity to train Family Assessment Response by training university partners and select local district staff in FAR.

Training is provided by university partners University of Colorado – Butler Institute for Families, SUC Buffalo – CDHS, SUNY Albany – PDP and SUNY Stony Brook.

Estimated cost for Training Series courses per delivery is \$7,450.

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2014-2015 (actual)	925		79
2014-2015 Symposium	1562	1	2
2015-2016 (proposed)	1562		100

## Child Welfare Eligibility Training

The purpose of this training 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. This training is delivered via iLinc modality. 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 percent, Kinship/Guardianship Assistance (KinGAP), Non-Reimbursable Payments; and Candidacy in Foster Care. Trainees learn how to determine and document each category of eligibility, the use of the Welfare Management System (WMS) and to identify and access the resources available to support their ability to accurately determine and document eligibility. Courses range from a half day to full day of training.

Training provided by SUC Buffalo – CDHS

Estimated cost per delivery is \$775.

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2014-2015 (actual)	349	45	34
2015-2016 (proposed)	450	45	27.5

### **Training for OCFS Bureau of Special Hearings Staff**

This training provides specialized Continued Legal Education training in a variety of topics for Bureau of Special Hearings staff to respond to the challenges made to the decisions of LDSS and state officials.

Training is provided by OCFS legal staff and consultant legal trainers.

Estimated cost per delivery is \$14,000.

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2014-2015 (actual)	37	1	2
2015-2016 (proposed)	37	1	2

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

This mandated training provides CPS staff and supervisors with the knowledge and skills to identify families who are affected domestic violence. The training prepares participants to engage each family member safely, including the offending parent, to conduct comprehensive safety and risk assessments, and to develop effective intervention strategies that promote child safety, permanency, and well-being. Section 17(g) of the Social Services Law requires this training for all CPS workers.

This two-day classroom training is designed to provide a comprehensive skill base for child protective workers. Course topics include, but are not limited to, identifying domestic violence, interviewing each member of the family affected by domestic violence, assessing safety, and making the determination decision. The training is delivered to CPS workers in LDSS offices throughout the state jointly by the New York State Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and SUC Buffalo – CDHS.

Estimated cost per delivery is \$7,440.

The training was developed in collaboration with the National Resource Center for Child Protective Services and the New York State Office for Prevention of Domestic Violence and reflects current research-based domestic violence/child welfare best practice.

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2014-2015 (actual)	388	23	46
2015-2016 (proposed)	440	22	44

### **Domestic Violence Training for Child Welfare Staff**

Provides training in Domestic Violence issues, including the dynamics of family abuse and safety planning interventions for foster care, preventive, and adoption child welfare caseworkers and supervisors who are working with families experiencing domestic violence. This is a two-day classroom training.

Training provided by New York State Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence.

Estimated cost per delivery is \$860.

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2014-2015 (actual)	291	17	34
2015-2016 (proposed)	400	20	40

### **Adolescent Services (formerly Independent Living Services)**

The courses that are considered foundation courses are “Promoting Positive Youth Development and Well-Being” and “Adolescent Services Toolbox.” One delivery in each region for local district and foster care agency caseworkers, supervisors, foster parents, child care workers, youth in foster care, Division of Juvenile Justice and Opportunities for Youth (DJJOY) OCFS staff and youth and Youth Bureau Staff. Training is recommended, but not required.

Providers are SUNY Albany and SUNY Stony Brook.

#### **Promoting Positive Youth Development and Well-Being (PPYD)**

PPYD was piloted in 2014. This is a blended training, part one is a two hour computer based training (CBT) and part two is the 2-day classroom training. The PPYD training was offered across the state. This training assists those working with youth in care to promote positive youth development and well-being by using positive youth development strategies.

Estimated cost per delivery is \$16,300.

#### **The Adolescent Services “Life Skills Toolbox” Training**

This training is offered statewide. This two-day course builds on the PPYD training by assisting participants to link assessment, the foundation for designing a life skills plan, with the resources contained in the toolbox. Topic-specific training, training support and technical assistance are courses designed to help foster care youth transition from care to self-sufficiency and will continue to be offered. The trainee population for these programs includes caseworkers, supervisors and foster parents of the local social service district and residential child care facilities, Youth Bureau staff and OCFS DJJOY facility staff.

Estimated cost per delivery is \$25,250.

OCFS also continues 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.

Each Network member presents an annual youth speak out and a youth leadership event that gives youth the opportunity to inform agency and OCFS and LDSS administrators, judges and elected officials of issues of youth in care.

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2014-2015 (actual)	3771	364	205
2015-2016 (proposed)	2760	305	212

For 2015, training programs will focus on promoting youth well-being. Training will focus on what workers can do to help youth feel safe and provide them with the skills they need to transition into adulthood.

### **CPS In-service Compliance**

All CPS Investigative/FAR workers are required to attend six hours of annual in-service training. Overall, 81 percent of CPS caseworkers in areas excluding New York City were compliant with their annual training requirements in 2014 (2,864 CPS workers in learning management system, 2,313 given credit for CPS inservice).. If the three largest counties with the lowest compliance rates are removed, the overall rate increases to 89 percent. OCFS will improve on this requirement by targeting those counties: Erie (51 percent compliance), Onondaga (42 percent compliance), and Westchester (64 percent compliance). Sixty percent of counties had more than 90 percent of staff meeting the annual training requirement (35/58 counties).

# of Counties Compliant with Annual In-service Training Requirement	
100%	10
90-99%	25
80-89%	7
70-79%	6
60-69%	4
50-59%	4
42-49%	2

<b>County</b>	<b>CPS Active</b>	<b>CPS Compliant</b>	<b>CPS Not Compliant</b>
Albany County Department for CYF	91	88	3
Allegany County DSS	18	14	4
Broome County DSS	69	46	23
Cattaraugus County DSS	20	16	4
Cayuga County HHS	16	16	0
Chautauqua County DHHS	30	29	1
Chemung County DSS	46	40	6
Chenango County DSS	15	14	1
Clinton County DSS	21	20	1
Columbia County DSS	17	16	1
Cortland County DSS	41	41	0
Delaware County DSS	31	25	6
Dutchess County Community & Family Services	50	48	2
Erie County DSS	196	100	96
Essex County DSS	15	14	1
Franklin County DSS	11	7	4
Fulton County DSS	35	32	3
Genesee County DSS	9	9	0
Greene County DSS	13	12	1
Hamilton County DSS	3	2	1
Herkimer County DSS	19	19	0
Jefferson County DSS	39	30	9
Lewis County DSS	18	18	0
Livingston County DSS	26	20	6
Madison County DSS	37	35	2
Monroe County DHS	225	206	19
Montgomery County DSS	14	14	0
Nassau County DSS	167	161	6
Niagara County DSS	35	32	3
Oneida County DSS	66	61	5
Onondaga County DSS	213	89	124

Ontario County DSS	20	20	0
Orange County DSS	65	64	1
Orleans County DSS	11	10	1
Oswego County DSS	90	74	16
Otsego County DSS	39	38	1
Putnam County DSS	13	10	3
Rensselaer County DSS	38	35	3
Rockland County DSS	40	40	0
Saratoga County DSS	43	42	1
Schenectady County DSS	71	42	29
Schoharie County DSS	11	11	0
Schuyler County DSS	9	8	1
Seneca County DHS	12	6	6
St. Lawrence County DSS	41	19	22
St. Regis Mohawk DSS	13	7	6
Steuben County DSS	32	24	8
Suffolk County DSS	321	291	30
Sullivan County DFS	24	18	6
Tioga County DSS	24	22	2
Tompkins County DSS	16	14	2
Ulster County DSS	29	26	3
Warren County DSS	21	20	1
Washington County DSS	33	32	1
Wayne County DSS	20	17	3
Westchester County DSS	202	130	72
Wyoming County DSS	6	6	0
Yates County DSS	14	13	1
	<b>2864</b>	<b>2313</b>	<b>551</b>

## Foster and Adoptive Parent Training

### *New York City Training Requirements*

PROGRAM	Pre-Service	Pre Service Completion Date	Mandatory annual In-Service training hours	Recommended additional In-Service training hours
RFBH	MAPP	Before certification and placement	6 (delivered by agency)	6 (delivered by agency or community)
Emergency RFBH	Caring for Our Own or mini-MAPP	Within 150 days of placement	6 (delivered by agency)	6 (delivered by agency or community)

PROGRAM	Pre-Service	Pre Service Completion Date	Mandatory annual In Service training hours	Child Specific training hours WITHIN, not in addition to, total training hours
TFFC (Converted from RFBH)	MAPP or mini-MAPP + PST	Before TFFC certification and placement	Minimum of 12 (delivered by agency or community, including professionals treating the child)	Minimum of 6 (delivered by agency or community, including professionals treating the child)
TFFC (Recruited directly to TFFC program)	mini-MAPP* + PST	Before TFFC certification and placement	Minimum of 12 (delivered by agency or community, including professionals treating the child)	Minimum of 6 (delivered by agency or community, including professionals treating the child)
<b>Adjustable Rate Category*</b>				
Special	MAPP or mini-MAPP + PST (if TFFC) + Child Specific Training (6hrs)	Within 6 months of special needs determination	12 (delivered by agency or community, including professionals treating the child)	Minimum of 6 (delivered by agency or community, including professionals treating the child)
Exceptional	MAPP or mini-MAPP + PST (if TFFC) + Child Specific Training (9hrs)	Within 6 months of exceptional needs determination	15 (delivered by agency or community, including professionals treating the child)	Minimum of 9 (delivered by agency or community, including professionals treating the child)

### ***Upstate Training Requirements***

Authorized agencies must provide training to each certified or approved foster parent in a training program approved by OCFS which will prepare foster parents to meet the needs of children in their care so that the best interests of the children placed by the certifying or approving agency will be met. [(443.2 (e))]

The following applies to ***training requirements for foster parents who take foster children assessed to have special/exceptional needs***: foster parents must have demonstrated their ability to care for foster children with special or exceptional conditions through past training and experience in nursing, special education, child care or the completion of or participation in special training provided by an authorized agency or other relevant training and experience; and actively participate in agency training for foster parents of not less than four hours per year in the case of providers of special foster care services and not less than five hours per year in the case of providers of exceptional foster care services. [427.6(e)(3)].

446.5(b) applies to “**designated emergency foster boarding homes.**” These homes are not the same as certified emergency homes and approved emergency homes defined in Part 443. The training requirements for designated emergency foster boarding homes is that for foster parents providing this type of care they must complete 15 hours of specialized training and a minimum of six hours of follow-up training each year (446.5).

This training program consists of several foster/adoptive parent leader certification preparation components, including 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. A description of components follows:

- 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: A preparation program specifically for relative caregivers given over a period of nine weeks.
- Shared Parenting: An eight-week program focusing on relationship building between foster parents and birth parents for best outcome of children in care.
- Mini-MAPP: Provides 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: Seven consultations are provided in this model to individual families to prepare them to foster or adopt.
- COMPASS, the in-service (post-certification) portion of this training program, includes first-year basic and advanced courses for subsequent years in such topics as Loss and Separation, Preparing Children for Adoption, Managing Difficult Behaviors, Sexual Abuse, Child Development and Discipline among others. There is also a leader certification component to this training similar to the preparation trainings listed above.
- Special Topics and use of the iLinc electronic training platform are other trainings available to foster/adoptive parents, local district staff, and voluntary agency staff statewide.

Year	Trainees	Training Days
2014-2015 (actual)	4338	510
2015-2016 (proposed)	3873	425

**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.

Training provided by University Partner SUC Buffalo – CDHS

Estimated cost per delivery is \$3,300.

Year	Trainees	Training Days
2014-2015 (actual)	1220	90
2015-2016 (proposed)	1220	90

### **Behavior Support, Crisis Prevention and Intervention in Residential Settings**

The program of one to two-day classroom trainings focuses on building the competence of staff to work more effectively and in a safe, 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 are provided to previously certified TCI trainers, to assist them in keeping their certification current.

Training provided by Cornell University.

Estimated cost per delivery is \$10,900.

Year	Trainees	Technical Assistance Days
2014-2015 (actual)	632	15
2015-2016 (proposed)	810	40

### **Other Training Improvement Anticipated in 2015**

OCFS will look to provide training on trauma and its effect on children and families, as well as secondary trauma and its impact on the workforce. OCFS is currently working with experts in the field to develop appropriate training.

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 is developing a comprehensive training assessment by improving the monitoring of training outputs, objectives and evaluations. The next section establishes one of these efforts in regards to evaluation.

### **Bureau of Training and Development Evaluation Plan**

It is critical that the Bureau of Training and Development (BTD) measure project and course effectiveness and ensure that resources are appropriately allocated. The evaluation is conducted under the framework of the Kirkpatrick 4-level model, known as "The Four Levels of Learning Evaluation."

#### *IDENTIFY AND ANALYZE EXISTING LEVEL 1 EVALUATION*

In Kirkpatrick's model the level 1 evaluation, known as a Participant Reaction Questionnaire (PRQ), measures how participants reacted to the training. Anonymous data is collected regarding the trainee's reaction about the experience, instructor, topic, material, its presentation, and the venue.

**Improvement Actions:**

- Conduct further statistical analyses with existing level 1 evaluation data with regards to topic, program area, delivery method, vendor, and trainer.
- Examine the current PRQ (synchronous and asynchronous) instruments used and make improvements where the data supports.

Reaction measurement helps to understand how well the training is received and to improve the training for future trainees, including identifying important areas or topics that may be missing. When correlated (anonymously) with the knowledge gain (level 2) and behavioral changes (level 3), the PRQ provides additional value in analyzing data trends.

*IDENTIFY AND ANALYZE EXISTING LEVEL 2 EVALUATIONS*

The level 2 of Kirkpatrick's 4-level model is Learning Gain which measures knowledge increase as a result of the training. Training begins with specific learning objectives which form the basis of the evaluation. A short test is used to measure knowledge gains. In most courses, the same test is delivered before and after the training.

**Improvement Actions:**

- Conduct further statistical analyses with existing level 2 evaluation data with regards to inferential statistical procedures, e.g. paired-sample t-test, Wilcoxon signed-rank test.
- Examine level 2 pre- and post-evaluation instruments: data statistical analysis and comparison to learning objectives

*EXPAND LEVEL 3 EVALUATION IMPLEMENTATION*

Level 3 determines how much transfer of knowledge, skills, and attitudes has occurred (i.e. trainees change in behavior). Specifically, this component assesses how trainees **apply** the information, knowledge and skills gained in training. The extent to which the new learning is applied in the workplace (or changes behaviors) determines level 3 success.

A goal of the Kirkpatrick model is the concept of generating a chain of evidence between the levels of evaluation. In this principle we will compare the results collected across level 1, 2, and 3 for a particular project and course to identify any themes.

*Assess Level 4 organizational outcomes that occurred because of the training program*

Measurement of Level 4 has proven elusive in most training environments due to both design and cost considerations. However, it remains an important objective because most staff training is undertaken with an explicit intent to benefit the organization.

