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

Annual Progress and Services Report
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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

Annual Progress and Services Report (APSR)

This Annual Progress and Services Report is the second 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 compliance with regulations. Day Care, for example, reviews eligibility requirements, among other things. Currently, the child welfare component is reviewed to ensure that the Plan is complete, signatures are included, appropriate interagency consultations have been held, and that the narrative contains outcomes, and other sections such as a needs assessment and strategies. To date, the County Planning process has primarily served as a compliance document. However, in preparation for the 2017-2021 planning cycle, OCFS recognizes the need to intentionally review Plans with an eye towards identifying common strengths and challenges, common underlying factors, and strategies that show promise that we may want to evaluate or build upon, regionally, ultimately statewide.

Accomplishments for 2015-2016:

- 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 described later in this APSR, has continued its work on the Child Welfare Practice Model to further improve state and local planning.

Plans for 2016-2017:

- A work group continues to meet and explore opportunities to employ the upcoming 2017-2021 Child and Family Services Plans (County Plans) as a tool to more explicitly assess our progress to achieve the desired outcomes that are identified in our Practice Model and throughout the Child and Family Services Review. Since 2015, OCFS has been working toward implementing a CQI process that includes: Strengths and Needs Assessment, Program Planning and Implementation, and Testing Effectiveness. The CQI cycle has become embedded in many of OCFS' data trainings and within the newly revised local program improvement plan (formally corrective action plans). We anticipate that the County Plans will utilize the CQI cycle to strategically identify key underlying factors to performance, targeted

strategies, and indicators of success. As OCFS reviews and approves 2017-2021 County Plans our goal is to identify trends, strategies that show promise that we may want to evaluate or build upon, regionally, ultimately statewide.

- OCFS is working with the Social Work Education Consortium within the University at Albany to modify the County Plan instructions and template to better align with the CQI process. We will also work with SUNY Professional Development Program to develop trainings to improve skills of both OCFS and county staff.
- May-September 2016, the County Plan template will be finalized and the data system will be revised. In October 2016 the revised template will be discussed with the county Directors of Services, and at that time, regional offices will begin working with counties to improve understanding the new CQI-focused county plan model.

Child and Family Services Review

OCFS has been planning and preparing for the rapidly approaching Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) that occurred the week of June 13, 2016. OCFS submitted the Statewide Assessment to the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) on April 13, 2016.

Title IV-E Plan

NYS submitted a Comprehensive Title IV-E State Plan in accordance with ACYF-CB-PI-13-05, issued April 17, 2013. On September 3, 2013, NYS 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 NYS's plan amendment with an effective date of January 1, 2015. On September 29, 2015, NYS submitted a revised title IV-E Plan Amendment (Submittal 15-03) with additional supporting regulatory amendments submitted on January 21, 2016, to address section 475(5)(C)(iv) of the Act, that address the requirement in the case plan to include health and education records of the child, including the most recent information available regarding records of immunizations. DHHS approved the plan amendment effective July 1, 2015.

Title IV-E Foster Care Eligibility Review (FCER)

NYS was recently found to be in substantial compliance with federal Title IV-E child and provider eligibility requirements by the federal Administration for Children and Families (ACF). This determination was based on the subsequent primary Title IV-E Foster Care Eligibility Review (FCER), completed at the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) in Rensselaer during the week of September 14 – September 18, 2015. NYS passed the 2015 FCER with two error cases.

NYS passed this FCER with ACF findings of two error cases and two cases with improper payments. ACF commended NYS for its continued efforts on improvements to court orders that contain detailed child-specific information and for ensuring that judicial expectations are clear when determining actions to achieve the desired permanency outcomes. These improvements

could not have occurred without the hard work and diligence of the LDSSs, Family Courts, voluntary authorized agencies, and other local and state partners over the last three years.

The review results demonstrate how important it is for NYS stakeholders to continue to work together and focus our efforts on improving Title IV-E compliance and case documentation. Continuous improvement is critical if we are to be ready for the next FCER in 2018.

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 two 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 works 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 coordinator for the Court Improvement Project. Attending from OCFS: are the Deputy Commissioner for Child Welfare, the Deputy Counsel for Legal Affairs, 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 in the twenty-one counties with the highest foster care populations. 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 convening's 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 trauma 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 and a need for stakeholders to better understand child safety structured decision-making.

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 2015-2016:

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:

<u>The Office of Court Administration (OCA)</u>

Across New York State, the foster care population of very young children has been rising due to the pervasiveness of the use of heroin. A coordinated response from child welfare, family court and the chemical dependency system was formed to address some of the difficult challenges of assisting these families and moving children fast from foster care to permanency.

Staff from OCA, OCFS, and the Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services have been collaborating on the Statewide System Reform Project aimed at three areas:

- improving the identification and referral of families from child welfare affected by substance abuse as reported through child protective services;
- the implementation of evidenced based services for families in the child welfare system; and
- the infusion of the principles of the Family Treatment Courts into all Family Courts, thereby reaching even more families in the child welfare system.

A pilot with eight counties is currently underway (see map included in item 29 for location of counties with this pilot in place in the NYS CFSR State Wide Assessment submitted April 14, 2016). Local districts participating in the pilot will be using the UNCOPE+ to aid in the early identification of child welfare families who are experiencing chemical dependencies issues, referring them to appropriate substance abuse treatment, and having them monitored through Family Court in an effort to reduce the amount of time children are spending in foster care.

Multidisciplinary Training
In 2015 OCFS and OCA co-sponsored a number of multidisciplinary trainings based on needs identified by the Statewide Multidisciplinary Child Welfare Work Group, Training was provided to a multidisciplinary audience in Dutchess County on the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders in child abuse and neglect proceedings. The training was developed to enhance the understanding of the attorneys and child welfare staff of the legal and ethical obligations of all parties in the child welfare process. 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.

In 2015, trainings on child safety decision-making were presented to multidisciplinary audiences in Albany and Onondaga Counties.

A two-day training on trauma, *Helping and Healing,* with Roger Fallot, Ph.D. was delivered in Syracuse to a multidisciplinary audience of representatives from upstate counties in October of 2015.

New York State Department of Health
Collaboration with the New York State Department of Health (DOH) continues in an effort to promote child safety and the prevention of Shaken Baby Syndrome. In 2015, OCFS continued its efforts to improve infant safe sleep practices and reduce the number of child fatalities due to unsafe sleep by providing free cribs to low income families in need. These cribs were distributed to local departments of social services, Voluntary Agencies and select community-based organizations that provide home visiting and/or parenting programs. Counties and agencies can request these cribs on behalf of families who need them to keep their babies safe. Over the past three years, OCFS has given away nearly 4,000 cribs to families in need in New York State. In an ongoing effort to enhance public education around critical child safety issues, OCFS has distributed publications and videos to local departments of social services, health agencies, child care agencies and community programs. These materials include tip sheets, brochures, DVDs, magnets and other items with information about safe sleep environments, coping with crying and additional topics. Helpful Tips to Keep Your Baby Safe are posted on the OCFS website and are available in six languages. Other materials OCFS developed include a 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 available in English and Spanish. In 2015, 69,255 publications and videos were provided, reaching families in 51 counties throughout New York State. In addition, a bookmark highlighting the five Protective Factors was rolled out in April during Child Abuse Prevention Month and is now available for distribution. Publications can be ordered or downloaded from the OCFS website.

OCFS also collaborates with DOH on the Bridges to Health Home and Community- Based Waiver Program. Through the waiver, services are provided to children in foster care who have serious emotional disturbance, developmental disabilities and/or medically fragile. Approximately 3,300 children are enrolled in the waiver program. Children in foster care get access to the following 14 services:

1. Health Care Integration
2. Family/Caregiver Supports and Services
3. Skill Building

4. Day Habilitation
5. Special Needs Community Advocacy and Support
6. Pre-vocational Services
7. Supported Employment
8. Planned Respite
9. Crisis Avoidance, Management and Training
10. Immediate Crisis Response Services
11. Intensive In-home Supports
12. Crisis Respite
13. Adaptive and Assistive Equipment
14. Accessibility Modifications

In 2015, 245 children enrolled in the Bridges to Health program reached their permanency goal of adoption, making the overall number of children enrolled in the Bridges to Health program finding permanency through adoption at 2,195.

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 (CoIIN), has invited OCFS to participate and to co-chair the subcommittee to address unsafe sleep deaths of infants across NYS. With materials collected, and reviewed in conjunction with activities underway, discussion keeps returning to the need to implement a consistent message across the state to educate new parents and other caregivers about how to keep a baby safe while they sleep.

OCFS has funded local programs to distribute portable cribs to families who have no safe place for their infant to sleep. This program is continuing in 2016. OCFS will work closely with the CoIIN 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.

The New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) is committed to working with local departments of social services (LDSSs), the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH), community-based organizations, and other stakeholders, to develop strategies to significantly reduce the prevalence of unsafe sleep-related infant fatalities. Some of the more recent activities aimed at improving safe sleep environments include:

- March 5, 2015, OCFS convened a statewide Safe Sleep Strategy workgroup. The group included representatives from the NYSDOH, New York City Administration of Children's Services (ACS), Casey Family Programs, the Westchester Child Fatality Review Team, Westchester LDSS, Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) Regional Resource Center and the Monroe County Baby Safe Sleep Coalition. Recommendations and resources were subsequently disseminated and the group will continue to convene.

- In 2015, OCFS continued to coordinate with NYSDOH, to develop “cobranded” educational materials for use in projects in hospitals and in communities. NYSDOH has distributed these materials to all 126 birthing hospitals for distribution to new parents, including an informational brochure, a magnet and a mirror cling. Hospitals were asked to present these items with safe sleep education prior to discharge.

- NYS Perinatal Quality Collaborative (NYSPQC) Safe Sleep Project: 80 of the 126 birthing hospitals are participating in a project that includes provision of non-standardized safe sleep education to new parents, and adds a survey about current sleep practices. Also includes crib audits, to ensure hospitals are modeling safe sleep practices.

New York Safe Babies continues to show all parents an educational video about shaken baby, but have added a safe sleep component.

OCFS stands ready to launch a pilot project this year, to be coordinated by Child Fatality Review Teams (CFRTs) with community hospitals. Standardized education will be provided to new parents about safe sleep, and all new parents will be provided a Safe Sleep Bag, containing an infant sleep sack, board book on safe sleep, safe sleep DVD, and informational door hanger. Parents who consent to be contacted will complete a survey 30 days after discharge. The survey asks questions about current sleep practices, the effectiveness of specific materials provided and barriers to safe sleep. The number of safe sleep-related deaths will also be examined.

Community Pilots: Seven home visiting agencies are participating in a community pilot, giving safe sleep information to mothers and caregivers. NYSDOH hosts monthly coaching calls for the agencies in five upstate counties, plus the Bronx and Queens.

In February 2016, OCFS participated in an ACS and NYDOHMH in a Safe Sleep Key Stakeholders Meeting at ACS in Manhattan. The meeting was the result of a 2015 mayoral initiative designed to bring together agencies in NYC to craft a uniform message for families and caregivers on the subject of safe sleep. Attendees represented NY ACS, the American Academy of Pediatrics, NYCDOHMH, the Department of Homeless Services, the Human Resources Administration, the Department of Education, the New York City Police Department, the Greater New York Hospital Association, among others. The purpose of this convening was to establish a cross-agency campaign to target unsafe sleep deaths, through a series of regularly scheduled meetings and work groups.

OTDA and OCFS Commissioners 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.

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. Additionally, OCFS is continuing to partner with OCA and OASAS on the Statewide System Reform Project with eight pilot counties beginning implementation in April 2016. A panel of members from each system will be presenting

workshops at the Child Welfare League of America and the National Association of Drug Court Professionals annual conferences this summer.

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.

Kinship

OCFS continues its effort 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 concise version but one that maintains the essential information that is needed to make important placement decisions. OCFS has worked at 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 by developing a functional chart that highlights key information for each option they have for initial placements.

Statewide System Reform Program

The New York Statewide System Reform Program seeks to increase the number of child welfare system-involved families who can be supported by the best practices of family treatment courts to promote adult recovery while simultaneously achieving safe and timely child permanency. New York State was awarded funding in 2014 to re-examine the family treatment court model and attempt to apply the effective Family Treatment Courts (FTC) practices to reach greater numbers of the target population. New York is one of only five states to receive a two-year planning award ($500,000) from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) under the Statewide System Reform Program (SSRP). Through this award, New York seeks to move towards full-scale statewide changes throughout the child welfare, treatment, and court systems. Although, the Office of Court Administration's Child Welfare Court Improvement Project (CWCIP) serves as the lead coordinating entity in this system change project, this effort requires collaboration with the Office of Policy and Planning (OPP), the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) and the Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS). States that are "successful" in their planning endeavors are eligible to apply for funding of between one and three million dollars in the following three years. In July 2015, OJJDP offered additional funding to support pilot testing identified best practices at designated sites. New York was awarded supplemental funds of $317,587, which will extend the planning and piloting phase one year. Specifically, the funding will cover the following: continuation of current staffing and travel; roll out of a statewide screening tool that will flag the need for further alcohol and substance abuse assessment; and, pilot testing of evidence-based practices within the social services district and/or treatment system.

The Executive Committee created five goal-oriented, targeted sub-committees that are co-chaired by members of the Steering Committee. The overall goals of the subcommittees are: developing a new model that incorporates the best and most promising practices of the FTC into all child abuse and neglect proceedings; formulating a strategy to increase the number of jurisdictions using the effective practices of FTCs; and, devising a plan to increase the

knowledge among child welfare system professionals of both safety and risk as they relate to recovery and evidence-based programs. The subcommittees met regularly between March and December 2015 in order to create recommendations, which were presented to the Steering Committee and will be finalized by the Executive Committee. The multidisciplinary subcommittees are: Evidence-Based Practices in Treatment and Child Welfare; Engagement of Parties and Counsel; Early Screening for Substance Use Disorders; Roles and Responsibility of the FTC Coordinator & Case Manager; and Identifying Essential FTC Practices for an Infusion Model. The eight pilot counties selected to begin testing the identified practices will begin their work in April 2016.

Human Trafficking

In 2015, OCFS added a permanent position within the Bureau of Youth Development to provide full-time support to the agency's anti-trafficking work. The Anti-Trafficking Coordinator began in December 2015 and is charged with supervising the agency's *Safe Harbour: NY* initiative, providing training and technical assistance to partners statewide, promoting best practice, engaging in prevention efforts, and coordinating inter-agency activities related to human trafficking, among other tasks.

In 2015, OCFS funded 11 counties, the five boroughs of New York City, the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe, and 10 County Youth Bureaus to participate in Safe Harbour: NY. Through this program OCFS supports LDSSs and other partners to convene a Critical Team to drive the development of a county-based response to child trafficking led by the child welfare system. Critical Teams drive the development of local policies, procedures, and protocol, the creation and dissemination of public awareness campaigns and direct youth outreach efforts, and the provision of social services to trafficking victims and at-risk youth. In January 2016 OCFS funded a total of 17 counties, the five boroughs of New York City, the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe, and six County Youth Bureaus to participate in Safe Harbour: NY.

OCFS continued to implement the requirements outlined in the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act throughout 2015-2016. This work was led by several workgroups, including one focused on the identifying, documenting, reporting and providing appropriate services for child sex trafficking victims. OCFS developed and issued a policy to ensure New York State maintained compliance with the provisions of this Act, and regional training on the policy was provided regionally. OCFS provides ongoing technical assistance to partners in the field about this and other policies through regularly held conference calls and the maintenance of a general mailbox (humantrafficking@ocfs.ny.gov). OCFS has implemented policies to respond to children who have run away from care and to screen them for sex trafficking upon return to care and to 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 monitor federal and state legislation and make any changes to policy and protocol required to remain in compliance with legislative requirements.

Throughout 2015 and 2016, OCFS held presentations/trainings on human trafficking to various audiences throughout the state that included child protection and foster care supervisors, voluntary agency staff, Native American communities, and many others.

In July 2015, 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.

OCFS was further invited to present at a number of national anti-trafficking conferences, including the JuST conference in Washington, DC (November, 2015) and the Freedom Network conference in Chicago, IL (April, 2016). Presentations offered at these national events focused on the innovative work OCFS leads in implementing a coordinated, statewide response to human trafficking through the child welfare system. Additionally, OCFS initiated a mandatory computer-based training for all employees via the Human Services Learning Center titled *Human Trafficking/Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC); An Overview.*

OCFS continues to participate in a number of interagency partnerships, work groups, and task forces. At the national level, OCFS participates in trainings and stakeholder meetings hosted by the DHHS Health and Human Services (HHS) Region II. At the state level, OCFS continues to be an active member of the New York State Interagency Task Force against Human Trafficking, a group that is charged with meeting New York State statutes to address human trafficking. In April 2016, OCFS formed a youth-specific subcommittee of this Task Force to address the needs of youth and young adults. Regionally, OCFS participates in a number of anti-trafficking task forces, including the Capital District Anti-Trafficking Task Force, the North County Anti-Trafficking Task Force, and the Westchester County Anti-Trafficking Task Force. In these meetings OCFS speaks to the needs of vulnerable youth and the work being done to support this population.

In January 2016, 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, promoting awareness information through our Facebook and Twitter accounts, highlighting human trafficking for an awareness day, and providing information to the public at a local mall. During the awareness day OCFS staff were asked to wear blue and a display table was set up with information and resources about human trafficking. Additionally, OCFS sponsored a production offering of the play *Kourtney's Choice* with the New York City Administration for Children's Services (ACS) and Administration for Children and Families (ACF) in New York City. This theatrical performance is designed to engage youth in school settings in conversations about human trafficking, vulnerabilities, red flags, and ways to ask for help.

In March 2016, OCFS hosted the state's first summit on the commercial sexual exploitation of children and human trafficking. This two-day event was held in Albany, NY and hosted more than 100 participants from across the state. The event was an opportunity for partners to network and exchange promising practice, as well as workshop common challenges. A second summit will be planned for the spring of 2017.

Plans for 2016-2017:

In addition to continuing the ongoing work from 2015, in 2016, OCFS will release a number of publications to support the child welfare field and its partners in how to best respond to commercial sexual exploitation and human trafficking. Some of these documents include:

- *Responding to Commercially Sexually Exploited and Trafficked Youth: A Handbook for Child Serving Professionals* (Handbook) - a guide for direct-care professionals who work with youth who are vulnerable, trafficked, or sexually exploited.
- *Blueprint for Building a Child Welfare Response to Commercially Sexually Exploited and Trafficked Youth* (Blueprint) - a road map for Local Departments of Social Services (LDSS) to respond to the needs of trafficked and sexually exploited youth in their localities.

- NYS OCFS Initial Trafficking Interview Tool for Youth – An optional screening tool to be administered directly to youth by child welfare, voluntary agency, RHY, DJJOY, and other child-serving professionals to gather information related to a youth's potential trafficking and sexual exploitation experiences.
- *Children at Risk: Foster Care and Human Trafficking* – a chapter within a book to be published by Springer. This chapter written to change the conceptual paradigm surrounding human trafficking from addressing criminal activity to considering human trafficking a multi-pronged public health issue.

OCFS also plans to:

- Revamp our human trafficking webpage to reflect the strides made in recent years
- Provide training to the Statewide Central Register to inform hotline specialists of how to identify potential cases of human trafficking (May, 2016).
- Host a second annual summit on the commercial sexual exploitation and human trafficking (spring 2017).
- Bring on additional county partners to the Safe Harbour: NY program (January, 2017).

Close to Home Initiative
A juvenile justice reform that was initiated in state FY 2012-13, has fundamentally restructured the delivery of residential rehabilitative services and aftercare for New York City youth adjudicated delinquent and placed in the non-secure and limited secure levels of care. The approach utilizes 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 ACS on this initiative. Phase 1, the non-secure level of residential care, was initiated in September of 2012. Phase 2, the limited-secure level of residential care, began in January of 2016. OCFS will continue to operate secure levels of care facilities for all youth statewide.

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 foster care. A total of 2,110 children that were enrolled in B2H have been adopted (January 2008 – July 1, 2015).

New York State 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 22 teams in six counties and in 2015 brought four Family Support Units from Staten Island into the project and three new teams in Columbia County. To date in 2016, Staten Island expanded Teaming with two additional units and Washington County began Teaming in three units. 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. Efforts were focused 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. The first Supervisory Symposium was held on October 21, 2015, with the focus of effective supervision across all three strategies. This year's Supervisory Symposium will be held on October 25, and will include supervisors from districts that support Teaming, FAR and KEYS.

Office of Court Administration (OCA) Permanent Judicial Commission on Justice for Children (Commission): The Commission is chaired by Chief Judge Janet DiFiore. 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. Most of the work with CIP takes place through the Statewide Multidisciplinary Child Welfare Work Group. As described above, it is made up of stakeholders from across the state, designs and oversees the implementation of court/child welfare collaboration initiatives on the state, regional and local levels.

The Seneca Nation Peacemaker Courts Collaboration began in 2005 and includes judges and court personnel from the 8th Judicial District, the Seneca Nation of Indians and the Peacemaker Court judges. This collaboration provides a forum to discuss practices and procedures and provides a welcome point of contact for issues including the implementation of the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA), and the development of a tribal Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) program. The Seneca Nation of Indians took part in the Federal-State-Tribal Courts Forum meeting held on October 29, 2015. Both OCFS and the Seneca Nation of Indians attended the Federal-State-Tribal Court Forum on April 21, 2016.

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 was in June 2015. In addition, OCFS and SED have finalized the data share testing phase. In June 2015, OCFS began the ability to receive education data for the more than 14,000 school aged children in care.

OCFS has begun to receive child specific education data for children in foster care. In addition, in 2015, HESC and OCFS entered a data sharing agreement to identify youth in care eligible for maximized income-based Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) grant awards. This collaboration allowed for 410 students to receive an average award increase of more than $2,300. Statewide, this resulted in an additional $715,000 in TAP awards provided to current and former foster care youth.

In 2016, HESC and OCFS will continue to collaborate to improve college readiness and improve graduation rates by:

- Creating brochures for youth, parents, caregivers, and counties about available higher education resources;
- Creating multi-media information for youth, local departments of social services and voluntary agencies about ways to improve college outcomes;
- Using education data and partnerships with local education agencies, targeting youth in 9th and 10th grades to instill college aspiration and preparedness;
- Developing "Campus Angels" through the SUNY and CUNY system to provide statewide mentors who meet with youth at least twice a month during their freshman year to improve freshman year completion rates by youth in care;
- Planning a campaign for summer/fall 2016 to support "College Application Week" in the fall for youth across the New York State;
- Collaborating on a joint workshop at the 2016 NYPWA summer conference, in an effort to further emphasize the importance of improved educational outcomes for youth in care.

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.

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, OCFS began to include Native American children and families in our data collections and in the work.

In 2009, the agency convened the first agency wide DMR workgroup, with the purpose of examining the over and under representation of children in the various divisions of OCFS, and how this impacts the provision of services that can prevent out-of-home placements, limit access to services, and present other barriers to achieving successful outcomes in 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 (CWCS) now include 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.

In 2015, CWCS regional offices began to develop Race Equity Learning Communities (RELCs) which will be a group of stakeholders from various systems and communities who have an interest in race equity focused work. During this period, CWCS convened a series of meetings with representatives from state agencies to look at cross system race equity and disparity issues and to develop a strategy to collaborate to reduce these disparities in one of the jurisdictions (communities or counties) in the state.

During 2015, several 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 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, and a historical review of the work done in those two counties will take place in 2016-17.

OCFS continued to work with the Social Work Education Consortium, to develop a focus on race equity, and anti-oppressive and anti-racists practices in the curricula of the schools of social welfare and social work to encourage their consideration to add an emphasis on race equity, and 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 has 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. Mr. Waheed provided Race Equity Learning

Exchange sessions to management and staff within the Division of Juvenile Justice and Opportunities for Youth.

The SCR is currently engaged in developing a plan and process to provide training in cultural competence for all staff. The training will be supplemented by a train the trainer process and curriculum.

A white paper was developed by OCFS staff from the Bureau of Strategic Partnerships and Collaborations. A Racial Impact process and tools were pilot tested during the period and a presentation to the RECC steering committee is planned for 2016. The Racial Impact process and tools were developed so that OCFS leadership, through the Race Equity Cultural Competence Steering Committee, would have an option to consider using Racial Impact Statement (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) continues to implement and develop its fatherhood initiative. The Brookwood Secure Center continued to convene fatherhood group sessions throughout the reporting period. MacCormick Secure Center continued to lead the effort within DJJOY. Highland Residential Center's fathers group continues to meet as needed since the numbers of young men who are fathers remains relatively small.

OCFS, OTDA and other stakeholders once again 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 800 schools and child care centers. The effort in 2015 was supported by representatives of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, who attended the opening day of the program in Albany along with the superintendent of schools, the mayor, and representatives from the County Executive and the Acting Commissioner of the Office of Children and Family Services.

A Fatherhood Summit was held in November 2015, in collaboration with Casey Family Programs and included participation from LDSSs, voluntary agencies, and community preventive programs. Another summit is being planned for 2016, and OCFS has developed a work group to provide support in order to continue the growth of the program and develop consistency for engaging fathers involved in our child welfare system.

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 September 2015, OCFS has contracts with 117 incorporated not-for-profit community-based organizations and faith-based organizations to provide quality afterschool programs to school-age children at 152 locations across New York State. The AASP serves approximately 15,000 children and youth 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 20 and 21, 2015, for the 45th Annual Youth Development Training Conference, in Niagara Falls, New York. The keynote address was delivered by Mark Fenton, on Engineering Healthy Lifestyles and Physical Activity back into American Communities and Lives. Mr. Fenton is a nationally-recognized public health, planning and transportation consultant, adjunct professor at Tufts University and former host of "America's Walking" on PBS television.

The AASP contract managers delivered a very well attended workshop on 'Achieving a Successful Advantage After School Program." OCFS had 55 AASP contractors represented with approximately 102 people in attendance at the conference. All 40 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.

On January 20, 2016, the AASP contract/program managers had training to support the use of the Quality Self-Assessment Tool (QSA) from AfterSchool Works / New York State After School Network. The contract/program managers agreed that they benefited from the refresher workshop in utilizing the tool and are now better able to help their AASP contractors more successfully use the QSA tool.

Also in February 2016, the Bureau of Contract Management (BCM) Lean Team asked the AASP for assistance in the development of a "Contractor Review Guide" that would be used by contractors to improve and simplify the contracting process with OCFS. A workgroup with BCM staff and three AASP contract managers was established and the goal was positively completed.

AASP managers are continuing to visit our program locations to assess the quality of the programs and provide technical assistance as needed.

2. Update on 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 November 2015.

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 November 2015, 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 the 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. 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.

The state replicated of the CFSR new safety outcomes using the same methodology and data files utilized by the Children's Bureau. As with the permanency metrics outlined below, OCFS generated detailed safety data packets that describe how observed performance varies across localities and subgroups of children. These have been shared with the localities.

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.

Assessment of Child and Family Outcomes and Performance on National Standards

A. Safety

Safety Outcomes 1 and 2

Safety outcomes include: (A) children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect; and (B) children are safely maintained in their own homes whenever possible and appropriate.

- For each of the two safety outcomes, include the most recent available data demonstrating the state's performance. Data must include state performance on the two federal safety indicators, relevant case record review data, and key available data from the state information system (such as data on timeliness of investigation).
- Based on these data and input from stakeholders, tribes, and courts, include a brief assessment of strengths and concerns regarding Safety Outcomes 1 and 2, including an analysis of the state's performance on the national standards for the safety indicators.

State Response:

New York State assesses Safety Outcome 1 as an area needing improvement. New York State (NYS) will be working on improving performance on the two federal measures:

- Recurrence of Maltreatment
- Maltreatment in Foster Care

New York State assesses Safety Outcome 2 as an area needing improvement. NYS will be working on improving performance on the federal Re-entry into Foster Care measure. Improvements are also needed in the following areas:

- Assessment of Service needs
- Provision of Services to prevent removal and re-entry

Please refer to the NYS CFSR Statewide Assessment submitted April 14, 2016, pages 9-16 for the complete state response.

B. Permanency

Permanency Outcomes 1 and 2

Permanency outcomes include: (A) children have permanency and stability in their living situations; and (B) the continuity of family relationships is preserved for children.

- For each of the two permanency outcomes, include the most recent available data demonstrating the state's performance. Data must include state performance on the four federal permanency indicators and relevant available case record review data.
- Based on these data and input from stakeholders, tribes, and courts, include a brief assessment of strengths and concerns regarding Permanency Outcomes 1 and 2, including an analysis of the state's performance on the national standards for the permanency indicators.

State Response:

New York State assesses Permanency Outcome 1 and 2 as an area needing improvement. New York State will be working on improving performance in the four federal measures.

Please refer to the NYS CFSR Statewide Assessment submitted April 14, 2016, pages 17-29 for the complete State response.

C. Well-Being

Well-Being Outcomes 1, 2, and 3

Well-being outcomes include: (A) families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs; (B) children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs; and (C) children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs.

- For each of the three well-being outcomes, include the most recent available data demonstrating the state's performance. Data must include relevant available case record review data and relevant data from the state information system (such as information on caseworker visits with parents and children).
- Based on these data and input from stakeholders, Tribes, and courts, include a brief assessment of strengths and concerns regarding Well-Being Outcomes 1, 2, and 3.

State Response:

New York State assesses Well-being Outcome 1 as an area needing improvement, as the data from the case record reviews conducted using the Onsite Review Instrument (OSRI) indicates that in three out of the four relevant case review items, New York State will need to work on improving performance.

New York State assesses Well-being Outcome 2 as an area needing improvement. The data indicates NYS will need to work on improving performance.

NYS assesses Well-Being Outcome 3 as an area of strength as the data from the case records reviews conducted using the OSRI indicates that in both of the relevant case review items; New York was in substantial conformity with the requirements.

Please refer to the NYS CFSR Statewide Assessment submitted April 14, 2016, pages 30-45 for the complete State response.

<u>Assessment of Systemic Factors</u>

A. Statewide Information System

Item 19: Statewide Information System

How well is the statewide information system functioning statewide to ensure that, at a minimum, the state can readily identify the status, demographic characteristics, location, and goals for the placement of every child who is (or within the immediately preceding 12 months, has been) in foster care?

State Response:

NYS assesses Item 19 as an area needing improvement. While users of the NYS system of record, CONNECTIONS, can readily identify the status, demographic characteristics, and location and placement goals for every child, OCFS does not routinely monitor the system to ensure accuracy of the data entered on the local level.

Please refer to the NYS CFSR Statewide Assessment submitted April 14, 2016, pages 46-51 for the complete State response.

B. Case Review System

Item 20: Written Case Plan

How well is the case review system functioning statewide to ensure that each child has a written case plan that is developed jointly with the child's parent(s) and includes the required provisions?

State Response:

New York State assesses Item 20 as an area of strength, as OCFS has a well-functioning system to provide written case plans for each child that are developed jointly with the child's parent(s) and those plans can be found in the case record. Data from the 2015 SPA case record reviews shows that in 99 percent of the cases, all required FASPs were in the record, with 96 percent of the cases involving the parent/guardian in case planning activities (parental involvement is determined through progress notes and through documentation in the FASP).

Item 21: Periodic Reviews

How well is the case review system functioning statewide to ensure that a periodic review for each child occurs no less frequently than once every six months, either by a court or by administrative review?

State Response:

New York State assesses Item 21 as an area needing improvement, as OCFS, while having a process in place, has noted through case record reviews that service plan reviews are not occurring as required in all cases. The data indicates that in 79 percent of the cases, a service plan review was held. One barrier is that a meeting is taking place, but the third party reviewer is not present, so it cannot be considered a service plan review for purposes of this item.

Item 22: Permanency Hearings

How well is the case review system functioning statewide to ensure that, for each child, a permanency hearing in a qualified court or administrative body occurs no later than 12 months from the date the child entered foster care and no less frequently than every 12 months thereafter?

State Response:

New York State assesses Item 22 as a strength as OCFS has a well-functioning system statewide to ensure for each child a permanency hearing occurs no later than 12 months from the date the child entered foster care and no less frequently than every 12 months thereafter. The data reveals that in 93 percent of the cases reviewed in 2015, a Permanency Hearing was held within the prescribed guidelines. While we are not able to get 2015 data from the Office of Court Administration (OCA) (data cannot be pulled until sufficient time has passed in 2016),

2014 data indicates that in 85 percent of the cases, an initial permanency hearing was held and completed within nine months from the date of entry into out-of-home care on behalf of children who remained in out-of-home care for at least nine months. OCFS and OCA work closely on this measure, with each agency sharing data in order to promote timely permanency.

Item 23: Termination of Parental Rights

How well is the case review system functioning statewide to ensure that the filing of termination of parental rights (TPR) proceedings occurs in accordance with required provisions?

State Response:

New York State assesses Item 23 as an area needing improvement as OCFS has noted through case record reviews that the filing of petitions for the termination of parental rights are not occurring within the prescribed timeframes in all cases. In 54.5 percent of the cases reviewed in 2015, the petition to terminate the mother's parental rights was filed in a timely manner, and for fathers, timely petitions were filed in 61 percent of the cases. One underlying condition noted in 2015 during the case record reviews was the backlog in the county attorneys' offices in getting the petitions filed. Another factor that has been cited is a delay in the location and engagement of fathers. Training was developed specific to engaging and locating fathers, and it appears a continued focus is needed in this area.

Item 24: Notice of Hearings and Reviews to Caregivers

How well is the case review system functioning statewide to ensure that foster parents, pre-adoptive parents, and relative caregivers of children in foster care are notified of, and have a right to be heard in, any review or hearing held with respect to the child?

State Response:

New York State assesses Item 24 as an area needing improvement. OCFS conducted a statewide survey of 3,063 foster/adoptive parents. At the time of the survey, there were 8,326 active foster homes. The survey was distributed to a random sample of 3,063 foster/adoptive homes that represented households from all six regions of the State. OCFS received 500 responses which included participation from foster/adoptive parents from 53 counties and New York City.

Please refer to the NYS CFSR Statewide Assessment submitted April 14, 2016, pages 52-62 for the complete state response for Items 20 - 24.

C. Quality Assurance System

Item 25: Quality Assurance System

How well is the quality assurance system functioning statewide to ensure that it is (1) operating in the jurisdictions where the services included in the CFSP are provided, (2) has standards to evaluate the quality of services (including standards to ensure that children in foster care are provided quality services that protect their health and safety), (3) identifies strengths and needs of the service delivery system, (4) provides relevant reports, and (5) evaluates implemented program improvement measures?

State Response:

New York State assesses Item 25 as an area needing improvement. The Quality Assurance (QA)/Continuance Quality Improvement (CQI) system is currently functioning within New York State. However, there continue to be areas needing improvement.

Please refer to the NYS CFSR Statewide Assessment submitted April 14, 2016, pages 63-69 for the complete State response.

D. Staff and Provider Training

Item 26: Initial Staff Training

How well is the staff and provider training system functioning statewide to ensure that initial training is provided to all staff who deliver services pursuant to the CFSP that includes the basic skills and knowledge required for their positions?

Staff, for purposes of assessing this item, includes all contracted/non-contracted staff who have case management responsibilities in the areas of child protection services, family preservation and support services, foster care services, adoption services, and independent living services pursuant to the state's CFSP.

State Response:

NYS assesses Item 26 as an area needing improvement. NYS mandates that both Child Protective Services caseworkers and their supervisors complete the NYS-approved program and meet the annual in-service training requirements. Although many child welfare staff begin as child protective services workers and thus receive the initial training, NYS does not have the specific training requirement for all other designated child welfare staff. This is an area that OCFS is currently looking to enhance.

Item 27: Ongoing Staff Training

How well is the staff and provider training system functioning statewide to ensure that ongoing training is provided for staff that addresses the skills and knowledge needed to carry out their duties with regard to the services included in the CFSP?

Staff, for purposes of assessing this item, includes all contracted/non-contracted staff who have case management responsibilities in the areas of child protection services, family preservation and support services, foster care services, adoption services, and independent living services pursuant to the state's CFSP.

State Response:

NYS assesses Item 27 as an area needing improvement. NYS mandates on-going training for CPS staff. Both CPS caseworkers and CPS supervisors are required to satisfactorily complete the NYS-approved program and meet the annual in-service training requirements. However, NYS does not have the same requirement for other child welfare staff.

Item 28: Foster and Adoptive Parent Training

How well is the staff and provider training system functioning to ensure that training is occurring statewide for current or prospective foster parents, adoptive parents, and staff of state licensed or approved facilities (that care for children receiving foster care or adoption assistance under title IV-E) that addresses the skills and knowledge base needed to carry out their duties with regard to foster and adopted children?

State Response:

New York State assesses Item 28 as an area of strength, as ample training is provided to prospective foster and adoptive parents, and to staff of state-licensed or approved facilities. A statewide survey was conducted of 500 foster parents to gather information about their experiences with the current training system. At the time of the survey, there were 8,326 active foster homes that had a child or children residing in the home. The survey was distributed to a random sample of foster/adoptive homes that represented households from all six regions. The 500 responses included participation from 53 counties and New York City. Not every foster parent answered every question.

Please refer to the NYS CFSR Statewide Assessment submitted April 14, 2016, pages 70-86 for the complete state response for Items 26-28.

E. Service Array and Resource Development

Item 29: Array of Services

How well is the service array and resource development system functioning to ensure that the following array of services is accessible in all political jurisdictions covered by the CFSP?

Services that assess the strengths and needs of children and families and determine other service needs;

Services that address the needs of families in addition to individual children in order to create a safe home environment;

Services that enable children to remain safely with their parents when reasonable; and Services that help children in foster and adoptive placements achieve permanency.

State Response:

New York State assesses Item 29 as an area needing improvement. In New York State, services to meet the needs of children and families are determined by the LDSS. Through the use of data and collaborations with key stakeholders as noted in their county plans, LDSS determine how they will use their funds to obtain needed services. Likewise on the state level, OCFS in collaboration with key stakeholders, districts (including reviewing their county plans) and agencies, and through the use of data determine how the agency will use state and federal funds to complement the services offered on the local level. A common concern expressed by the 500 foster parent survey respondents from 53 counties and New York City, and feedback from attorneys for the parent (this feedback was provided by Angela Burton via a survey she did statewide of attorneys for parents) is that there are not enough services to meet the needs of all children and families who interact with the child welfare system.

Item 30: Individualizing Services

How well is the service array and resource development system functioning statewide to ensure that the services in item 29 can be individualized to meet the unique needs of children and families served by the agency?

State Response:

New York State assesses Item 30 as an area needing improvement. While NYS has an array of services that are provided by LDSSs and the voluntary agencies with which they contract,

services cannot always be made available or tailored to meet the unique needs of the children and families served by local districts and agencies. This is especially true for children who have dual diagnoses (such as mental health and substance abuse). Feedback from the attorneys for the parents has indicated that parents are sometimes offered formulaic services that do not take into account the complex needs of the family. The array of services are seen by some as a "boiler-plate set of services" that are often over-broad and/ or vague. The feedback was obtained by Angela Burton, Director of Quality Enhancement for Parental Representation, NYS Office of Indigent Legal Services, who conducted a survey of attorneys of parents across New York State. The exact number of attorneys surveyed is unknown.

Please refer to the NYS CFSR Statewide Assessment submitted April 14, 2016, pages 87-95 for the complete State response for Items 29 and 30.

F. Agency Responsiveness to the Community

Item 31: State Engagement and Consultation with Stakeholders Pursuant to CFSP and APSR

How well is the agency responsiveness to the community system functioning statewide to ensure that in implementing the provisions of the CFSP and developing related APSRs, the state engages in ongoing consultation with Tribal representatives, consumers, service providers, foster care providers, the juvenile court, and other public and private child- and family-serving agencies and includes the major concerns of these representatives in the goals, objectives, and annual updates of the CFSP?

State Response:

New York State assesses Item 31 as an area of strength as OCFS engages many stakeholder groups throughout the year in ongoing consultation to gather major concerns and strengths related to New York State's performance on key goals, objectives and strategies for improvement.

Item 32: Coordination of CFSP Services with Other Federal Programs

How well is the agency responsiveness to the community system functioning statewide to ensure that the state's services under the CFSP are coordinated with services or benefits of other federal or federally assisted programs serving the same population?

State Response:

NYS assesses Item 32 as an area of strength. OCFS coordinates services and benefits of other federal or federally-assisted programs serving the same population in a variety ways, including participating in various statewide councils, committees, and advisory boards. Additionally, OCFS convenes meetings with stakeholders to assess needs and service provision with an eye on reducing duplication of resources.

Please refer to the NYS CFSR Statewide Assessment submitted April 14, 2016, pages 96-104 for the complete state response for Items 31 and 32.

G. Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention

Item 33: Standards Applied Equally

How well is the foster and adoptive parent licensing, recruitment, and retention system functioning statewide to ensure that state standards are applied to all licensed or approved foster family homes or child care institutions receiving title IV-B or IV-E funds?

State Response:

NYS assesses Item 33 as an area needing improvement. While OCFS reviews and monitors that the child care institutions are applying state standards equally through our ongoing monitoring and voluntary agency review process, the agency does not routinely review family foster homes licensed or approved by LDSSs or voluntary agencies.

Item 34: Requirements for Criminal Background Checks

How well is the foster and adoptive parent licensing, recruitment, and retention system functioning statewide to ensure that the state complies with federal requirements for criminal background clearances as related to licensing or approving foster care and adoptive placements, and has in place a case planning process that includes provisions for addressing the safety of foster care and adoptive placements for children?

State Response:

New York State assesses Item 34 as a strength, as there is a well-functioning system that complies with federal criminal background clearance requirements for approving foster and adoptive homes.

Item 35: Diligent Recruitment of Foster and Adoptive Homes

How well is the foster and adoptive parent licensing, recruitment, and retention system functioning to ensure that the process for ensuring the diligent recruitment of potential foster and adoptive families who reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of children in the state for whom foster and adoptive homes are needed is occurring statewide?

State Response:

NYS regulations require that agencies have a comprehensive recruitment strategy/plan for establishing a pool of waiting foster and adoptive parents that reflects the racial and ethnic diversity of the children in foster care. Permanency Specialists in the OCFS Regional Offices monitor local district and voluntary agency implementation of foster and adoptive Comprehensive Recruitment Plan requirements and provide technical assistance to local districts and voluntary agencies to determine their compliance with the Multi-ethnic Placement Act of 1994 (MEPA) as amended by the Interactive Adoption Provisions of 1996, and state regulations. Recruitment efforts in each county of the state are tailored to meet the specific needs in that county. In some counties, foster and adoptive parents are trained to be recruiters and use their experience to provide guidance, direction, and consultation to new foster parents. OCFS takes an active role in disseminating information on foster care and adoption through the use of the media.

Item 36: State Use of Cross-Jurisdictional Resources for Permanent Placements

How well is the foster and adoptive parent licensing, recruitment, and retention system functioning to ensure that the process for ensuring the effective use of cross-jurisdictional resources to facilitate timely adoptive or permanent placements for waiting children is occurring statewide?

State Response:

NYS regulations address ASFA requirements and state that authorized agencies may not delay or deny the placement of a child freed for adoption with an approved adoptive parent on the basis that the approved adoptive parent resides in a state or county different from the agency with jurisdiction of the child. NYS regulations also address the importance of concurrent planning in order to permit efforts to place a child for adoption or with a legal guardian concurrently with efforts to make it possible for a child to safely return home. The Safe and Timely Interstate Placement of Foster Children Act of 2006 resulted in regulations that require timely home studies for cross-state placements. Additionally, OCFS required the same timeframe for cross-county home studies, as was required by the federal law for cross-state home studies. In April of 2011, recognizing the critical role relatives play as resources for children, OCFS implemented the Kinship Guardianship Assistance Program (KinGAP) to enable a foster child to achieve a permanent placement with a relative who has been the child's foster parent for at least six months. OCFS regulations require authorized agencies to develop a comprehensive recruitment strategy/plan for establishing a pool of waiting foster and adoptive parents that reflect the racial and ethnic diversity of the children in foster care. OCFS Regional Office staff monitor agency progress in implementation of the Comprehensive Recruitment Plans including reviewing a sample of cases of children waiting for adoption in each agency. The OCFS Child Welfare Practice Model identifies multiple strategies for agencies to use in order to facilitate safe out-of-home placements and rapid permanency including, but not limited to, Permanency Roundtables, Family Finding, Heart Galleries, KinGAP, kinship support, and post adoption education.

Please refer to the NYS CFSR Statewide Assessment submitted April 14, 2016, pages 105-117 for the complete state response for Items 33-36.

3. Plan for Improvement

Since receiving performance data in 2014, OCFS has been aggressively responding to improving safety and permanency outcomes. Using the Practice Model as a guide, the work has revolved around generating data, analyzing factors impacting performance, identifying strategies that will improve outcomes, and providing assistance to LDSSs and agencies to implement changes. OCFS has proactively and intentionally engaged LDSSs and agencies in a collective approach to improving outcomes.

With the assistance of a national consultant and input from a wide array of stakeholders, including: LDSSs, voluntary agencies, youth bureaus, university partners and community-based organizations, OCFS finalized the NYS Child Welfare Practice Model in 2015. This model provides a shared vision for bringing cohesiveness to the state's diverse network of partners and strategies and to align resources to have the greatest impact on outcomes.

During 2015, OCFS partnered with training vendors and consultants to support OCFS staff, counties and providers to:

- analyze data to identify challenges and "bright spots",
- create local implementation teams to support the change strategies,
- employ "Principles of Partnership", and
- implement and sustain effective supervision.

Data

To help NYS better understand its CFSR performance, in December 2015, data packets were provided to each county and included county-level breakouts of the six CFSR metrics on which New York State was performing below national standards as of May 2015. As the data released by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) is limited to the state level, these metrics were produced by the OCFS Bureau of Research, Evaluation and Performance Analytics (BREPA), using syntax provided by ACF. The packets replaced and updated the county-level permanency data distributed in February 2015 by OCFS, as those packets were created prior to the release of the ACF syntax.

The packets contained two summary tables, one for each of two waves (Wave 1: FFY 2013 (October 1, 2012-September 30, 2013), and Wave 2: FFY 2014 (October 1, 2013-September 30, 2014). Providing the county-level snapshots for multiple waves of data (e.g., Wave 1 and Wave 2) will allow counties to track their performance on each measure over time, and identify any areas needing improvement, and areas in which the county performance is strong compared to New York State performance or national standards. It is OCFS' intention to provide updated county-level breakouts every six months, in keeping with the ACF release schedule.

Following the dissemination of the data, conference calls were held with districts to help them understand the data and to create a sense of urgency. Additionally, 43 training sessions were held across the state for OCFS regional and home office staff, LDSSs and voluntary agencies. The purpose of these sessions was to help staff analyze the data and identify factors impacting performance.

Also In 2015, three LDSSs (Suffolk, Nassau, and Westchester) engaged with Public Catalyst, a national organization that utilizes a data-driven approach to help "…systems transform aspirations and ideas into results." Through a series of productive and intense monthly meetings, each LDSS 1) identified local barriers and bright spots that have the greatest impact on timely permanency, and 2) proposed targeted, realistic solutions to improve outcomes. The counties utilized several strategies throughout the process: child-level demographic and permanency analysis, staff surveys, business process mapping, literature review, reflection and discussion, dispelling myths, and an examination of bright spots for clues to potential solutions. The challenges, bright spots, and solutions that emerged were presented to staff and leadership in each district to facilitate understanding and ownership for the challenges and solutions.

Training

In 2015, OCFS convened a Training Steering Committee including representatives from local districts across the state and training vendors. The purpose of the committee is to assist in developing a competency-based training model, beginning with foundational training for all caseworkers. The benefits of the model include improved flexibility to address emerging needs and the growing number of staff requiring training. The committee is also creating a plan that will include training for all caseworkers as well as state staff. It is anticipated that this model will begin to be rolled out in late 2017.

OCFS also contracted with the developers of the "Principles of Partnership" to train all OCFS Child Welfare staff to partner effectively with each other, stakeholders and customers. These values form the foundation of the Practice Model. A multi-phase plan began in 2015.

Again in 2015, CWCS hosted a Leadership Forum for Directors of Services from local departments of social services. The theme of this year's forum was "Moving the Needle". Workshops included Leadership for Good: An Asset-Based Approached for Sustainable Supervision, and Local Implementation Teams. Sharing of information through Cafes included: Practice Implications for Strengthening Families and Preventing Sex Trafficking Act; Medicaid Managed Care Transition, and Domestic Violence: Enhancing Child Welfare Practice.

The first supervisory symposium was held in 2015, merging the effective supervisory practices under the Keys, Teaming and Differential Response strategies. The theme of the conference was "Expanding Effective Supervision through Bridging Strategies". As a follow up to the symposium, OCFS and its training partners are assisting counties in establishing local implementation teams to guide the local strategies.

Strategy support

- **Kinship and KinGap expansion** – OCFS partnered with an American Bar Association (ABA) consultant to create and disseminate a survey to determine the extent of Kinship resources and knowledge statewide. Additionally, each county was provided both KinGap and Adoption targets for 2015 and 2016.

- **Permanency Summit** – CWCS conducted a Permanency Summit in collaboration with Casey Family Programs and the Redlich Horowitz Foundation. The ten largest districts participated and learned about the use of data, and the importance of developing implementation teams when employing new strategies. "Ted Talks" were used to highlight ten strategies that LDSSs could implement, all aimed at improving permanency for children in foster care. Time was allotted for each of the districts to review their county and court data, and to develop an action plan for next steps in their program improvement plans.

- **Diligent Recruitment and Retention Award** – Working with Welfare Research, Inc. OCFS developed a guide entitled "Revitalizing Recruitment". The guide provides practical strategies for finding and keeping foster, adoptive and kinship homes. The guide was distributed to local departments of social services as well as voluntary agencies.

- **CPS Behavioral Health Consultants** – Funding was provided to 14 LDSSs to fund a CPS Behavioral Health Consultant. The consultant will work primarily with child protective services in the identification, screening and referral of adults and children with behavioral health issues for services. The funding will be provided for two years, at which time each district will assume financial responsibility for the continuation of the consultant.

- **Title IV-E Waiver Implementation** – The implementation of New York Title IV-Waiver continued through 2015 with New York City Administration for Children Services continuing training voluntary agencies on evidence-based intervention with the goal of reducing the length of time children are placed in family foster boarding homes, and to reduce re-entry of children back into foster care once reunified with their families.

- **Improving Educational Outcomes for Youth in Care -** In collaboration with New York State Education Department (SED) and the Family Court, OCFS created a collaborative framework which can improve outcomes for youth. This collaborative continues to receive technical support from Casey Family Programs and the American Bar Association (ABA), providing best practices from across the nation which can be replicated and implemented statewide. The goal is to make it possible for children in foster care to receive appropriate, coordinated educational supports, and services, which will lead to increased high school graduation rates, and ultimately an increased number of youth prepared for the rigors of post-secondary education. Much progress has been made:

    - OCFS and SED successfully completed the first data transfer of educational records. The agencies are currently sharing K-12 educational data for youth in foster care. Providing caseworkers a full educational record for children; and providing OCFS data which will be analyzed to fully understand the performance and educational needs of NYS' youth in care.

    - In January 2016, OCFS released ADM, 16-OCFS-ADM-01, providing information to LDSSs and voluntary agencies about the educational data now available in CONNECTIONS and how to utilize these records to improve outcomes for youth.

    - In 2015, OCFS and Higher Education Servicing Corporation (HESC) entered into a memorandum of understanding to allow data sharing between the agencies and helped youth access more than $400,000 in state financial aid for youth in care. OCFS and HESC are collaborating to develop training for caseworkers along with high school administrators and educators about the financial supports for our youth.

    - In 2015, OCFS began meeting with State University of New York (SUNY), to develop a data sharing memorandum of understanding which would allow for the early identification of current and former youth in foster care on SUNY campuses. The aim is to develop a protocol for early implementation of wrap-around services and supports to improve college readiness and graduation rates for youth.

    - There are approximately 1,500 current and former foster youth attending college full time in New York State. In 2015, OCFS in partnership with SUNY, Fostering Youth Success Alliance (FYSA), and Permanent Judicial Commission on Justice for Children; NYC ACS; and Casey Family Programs held a convening to discuss state and national efforts to improve educational outcomes for current and former foster care youth in the state and city university system.

Planned activities for 2016-2017

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

- Working to expand the work with the three existing counties and adding at least one additional county to participate in an in-depth analysis. Additionally, OCFS home and regional office staff participated with the intent to replicate this process

throughout other NYS districts, and plans are under development to involve additional LDSSs in a similar process in 2016;
- Revising the annual County Plan templates to capture individual county goals and strategies selected to improve outcomes;
- Rolling out the competency-based foundational training to all caseworkers;
- Disseminating county-specific data packets for safety and permanency measures;
- Convening the second annual Permanency Summit; and
- Implementing the next phase of Principles of Partnership, including facilitated workshops to apply concepts to our work, and training for local social district leadership and eventually caseworkers.

4. Update on Service Description

Child and Family Services Continuum

OCFS and its Local Departments of Social Services 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. Listed below is the continuum of services available beginning prenatally and through adulthood, ranging from primary prevention to permanency. Included is a brief description of some of the significant services on the continuum. Additional information is available on the OCFS website:

Services available in all local departments of social services

- Prevention Services – mandated and optional preventive services offered directly by the LDSS 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, and 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.

- 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.

- 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.

- 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 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.

- 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.

- 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.

- Youth Development - programs are designed to prevent juvenile delinquency and promote positive youth development though programs which provide general development, recreational and youth services for the young people under 21 years of age.

Services supported through state and federal funds (not funded statewide due to limited resources. Through the use of data, such as poverty rates, recurrence, Medicaid spending, high need areas are identified.)

- Family Resource Centers (child abuse prevention programs) – Through state Children and Family Trust Fund dollars and the federal Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention grant, OCFS supports seven Family Resource Center (FRC) programs, with a total of 18 FRC sites 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. HFNY programs are in place in 27 counties, and through a Request for Proposals being offered this spring be expanded to additional sites in 2016.

- 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. OCFS licenses 159 domestic violence residential programs and 86 approved non-residential domestic violence programs. Federal Family Violence Prevention and Services Act funds support 73 residential and non-residential programs to support evidence informed program models as well as general operating expenses, health and safety improvements, and/or program enhancements. Additionally, TANF

funds are used to support the provision on non-residential domestic violence services provided through the local departments of social services.

- Kinship Services – OCFS directly funds 19 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.

- Post-Adoption Services - OCFS administers TANF funds directly to three community-based programs to provide services to pre- and post-adoptive families to support adoption finalizations and reduce disruptions. OCFS will be making available additional monies in 2016 to fund statewide Permanency Resource Centers (PRCs) that will provide a myriad of services to post-adoption and post-kinship families. The services from the PRCs will be available to all families who have adopted a child both from child welfare and privately.

- Parenting Programs - In partnership with New York State Parenting 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 identified barriers, with recommendations for continued promotion of this family engagement strategy.

- Substance/ Alcohol Abuse and Mental Health Services – Identification of families in need of services is the focus of the CPS/Behavior Health project. A total of 14 counties were funded in 2015 for two years to employ or contract with a Behavioral Health Specialist to help screen parents and children to determine if further assessment is needed. Additionally, OCFS is collaborating with the Office of Court Administration and the Office of Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services on a grant from OJJDP called Statewide System Reform Project. Eight counties have been selected to pilot the use of the UNCOPE+ screening tool, that will be used to screen families who will benefit from a Family Treatment Court or an Infusion Court along with evidence-based services related to their addiction. Lessons learned from the eight pilot counties will be used to inform future infusion of the model statewide.

- Multidisciplinary Investigation Team (MDT), Child Advocacy Center (CAC) and Child Fatality Review Team (CFRT) – Local community coordination of the investigation, prosecution and treatment of child abuse and neglect cases is support through the federal Children's Justice Act Program Grant. The goal of these funded programs is to reduce additional trauma to child victims after they disclose, improve handling of cases for all agencies involved, and improve the skills and knowledge of all professionals involved.

- Public Private Partnerships - OCFS funds collaboration projects in nine counties and New York City. The projects are required to include local partnerships with private, non-profit entities working alongside local county entities to achieve mutually identified objectives. Some examples of funded projects include: supporting children who have been terminated from or are at risk of being terminated from child care programs due to

challenging behaviors; working with disconnected youth at risk of out-of-home placement; providing funding for at-risk families with children ages 0-3 to provided home visits by teachers and family development specialists; providing trauma-informed training to entire county-based, cross-system team; and piloting the use of evidence-based intervention with families with children ages 0-3.

- Safe Harbour: NY – OCFS funds anti-trafficking collaboratives in 28 counties and New York City. These collaboratives provided technical assistance from OCFS to build and sustain a child-welfare centered, county-wide response to youth who have been victims of or who are at risk of being Commercially Sexually Exploited (CSEC) or trafficked for either labor or sex. These collaboratives, headed by the local social services district or the youth bureau, include local, state, federal, and tribal law enforcement (where appropriate), probation, runaway and homeless youth providers, youth bureaus, mental health, health, immigrant service providers, service providers for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community, among others. Safe Harbour supports counties in building a system to raise awareness, identify youth, and provide services and responses to youth and their non-offending families.

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.

OCFS engages many stakeholder groups throughout the year in ongoing consultation to gather major concerns and strengths related to New York State's performance on key goals, objectives and strategies for improvement. Listed below are various groups OCFS met with during 2015.

Advocacy Groups

The Deputy Commissioner for CWCS has also met with several advocacy agencies during 2015 to address their concerns related to various topics such as post adoption services, and kinship services. The information shared by advocates from the Navigator Program, and NYS Citizen's Coalition for Children has helped to formulate a soon-to-be released Request for Proposals related to post-adoption and post-kinship services.

Citizen Review Panel

Citizen Review Panel Chairs met with the Acting Commissioner (OCFS) and Deputy Commissioner (CWCS) on June 11, 2015, to discuss the annual New York State Citizen Review

Panels for Child Protective Services 2014 Annual Report and Recommendations. Many of the recommendations align with the work of OCFS in implementing, and many of the recommendations are aimed at funding and legislation that is not within OCFS's authority to authorize.

OCFS appreciates the opportunity to meet with the three panels (Eastern, Western and New York City) throughout the year, as this provides an opportunity to share ideas and get feedback on the initiatives OCFS is implementing.

Courts and Judicial Staff

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 CWCS, 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.

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 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.

The OCFS/OCA Leadership Team met on March 16, 2015, to discuss the following issues: trauma training, CFSR data, court data, the use of trial discharge, the proposed Raise the Age legislation, assessing our current Safety and Risk model, the Statewide System Reform Program (SSRP) Award, LEAN, Public Law 113-183, Preventing Sex Trafficking, Permanency

Hearing Reports, JD/PINS Permanency Bill. The Statewide Multidisciplinary Child Welfare Group met on three occasions in 2015: April 20, September 21, and December 14. The topics included upcoming trainings, the Child Welfare Practice Model, Indigent Legal Services Conference, the CFSR, the use of data from the courts and child welfare, Person-centered Planning for Transition from Foster Care, the SSRP project, the use of APPLA, Trauma Training and Child Safety Training, and enhanced permanency for infants. The discussions from these meetings are used to help frame work that is needed by both the child welfare and court systems.

Foster/Adoptive Parents

OCFS conducted a survey in 2015, of foster/adoptive parents and held two focus groups from 12 districts to get feedback on the training they receive both initially and ongoing, their involvement in service planning for the youth entrusted to their care, and their invitation to and attendance at service plan reviews and permanency hearings, their agreement with the services being provided to the foster child/youth, and supports they receive while caring for these children. Over 450 foster/adoptive parents responded to the survey. The information provided has been used to help tailor future trainings, and to address needed services and supports.

Local District Staff

At each session of the NY Public Welfare Association conference (held twice a year), Acting Commissioner Poole meets with local commissioners to discuss current issues facing social service districts, and to raise topics of concern on the state level. These sessions were held on January 28, 2015, and July 20, 2015. The exchange of concerns and issues is used in developing trainings, policies, and other supports to the districts. Acting Commissioner Poole and Deputy Commissioner Laura Velez also participated in the NYPWA Policy Forum on October 7, 2015, that included topics on foster parent recruitment and training, Family Assessment Response, and the Medicaid Transition and Redesign.

Additionally, in 2015, Acting Commissioner Poole held a two and a half-day (May 6-8, 2015) forum with Commissioners whereby the following topics were discussed: CFSR outcomes, the urgency for achieving permanency, and LEAN (business improvement process), a systemic way to increase efficiency and its use within child welfare. Several districts expressed interest in participating in a LEAN project related to improving permanency for children in foster care.

Regional Office staff meet at least quarterly with local district staff. At these meetings, issues and concerns are discussed, focusing on improving practice to enhance outcomes for children and families. During these meetings the following areas are addressed:

- Local district/agency data is reviewed with a focus on several key areas:
  - making sure the data is accurate;
  - the timely entry of data; and
  - the analysis of data in determining strategies
- The implementation of key strategies on which workers have been trained
- Progress made on any corrective actions that resulted from case record reviews and complaints
- Review of current policy directives

Issues raised at these meetings inform t additional resource are needs for workers, which include trainings, services and funding.

OCFS Advisory Board

The creation of OCFS was accompanied by a statutorily-created Child 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 each appoint six members. Its duties broadly include consideration of matters related to the improvement of children and family services, review of rules and regulations of OCFS prior to their adoption, advocacy for OCFS programs, and liaisons with local stakeholders.

In 2015, the Advisory Board met on, July 31, 2015, and December 8, 2015. The board was briefed on the transition of children in foster care to Medicaid Managed Care that is expected to occur in 2017, with Health Home Implementation scheduled to occur in 2016. Updates were also provided on the following topics: collaboration between OCFS and DOH on the safe sleep initiative aimed at reducing infant sleep deaths; the implementation of the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act - noting that Strategic Policy and Planning Development will be distributing directives to the field by the end of September 2015, and the follow-up training that will be necessary; the work that is being supported by Casey Family Programs related to the piloting of educational liaisons within schools and departments of social services; the continued implementation of FAR and the evaluation of the program; and LEAN.

Sister State Agencies

Since December 2007, a meeting of state agency commissioners (or their designees) 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/designees 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 or their designees 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.

In 2015, meetings were held on the following dates: 1/8/15, 2/5/15, 4/2/15, 5/7/15, 6/4/15, 8/6/15, 9/3/15, 10/1/15, 11/5/15, and 12/3/15. Topics that impact the NYS state plan included: trauma informed care, reducing the reliance on restraints and seclusion, updates on the use of RTATs, Children's Manage Care, and child welfare response to child trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation.

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 (CoIIN), has invited OCFS to participate and to co-chair the subcommittee to address unsafe sleep deaths of infants across NYS. Meetings held on March 21, 2015, and May 13, 2015, focused on the need for a collaborative effort to address unsafe sleeping environments. Information gathered at these meetings has been used to put together

an initiative to share information with parents on the dangers of unsafe sleep environments. Additionally, OCFS purchased 1,700 Pack And Play cribs for local districts to be distributed to families in need.

OCFS continued its collaboration with other sister state agencies, in particular the DOH, OASAS, and OMH around the development and implementation of Medicaid Managed Care. This work includes three primary areas, Health Homes, new Medicaid services, and the transition of children in foster care into a Medicaid Managed Care environment. This work will be detailed more in Item 29: Array of Services.

Tribal Nations

The OCFS Native American Services (NAS) unit actively interacts with Indian Tribes/Nations leaders to offer general forums that are held twice a year for discussions of issues, as well as to address specific child/family circumstances and consult with the Tribal/Nation communities. All Tribal Nations are invited to the forums.

Quarterly meetings with Tribal representatives, which typically are caseworkers and supervisors, provide the opportunity for ongoing dialogue related to the work of the tribal nations on the Indian Child Welfare Act. NAS is active in supporting and sharing feedback from the Tribes/Nations and with OCFS Home Office. These meetings also serve to identify training needs for the Tribes and development of training initiatives; provide input into the CFSP Title IV-B plan; and to strengthen service delivery to Native American children and families. These meetings also provide an excellent forum to introduce other OCFS-supported initiatives such as court collaboration, Protective Services for Adults, Chaffee Independent Living Services to Tribal and agency staff who need program support to serve their respective Tribal and urban Native American Communities.

In 2015, the NAS conducted three of the four quarterly meetings (the fourth was canceled due to a lack of participation from the tribal representatives) that assisted in identifying the tribal needs and issues in regards to the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA). Several of the needs directly related to child welfare and included: Native foster parents/homes, transportation assistance, domestic violence/women's shelter, youth programs, and parenting workshops. OCFS will be working with the Tribes to identify resources to help address some of their needs.

Also, in 2015, OCFS collaborated with ACS, the Shinnecock and Unkechaug Indian nations to provide an ICWA Training at ACS' Leadership Forum, which consisted of approximately 300 ACS employees. The goal of the training was to assist staff in better identification of children and families with tribal affiliation.

Voluntary Agencies

Staff also attended meetings in 2015 with voluntary agencies facilitated by Council of Family and Child Caring Agencies. During 2015, many of the meetings focused on the development of the Medicaid Managed Care initiative and its impact on voluntary agencies and what steps voluntary agencies need to take to become ready for the transition. Input from the voluntary agencies has been helpful in developing training sessions and resource materials.

Youth

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 on a wide range of topics that impact their experience in foster care and beyond. In addition, OCFS has expanded opportunities for youth voice by establishing relationships with the statewide organization, Youth Empowerment, and with the Bravehearts, a youth-led association with chapters in Westchester County and other localities.

In 2015, Acting Commissioner Poole met with the NYS Youth in Progress group on June 15, and Senior Staff meet with youth at four of the Youth Speak Outs that were held on July 8, July 14, August 4 and August 13. Concerns noted at these meetings involve improving practice, policies and trainings as noted in our state plan.

The Youth in Progress also meet with staff from OCFS on a monthly basis, dates include: 1/13/15, 2/10/15, 3/10/15, 4/14/15, 5/12/15, 6/9/15, 7/14/15, 8/11/15, 9/8/15, 10/13/15. 11/10/15, 12/8/15. During these meeting updates are provided to the members of YIP with an opportunity for feedback. Topics have included Human Trafficking, Teen Dating Violence, and Normative Experiences for Youth in Foster Care, National Youth in Transition Database, The Affordable Health Care Act, and Educational Stability.

Youth in foster care were also encouraged to take the on-line survey (paper copies were also made available to youth who did not have access to a computer) that asked them to provide input on: connections with family and extended family; visitation with their siblings and parents; knowledge of who is their caseworker and frequency and quality of visits with their caseworker; their needs and if they are being met; their permanency goal and their involvement in goal and service planning. Data from their responses helps inform OCFS policy, practice, and the State Plan.

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 2016, OCFS began to receive educational data for all school age children currently in foster care across the state. OCFS has begun data analysis, on the state level, of the performance of foster care youth as compared to their peers not in care. OCFS, with support from Casey Family Programs and the American Bar Association, have begun to develop a training curriculum to help local districts and voluntary agencies meet the educational needs or youth across New York State. OCFS has begun providing case workers with student-specific education data. The training is needed to help caseworkers and agencies understand how to develop plans and strategies in collaboration with the local education agencies (LEA) to help improve educational outcomes for the youth in their care. OCFS is also developing a data sharing Memo of Understanding (MOU) with the State University of New York (SUNY). This agreement will provide OCFS with student-specific education data for youth within the public college system. OCFS is working with SUNY to develop strategies and best practices to work with youth in the secondary education system to improve college preparedness and to develop on-campus supports to improve college graduation rates for youth. OCFS continues to work to train school and child welfare personnel in the competencies needed for school liaisons.

- 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/humantraffic/)

- Kinship Support Services - OCFS conducts quarterly conference calls with OCFS-funded Kinship programs and the NYS Navigator in an effort to increase Kinship care, including KinGAP, as a permanency option. OCFS and OTDA continue to collaborate to address challenges in supporting Kinship caregivers. As a result of a new RFP issued in 2015, thirteen new kinship provider contracts were awarded. In the 2016 NYS budget, the 13 Kinship programs received funding to renew contracts until 2017 and additional funding for nine new kinship contracts. As a result, for FY 2016 - 2017 there will be 22 kinship programs statewide.

  A new training curriculum "Kinship Care Overview – Presenting Options to Kin/Relative Caregivers" was developed with CDHS in 2015 to train regional office, local district and voluntary agency staff on all permanency options available to caregivers.

- Parenting Programs - In partnership with New York State Parenting 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 2015, 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, 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 4,351 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. Work continued to fully implement the iCarol system in 2015.

CJA

- 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) was 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
- CJA staff continued to collaborate on intra-agency initiatives with the OCFS Bureau of Training, Regional Operations and Office of Strategic Planning and Policy Development. Activities included participation in curriculum design for "Forensic Interviewing Best Practices" and the piloted curriculum for "Advanced Forensic Interviewing Best Practices". During 2015, the Children's Justice Task Force approved updates to the curriculum for "Forensic Interviewing Best Practices". In addition, the "Advanced Forensic Interviewing Best Practices" was offered on three occasions over the course of the year and received positive feedback. There are currently many requests for additional trainings.
- CJA staff also provided technical assistance to the Child Fatality Review Team (CFRT) program, OCFS regional offices, the Safe Harbour: NY program, child sexual abuse prevention initiatives, and written directives related to investigation, treatment and/or management of child abuse cases. 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 43 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.

- A growing number of MDT/CAC programs are exploring the feasibility of expanding services into surrounding counties. During 2015, Clinton County formalized CAC collaborations with Essex, Franklin and St. Lawrence counties. In addition, the Clinton County CAC worked to create the first CAC on a tribal nation. The Genesee County Justice for Children CAC Program is also often used by surrounding counties such as Livingston, Orleans and Wyoming counties. The Chemung County CAC is used by Tioga and Schuyler counties. Recognizing the collaborations that are naturally occurring among counties, OCFS plans to issue a Request for Proposals that includes regional CAC as a model to provide access to CAC for a greater number of child victims. Through these efforts, New York State is improving access to CACs by supporting regional programs across the state.

- To meet the growing need for sound data collection methods, CJA staff continues to work with CARCC to establish effective case tracking systems for MDT/CACs. In 2015, CARCC collaborated with the National Children's Alliance (NCA) and OCFS to transition away from the Case Tracking Database (CTDB) system in New York State. NCAtrak has become the primary data collection system for MDT/CACs. With NCAtrak, a MDT or CAC can track case-specific information in a user-friendly manner. There is also a feature that allows a MDT or CAC to produce a specialized report tailored to their individual queried needs, regardless of organizational structure. To aid in the transition, Jonathan Picklesimer from NCA travelled to New York to conduct two two-day new user trainings and two one-day refresher trainings in Syracuse and Albany. These trainings were offered in June and August of 2015. Fifty-one professionals from 23 counties attended the new user trainings. A total of fifteen professionals from seven counties attended the two refresher trainings. CARCC managed the administrative tasks associated with these trainings, including identifying the locations of the trainings, outreach and facilitating registration. Technical assistance for NCAtrak will be available to all NYS CACs through the NCA. Technical assistance will also continue to be provided by CJA staff, CARCC staff and Jonathan Picklesimer.

- 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.

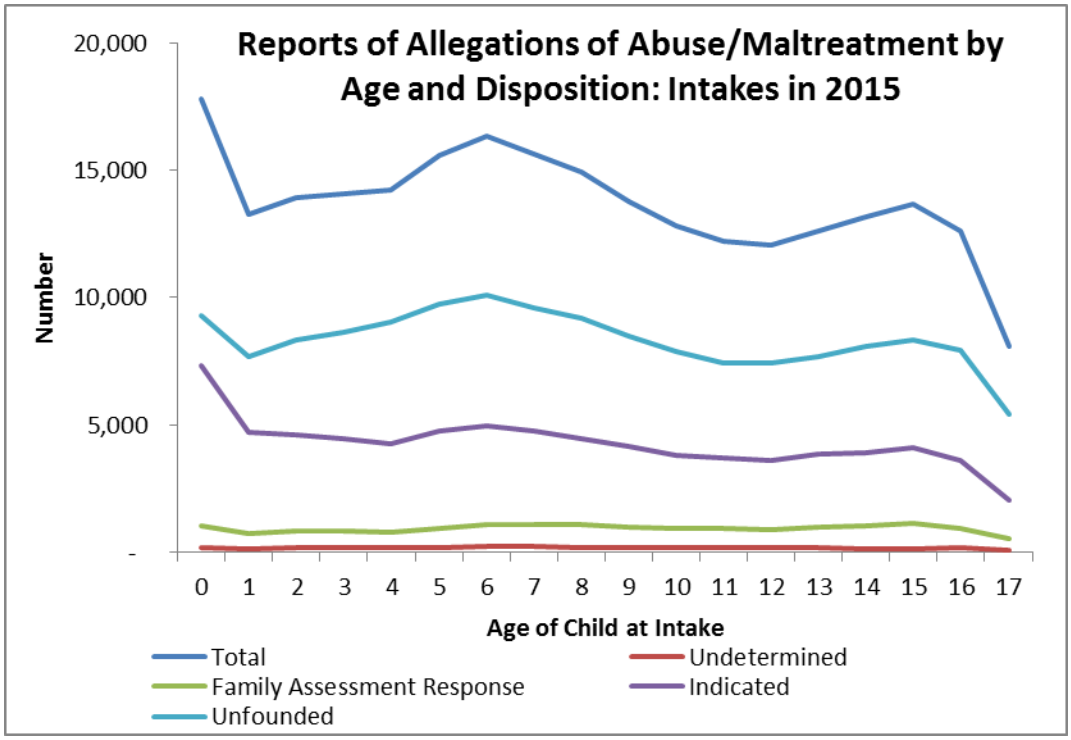
Please refer to the NYS CFSR Statewide Assessment submitted April 14, 2016, pages 87-95 for the complete state response and update on service description.

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 3.6 percent of New York State children are involved in a report to the Statewide Central Register of Abuse and Maltreatment (SCR). The percentage of children under 18 years of age with a SCR report in calendar year 2015 from the 11 largest counties is between 1.5 percent and five percent of the county's child population; which is below the statewide median of 5.7 percent.

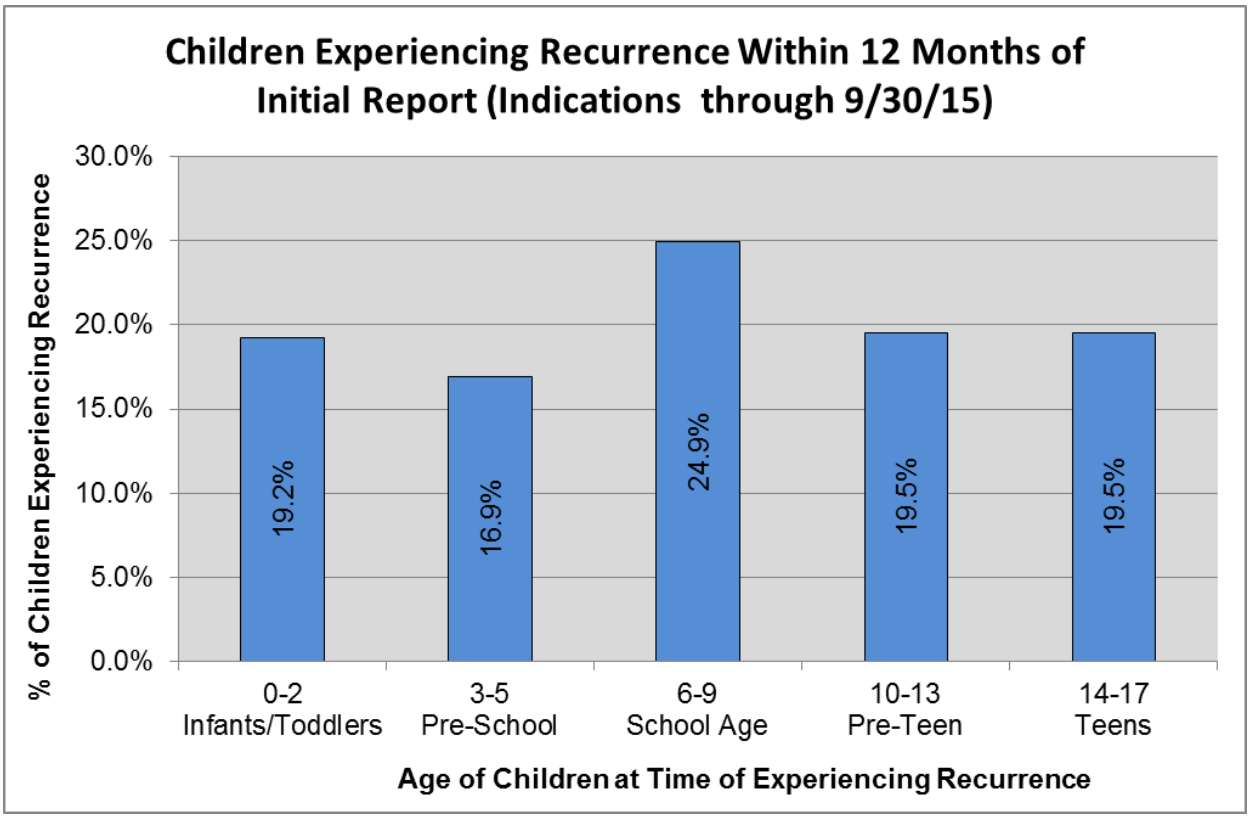
Data indicated that children less than one year of age are most likely to be involved in a report to the SCR, and the allegations within those reports are most likely to be substantiated.



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 continues to implement Permanency Roundtables to assist LDSSs 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. OCFS held Permanency Roundtables in the following counties in 2015: Cattaraugus, Erie, Monroe, Steuben, Broome, Schenectady, Fulton and Dutchess. Additionally, PRTs were conducted in the following voluntary agencies: Hillside, House of Good Shepherd, Catholic Guardian, Heartshare St. Vincent's, St. Christopher's, and St. Catherine's.

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 serves adoptive families in need of support with connections to services on the OCFS *Post-Adoption Help for Families* webpage (http://ocfs.ny.gov/adopt/post_adoption). The webpage includes crisis links, hotline phone numbers, resource information and a link to the websites of local departments of social services. The webpage also provides the name, contact information and core services provided by post-adoption programs funded by NYS. Post Adoption services include counseling, parent education and training, support groups, referrals, mental health services, educational and legal advocacy, respite and recreational activities. The most requested services by Post-Adoption program participants are crisis intervention, support groups and parent training. These services prevent adoption dissolution and disruption.

As noted in the NYS CBCAP State Plan, OCFS provided TANF funds totaling $805,000 to three Post-Adoption programs through October 31, 2015. The 2015-16 enacted state budget added $1,570,000 in TANF funding which enabled OCFS to extend the three contracted programs and add an additional four programs which will all be funded until October 31, 2017. Based on annual reports submitted by the three programs for the contract year ending October 31, 2015, the Post Adoption programs served 210 families, 295 adults and 515 children.

In 2016, through a Request For Proposal (RFP) process OCFS intends to fund Regional Permanency Resource Centers (PRC's), which will increase the state's capacity to strengthen families by providing critical services to children, parents, caregivers and siblings, and are programs designed based on the unique needs of adoptive, and guardianship families. This funding is based on a the provision of the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act which included a requirement mandating that the State spend an amount equal to the amount of savings, if any, resulting from delinking in Title IV-B or Title IV-E child welfare services. Title IV-E agencies must use the savings to supplement, not supplant, any federal or non-federal funds used to provide any service under Title IV-B or IV-E. At least 30 percent of the calculated savings must be spent on post-adoption services, post-guardianship services and services to support positive permanent outcomes for children at risk of entering foster care.

5. Program Support

The state's training and technical assistance provided to counties and other local or regional entities.

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.

OCFS has a specific liaison in every region and in the home office. The liaisons are responsible for providing training services and other related activities to assist regional office, LDSSs and voluntary agency staff in various initiatives planned by the OCFS Division of Child Welfare and Community Services. Through the design and implementation of statewide and district-specific training and training support activities, OCFS staff will assist districts to identify areas of practice and performance in need of improvement and to develop and implement change strategies and performance supports. The following is a summary of the work completed in calendar year 2015:

Engage families

OCFS staff provided technical assistance to counties in locating and engaging absent fathers, and engaged child welfare workers in conversations around specific skills to locate absent fathers/parents.

OCFS staff also encouraged districts to continue with Family Assessment Response (FAR). OCFS worked with counties to reenergize and strengthen their FAR practice through identifying barriers to effective child welfare practice and used solution-focused planning to re-implement FAR.

Engage youth and provide normative experiences

Through the use of public forums OCFS staff met with youth in foster care to solicit their feedback on their experiences with the child welfare system. This information is being used to help formulate policy related to the new Prudent Parenting Standards.

Strengthen caregiver capacity to protect and provide for children

OCFS staff provided various trainings and strategies to caseworkers to assist them in strengthening caregiver's capacity to protect and provide for children. Topics included: working with Amish and Mennonite families, conditional surrender, parenting the hurt child, talking to a therapist, and enhanced adoptions. OCFS staff assisted in piloting the kinship caregiver training. Additionally, OCFS staff are involved in improving how districts work with families impacted by domestic violence, by facilitating crucial conversations with providers and districts.

Facilitate safe out-of-home placements and rapid permanency

OCFS provides funding for Family Finding, encouraging districts to use this process to improve permanency outcomes. LDSSs report that there has been progress for youth in care as permanency resources have been located and engaged.

OCFS staff are also very involved in implementing Permanency Roundtables (PRT). Through the use of PRTs counties and agencies are able to review the permanency status of children and come up with an action plan that will enhance the child's prospect of obtaining permanency. LDSSs and agencies provide progress updates to the Regional Office as they use this process.

OCFS staff continues to work with LDSSs on moving more children to permanency through the use of KinGap. It has been apparent that additional training is needed, and OCFS is developing a one page brochure that can be used by caseworkers in explaining the various permanency options to families.

OCFS staff also encourages the LDSSs to employ the Foster Parent as Recruiter Program. Funds are made available to districts efforts to utilize current foster parents in the recruitment of prospective foster parents.

Develop a trauma-informed system

OCFS staff has been active in assisting districts in coordinating Vicarious Resilience training. OCFS staff has been providing districts and agencies with Solution Focus tools that can be used with children and families. OCFS staff has also led discussions with districts and agencies on the Rapid Screening Tool required by 15-OCFS-ADM-16 related to screening of youth who may have been victims of sex trafficking, along with the referral process to law enforcement, and documentation in Connections to help reduce additional trauma to the youth.

Support a racially equitable and cultural competent system

Because of the various monitoring and evaluation reviews completed, OCFS staff have identified an increased need to incorporate cultural competencies into practice. In the Corrective Action Plans, staff are encouraged to explore cultural and tribal connections with families. They are also encouraged to review the DMR data. Staff participates in the OCFS Racial Equity and Cultural Competence (RECC) initiative through involvement in monthly meetings, and statewide Race Equity Learning Community (RELC) conference calls, and an online training series re: racial/ethnic disparities within various systems. OCFS staff has developed Cross-System Race Equity Learning Communities. OCFS staff has conducted training needs assessments with leadership in different districts and have secured consultants to assist the district to decrease racial/ethnic disparities within their child welfare system. In addition, OCFS staff have worked with voluntary agencies on how they support youth's individuality - specifically youth that identify as LGBTQ.

Address individual family needs through comprehensive family assessments

Through case record reviews OCFS continues to explore the assessment of child and parent service needs. Additional screening tools are being explored, such as the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strength tool. It is currently being implemented in NYC as part of the Title IV-E Waiver.

Additionally, through the implementation of the CPS/Behavior Health Consultants and Statewide System Reform Project, screening tools are being used to assess substance abuse disorders with the goal of early identification and treatment.

Develop organizational effectiveness

OCFS staff work regularly with the federal performance data. OCFS staff encourage districts and agencies to use data to define their current performance and assess underlying conditions, and then create a plan for improvement. Some strategies identified by this process has included improvement to procedures when transferring cases between child welfare units, more timely and accurate data entry of key child welfare milestones to name a few.

In 2015, OCFS began an organizational change effort dedicated to the Principles of Partnership as outlined in the Practice Model. Twelve deliveries of the Principles of Partnership were completed; with nearly 250 trainees attending. The deliveries were scheduled in each of the regional offices.

In preparation for these deliveries, 20 trainers from BT, CDHS, and PDP were on-boarded and mentored in the content, goals and objectives for the two-day training. The team of seasoned trainers each completed two-to-three deliveries with assistance from the curriculum developer. In conjunction with the training, posters and desk aids were created to help workers associate the Six Principles of Partnership with their everyday work.

Improving Supervision to Child Welfare

OCFS continued its focus on quality supervision through the implementation of KEYS. Local district child welfare supervisors and administrators are provided the opportunity to gain and build their supervisory skills through a multi-component training, skill clinics, coaching, and consultation system to implement the “Keys to Excellence in Your Supervision (KEYS)” model of supervision. This program focuses on the needs of new supervisors and the competencies they most need within the first six months of assuming a supervisory position. In addition, “KEYS” provides new supervisors with the knowledge and skills necessary to effectively support, develop, and supervise child-centered, family-based, and strengths-based child welfare practice. In 2015, 93 trainees completed “Supervising KEYS” and 45 completed Supervising CPS. Of the 45, 27 had also taken “Supervising KEYS.” In NYC, ACS had 63 trainees complete their Supervisory Common Core, an 11 day program they offered five times in 2015.

New Competency-Based training system

OCFS has undertaken strategies to improve compliance with the federal standard that all child welfare staff are trained, and to assess other ways in which the training program should improve. A steering committee of 25 people representing local districts and OCFS staff was formed to explore revising the organization and structure of the outcome based training programs. The goals of this group include developing a competency model that all case-worker training is developed against, which will allow for improved evaluation of caseworker competence, and can be easily understood by all organizations to guide their staff development

plans. The steering committee is using that model as a basis to redesign the Outcome-Based Training Model to be more flexible and nimble, more behavioral based and able to better meet the growing number of staff who work across the child welfare spectrum of programs. This group is also devising strategies to expand the capacity of the training program to improve the rate of compliance to include staff serving in all case manager roles. It is anticipated that the outcome of the efforts of this steering committee will begin to roll out in the second quarter of 2017, and be fully implemented within the following 12-18 months.

Adjusting training methods to meet the needs

The cornerstone of OCFS' child welfare training program is The Child Welfare/Child Protective Services Outcome-Based Training (OBT) System. This comprehensive training is designed to provide caseworkers and supervisors with the abilities needed to achieve safety, permanency and well-being for the families they serve. In 2015, 378 trainees completed this program, of which 343 were from the LDSSs and 35 were from voluntary child welfare agencies. Additionally, 35 LDSS caseworkers and 118 voluntary agency staff attended “Core Essential Skills for Experienced Caseworkers”, an eight-day training designed for workers who come to the role with Child Protective Services with child welfare experience.

In an effort to better meet the increased need for the training by the counties, OCFS has implemented a new, additional format to the OBT system titled “CPS Foundations Parts 1 and 2”. This new format was designed to provide new staff with pre-service, the immediate foundation information necessary, to begin field work with children and families in “Part 1”. As workers gain more field experience and support from their local district, they develop skills in a field-based environment. After 90 days to six months of field experience, they return to the classroom to attend “Part 2” to build on their developing competency to do the work. This method allows workers to meet the 90-day CPS training law, and decreases the front loading of training. In 2015, 152 county social services caseworkers completed the CPS Foundations Part 1. Due to the fact this new program was first offered in September 2015, Part 2 will be offered in 2016.

Regardless of which foundational course CPS workers attend, they are then eligible to attend “Child Protective Services Response Training (CPSRT)”. This eight day training is the core training required by law for CPS and Family Assessment Response (FAR) workers. The course builds on safety and risk assessment and critical thinking skills acquired via the foundation courses by applying them to CPS. It focuses on the principles and techniques of assessing safety and risk; investigation; determination of allegations; relationships with other investigative bodes; and legal issues.

Meeting Local Department of Social Services Districts individual Training and Technical assistance needs

OCFS provides individual training and consultation related to casework practice and organizational strategies to meet state and federal legal and regulatory standards upon request. The focus is on responding to training issues and practice improvement needs identified in statewide and local program improvement plans resulting from state and federal case reviews and audits, as well as from other sources of information regarding local district training needs. Altogether, OCFS offered over 100 days of training, technical assistance or coaching to well over 3,000 participants.

Training and technical assistance that will be provided by the state in the upcoming fiscal year

The child welfare training program will continue to evolve as OCFS refines its training to align with national best practice standards and child welfare policy. In the upcoming year, OCFS will continue offering training and technical support as discussed above to the LDSSs and agencies. The work of the training Steering Committee will result in a new training system/ model.

The Principles of Partnership training will continue to expand and possibly reach the caseworker staff by the end of this fiscal year.

OCFS will focus on the requirements of the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act and provide training and technical assistance to stay in line with the federal policy.

OCFS has and continues to explore 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:

BREPA is continuing its evaluation of the Healthy Families New York (HFNY) project. HFNY is an evidence-based prevention program that seeks to improve the health and well-being of children in targeted high-risk communities through the provision of intensive home visitation services to expectant and new parents. In 2015, BREPA began collecting data for the HFNY 15-year follow-up RCT. Activities focused primarily on conducting interviews with the original 1,128 study mothers and their approximately 15-year-old target children. During 2015, interviews were conducted with 387 study mothers, 336 target children, and 16 caregivers. These interviews are expected to continue through mid-2017 as the remaining target children turn 15 years old.

BREPA also anticipates obtaining administrative data from various state agencies, including the juvenile justice system. Additionally, HFNY supports research conducted by outside

professionals and has a written policy describing the process that outside researchers must follow in order to conduct research on HFNY programs and families.

BREPA is also supporting a variety of continuous quality improvement activities to support ongoing HFNY services. These activities include: 1) ongoing analyses of fathers' involvement in home visits and identification of areas where documentation of involvement can be improved, 2) developing a pilot study to examine the feasibility of new family enrollment strategies, and 3) understanding effective service delivery.

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, began in December 2015, and requires New York City to assume responsibility for JD youth placed into limited secure settings.

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. In 2015, data collection efforts were expanded to include information on juvenile justice youth released from local district custody, including youth served under the CTH program.

Infant Safe Sleep Parent Education Pilot

OCFS is conducting and evaluating a pilot project, *Safe Sleep Kits*, to encourage parents to use safe sleep practices with their newborn babies. Partners in this initiative include the Division of Child Welfare and Community Services (CWCS), the Bureau of Research and Evaluation, and Performance Analytics (BREPA), and the Human Services Call Center (HSCC) at OCFS, and several local Child Fatality Review Teams and maternity hospitals. *Pilot Goals* are: 1) to educate parents of newborns about safe sleep practices using the **ABC** message (**A**lone, on **B**ack, in a **C**rib) and 2) to determine if providing parents with the tools has an impact on safe sleep practices.

The *Intervention,* before discharge from the hospital after their baby is born, the hospital maternity nursing staff will provide new parents with their usual education on safe sleep practices. They will also give parents the OCFS-provided "Safe Sleep Kit" which contains safe sleep materials to take home from the hospital. The kits include: a tote bag, a door hanger with safe sleep information, a board book about safe sleep, a safe sleep DVD, and a Sleep Sack, which is a garment for the newborn to sleep in.

*Evaluation***,** nursing staff will ask parents to give (or decline) permission for OCFS to contact them for a follow-up survey about their sleep practices. The hospitals will share the contact

information with the BREPA evaluation staff at OCFS. Evaluation staff will email parents a link to an online survey or forward phone numbers to the HSCC, which will contact parents by phone. Parents have the option of completing the survey online or verbally over the phone with the HSCC.

Project Status Highlights:

- The Institutional Review Board at the New York State Department of Health has approved OCFS's evaluation plan.
- Four hospitals in the western part of the state have committed to participate in the pilot (OCFS has ordered the materials for the kits).
- Pilot hospitals will receive kits to cover approximately six months of births.
- Kits are expected to be assembled and distributed to the hospitals by spring 2016.
- The evaluation is expected to span six months.
- The pilot has planned for additional kits in order to provide for other hospitals to join the pilot.

6. Consultation and Coordination Between States and Tribes

As indicated in the CFSP, 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 CFSP, as well as the outcomes and activities accomplished. Additionally, this report update 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 Highlights

Based on a review of data collected on Native American children in out-of-home placement as of December 31, 2015, it was found that 55 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: 27.27 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 9.09 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 14.57 percent of the Native American placements in this area of the state. The total number of Native American placements represents 0.3 percent of the total foster care population of New York State.

During 2016, OCFS reviewed 55 of the 216 Native American placements. Eighteen of the Native American children achieved permanency by returning to their parents or through adoption. Of the 55 Native American children remaining in out-of-home placement, two children required a higher level of care, including therapeutic foster homes or group home institutional settings. The remainder of the foster care placements is as follows; there are 21 in kinship placements and 18 in certified foster homes that were consistent with ICWA placement preferences, 14 children were returned to parents and one was adopted.

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)
2015: 18 Native American Children of the 55 in placement (32.7 percent)

Projected Targets:

2016: not below 50 percent *

*It is anticipated that the identification of Native American children will continue to increase based on ICWA trainings in 2015-2016. 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 55 Native American youth in placement, 22 were matched with placements to support their tribal heritage**.** An additional two 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 70 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 (20/20) were at 100 percent compliance in 2015 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, along with subsequent APSRs 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 continues to support Seneca Nation of Indians in the development of their tribally approved foster homes. The tribally approved foster homes are exclusively funded and regulated by the tribal nation, and service only those children under their jurisdiction. To date there are five tribally-approved foster families.

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. 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, OCFS continues 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. The ICWA desk aid is continuously maintained and updated to provide 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 50 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
IROQUOIS:			
Cayuga Nation of Indians	Seneca Falls Territory	525	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 *
ALGONQUIN:			
Shinnecock Tribe	Shinnecock Reservation	250 *	500 *
Unkechaug Nation	Poospatuck Reservation	128 *	250 *

*Approximate estimates based on previous data. OCFS does not collect tribal census figures from these Indian nations.

St. Regis Mohawk Tribe

The St. Regis Mohawk territory, known as Akwesasne, "Land Where the Partridge Drums," is located in northern New York State and crosses the international border and the St. Lawrence River, extending into Canada. The St. Regis Mohawk Tribal Council is the duly-elected and recognized government of the Mohawk people. The Tribe provides comprehensive services to the community through 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 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 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.

Indian Nation/ Tribe	**Governing Structure**	**Administrative**
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 2015-2016:

Throughout 2015, 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 2015, with the OCFS CWCS Assistant Commissioner presiding.

NAS also continues to be involved in supporting OCFS Racial Equality and Cultural Competency and addressing Disproportionality Minority Representation in the foster care system. NAS has provided cultural competency trainings to various state agencies and local service providers.

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 2015 – March 2016, OCFS participated in site visits to four 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 March and Syracuse in June and in September 2015**.** OCFS hosted the first 2016 quarterly meeting in Albany in March.

Also in 2015-2016, OCFS supported Indian Child Welfare compliance through trainings offered at various forums including local districts, voluntary agencies and OCFS regional meetings. Approximately 175 workers attended the various trainings. OCFS also sponsored one tribal representative from four Tribal Nations to attend the Adult Abuse Training Institute in Albany on November 16-18, 2015, to strengthen Tribal Adult Protection programs.

NAS offered technical assistance and compliance support to over 114 calls for assistance on ICWA cases identified by the local districts, voluntary agencies and Tribal staff in 2015-2016. OCFS distributed over 350 desk aids and an additional 500 through April 2016.

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 3,000 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 March of 2015, the NAS specialist held a facilitated discussion at the Gathering of Good Minds on Child Welfare and Foster Families recruitment.

In January 2016, the Tuscarora Nation, in collaboration with Niagara County Social Services offices held a foster care recruitment event for families and individuals of the Tribal Nation whom are interested in becoming foster families and/or parents. An OCFS Native American Services Specialist was on site to assist in addressing any concerns.

As the OCFS Native American Specialist provides ICWA training to local districts and regional consortiums in 2015-16, 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 2016– 2017:

- 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 facilitate the Family Service Commission 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 Tribal Nations 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 Tribal Nations, 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. In 2016, Unkechaug Nation and Tuscarora Nation have volunteered to assist and participate in the CFSR process. 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.

<u>Casework Contact with Parent or Relative</u>

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[1]; (c) a caseworker[2] assigned to the case, as directed by the case planner; or (d) a parent advocate[3] 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 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 access 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

[1] 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.

[2] 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.

[3] 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.

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 will 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.

OCFS will begin contracting with an additional Business Analyst to prepare data reports that will assist counties and voluntary agencies as they work to understand the strengths and challenges related to their current performance; assist localities with the assessment phase of their 2017-2021 County Plan process; and assist regional offices, LDSSs, and voluntary agencies with applying CQI concepts to improve outcomes.

8. Adoption and Legal Guardianship Incentive Payments

In 2015, OCFS 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 under age nine, children nine to 14 years old and children older than age 14. Targets of 90 percent finalizations in each category were established and each LDSS received a county-specific list. Additionally, OCFS 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 KinGAP were established to increase focus on KinGAP as a permanency option for relative foster families. OCFS regional office staff support 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. OCFS also revised the timeframe for targets to align with the federal fiscal year time period. For FFY 2016 the KinGAP target goal was increased to 40 percent with adoption incentive targets remaining at 90 percent. New York State was successful in receiving an Adoption and Legal Guardianship Incentive Award for FFY 2014.

In 2015, OCFS moved oversight of kinship and post adoption contracted programs to the office formerly known as New York State Adoption Services. The office was renamed the Bureau of Permanency Services. The reorganization was purposefully planned to provide a state focal point for information, technical assistance and support for advancement of permanency outcomes for children in care who cannot return home. It also provides information, technical assistance and support for caregivers caring for relative children in formal and informal settings. In late 2015, OCFS Regional Office Permanency Specialists, formerly Adoption Specialists, completed the *Presenting Options to Kin/Relative Caregivers* train–the–trainer (TOT) program. The Specialists will be scheduling and providing this TOT to local district staff throughout 2016 so staff will be prepared to articulate the options and resources available to families at the onset of discussions and decision making for appropriate care and well-being of the child. OCFS intends to work with local departments of social services to identify and train Kinship Champions in each district. A Champion would be a designated staff person who can guide a family through the available options, legal responsibility and supports available in informal and formal relative care settings.

In August of 2015, OCFS issued an Administrative Directive to address implementation of the continuation of KinGAP payments to a successor guardian if the original relative guardian dies or is incapacitated per the provisions of the federal Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act (P.L. 113-183).

On September 18, 2015, OCFS was notified that NYS had been awarded an Adoption and Legal Guardianship Incentive Payment for FY 2015 in the amount of $326,126 which represents 38.5 percent of the entire award. The notification letter however, was sent to the NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance, not the NYS Office of Children and Family Services. We have reached out to ACF on several occasions to get the letter and award modified, but to date that has not happened. Until such time, the monies are not available to OCFS.

Additionally, due to the amount only being 38.5 percent of the entire award, the allocation methodology currently used by OCFS would result in some districts getting very small awards which would not be of significant benefit to the district. Upon receipt of the remaining 61.5 percent of the award, OCFS will look to distribute the funds.

9. Child Welfare Waiver Demonstration Activities

New York State and ACS publically announced the full launch of its IV-E waiver initiative, which it has named Strong Families NYC. Strong Families NYC consists of the four waiver interventions in the city's foster care system, including: 1) reductions in caseloads and supervisory ratios; 2) use of New York's Child and Adolescent Strengths and Needs assessment tool (CANS-NY) for all children in family foster care; 3) Partnering for Success (PfS), a framework for the effective use of behavioral health care and evidence-based, trauma-focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy; and 4) Attachment Bio-behavioral Catch-up (ABC) to secure nurturing care and healthy development of infants and toddlers. All 23 foster care agencies are implementing caseload reductions and CANS-NYC. All 23 foster care agencies will utilize ABC once implemented citywide, and 18 of the 23 agencies will utilize PfS once fully implemented.

Following its public announcement of Strong Families NYC in July 2015, ACS began the rollout of ABC and PfS, the two evidence-based therapeutic models featured in Strong Families NYC. Power of Two, the community-based service provider contracted to deliver ABC for Strong Families NYC, hired and trained eight ABC parent coaches and began offering ABC in target neighborhoods in Brooklyn in November 2015. Approximately 200 case planners, supervisors and program directors from five foster care agencies attended a one-day training on the ABC model, and 26 children had received or were receiving ABC services with their primary caregiver.

In addition, ACS and its Workforce Institute (a collaboration with the City University of New York CUNY)) also hired seven trainers to deliver PfS for Strong Families NYC and delivered the three-day PfS training to case planners and mental health clinicians from two foster care agencies in Brooklyn. As of December 31, 2015, Strong Families NYC had trained 70 child welfare staff, including case planners, supervisors and program directors, and 25 partner mental health clinicians in PfS, and 47 children had received or were receiving Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Plus (CBT+) or Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT) from a PfS-trained clinician. By this date, more than 4,920 children in foster care—64 percent of all children in regular family foster care at the end of November 2015—had an up-to-date CANS-NY

completed, an improvement of 24 percent over the prior month. Across the New York City system, the mean ratio of supervisors to case planners was one to 3.99, meeting ACS's target for the system, and case planners had an average caseload of 9.6 active cases and 1.4 suspended-payment cases each.

ACS will continue working with its CUNY Workforce Institute partners and University of Maryland, Baltimore to complete a second round of revisions to the NYC-adapted Partnering for Success curriculum and participant guide. On January 4 to 6, 2016, University of Maryland, Baltimore held a three-day training of trainers for the CUNY Workforce Institute PfS trainers, and the chosen mental health consultants attended their one-day PfS training of trainers on January 7, 2016. On January 13, the CUNY Workforce Institute PfS trainers attended a one-day training on the facilitation of case consultation for PfS training participants. ACS and its partners expect to train an estimated 1,100 case planners and 200 mental health clinicians in 2016. In addition, ACS will continue to work with Dr. Metz to implement the new structure for PfS implementation and leadership meetings, which incorporate the delivery of quarterly implementation science training modules, delivered by Dr. Metz, to foster care agency leadership.

Concurrent with the rollout of PfS training, ACS will also launch the new eCANS system, which features electronic versions of the CBT+ referral and tracking forms. These new enhancements will allow ACS to better monitor and track CBT+ and TF-CBT referrals and service provision.

The overall objectives of the interventions listed above include:

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

10. Quality Assurance System

The Quality Assurance (QA)/Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) system is currently functioning within New York State. However, there continue to be areas needing improvement.

OCFS participated in 2013 in a CQI assessment conducted by the federal Children's Bureau. While many areas of strength were noted, several areas for improvement were also identified. OCFS has worked over the last several years to enhance our CQI system to help us better assess our implementation of the Child Welfare Practice Model. OCFS's CQI system is aligned with the federal Information Memorandum issued in 2012. In NYS, our CQI system includes Foundational Requirements, Quality Data Collection, Case Record Review and Process, Feedback and Adjustment. The following summary details the ways in which New York State's CQI system is currently functioning:

1) The CQI system is operating in the jurisdictions where the services included in the CFSP are provided.

<u>Foundational Requirement</u>

NY Social Services Law gives OCFS the authority to oversee and monitor the performance of local departments of social services and authorized voluntary agencies. OCFS does this through the distribution of consistent performance data for, the review of case records, fatalities, and compliance. This information is used to assess compliance with state and federal regulations, and case practice related to safety, permanency and well-being. It is also used to inform training and technical assistance needs, as well as to evaluate the effectiveness of implemented strategies. On the district and agency level, the feedback provided is used to determine underlying conditions for performance and to develop corrective action plans, if warranted, which can include the implementation of new or enhanced strategies.

Monitoring of districts and agencies is done through the Regional Offices with support from home office. Regional and Home Office staff review performance data, complaints, and fatalities for the purpose of analyzing trends and identifying areas of strength and areas needing improvement. Additionally, case record reviews are performed to review compliance with regulations and to promote quality case work practice. A description of each of the reviews is included at the end of this section. In 2015, the following case reviews were conducted:

2015 Number of Cases Reviewed, by Type of Case Review and Jurisdiction

County LDSS	Fatality Reviews	OMA Reviews	FAR	SPA	CFSR OSRI	PRT
Albany	8					
Bronx	30					
Broome	5					12
Cattaraugus	1					12
Cayuga	2	14	6			
Chautauqua				20		
Chemung	5				15	
Chenango		15				
Clinton	2				15	
Cortland	1					
Columbia	1					
Delaware	3					
Dutchess	3					12
Erie	10			30		10
Franklin	1					
Fulton	2					14
Greene	1					
Jefferson	3					
Kings	33					
Livingston	1					
Madison	1			10		
Monroe	20	30				
Montgomery	1					

Nassau	4					
New York	18					
Niagara	3	20		20		
NYC (ACS)					30	
NYC Regional Office	1					
Office of Special Investigations	1					
Oneida	3			30		
Onondaga	8					
Ontario	3					
Orange	7	20	10			
Oswego	3					
Putnam	1					
Queens	30					
Rensselaer	6					
Richmond	5					
Rockland	4	14	6	10		
Saratoga	1	20				
Schenectady	10					15
Schoharie		15				
Seneca						12
St. Lawrence	2	14	6			
Steuben	1	20				12
Suffolk	21					
Sullivan	1					
Tompkins		15				
Ulster	3	14	6		15	
Warren		15				
Washington	1	20				
Wayne	5					
Westchester	14			30		
Wyoming	1					

Additionally, all state staff who participate in case record reviews or Permanency Roundtables (PRTs) are trained on each of the instruments or components of the process.

Increasing the capacity for OCFS and county staff to utilize data within a CQI context continues to be a priority for OCFS. Onsite Training is provided to state, local and voluntary agency staff related to the use of data. The chart below shows the training focus and the number of staff who participated from each jurisdiction in 2015 (attendees may be counted more than once if they attended multiple trainings).

Total Participants in 2015 On-Site Data Training: By Topic and Audience				
		Regional Office Staff	**LDSS Staff**	**Home Office Staff**
Overview CFSR, Performance & CQI/Pivot Tables	Regional Directors of Services Meetings	5	9	5
	Home Office Manager & Staff Meetings	6	0	45
	Multi-Systems	17	25	16
	Albany	5	7	2
	Allegany	3	7	1
	Cattaraugus	3	4	1
	Chautauqua	3	0	1
	Chemung	11	8	1
	Columbia	1	6	3
	Erie	8	8	2
	Genesee	3	3	1
	Livingston	5	4	1
	Monroe	8	0	0
	Nassau	0	0	2
	Niagara	3	5	1
	Onondaga	9	3	2
	Orange	2	3	3
	Orleans	3	2	1
	Rockland	3	6	1
	Seneca	3	5	1
	St Lawrence	1	5	0
	Steuben	5	6	1
	Suffolk	0	0	2
	Wyoming	3	1	1
	Multi-Systems	7	16	10
	RO Staff	39	0	7
	VA Staff	3	0	0
FCDA Overview	ACS	**3**	**7**	**1**
	OCFS Home Office	**0**	**0**	**12**

In-Depth Instruction		**18**		**1**
	Total	**180**	**140**	**125**

2016 training and overview events have been held with representatives from:

- Albany Regional Office
- Family Engagement Specialists
- Region 2 County Directors of Services and Agency Executive Directors
- Onondaga County
- Oneida County
- Washington County
- Franklin County
- Schenectady County
- Sullivan County
- St. Regis/Mohawk Tribe
- OCFS Business Analysts working with Casework Contacts projects
- Joint planning with OCFS and NYS Office of Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services

Quality Data Collection

NYS has a robust data collection system known as CONNECTIONS. Information from the CONNECTIONS system can be used to monitor compliance with federal and state regulations. In additional, OCFS collects data through case records reviews, fatality reviews, and complaints. This data is made available to districts and agencies.

In order to improve on data quality issues, OCFS has worked with districts on improvements by sending various child specific lists to them when data reports indicated there is a high percent of information missing such as race/ethnicity, or improperly coded elements.

OCFS is continuing to work on data collection related to training of staff. Local districts and agencies are encouraged to enter all new staff into the training system (HSLC) in order to track and monitor compliance with required training.

Case Review Process

OCFS has written guidance documents for case record reviews and PRTs. The Case Record Review process provides basic expectations for uniformity in the implementation of those activities through training and written procedures. The number of cases reviewed is determined by the size of the county (10 cases for small counties, 20 cases for medium counties and 30 for large counties).

Analysis and Dissemination of Quality Data

NYS provides access to a multitude of pre-defined reports via the OCFS Data Warehouse and through participation in Chapin Hall Center for Children's Multi-State Foster Care Data Archive database. In addition to the availability of core pre-defined, there is an ability to create ad-hoc data reports. Electronic access to these data, including the ability to create reports, is available to external partners (LDSS, voluntary agencies). Additionally, key data reports are updated weekly and are accessible through the "Commissioner's Dashboard". This Dashboard contains

a full range of management reports, including child welfare, child care, and public assistance–related data.

Example of a county utilizing evidence to improve outcomes for children in foster care:

In mid-2015, "X" County partnered with OCFS to improve permanency outcomes for children involved in their county's child welfare system.

Between August 2015-January 2016, a the local workgroup comprised of staff from County Children's Services, CPS, Planning & Research, Staff Development and the OCFS Regional Office met monthly with an OCFS contractor, Public Catalyst, to take a very close look at Nassau's permanency data and identify both "bright spots" and challenges in our processes, identify solutions and introduce their findings to their colleagues throughout the organization.

Early in the process, this county noted that only about 20 percent of children who had been in care more than 24 months, achieved permanency (through adoption, reunification or exit to relative). This was below the national average of 30.3%.

In order to gain an understanding of specific the case and child characteristics that might impact permanency, the workgroup engaged in an extensive data analysis exercise. They formed questions and sought the answers through administrative data, process mapping, interviewing, and literature reviews to form hypothesis related to factors that contribute to their current permanency rate.

Based on all of the evidence gathered, including children's permanency goals (graphed, right) they identified three do-able strategies that they believed would improve their permanency outcome by addressing some key underlying factors that contributed to their past performance:

- 10 Month Roundtable: A 30 minute meeting held at the 10 month point, to serve as support to caseworker, and to help develop plan for child to reach permanency earlier in their foster care placement.
- Termination of Parental Rights (TPR) Checklist: Created guidelines to help make a TPR filing more fluid and to avoid delays
- Adoption Checklist: Inclusive checklist was developed to guide the process from filing for an adoption subsidy to making necessary changes in our data entry system.

In January 2016, the county introduced these strategies, and the research that helped them reach this conclusion, to the entire child welfare agency staff.

The County noted that on a particular day (June 30, 2015), there were 82 children who had been in foster care for 24 or more months. They also recognized that if 25 of the 82 children achieved permanency within 1 year, they would exceed the national average. Their target was to help create safe, permanent living environments for at least 25 children.

In conclusion, "X" County is well on their way to exceeding the national average. By mid-2016, they anticipate that 30 children who had been in care 24 months or more will have reached permanency:

- Reunification – 7 youth
- Finalizing Adoption - 22 youth

- KinGAP – 1 youth

Feedback to Stakeholders

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 plan-development process.

As noted above, data and case review results are used by the RO and LDSS to inform planning, monitoring, and adjustment at the local level with the primary focus on practice. One primary method of feedback and adjustment is through the development and implementation of a local Improvement Plan. In 2016, OCFS began utilizing a new Implementation Plan format which consolidates and streamlines the previously utilized Corrective Action Plan (CAP) format. The previous CAP template was used with each separate review type, and resulted in a jurisdiction having multiple CAPs at one time. This created a barrier to the consistent documentation of the implementation of best practices. This new Improvement Plan also requires the documentation of underlying factors that contributed to findings, agreed upon outcomes being sought, and progress updates. Below are the headings included in the Improvement Plan template:

1. Topic/Finding
2. Statute/Regulation/Policy reference if applicable
3. How and when was topic/finding identified? (Case review/VAR, Justice Center-related, fatality review, data, discussion, etc.)
4. What underlying factors are contributing to the finding?
5. Given the underlying factors, what strategies/actions will be implemented? (Include what is to be done, by who and timeframes)
6. How will implementation be monitored and measured?
7. Status update and completion date (at least quarterly until complete).

2) Standards to evaluate the quality of services

NYS CQI system has standards in place to evaluate the quality of services, including standards to promote that children in foster care are provided with quality services that protect their health and well-being. Within the Safety and Permanency Assessment (SPA) case record reviews, questions are included to assess the districts performance on the provision of services to the child and their family. The SPA includes the following questions related to service provision:

- Does the care record indicate that the parents/discharge resources are being provided with the services necessary to achieve permanency for the child?

- Does the care record indicate that the foster parents are being provided with the services necessary to achieve permanency for the child?

- Does the care record indicate that the child is being provided with the services necessary to achieve permanency?

Additionally, questions are included to assess the safety of the child:

- Do any safety issues exist for this child?

- Does the case record document that the child is safe in relationship to the foster care setting?

- In addition, through the use of the onsite review instrument (OSRI), similar questions are asked. Data for these SPA and OSRI related questions can be found under Safety Outcome 2 and Well-Being Outcome 1.

NYS also has standards related to monthly caseworker visits to ensure that children in foster care are visited and monitored monthly. Through the federal Every Child Every Month Program, the expectation is 90 percent compliance with month caseworker visits. In FFY 2015, (10/1/14 – 9/30/15 (data as of 11/28/15)), NYS achieved 95.5 percent compliance with this standard.

2) Identifies strengths and needs of the service delivery system

NYS's CQI system identifies both the strengths and needs of the service delivery system through the review of each county's Child and Family Services Plan. All NYS counties are required to submit a single comprehensive five –year county plan, with annual updates that includes the following program areas: child protective services, child preventive services, foster care, adoption, youth development, domestic violence, child care, detention, runaway/homeless youth, persons in need of supervision, and adult protective services. The plan narrative is built upon the following tenants of CQI:

1. Assessment of Strengths and Needs:
    a. Identification of strengths/needs and
    b. Understanding of underlying factors that impact performance;
2. Planning for and Implementation of Strategies:
    a. Selecting and/or designing a solution and
    b. Implementation of the solution as planned; and
3. Testing and understanding the effectiveness of the solution.

3) Provides Relevant Reports

NYS's CQI system makes available to local districts and voluntary agencies reports through the Data Warehouse as well as those distributed monthly, quarterly, and semi-annually. Data from case reviews are provided to the district and agency detailing the findings, and noting strengths and areas needing improvement. Aggregate data from case record reviews are shared with Senior Managers as OCFS continues to assess the overall state training and technical assistance plan, and where additional funding may be needed to provide additional services.

CFSR performance data is also provided to districts for their use with staff and stakeholders (Family Court, Attorneys for Children and Attorneys for Parents, and service providers). OCFS also shares state aggregate data with state stakeholders such as advocacy groups, Casey Family Programs, Citizen Review Panels and our training partners.

5) Evaluates implemented program improvement measures

This is an area in which OCFS needs to further develop. While OCFS has begun the implementation of a Practice Model, measuring its effectiveness in improving the outcomes of safety, permanency and well-being is just starting to take root. During 2015, OCFS encouraged districts to implement key strategies aimed at improving the practices as outlined in the OCFS Practice Model. Developing additional tools to assess the impact of those strategies is still needed.

Additionally, OCFS has noted some differences in the skill level and understanding of the role of Regional Office staff in case record reviews. During 2016, OCFS will enhance the training of case reviewers in order to promote consistency among case record reviews.

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

Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) Overview

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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 2015-2016:

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

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 develop and document data collection methods; obtain administrative and school record data; 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. In 2015-16, OCFS funded new DV programs using Federal Family Violence Funds. These programs began providing services in April 2015 and include Child Protective/Domestic Violence Collaboration Projects, serving underserved populations, trauma-informed programs and supervised visitation.

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. A growing number of MDT/CAC programs are exploring the feasibility of expanding services into surrounding counties. During 2015, CJA funds were used to allow Clinton County to formalize CAC collaborations in the neighboring counties of Essex, Franklin and St. Lawrence counties. In addition, CJA funds supported Clinton County CAC's efforts to create the first CAC on a tribal nation.

Recognizing the collaborations that are naturally occurring among counties, OCFS developed a Request for Proposals (RFP) in 2015 to fund additional CAC's including regional CACs in New York State. This RFP will be issued in 2016 using available CJA funds. Through these efforts, New York State is improving access to the services of CACs statewide.

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 300 technical assistance requests in the past 12 months. Technical assistance included, but was not limited to, the request of mandated reporter cards, information on recording forensic interviews in New York State, referrals for legal advice, resources on child-on-child offenses, and statistics on medical exams at CACs. 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 setting up a mentoring relationship between Clinton County and MDTs in the North Country. The objective is to create a regional center in Clinton County that will provide satellite services in surrounding counties.

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 650 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); 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.

In 2015, this website was transferred to a new web management service through Safe Horizon. These changes have resulted in 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. The website is continuously updated with CARCC's Forensic Interviewing Best Practices Training as well as conferences and other statewide and national learning opportunities as they become available.

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 176 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 82 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 work with CARCC to establish effective case tracking systems for MDT/CACs. In 2015, OCFS collaborated with the National Children's Alliance (NCA) and CARCC to move away from the Case Tracking Database (CTDB) system in New York State. NCAtrak has become the primary data collection system for MDT/CACs. With NCAtrak, an MDT or CAC can track case-specific information in a user-friendly manner. There is also a feature that allows a MDT or CAC to produce a specialized report tailored to individual queried needs. Training was provided on this database in 2015 and technical assistance will continue to be available for all MDT/CACs through the NCA and CARCC staff.

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 146 calls on the toll-free number from 34 different counties in New York State, in addition to four international calls and calls from 12 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://disabilityabuse.org) since the website's launch in 2007,

there have been more than 33,000 visits to the site and visitors from over 129 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 2015, the Project Team continued to work with website consultants and colleagues in the field to assess the content and facilitation of the full website. The LOGON feature was formally launched in June, 2015. The Team also discussed ways to sustain at least the current site once the contract year ends and funding is discontinued. Discussions and meetings were held with staff from OCFS who have supported this Project throughout these years.

Accomplishments for 2015-2016

As of FFY 2015 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) has been established, with 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 now has 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).

CJA staff has also assisted in the implementation of NCAtrak, a statewide database, by partnering with CARCC and the National Children's Alliance (NCA). All 43 CACs in New York States are now training and utilizing NCAtrak. This database system is used on a national level and has been customized to fit the specific needs of the state. NCAtrak staff are providing technical assistance and support in operating the database.

In 2015, OCFS used available CJA funds to award a single source contract to the New York State Chapter of the Children's Alliance to help support and strengthen the state chapter. CJA staff will work with NYSCA staff to hold MDT/CAC regional meetings across the state. These regional meetings will promote sharing resources, strengthening collaborations and identifying needs in different regions of the state.

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 25 on-site technical assistance and/or monitoring reviews during 2015. Some programs required numerous visits to provide necessary program development services. Staff also provided numerous phone consultations to provide technical assistance to MDT/CAC programs. 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;
- One contract reassignment from a municipality to a not-for-profit entity;

- Assisting contractors in contract development; and
- Assisting contractors in budget revisions and/or amendments.

CJA staff continued to collaborate in intra-agency initiatives with the OCFS Bureau of Training, Regional Operations and Office of Strategic Planning and Policy Development. Activities included participation in curriculum design for "Forensic Interviewing Best Practices" and the piloted curriculum for "Advanced Forensic Interviewing Best Practices". During 2015, the Children's Justice Task Force approved updates to the curriculum for "Forensic Interviewing Best Practices". In addition, the "Advanced Forensic Interviewing Best Practices" was offered on three occasions over the course of the year and received positive feedback. There are currently many requests for additional trainings. CJA staff were also 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.

Update on Services to Substance-Exposed Newborns

New York State previously addressed the policies and procedures (including appropriate referrals to child protective service systems and for other appropriate services) to address the needs of infants born with and identified as affected by illegal substance abuse or withdrawal symptoms resulting from prenatal drug exposure, or a Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, including a requirement that health care providers involved in the delivery or care of such infants notify the child protective services system of the occurrence of such condition in such infants (section 106(b)(2)(B)(ii)of CAPTA) with the submission of our CAPTA State Plan in June 2011. As noted in that submission, the following laws, regulations and policy or procedural documents demonstrate our compliance:

- Family Court Act (FCA) §1012(f) – Neglected Child;
- SSL §412(2) – Maltreated Child;
- SSL §413 – Persons and Officials Required to Report Cases of Suspected Child Abuse or Maltreatment;
- SSL §415 – Reporting Procedure;

- SSL §424(13) – Duties of Child Protective Services Concerning Reports of Child Abuse and Maltreatment (Coordination, Provision or Arrangement and Monitoring of Rehabilitative Services);
- 18 NYCRR 432.2(b)(3)-(5) – Child Protective Service: Responsibilities and Organization – Investigation/Assessment, Providing, Arranging for and/or Coordinating Services and Monitoring;
- 18 NYCRR 432.3(m) and (n) – Child Protective Services: Duties Concerning Reports of Abuse or Maltreatment;

  Child Protective Services Program Manual - Chapter 4, Section D.2.b., Pages 15-16 – Investigation and Assessment: http://www.ocfs.state.ny.us/main/cps/cps_manual.asp

As for the development of a plan of safe care for the infant born and identified as being affected by illegal substance abuse or withdrawal symptoms **or** Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (section 106(b)(2)(B)(iii) of CAPTA), the following demonstrates our compliance:

- SSL §424(13) – Duties of Child Protective Service concerning Reports of Abuse or Maltreatment – Coordination, Provision or Arrangement and Monitoring of Rehabilitative Services;
- 18 NYCRR 428.1 – General Statement (Uniform Case Recording for Indicated CPS Reports)
- 18 NYCRR 428.6 – Family Assessments and Service Plans;
- 18 NYCRR 432.2(b)(3) – (5) Child Protective Service: Responsibilities and Organization – Investigation/Assessment; Providing, Arranging for and/or Coordinating Services and Monitoring.

Currently, addiction to heroin and other opioids continues to be at crisis level for many counties of New York State. Recently, Governor Cuomo reconvened a special advisory group comprised of representatives from treatment and service provider agencies, former addicts and representatives New York State Department of Health (DOH), Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS), Office of Mental Health (OMH), Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS), the Office of Court Administration (OCA), and Probation and Correctional Alternatives (PCA). The advisory group has begun conducting “town hall” meetings around the state, to obtain an informal assessment of the depth of the opioid addiction problem in various regions. The advisory group is expected to report back to the Governor on various community and regional needs to combat the problem, and best practices identified or needed to keep children and families safe.

In the Fall of 2015, OCFS identified 19 counties in the State that are experiencing a noticeable rise in child welfare cases in which the parent or primary care taker has addiction to heroin or other opioids. There is also an increase in the number of infants being reported to the statewide Central Register on Child Abuse and Maltreatment due to Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS). OCFS collaborates with DOH, OMH, OCA and OASAS to provide training for child welfare caseworkers on working with opioid-involved families. OCFS has also collaborated with the aforementioned agencies to: explore case practice models which incorporate the use of medically-assisted treatment, target expansion of treatment services, encourage local collaboration between family courts and LDSSs, and encourage LDSSs to utilize kinship care and other interventions which promote family involvement, and concurrent planning to achieve permanency if needed. Ongoing hands-on technical assistance is provided to LDSSs regarding the opioid crisis through OCFS’s regional offices.

OCFS's website contains a webpage http://ocfs.ny.gov/main/Opiate_Abuse/ to provide resources to case workers and the public regarding heroin and other opioid topics. The webpage contains links to various state and/or federally sponsored training and technical assistance on the topic of heroin and other opioids; current expert articles and case practice, and links to other statewide resources available through Governor Cuomo's New York State Combat Heroin and Prescription Opioid Abuse campaign and the Combat Heroin website.

Activities to address P.L. 114-22, the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act of 2015

OCFS has largely addressed P.L. 114-22 through its provisions and procedures in addressing the requirements of P.L. 113-183, of identifying and assessing all reports involving known or suspected child sex trafficking through policy and state regulation. OCFS released 15-OCFS-ADM-16 *Requirements to Identify, Document, Report, and Provide Services to Child Sex Trafficking Victims* on September 1, 2015 (Revised March 30, 2016) and state regulation 18 NYCRR 432.1(b)(3)(iii) was promulgated to meet the requirements of P.L. 113-183.

OCFS also began to address sex trafficking prior to the passage of the P.L. 113-183 and P.L. 114-22 with 09-OCFS-ADM-01 New York State Anti-Trafficking Statute which was passed as part of Chapter 74 of the Laws of 2007, which was a joint policy with the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA). This policy requires that all LDSSs designate a human trafficking liaison in their district to receive referrals for services for state-confirmed human trafficking victims.

OCFS has also developed the following policy and guidance to address sex trafficking and provide services to victims, 15-OCFS-INF-08 Promoting Awareness and Best Practices to Address Human Trafficking, 16-OCFS-ADM-09 Protocols and Procedures for Locating and Responding to Children and Youth Missing From Foster Care and Non-Foster Care (discussed further below), and with regulations 18-NYCRR-431.8 Procedures in cases of children absent without consent from foster care placement.

Further, OCFS is providing training to assist workers in becoming more knowledgeable on what human trafficking is and what is required by workers in assessing, identifying, documenting and responding to child sex trafficking victims as prescribed in this directive. These trainings were available in September 2015 on the Human Services Learning Center (HSLC) https://www.hslcnys.org/hslc/ and through an "On Demand" internet link in September 2015.

The training on the requirements in this policy, entitled *Child Welfare Requirements for Identifying and Working with Sex Trafficking Victims*, will be mandatory. The computer-based training (CBT) entitled, *Human Trafficking/Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC); An Overview*, will be a prerequisite to the training on the policy and protocol. Current foster care, child protective and preventive staff, and new hires through September 28, 2016, will need to take the course before October 2016. After that, new staff will need to take the course within six months (180 days) of their start date. The mandatory course will count towards CPS in-service training.

Regarding the addition of a *victim of sex trafficking or severe forms of trafficking* to the definition of child abuse and neglect and to sexual abuse, an amendment to state law will be required to meet this requirement by the due date of May 29, 2017.

In January 2016, to inform the field, OCFS created a question and answer Prezi presentation for the January 2016 NYPWA conference to provide a brief overview of the requirements for some of the policies that were released for policy implementation of the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act.

In April 2016, OCFS developed and posted a *Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act (P.L. 113-183) FAQ* This FAQ is to provide some of the frequently asked questions from the package of policies that were issued for the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act (P.L. 113-183). The policies in their entirety, as well as, associated desk aids, forms and other tools can be found on the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) Strategic Planning and Policy Development (SPPD) webpage at *http://ocfs.ny.gov/main/sppd/federal_acts.asp* and on the OCFS policy webpage at *http://ocfs.ny.gov/main/policies/external/.*

On May 5, 2016, OCFS issued 16-OCFS-ADM-09 *Protocols and Procedures for Locating and Responding to Children and Youth Missing From Foster Care and Non-Foster Care* to inform local departments of social services (LDSSs) and voluntary authorized agencies (VAs) of the requirements regarding the response to youth who are absent without consent, missing or abducted from care or home as set forth in the federal Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act (the Act) [P.L. 113-183] and regulation at 18 NYCRR 431.8, and who are:

- in foster care (care and custody or guardianship and custody of LDSS or OCFS);
- in an open child protective services or preventive services case;
- receiving federally-funded independent living services;
- under the supervision of the social services district pursuant to a court order; or
- under 21 years of age, discharged to another planned living arrangement with a permanency resource (APPLA), or deemed to have been discharged to APPLA, and under the supervision of the social services district.

While responding to youth who are absent without consent, missing, or abducted is pertinent for securing the safety, permanency, and well-being of children, it is also connected to the other critical components of the Act – specifically, preventing and responding to children who are victims of sex trafficking, applying a reasonable and prudent parent standard, and supporting a transition to a successful adulthood. Each of these areas must be addressed when making decisions regarding the response to and support of children who are absent without consent, missing, or abducted.

In developing 16-OCFS-ADM-09, OCFS engaged several different stakeholder groups ─ youth in foster care, foster parents, LDSSs, and VAs ─ to obtain their perspective on the creation and implementation of procedures and protocols for preventing and reporting children who are absent without consent, missing, or abducted, working with these children upon their return to identify the reasons for their leaving and their experiences while gone, and taking steps to prevent this from occurring again.

In moving forward with implementation, OCFS will explore lessons learned from states throughout the country with comprehensive policies for responding to children who are missing from care, as well as seek guidance from ACYF on implementation strategies.

Additional and Ongoing Activities

New York State Safe Harbour

CJA staff are actively involved with supporting New York State's Safe Harbour: NY program. OCFS continued to receive funding in the New York State Budget to support the Safe Harbour for Exploited Children Act, which protects sexually exploited children by recognizing them as victims, and offers services that pave the way for better outcomes.

Through this funding, OCFS has launched Safe Harbour: NY program, a statewide child welfare-based response to the commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) and trafficking. OCFS currently funds 23 partner areas including the counties of Nassau, Suffolk, Westchester, Rockland, Orange, Ulster, Putnam, Dutchess, Albany, Rensselaer, Schenectady, Saratoga, Washington, Seneca, Franklin, Oneida, Onondaga, Broome, Monroe, Erie, and Niagara, the five boroughs of New York City, and the St. Regis Mohawk Reservation. An additional six counties receive funds from OCFS to support awareness raising training and supports to youth through Youth Bureaus. Those counties include: Chautauqua, Herkimer, Madison, Oswego, Schuyler and Tompkins.

Through this coordinated, statewide response, Safe Harbour: NY 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 Safe Harbour: NY includes:

- Developing a 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 identifying and providing services to victims of child trafficking.
- Providing ongoing technical assistance to professionals and organizations on building a county-based system response to identifying, assessing, and providing services to child and youth CSEC and trafficking victims as well as topic and case-specific technical assistance as needed.
- Increasing services across the state responsive to the needs of youth with CSEC/trafficking histories and experiences.
- Developing the *Blueprint for Building a Child Welfare Response to Commercially Sexually Exploited and Trafficked Youth* (Blueprint) which will guide a comprehensive and sustainable statewide response to CSEC and child trafficking.
- Developing the *Responding to Commercially Sexually Exploited and Trafficked Youth: A Handbook for Child Serving Professionals (Handbook)* to guide service providers as they respond to the needs of CSEC and trafficked children and youth.
- Developing the *OCFS Initial Trafficking Tool for Youth,* a rapid screening tool to aid providers in quickly and accurately interviewing youth to identify victims of CSEC and child trafficking.
- Incorporating relevant elements of OCFS' response to the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act into the Safe Harbour: NY program.

In 2015, CJA staff assisted in the planning and development of five regional trainings targeted at MDT members to train them on CSEC and Human Trafficking. CJA staff also met periodically with program staff for implementing the Safe Harbour: NY program to identify additional program areas where anti-CSEC and trafficking work can be integrated into CJA activities. Ideas for consideration include incorporating child trafficking information into "Less is More" training and hosting additional offerings of specialized CAC trainings.

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. CJA funds were also used to support MDT members' participation at these various trainings. CJA funds also supported the 2015 Bivona Summit which was attended by over 600 professionals from various disciplines across the state. 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:

- New York State Coalition Against Sexual Assault
- New York State Association for Treatment of Sexual Abusers
- New York State Alliance of Sex Offender Service Providers
- New York State Children's Alliance
- New York State 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
- New York State 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 a five-day comprehensive training seminar for professionals in investigation of sex offenses entitled "Crimes Against Children Training Seminar" Attendees included law enforcement, child protective services, victim advocates, medical personnel, district attorneys and other multi-disciplinary team members. The training was held in May, 2015. It included topics such as sex trafficking, forensic interviewing, victimology, and the medical evaluation of child victims, using forensic sciences in child abuse investigations, investigations involving persons with disabilities, crime scene investigations and legal perspectives. Training was also provided May 2016.

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 Services and other Child Welfare caseworkers.**

This training is provided by University Partners SUNY Stony Brook/Fordham University.

New York State Citizen Review Panels

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 2015 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, 2016. 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 2015-2016:

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 A new RFP combining Trust Fund and CBCAP funds will be issued in 2017.

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.

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 include 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 2015 CBCAP federal grant award of $1,387,417 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 Prevent Child Abuse New York (PCANY) Prevention and Parent Helpline, and New York's annual child abuse prevention conference, along with providing training and technical assistance.

In 2015, more than 213,600 adults and children accessed crucial support and resources from 25 program providers who received funding from the Trust Fund. Outcomes attained by those individuals include the following:

- Improved factors that protect against child abuse and maltreatment;
- Improved safety for children, adults, and elders exposed to family violence;
- Reduced incidents of abusive head trauma (Shaken Baby Syndrome);
- Increased knowledge of safe sleep environments for infants; and,
- Increased awareness of elder abuse.

These outcomes align with efforts at the local, state and federal level to promote the safety, permanency, and well-being of children and families. OCFS applied for and received federal CBCAP grant funds to complement Trust Fund child abuse prevention efforts in 2015-16.

State and federally funded child abuse prevention programs include:

- Family Resource Centers (FRCs) 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, (serves Clinton, Franklin and Essex Counties), 5) Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tioga County, Owego and Waverly, 6) Pro Action of Steuben and Yates, Inc., Bath, Addison, Hornell and Corning, 7) Leake and Watts Services, Inc., Bronx;
- 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, serves all boroughs of 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 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 2015-16 include: (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, (5) Victims Information Bureau of Suffolk, Inc. (VIBS), Islandia and (6) My Sister's Place, Mt. Vernon.

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 (AHT), also known as Shaken Baby Syndrome (SBS). The methodology of this educational program and its effectiveness in reducing AHT have been published in both Upstate and Downstate New York, demonstrating a 47 percent and 75 percent reduction in incidence, respectively (compared with historical control rates).

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/Women and Children's Hospital of Buffalo, which oversees the program in the Western New York, Finger Lakes and Capital regions, and Maria Fareri Children's Hospital at Westchester Medical Center (WMC – New York, Inc.), which oversees the program in the Hudson Valley, New York City and Long Island regions, remain committed to sustaining this educational program. Similarly, with additional resources through the Trust Fund, the scope of the program expanded in 2013 to educate parents about infant safe sleeping practices, to further strengthen OCFS and DOH efforts to reduce child fatalities where unsafe sleeping environments are a factor. In approximately half of the fatalities for infants under the age of one, OCFS noted at least one unsafe sleep risk factor (source: New York State Child Fatality Report 2010-2014). "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 additional 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. All versions are available for download on the OCFS website. In conjunction with distributing "A Guide for Parents," nurses use educational videos with both the "Safe Sleep" and the "Never Shake a Baby" messages to

support these strategies for keeping children safe. In 2015, Safe Sleep and Never Shake a Baby messages were delivered by nurses to parents of 205,963 newborns, 91 percent of hospital births.

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.

In 2015, OCFS continued its efforts to improve infant safe sleep practices and reduce the number of child fatalities due to unsafe sleep by providing free cribs to low income families in need. These cribs were distributed to local departments of social services, voluntary agencies and select community-based organizations that provide home visiting and/or parenting programs. Counties and agencies can request the cribs on behalf of families who need them to keep their babies safe. Over the past three years, OCFS has given away nearly 4,000 cribs to families in need in New York State. In an ongoing effort to enhance public education around critical child safety issues, the Trust Fund facilitates the distribution of publications and videos to local departments of social services, health agencies, child care agencies and community programs. These materials include tip sheets, brochures, DVDs, magnets and other items with information about safe sleep environments, coping with crying and additional topics. 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.

In 2015, 69,255 publications and videos were provided, reaching families in 51 counties throughout New York State. In addition, a bookmark highlighting the five Protective Factors, developed by OCFS and Trust Fund staff, was rolled out in April 2015 during Child Abuse Prevention Month and is now available for distribution. Publications can be ordered or downloaded from the OCFS website at: http://ocfs.ny.gov/prevention. Efforts to identify and promote child safety issues will continue as resources allow.

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 (PCANY), 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.

OCFS staff and Protective Factors Framework (PFF) trainers developed a 90 minute webinar to introduce the PFF to a wider audience statewide. The webinar was promoted statewide by the NYSPEP. Additional NYSPEP activities include issuing a Parenting Educator credential, providing professional development trainings across the state and via webinars, and developing a new parent kit. NYSPEP offers mini-grants annually to improve access to parenting education programs. For more information, go to the NYSPEP website at: www.nyspep.org.

NYSPEP and its member agencies maintain an interest in promoting Community Cafés as a community engagement strategy. To support ongoing interest in this work, New York State Parent Leaders host bi-monthly conference calls to support individuals interested in

implementing the Community Café Model. More information on this model is available at www.ctfalliance.org/initiative_parents-2.htm.

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, prevention education including the Enough Abuse Campaign, 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 and assisted 6,187 individuals in 2015. The most frequent requests for information or assistance received in 2015 included:

- Parenting classes or supports, including those connected to home visiting, court, CPS/ACS mandates, custody concerns, and parental rights;
- Family counseling services and preventive services, including combinations of services recommended by CPS/ACS and anger management services;
- Services for "out of control" adolescents and questions about child custody and legal information;
- Questions and complaints about CPS/ACS or navigating the CPS/ACS system; and
- Emergency services or basic needs unmet for their families.

PCANY's public education efforts include a variety of outreach strategies, including literature development and distribution, presentations and exhibits, media activities, a parenting education and services database, and website. More than 59,000 people received prevention information through these avenues this past year. 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 Trust Fund partnered with PCANY to implement 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. The campaign focuses on building adult and community responsibility to prevent child sexual abuse, through comprehensive public education and citizen mobilization. Initial work began in 2012, in the pilot counties of Tompkins, Broome, and Suffolk. The campaign expanded in 2015 to include Nassau, Cayuga, and Rensselaer counties. In 2015, 51 trainings were held throughout New York State, with 978 adults educated in sexual abuse prevention. In addition, a training of trainers has been completed in Nassau and Rensselaer Counties, with an additional training scheduled to be held in early 2016 in Cayuga County. Seventy-five people have become certified trainers this year. A Public Service Announcement (PSA), bringing awareness to community responsibility and available EAC resources, was completed and will be available for use by all six EAC sites.

The year 2015 marked the 20th annual New York State Child Abuse Prevention Conference. The conference brought together more than 400 hundred participants, including parents, caregivers and professionals from various backgrounds including social services, mental health, and education for three days of training. Forty-eight workshops were offered in the areas of: Parenting Education and Support; Child Abuse Prevention Skills and Strategies; Child Sexual Abuse Treatment and Prevention; Reducing Barriers to Children's Well-Being; Family Engagement and Involvement; and Personal and Organizational Resilience. Nationally-and-internationally recognized plenary speakers included Olga Trujillo, who shared her personal journey of surviving physical and sexual abuse, with a focus on factors that contributed to her resilience and made recovery possible. Anthony Zenkus presented on the impact that poverty and income inequality have on the well-being of children; and Mary Gordon, a leading expert on empathy, discussed the critical importance of helping children to develop empathy and build secure attachments.

Family Resource Centers (FRCs) are supported by the Trust Fund and have services available to any family, with an emphasis on those with children five years of age and younger, with stressors that place them at higher risk of child abuse or maltreatment. FRCs are embedded in their communities, working closely with families, local departments of social services, and other organizations serving families. The Trust Fund supports the Family Resource Center Network, bringing programs together to share strategies and solutions, coordinate services, and provide peer support. The Network meets quarterly and at regular regional meetings that enable staff to participate in discussions focused on local and county issues. 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.

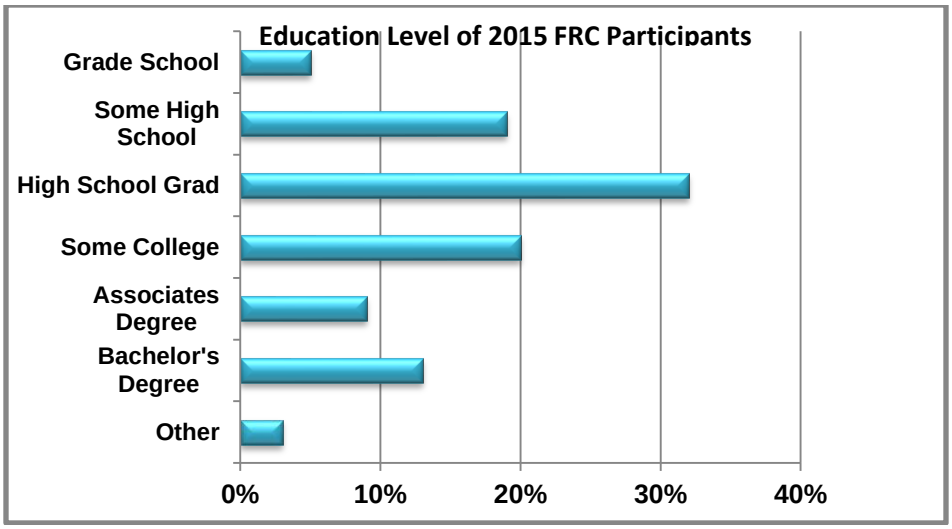
Core services at FRCs include the following:

- Parent education and support;
- Parent/child/family activities;
- Creative outreach to families at high risk;
- Information and referral to other community services; and
- Parent leadership and peer support opportunities.

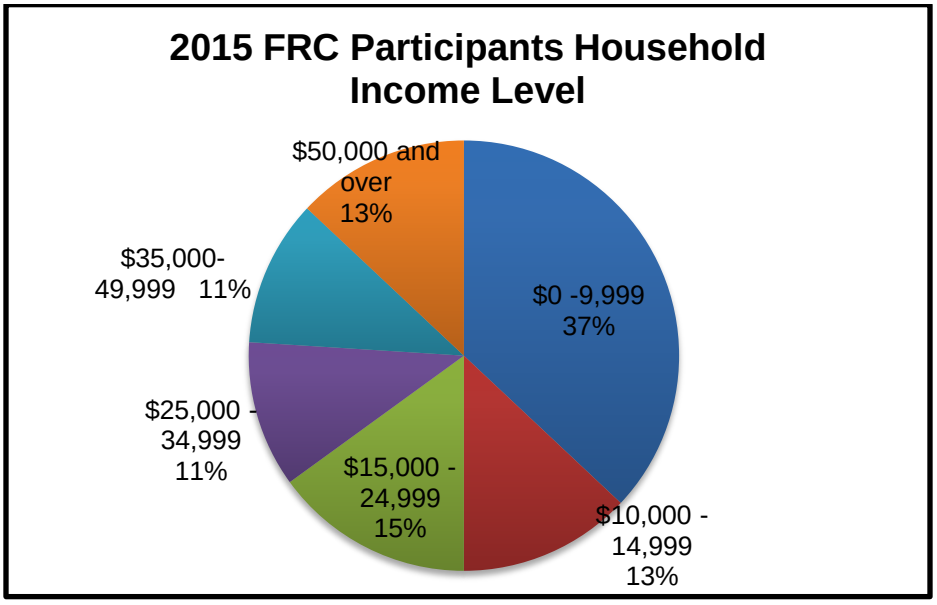
Depending on the needs of the community, FRCs may offer services themselves or link to other supportive services, including home visiting, food pantries, supervised visitation, early intervention, mental health services, clothes closets, and substance abuse services.

In 2015, FRCs continued their efforts to engage families at high risk. Specific populations targeted by FRCs 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 the centers have successfully engaged these targeted populations. In 2015, 74 percent of families registered at FRCs presented with at least one risk factor; 50 percent had two or more risk factors.

One risk factor is low educational attainment. Fifty-six percent of participants reported no additional education beyond high school completion, and 24 percent did not complete high school. The chart below delineates education levels of FRC participants in 2015 as compared to 2014.



Another risk factor is low-income. In 2015, 37 percent of FRC participants had household incomes below $10,000, regardless of family size. The proportion of participants with incomes below $15,000 was 50 percent, and 65 percent of families had incomes below $25,000.



The Trust Fund is committed to using data to support ongoing program improvement efforts and improving outcomes for families. During 2015, the Trust Fund partnered with OCFS' Bureau of Research, Evaluation, and Performance Analytics (BREPA) and SUNY University at Albany's Center for Human Services Research (CHSR) to identify and respond to funded programs' needs and concerns with the existing data system and data collection instruments. The Trust Fund engaged in several key efforts to expand its capacity to collect data on program services and outcomes across the wide range of program models it supports:

- Upgraded and expanded the data management system to collect client- and family-level enrollment, services, and protective factors assessment and outcomes data elements for family resource centers, home visiting, parenting education and clinical/family support programs.

- Revised the Protective Factors Survey (PFS), a participant-completed, pre-test/post-test outcomes instrument, to address measurement concerns identified by programs. The revised version of the PFS became known as the Protective Factors Instrument (PFI).
- Developed an observational assessment tool, The Assessment of Participant Strengths (APS), to be completed by program staff to identify and target participant strengths and needs as they relate to the protective factors.

In 2015, the Trust Fund supported innovative strategies to meet the needs of individuals served, to build protective factors within families and communities, and to promote well-being for children by:

- Providing both evidence-based and innovative parenting education strategies to build parents' skills, confidence and knowledge;
- Bringing families together to reduce social isolation, and provide opportunities to build supportive networks;
- Empowering parents to take leadership roles by serving on advisory boards and planning and leading program activities;
- Reaching out across systems to educate the community, collaborate, and find safety for elder abuse victims;
- Providing therapeutic counseling services for children, teens and adult survivors of intimate partner violence; and,
- Collaborating with providers of concrete services to expand access to needed resources, including food pantries, facilitated enrollment for health insurance, developmental screenings and early intervention.

Trust Fund programs acknowledge the challenges facing families on a daily basis. These challenges often include multiple obstacles such as poverty, domestic violence, and mental health concerns. The Trust Fund supports both primary and secondary prevention work. Primary prevention efforts strengthen families to prevent family violence before it takes place. Secondary prevention work addresses early signs or risk factors of family violence to prevent system intervention and/or further harm. Programs partner with families to identify strengths and skills, build capacities, and assist with challenges. Trust Fund programs employ a universal approach of building on individual strengths in the context of their communities and culture. Program staff partner with families to build skills, avoid harm, reduce the need for costly interventions and create brighter futures. Research has shown that the presence of certain protective factors within families and communities can help prevent child abuse and maltreatment. Trust Fund child abuse prevention programs work to promote these protective factors which include:

- Nurturing and attachment—Building a close bond helps parents better understand, respond to, and communicate with their children.
- Knowledge of parenting and of child and youth development—Parents learn what milestones to look for at each age and how to help their children reach their full potential.
- Parental resilience—Recognizing the signs of stress and enhancing problem-solving skills can help parents build their capacity to cope.
- Social connections—Parents with an extensive network of family, friends, and neighbors have better support in times of need.
- Concrete supports for parents—Caregivers with access to financial, housing, and other concrete resources and services that help them meet their basic needs can better attend to their role as parents.

Trust Fund staff continued to support trainers delivering the Protective Factors Framework (PFF) training. These trainers were nationally certified in October of 2014, when the Trust Fund extended an opportunity for 15 experienced trainers from across the state to attend a training of trainers provided by the National Alliance of Children's Trust and Prevention Funds (the Alliance): *Bringing the Protective Factors Framework to Life in your Work.* In 2015, quarterly phone conferences provided opportunities to network, share strategies and accomplishments, and track progress statewide in developing this work. In 2015, more than 280 individuals in seven counties received PFF training. The training was delivered to a wide variety of groups including LDSS staff and leadership, Family Resource Center staff, Healthy Families New York staff, teachers and teacher aides, day care providers, Childcare Coalition directors, and staff from other human services agencies.

The National Alliance of Children's Trust and Prevention Funds is the member organization for Trust Funds including all 51 states and Puerto Rico. As a member of the Alliance, the Trust Fund is part of the national voice for strengthening families and reducing child abuse and neglect across the country. For more information on the National Alliance, go to www.ctfalliance.org.

Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP)

Agency Administering CFCIP

Office of Children and Family Services 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 skills 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: 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 cases, 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 (currently known as the Statewide Youth Service Training), 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 Statewide Youth Service Training. which 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 Professional Development Program (PDP), 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 part of education/vocational programming 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 career interest inventory is initiated and often completed at Ella McQueen Reception Center by all youth placed in OCFS DJJOY facilities. This assessment is conducted using the New York State Department of Labor CareerZone ONET interest assessment web portal. Currently, career preparation is part of education/vocational programming where youth take part in a Career and Financial Management course.

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, staff meet with these young fathers individually to explain their parental rights while they are placed with OCFS. Staff frequently discuss the

importance of education, future plans, and ways for identifying community resources with staff and students during site visits. Lastly, the young father may be given responsible parenting brochures/literature; videos; and other materials by staff 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 an integrated model. This 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 Voice
In 2016, the two Youth in Progress (YIP) contracts were solely awarded to the Professional Development Program. The YIP name is expected to change to a name that will be decided by the youth later this year. Although the name may change, the mission to support youth in care by providing them with leadership skills and the opportunity to voice their experience will remain the same. In 2016, the youth groups are expected to be youth driven, which promotes independence and leadership skills for the youth involved.

The Ongoing Goals of Youth Voice Meetings and Events 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 2015-2016

Youth Voice
OCFS assessed the Adolescent Services Resource Network (ASRN) and YIP contracts for their currency and responsiveness to the needs of the youth, staff, and foster parents. The ASRN contract was bid upon through a Request for Proposals (RFP) process and was awarded to the Professional Development Program (PDP). In 2016, the focus will promote a sustained presence in the regions and local districts where youth are being served.

PDP is currently in the process of hiring Youth Engagement Specialists in each of the six regions. The specialist will work in the OCFS regional offices and provide coordination, training and support services to regionally-based youth services staff by conducting various activities related to the professional development of individuals working with foster care and at-risk youth aged 14-21. The youth meetings in 2016 will be youth driven, and adult supported. The meetings will not only provide youth with the tools needed to identify issues with the policies and practices of the system of their care, but it will also provide them with the support and skills needed to raise those issues and take an active role in developing solutions. Additionally, OCFS

has instructed PDP to conduct a needs assessment on NYS foster care agencies to assess what challenges those agencies face when youth transition out of care. The results will be analyzed to determine what training needs must be met within the regions.

NYTD
The NYTD contract has been reassigned to the Center for Human Services Research (CHSR). OCFS regional offices are working in collaboration with the CHSR to ensure that the in-care youth survey numbers are met.

OCFS released various administrative directives (ADM) to promote normative experiences, and positive support and services to youth in or transitioning out of care. The ADMs greatly impact the way that agency staff prepare youth for transitioning out of care. The directives also clarify the support and services available to youth who are out or transitioning out of care. The ADMs addressed topics such as supporting normative experiences, mandating credit checks, Medicaid to 26, APPLA, and updates to the transition plan form for youth in care.

In 2015, in partnership with OCFS, the Adolescent Services Resource Network coordinated three Speak Out events. The Speak Outs presented an opportunity for youth in care to express their thoughts, feelings, and opinions about their experiences to a panel of state and local administrators. The Speak Outs took place on July 8th at Stony Brook University, August 4 at SUNY Geneseo, and August 14 at Herkimer County Community College. In total, 499 youth attended the events across New York State. At the Speak Out held at Stony Brook University, 172 youth and adults attended, including guest panelists and informational tables, summer interns and youth ambassador. At the Speak Out held at SUNY Geneseo, 175 youth and adults represented 24 local districts, voluntary agencies, OCFS and PDP. At the Speak Out at Herkimer County Community College, 152 youth and adults represented 20 local districts and voluntary agencies, guest panelists, OCFS, and PDP. The OCFS summer interns played a leadership role at the Speak Outs.

In addition to the Speak Outs, the ASRNs also coordinated four Youth Development Days. The workshops at the Youth Development Days were led by Foster Club All-Stars (former foster care youth that participated in a seven-week residence internship program to gain leadership skills). The Foster Club All-Star from New York State was present at the event and facilitated a workshop. The workshops were geared to support the youth in: self-expression, self-identity, and personal independence. The Youth Development Days took place on July 14 in Liverpool, NY; on July 17 in Batavia, NY; on August 21 in Stony Point, NY; and August 25 in Albany, NY. The events were well attended and provided great resources to youth in care.

Plans for 2016-2017

ETV
OCFS currently contracts with 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 21st 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. In 2016, OCFS is looking to address the needs of ETV eligible students under the age of 23 that are enrolled in graduate school. OCFS is also looking to address ETV funding for youth who reside in OCFS residential facilities.

Youth Voice

The deliverables that must be met in 2016 are as follows: Youth Engagement Specialist will conduct training from a catalog of existing and yet to be developed curricula and special topics to support Adolescent Services providers. It is anticipated that there will be up to 50 one-day offerings for a total of 300 days of training statewide. In addition, training services will be provided to OCFS regional offices, to assist staff in various program initiatives as planned by the Division of Child Welfare and Community Services. The specialist will also conduct youth progress meetings within the regions. These progress meetings are to provide Adolescent Services providers, mentors and youth with training, skill practice, awareness and practical guidance on how to access and use the resources available to assist youth in the transition to self-sufficiency. It is anticipated that there will be up to 12 one-day offerings with an average of 10 trainees in six regions for a total of 72 days of training statewide. The Professional Development Program will also work closely with OCFS to develop and execute Regional Youth Voice Events that will provide youth in care with an opportunity to present their individual issues and concerns to a panel of regional policy makers who can effect local change. Youth leaders will be supported in conducting workshops and presentations that cover a wide variety of topics and will be assisted in raising their concerns in a productive way aimed at being an active participant in the resolution of the issues.

Plans and activities to ensure youth in foster care until age 18 have ongoing opportunities to engage in "age or developmentally-appropriate" activities.

The federal Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act (the Act) [P.L. 113-183], section 111 of the Act, "Supporting Normalcy for Children in Foster Care," requires states to support normative experiences for children through the implementation of the reasonable and prudent parent standard (the standard). Prior to the signing of the Act, OCFS had already been actively working to support normative experiences for children in foster care. This work included coordinating meetings with youth in foster care, foster parents, commissioners of LDSSs, and VA representatives to learn more about the experiences of children in foster care. LDSSs and VAs also participated in a survey designed to gather information on existing policies that support the healthy development and well-being of adolescents in foster care. Additionally, OCFS participated in national conference calls that emphasized the critical impact of normative experiences for children in foster care and mechanisms for promoting such opportunities, such as the standard.

OCFS then developed policy and provided an Administrative Directive (ADM) *15-OCFS-ADM-21 Supporting Normative Experiences for Children, Youth, and Young Adults in Foster Care: Applying a Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard* to LDSSs and voluntary authorized agencies (VAs) informing them of the requirement to implement the standard. In developing this policy, OCFS engaged youth in foster care, foster parents, LDSSs, and VAs to obtain their perspectives on the implementation of the standard, identify potential barriers, and gather ideas for overcoming challenges. Focus groups with youth were conducted throughout the state, and LDSSs and VAs participated in a one-day symposium in which they were able to provide feedback and guidance to OCFS on considerations and strategies for applying the standard.

OCFS also developed and held presentations on the basic tenets of the Reasonable and Prudent Parenting Standard across the state by region with CWCS Regional Directors and departmental staff as indicated below:

- New York City Regional Office (11/9/15)

- Syracuse Regional Office (1/19/16)
- Albany Regional Office (3/8/16)
- Buffalo Regional Office (3/9/16)
- Rochester Regional Office (3/10/16)
- Spring Valley Regional Office (3/22/16)

Presentations were held at the winter New York Public Welfare Association (NYPWA) Conference on January 27, 2016, and at the Annual conference of the Adoptive and Foster Family Coalition of New York on May 6, 2016.

Please describe policies or practices in place to support or affirm the sexual orientation and gender identities of youth served by the program.

Serving children and youth in foster care regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity and expression (SOGIE) has become a priority for OCFS. On September 9, 2015, OCFS issued *15-OCFS-ADM-18, New York State Bill of Rights for Children and Youth in Foster* Care stating that children and youth who are 14 years of age and older must be provided with and explained the Bill of Rights. The Bill of Rights states that children and youth in foster care in the State of New York have the right "to be treated fairly and with respect and to receive care and services that are free of discrimination based on race, creed, color, national origin, age, religion, sex, gender identity or gender expression, sexual orientation, marital status, physical or mental disability, or the fact that [they are] in foster care." On February 8, 2016, OCFS issued 16-OCFS-ADM-02, *Regulations Prohibiting Discrimination and Harassment in Child Welfare and Youth Programs* advising LDSSs and VAs of regulations which prohibit discrimination and harassment by LDSS and VA staff, volunteers, and certified or approved foster parents on the basis of SOGIE or other aspects of a person's identity. On March 25, 2016, OCFS issued, 16-OCFS-INF-04, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration and Family Acceptance Project Release: *A Practitioner's Resource Guide: Helping Families to Support Their LGBT Children* announcing a SOGIE-affirming resource for families.

OCFS continues to improve its services for children and youth in foster care of all SOGIEs. OCFS policy writers are currently working on informational letters which explain to staff how to use SOGIE terms in developmentally-appropriate ways, and how to ask children and youth in foster care about their SOGIEs safely, respectfully, and with affirmation.

NYTD

In 2016-2017, OCFS will continue to work with the new NYTD contractor, Center for Human Services Research (CHSR). In March 2016, it was announced that for the very first time, NYS reached the federal NYTD benchmark of an 80 percent response rate for in-care youth. This achievement was due to a concerted effort by CHSR, OCFS regional offices, and local agencies. In 2016, CHSR will continue to maintain a list of NYTD liaisons and work to build relationships with OCFS, local district staff, voluntary agencies, and foster youth to assist in finding youth to be surveyed. Before and during survey administration, outreach activities will occur with the key contacts. CHSR will distribute Cohort 2 NYTD-19 survey rosters to NYTD liaisons and inform caseworkers of the upcoming survey. Outreach materials (electronic and/or printed) will also be distributed to NYTD liaisons and caseworkers. CHSR will ask liaisons to speak to caseworkers and youth regarding the best method for survey administration – on-line, by phone, or by mail. In 2016, new incentives and methods are being looked at to increase both the caseworkers and youth involvement rate.

Homelessness Prevention
OCFS staff are participating on the Westchester Building Futures (WBF) Steering Committee. WBF received a federal grant to develop a model intervention method for youth/young adults with child welfare involvement at-risk of homelessness. Building Futures will focus on empowering young people to become successfully independent while ensuring their health, safety and well-being. WBF is based on the following five values: (1) Youth-Guided; (2) Housing and Family First; (3) Culturally Responsive; (4) Trauma Informed; and (5) Cross-System(s) Change. WBF is a youth, community, and data-driven implementation process that is transforming Westchester's systems of care. OCFS will continue to work with WBF to assist them in meeting their objectives in Westchester.

Pregnancy Prevention

OCFS developed and updated "Working Together: Health Services for Children and Foster Care" (2009) http://ocfs.ny.gov/main/sppd/health_services/manual.asp. This manual was developed in collaboration with LDSSs and voluntary agencies in an effort to support child welfare, foster care and health services workers in addressing health services for children in foster care. The manual also refers to the Bright Futures Guidelines for Health Supervision of Infants, Children, and Adolescents for areas to be addressed such as body image, interpersonal relationships, sexuality, and pregnancy and prevention as linked here: https://brightfutures.aap.org/Bright%20Futures%20Documents/18-Adolescence.pdf

OCFS released 11-OCFS-ADM-09 *Reproductive Health and Services for Youth in Foster Care,* this Administrative Directive (ADM) advised LDSSs and voluntary authorized agencies of the requirements pertaining to reproductive health services for youth in foster care. This ADM also provided guidance and resources to assist LDSSs and voluntary agencies to become more knowledgeable and competent in the provision of such services. The ADM also provided a resource for youth in care in the form of a booklet, "*A Medical Guide for Youth in Foster Care",* that caseworkers could reference and share.

Youth In Progress (YIP) has previously published and disseminated "Pregnancy and Parenting Issues for Youth in Care" as part of their *Need to Know Series.* This eight-page document provides youth information, guidance, and direction to supports that will assist youth in making informed choices and decisions related to prevention, family planning and parenting.

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))

Information on the education, qualifications and training requirements established by the state for child protective services personnel:

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:
    - New York State 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)

New York City qualification requirements - A baccalaureate degree from an accredited college including or supplemented by 24 semester credits in one or a combination of the following fields: social work, psychology, sociology, human services, criminal justice, education (including early childhood), nursing or cultural anthropology, at least 12 of which must have been in one of these disciplines. Candidates must pass a test to demonstrate English language proficiency. Education and qualifications – NYC ACS cites New York State Social Services Law and regulations. Training requirements – cite New York State Social Services Law and regulations, and all CPS workers are required to participate in Core Phase II within 18 months, and all supervisors must participate in the Supervisory Core. The 11 day program for newly-appointed supervisors and the six-day course for experienced supervisors. (See page 131, Training Plan Update).

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

Education, qualifications, and training of such personnel

As CPS personnel are employees of a county or of New York City (NYC), OCFS does not have direct access to those workers' personnel records. Information on the specific education level, demographics, and workforce qualifications beyond those required by state law must therefore be obtained directly from each of the LDSSs. As noted above, by state requirements, each child protective services caseworker statewide must satisfy minimum educational and training qualifications.

In regard to training, the number of CPS personnel from counties outside NYC completing CPS trainings each year is tracked in an administrative database managed by OCFS. As shown in Appendix "D", this database can be used to produce annual statistics on the number of CPS workers who attended training (3,177), number of classes attended (43,137), number of class hours (247,342), and average hours of training per worker (78). In addition, OCFS is also able to provide curriculum-specific information for workers outside NYC. Also noted in Appendix "D", county-by-county data for 2015 include the number of staff trained in (1) Response Training, (2) Common Core, and (3) Supervisory Core.

NYC demographic information for the CPS personnel remains similar to what was reported in October 2015, and as noted below:

NYC Division of Child Protection's (DCP) demographics (as of 8/1/14)

- Black – 74.2% (2,131)
- Hispanic – 15.9% (457)
- White – 7.1% (204)
- Asian – 2.2% (62)
- American Indian - .5% (15)

- Unknown - .1% (4)

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2,873 = All DCP employees (CPS, Supervisor, Manager, Deputy Directors, Clerical, Leadership and any other titles)

Information on caseload or workload requirements for such personnel, including requirements for average number and maximum number of cases per child protective service worker and supervisor

Caseload or workload requirements
Child welfare caseload sizes and staffing ratios are determined at the local level. Aside from the requirement in Social Services Law §423(1)(c) that a 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 does, however, provide counties with a monthly data report detailing the number of open CPS cases assigned to individual case workers on the last day of each month.

The New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) provide 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 2015 was 9.9. This is the average of the 12 months in 2015 (see Appendix "J" for county breakdown).

Juvenile Justice Transfers:

The number of youth transferred to juvenile justice facilities in FFY 2014-15 was 101 youth, a decrease from FFY 2013-14 which was 123. 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 2014-15 (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 2014-15; 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 maltreatment 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

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 21st 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 21st birthday, until they turn 23 years old, as long as they are enrolled in a post-secondary education or vocational training program and are making satisfactory progress toward completion of that program.

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 30th
  - Each applicant is assigned a unique Program ID Number the first time they apply
- The Program ID filters applicant data to confirm
  - New/1st 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

877 youth received ETV awards during FFY 2014-2015

357 (41%) were New 2014-2015 Students and 520 (59%) were Returning 2013-14 Students

Male: 282 (32%)
Female: 595 (68%)

Age and Number of students:

18	252	29%
19	231	26%
20	185	21%
21	129	15%
22	80	9%

Ethnicity:

African-American	419	48%
Asian-American	36	4%
Caucasian	130	15%
Latino	162	18%
Mixed Race	120	14%
Native-American	4	<1%
Pacific Islander	6	<1%

*in some cases this might be an estimated number since the APSR is due June 30, 2016.

Funding awarded to New York students: $2,434,088

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)

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 fifteen (15) New York State authorized voluntary agencies and one New York State private attorney have been accredited or approved by the Council on Accreditation (COA). One of the 15 is in the process of renewing the Hague accreditation. All of the 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.

In 2015, the Family Services Intake (FSI) module in Connections was modernized to include a new tab which allows for collection of information on adopted children and the services the family is seeking and the services provided. In 2015, there were no children reported placed into foster care who had been adopted from other countries.

e. Monthly Caseworker Visit Data:

In Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2015, OCFS continued its year-over-year improvement in contacting foster children. OCFS achieved a FFY 2015 Contact percentage of 95.5 percent. This is a 1 percent improvement from 94.5 percent in FFY 2014 and resulted in reaching beyond the 95 percent Foster Children Contact mandate for FFY 2015 established by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF).

In FFY 2015, the primary metric used to measure Foster Children Contacts is 'In Care Contact %'. [4] 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 2016 (October 2014 - March 2015) Foster Children contacts showed an 'In Care Contact %' = 92.6 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 was 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%
	10/1/15	95%, reported actual 95.5%

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; timely updates enable districts, voluntary agencies, and OCFS staff to monitor progress and to take action to improve child contacts. Data relating to Case Manager and Case Planner, including associated organizational codes (i.e., site-unit), has enabled agencies to monitor and improve accountability by work units.

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 in conjunction with Data Warehouse reports were utilized by the OCFS Division of Child Welfare and Community Services (CWCS) to increase casework contacts. BREPA continues to work on monitoring casework contacts.

[4] 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.

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 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. This contractor works on refining existing reports and developing reports to assist in monitoring casework contacts.

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 to maintain and improve the 95 percent target that was achieved in FFY 2015 and to improve quality associated with casework contacts.

Targeted Plans within the CFSP

Foster and Adoptive Parent Diligent Recruitment Plan Update

New York State regulations require agencies to have a comprehensive recruitment strategy for establishing a pool of waiting foster and adoptive parents. The plan should reflect the racial and ethnic diversity of the children in foster care. Permanency specialists in the OCFS regional offices monitor local district and voluntary agency implementation of foster and adoptive Comprehensive Recruitment Plan requirements. They provide technical assistance to local districts and voluntary agencies to determine compliance with the Multiethnic Placement Act of 1994 (MEPA) as amended by the Interethnic Adoption Provisions of 1996 and state regulations. Recruitment efforts in each county of the state are tailored to meet the specific needs in that county. In some counties, foster and adoptive parents are trained to be recruiters and use their experience to provide guidance, direction, and consultation to new foster parents. OCFS takes an active role in disseminating information on foster care and adoption through the use its web site.

To support the diligent recruitment of foster and adoptive families who reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of children needing out of home care, OCFS actively guides recruitment and retention across the state in several ways. OCFS requires counties and voluntary agencies to create a multiyear Foster and Adoptive Parent Recruitment and Retention Plan. Voluntary agencies may serve multiple counties and their retention plan is a reflection of the children entrusted to their care. Counties and agencies submit these plans to OCFS every three years. They detail the racial and ethnic diversity of available homes and project the number of homes needed to fill any gaps. The plans must be in compliance with MEPA and its subsequent amendments. OCFS regional offices review each submission and may ask counties to clarify and strengthen their recruitment strategies prior to plan approval. Permanency specialists from OCFS regional offices periodically meet with districts and agencies to review progress in recruitment.

OCFS provides detailed instructions to counties and agencies for developing a Recruitment and Retention Plan. Since the last statewide assessment, guidance has become more rigorous.

Agencies must review data related to demographics of children who need foster/adoptive homes, and determine unmet needs by comparing the data to the current pool of homes (Please see the Statewide Self-Assessment for specific data).

Agencies are asked to examine vacancy and utilization rates to support their analysis of needed homes. Then, agencies document the number of children currently in different levels of foster care (e.g., foster homes, therapeutic and residential care), including those seeking adoption. This data is broken down by race and ethnicity. From these numbers, the agencies project targeted recruitment needs for the next three years by race and ethnicity, as well as by age and special needs (such as sibling groups, behavioral issues, etc.).

As a result of these comprehensive plans, every county and agency in the state sets specific targets for recruiting a diverse pool of foster and adoptive parents and works toward measurable outcomes in this area. When developing the plans, counties and agencies assess their current opportunities and challenges in recruitment and retention, considering what worked and what did not work in past efforts, and then decide how to build on past successes. The plans are to include targeted and child-specific recruitment strategies to support the recruitment of foster and adoptive homes which reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of children needing care. OCFS recommends using targeted recruitment strategies to address gaps, including community partnerships and the involvement of current foster and adoptive families. As part of the recruitment planning process, counties and agencies are directed to evaluate the extent to which their objectives were met, document results, and identify opportunities for improvement.

The current deadline for submitting these plans is the end of December 2016. OCFS is refining its instructions for counties and agencies. These improvements will further align the plans with the latest research and best practice in diligent recruitment, and will increase comparability of data from the plans across the state's counties and agencies.

Factors Affecting Practice

Further strengthening efforts in the state, OCFS was awarded a five year federal diligent recruitment grant from the Children's Bureau, Administration of Children and Families. The grant objectives include addressing the ongoing needs for the recruitment of foster and adoptive families that reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of children in need of foster care. The grant was implemented from 2013 to 2018 by Welfare Research, Inc. (WRI) and is designed for statewide impact. Communications between the grant project staff and the federal project officer have been helpful, productive, and strengthened implementation.

The federal diligent recruitment project provides several new tools for counties and agencies to increase the diversity of their pool of foster and adoptive homes. The first tool is a best practices guide released in the fall of 2015, Revitalizing Recruitment: Practical Strategies for Finding and Keeping Foster, Adoptive, and Kinship Families. Emphasizes strategies to recruit an ethnically and racially diverse pool of foster and adoptive parents. Another tool is a web-based recruitment tracking system that allows agencies to see trends in characteristics of the families they are recruiting and certifying, including race and ethnicity. This data system will help agencies examine recruitment trends over time to see whether, for example, a pool of Latino foster homes has increased or decreased compared to the previous year. A third tool from the diligent recruitment project will include a step-by-step "Blueprint," a how-to-guide on using data to drive recruitment efforts. The guide will help agencies examine their data and better target recruitment of homes needed to meet the characteristics of children in care. Foster parent satisfaction surveys and "closed home" surveys will measure retention, including retention of diverse families over time.

The grant project staff began working intensively with three implementation counties to look carefully at available data, develop and implement strategic action plans to address local priority areas and to support the counties' work. The project expanded to a fourth county and will include at least two more in 2016. The lessons learned from this work are being documented in the "Blueprint" that will help other counties and agencies statewide to undertake this process themselves.

The OCFS regional offices support counties and agencies in this work in additional ways, such as providing technical assistance. OCFS's training contracts support counties and agencies in accessing additional expertise and training, with approval from the regional offices. These training contracts include the Foster Parents as Recruiters program, which allows counties and agencies to contract and partner with an experienced foster parent in implementing recruitment and retention. This program is based on the well-founded principle that foster parents are the best recruiters, and is an important way OCFS supports innovative strategies.

OCFS was awarded a federal diligent recruitment grant from the Children's Bureau, Administration of Children and Families. The work plan, implemented from 2013 to 2018 by Welfare Research, Inc. (WRI), is designed for regional and statewide impact.

Current activities include ongoing work with three implementation counties in Regions IV and V: Albany, Schenectady and Nassau (and additionally Ulster County). Guided by project staff, each county developed and is now implementing a strategic action plan based on needs identified from their local data. Although each county's action plan is unique, common strategies include: recruitment data tracking, administration of a foster/adoptive parent survey, strengthening targeted and child-specific recruitment strategies, and enhancing supports for foster parents to improve retention. Details on these strategies are outlined below:

Systematic tracking and improvement of recruitment process steps and outcomes. Currently, counties are piloting a tracking tool from AdoptUSKids called the Family Intake Tracking Tool (FITT).
Administration of a foster/adoptive parent survey in the three implementation counties. The survey results will be used to make improvements in recruitment and retention. The survey is developed and analyzed by the project's evaluation partner, Child Trends.
Targeted recruitment by partnering with diverse community-based organizations child-specific recruitment through implementation of the Wendy's Wonderful Kids program in two of the three counties. Wendy's Wonderful Kids is an evidence-based, child-focused recruitment approach developed by the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption, especially effective with older youth. Wendy's Wonderful Kids recruiters, stationed at the local offices of Albany and Schenectady counties, find permanent homes for children.
In two of the three counties there is an ongoing partnership with Fostering Futures NY, an innovative program that recruits and trains teams of volunteers from the community to provide natural and practical supports to foster families.

This year, the project is expanding into Region III (Syracuse Region), where project staff will work with at least two additional implementation counties. Plans are underway to establish and strengthen cross-county and regional recruitment strategies, to avoid duplication at the local level and leverage regional strengths.

As noted above, the project is developing and distributing a "Blueprint," how-toguide on using data to drive recruitment efforts. Lessons learned from the work with implementation counties,

along with national research, will be documented in the "Blueprint," so that other counties and agencies may use the same process. This tool will complement the best practices guide developed and disseminated by the project team last year, Revitalizing Recruitment: Practical Strategies for Finding and Feeping Foster, Adoptive, and Kinship Homes.

Building on this knowledge, the project team is refining the template of the Recruitment and Retention plan.

The project also includes ongoing engagement in evaluation activities with Child Trends, such as annual site visits to learn how the grant activities affect recruitment and retention practices and how they affect the pool of foster/adoptive families. Initial feedback indicates the implementation counties view the grant activities positively. While impacts and outcomes are still being measured, it is known that one implementation county has increased its number of certified homes by 33 percent as a result of engagement with the grant. Regarding the racial/ethnic composition of the pool, (and whether that is changing to better meet the needs of children in care), this data, contained in existing SACWIS reports, is not easily accessed by the counties. The grant activities highlight the need to increase SACWIS reporting on the characteristics of foster homes. In the short term, a recruitment data tracking system such as FITT, described above, will help counties assess the racial/ethnic breakdown of homes. In 2016-2017, Child Trends' evaluation will include analysis of administrative (SACWIS) data to see if the pool of homes in the three implementation counties has increased and to show the pool's racial/ethnic breakdown.

All diligent recruitment activities are detailed in semi-annual reports to the Children's Bureau and quarterly calls with the Federal Project Officer.

During 2016 – 2017, grant activities will include ongoing work with six counties in Regions III, IV and V. Each county will continue to implement its strategic action plan for recruitment and retention. Ongoing strategies are expected to include: recruitment data tracking, re-administration of a foster/adoptive parent survey, strengthening targeted and child-specific recruitment strategies, and enhancing supports for foster parents to improve retention (details in the previous section).
Next year, the project will continue to strengthen cross-county and regional recruitment strategies and will distribute the "Blueprint" through a series of regional forums. The "Blueprint" complements the best practices guide, Revitalizing Recruitment: Practical Strategies for Finding and Keeping Foster, Adoptive, and Kinship Homes.

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 generally 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 (No change). 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 the OCFS medical director (a pediatrician), and a representative group of foster care agency and social services staff that included medical professionals and was revised 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, is contracted with two supervising psychiatrists and employs 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 utilized the evidence based Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) assessment tool for the since the origin three Bridges to Health (B2H) Home and Community Based Waivers for children in foster care and who remain B2H eligible upon discharge from foster care. Bridges to Health (B2H) (*Working Together Manual* B-21, B-175) care managers utilize the CANS to plan for B2H services and provide direction to address needs and strengths.

OCFS, along with its NYS partners at the Department of Health, Office of Mental Health, and Office of Substance Abuse and Alcoholism Services, have been working to transition the children's behavioral health and health systems, through the Governor's charge of Medicaid Redesign. The State partners have worked Dr. John Lyons to revise the current CANS-NY to create 2 CANS instruments that account for the differences in younger and older youth.

Dr. Lyons has approved the two draft versions of the CANS-NY 0-5, and the CANS-NY 6-21, which are now utilized by the B2H providers and will be used in the future for the foster care population transitions described below. NYS, under the approval of Dr. Lyons, included an "early development" module in the CANS 0-5, modules on "transition to adulthood" in the CANS 6-21, and increased both tools' sensitivity to medically fragile children and enhanced trauma related items.

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.

Children placed in foster homes licensed by the LDSS (referred to as "direct care foster care"), 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) and reviewed the contents of the Policy Paper.

The NYS Medicaid Redesign impacts children in foster care in significant ways with the following projected timelines:

1. ***Health Homes Care Coordination beginning in October 2016***: Health Homes for children will begin enrollment as part of New York States' "care management for all" 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 Home Care Management Agencies for the foster care population.

2. ***State Plan Amendment (SPA) Services beginning January 2017:*** OCFS and its NYS partners have been developing six new Medicaid SPA services that will be based on Medical Necessity, including Crisis Intervention, Community Psychiatric Supports and Treatment, Other Licensed Practitioner, Psychosocial Rehabilitation Services, Family Peer Support Services, and Youth Peer Advocacy and Training.

3. ***Children placed with Voluntary Foster Care Agencies are intended to move into Managed Care in July 2017 (New York City, Long Island) and January 2018 (Rest of State):*** The Children's Health Subcommittee of the MRT Behavioral Health Workgroup includes representatives from DOH, OCFS, OMH and OASAS whose charge is to transform to care for children and redesign services for children. This includes approximately 16,500 children who are served by 92 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 this must be done in a highly orchestrated fashion.

    - This includes the access of information regarding psychotropic medication utilization for the foster care population, as this will be made available through the Managed Care Plans. OCFS is developing draft revisions to the New York State Model Contract with the Managed Care Organizations (MCOs), whereas the MCOs must implement oversight and monitoring the use of psychotropic medications for children in foster care, including the oversight of any child: (1) under the age of 6 taking any psychotropic medications (2) on more than one

medication from the same class (antidepressants, antipsychotics, ADHD medications, anxiolytics/hypnotics, mood stabilizers) OR (3) on three or more psychotropic medications; in the event that any of these prescribing methods occur, MCOs must provide quality standards and oversight through its physician network through alerts, consultation, and education.

4. ***Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Services beginning July 2017 (New York City, Long Island) and January 2018 (Rest of State***): OCFS and its NYS partners have been developing an expanded array of HCBS services, including: the existing B2H Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) will be aligned to one array of HCBS benefits, pending federal CMS approval, and will be moved to Managed Care. As a result of this transition, the B2H Waivers will be discontinued as separate programs once the transition is complete. In 2017, children meeting Level of Care criteria will begin to receive HCBS benefits. In 2018, children meeting Level of Need criteria will begin to receive HCBS benefits.

OCFS is working in tandem with DOH to design a system of care for Children in 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 (VFCAs) will continue to receive and operate a "Residual Medicaid Per Diem" to include services that are health care related and vital to the VFCA's operations. This includes Nursing and Social Work, which are non-encounter based services.

- Exploration of options for VFCAs: VFCAs are required to provide or arrange for health care services based on Federal and State Health Care standards. As New York State continues to move services and populations into managed care, as well as recognizing that the VFCA provide trauma-informed services, New York State is exploring how VFCAs could qualify to be "licensed" as a stand-alone medical facility provider types. This includes requirements for obtaining that licensure. Some issues with licensing VFCAs within the scope of them offering "health care services" through qualified practitioners are regulatory in nature, including the New York State agency that would oversee and monitor the health services of VFCAs; as well as considerations of New York State resources, minimum standards, as well as whether legislation would be required.

- Managed Care Organizations contract for clinical services, such as: behavioral health, primary care, specialty health care, pharmacy & lab care and dental services. OCFS and DOH are working to define the MCO per Member per Month 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) requires states to provide Medicaid coverage to eligible **Former Foster Care Youth (FFC)**, if otherwise eligible, through the end of the month of their 26th 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 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. As required per P.L. 111-148 of the Act, OCFS is submitting an updated Health Care Oversight and Coordination Plan with the CFSP on June 30, 2014, identified in the table of contents as Appendix "E."

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 been based upon the extensive reuse of technical assets developed as part of the Children's Passport for Juvenile Justice (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 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 Is working with The New York State Office of Information Technology Services to replace the agency's Geographic Informational Center (GIC) mapping computer application which was

widely used as a tool to identify facilities and providers in impacted areas for disaster response. OCFS was recently approved to receive several new licenses for new GIS software packages.

OCFS is a member of the New York State Disaster Preparedness Commission (DPC).

OCFS serves on the New York State Human Services Committee under the DPC and is the Co-Lead of the NYS Disaster Assistance Center Group.

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 2015-2016:

OCFS Emergency Responses and Preparedness Coordination
OCFS participated in Multi-Agency Coordination Calls for several events throughout the year such as the Papal visit to New York City, Sept. 24-26, 2015; Hurricane Joaquin, Oct 1, 2015; Winter Storm, Jan 21-24, 2016.

Social Services Block Grant
OCFS continues to administer the Hurricane Sandy SSBG supplemental funding. This funding, $235,434,600.00, supports state efforts to address social services, health, and mental health services recovery needs of disaster survivors; and the repair, renovation and rebuilding of health care facilities (including mental health facilities), child care facilities, and other social services facilities damaged or destroyed by the disaster.

OCFS NY-Alert
OCFS continues to use and test 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.

Emergency Management Certification and Training (EMC & T) Academy
OCFS emergency management staff completed the 2015 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 Preparing for the Health and Mental Health Consequences of Climate Change
OCFS staff attended the annual Institute for Disaster Mental Health Training and Conference on Preparing for the Health and Mental Health Consequences of Climate Change on April 17, 2015.

Scenario Based Facilitated Discussion on School Preparedness and Response Exercise
OCFS participated in a facilitated discussion based exercise on the need for better coordination of Disaster Mental Health with school responses to emergencies. January 22, 2016.

New York State Citizen Preparedness Corps Training

OCFS hosted a personal disaster preparedness program, Citizen Preparedness Corps for Home Office staff on September 23, 2015.

Disaster Preparedness Commission (DPC) Training/Exercises/Meetings

- OCFS Agency Emergency Management Coordinator participated in a three day Human Services Branch table top exercise hosted by NYSOEM August 5, September 9 and December 9, 2015.
- Agency Emergency Management Coordinator helped develop and teach Access and Functional Needs Workshops hosted by NYSOEM on August 7 and September 18, 2015.
- Community Resilience, Recovery and Preparedness: A Triad in Emergency Management Meeting on May 7, 2015
- AEMC participated in a COOP Workshop hosted by NYSOEM on August 28, 2015

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

- R. E. Ginna Federally Evaluated Plume Exercise: April 28, 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 October 23 and 24, 2015, 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
- NYS Human Services Annex review

New York Public Welfare Association Presentation (NYPWA)

OCFS presented with OTDA and the Montgomery County Commissioner of Social Services a disaster scenario based workshop during the summer NYPWA conference on July 20, 2015.

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 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 final stages of development and is planned to be released 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 2016.

- **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 2016-2017

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

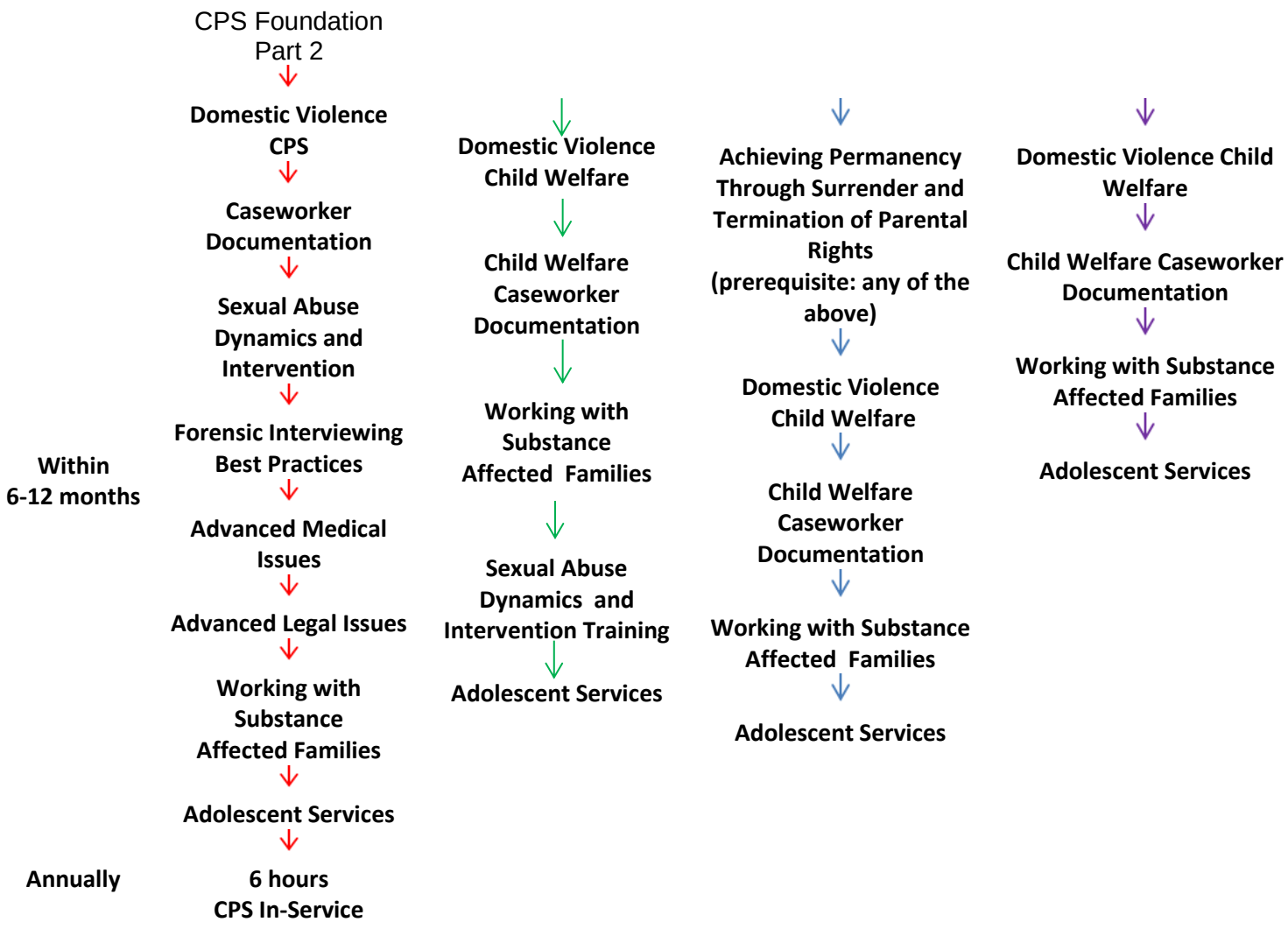
Training Planned For Federal Fiscal Years 2015-2019

Training Conducted in Federal Fiscal Year 2015-2016 and Proposed in 2016-2017.

It is expected that many of the training programs provided in 2015, as described in the Program Support section of the Final Report, will be offered again during the 2016, based upon OCFS' Practice Model and subject to the availability of funding and vendor contracts. The following trainings are planned for 2016:

CW CASEWORKER TRAINING PATH

Time Frames For CPS track only	CPS	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 OR Core Essential Skills for Experienced Caseworkers OR CPS Foundation Part 1 OR NYC ACS Core ↓ Child Protective Response Training (prerequisite: any of the above) ↓	CW/ CPS Common Core for New Caseworkers OR Core Essential Skills for Experienced Caseworkers OR NYC Voluntary Agency Core ↓	CW/ CPS Common Core for New Caseworkers OR Core Essential Skills for Experienced Caseworkers OR NYC Voluntary Agency Core ↓	CW/ CPS Common Core for New Caseworkers OR Core Essential Skills for Experienced Caseworkers OR NYC Voluntary Agency Core ↓
FAR: P&P before case assigned, others within 90 days	For FAR: • FAR Process and Practice • Solution Focused FAR Practice • Assessing Safety & Risk in FAR ↓			



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. Traditionally, the Child Welfare/Child Protective Services Common Core for New Caseworkers has provided all new caseworkers with a common set of knowledge and skills to achieve the goals of safety, permanency, and well-being for children. A second foundational program was introduced in 2015 to meet an unprecedented demand to train CPS workers quickly: CPS Foundation Part 1, to be followed by CPS Foundation Part 2 in 2016. The Common Core and the CPS Foundation programs are 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 or CPS Foundation, 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 or CPS Foundations Part 1 and Part 2 may be accepted as part of the approved CPS foundation training:

-Core Essential Skills for Experienced Caseworkers for caseworkers who have at least six months of experience, but did not attend Common Core or CPS Foundation.
-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 a foundation training program for new caseworkers hired by local districts and contracted preventive and foster care services agencies. In mid-2015, this program was replaced by CPS Foundation Part 1 as the primary foundational training in response to the need to train an unprecedented number of CPS workers. However, it is possible that up to two Common Core offerings will be offered in 2016. Common Core is designed 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.

Training is provided by the University Partner SUC Buffalo – CDHS/ICHP.

Estimated cost per delivery is $302,000.

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2015-2015 (actual)	378	14	297
2016-2017 (proposed)	50	2	38

CPS Foundation Part 1

CPS Foundation Part 1 is the first part of a new training program, as a modularized revised version of Common Core, developed by CDHS/ICHP in collaboration with OCFS to meet the unprecedented hiring of CPS workers in local districts during a condensed time period. The program is designed to build and enhance foundational competencies of new caseworkers who have a role in Child Protective Services Responses, including FAR and on-call services, by providing them with the knowledge and skills necessary to effectively begin working with children and families to achieve the child welfare outcomes of safety, permanence, and well-being. CPS Foundation Part 1 provides foundational learning necessary to proceed to Child Protective Services Response Training (CPSRT).

CPS Foundation Part 1 is a blended learning program that includes 8 days of classroom training, one day of which is Legal training, as well as web-based instructional activities. Mandated Reporter Training is required for successful participation in CPS Foundation Training and must be completed before the first week of classroom training. Web-based instructional activities are prerequisite for the first week of classroom training. The web-based activities will cover child welfare definitions and concepts, laying the groundwork for further development in the classroom. There are also post-classroom web-based training components that trainees are required to complete in their home districts prior to attending CPSRT.

Trainees and their supervisors will participate in mid-training, and post-training coaching conferences. The mid conference will be held via phone after the trainee completes

CPSRT. The post training conference will occur face to face in the trainee's district after CPS Foundation Training Part 2

Training is provided by the University Partner SUC Buffalo – CDHS/ICHP.

Estimated cost per delivery is $113,800.

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2015-2016 (actual)	152	9	72
2016-2017 (proposed)	275	11	88

CPS Foundation Part 2

CPS Foundation Part 2 is the second part of a new training program, as a modularized revised version of Common Core, developed by CDHS/ICHP in collaboration with OCFS to meet the unprecedented hiring of CPS workers in local districts during a condensed time period. The program is designed to build upon the knowledge and skill new CPS workers gained during Part 1 of Foundation and CPSRT, as well as during on the job training and their initial casework. CPS Foundation Part 2 is required for CPS Foundation Part 1 and CPSRT participants to complete their "new caseworker" training.

CPS Foundation Part 2 is a blended learning program consisting of 8 days of classroom training, including an optional legal training day, and web-based instructional activities. The web-based activities will cover child welfare definitions and concepts, laying the groundwork for further development in the classroom.

Trainees and their supervisors will participate in post-training coaching conferences. The post training conference will occur face to face in the trainee's district after CPS Foundation Training Part 2

Training is provided by the University Partner SUC Buffalo – CDHS/ICHP.

Estimated cost per delivery is $113,800.

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2016-2017 (proposed)	425	17	136

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 or CPS Foundation as a prerequisite for CPSRT Training.

Training is provided by a collaboration between University Partners: SUNY Albany – PDP, and SUC Buffalo – CDHS/ICHP.

Estimated cost per delivery is $54,600.

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2015-2016 (actual)	154	11	100
2016-2017 (proposed)	144	12	114

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. Until 2016-2017, each module was treated as a separate course for the purpose of tracking the number of offerings, trainees, and training days. It was recommended that all trainees attend all four modules. Beginning in 2016-2017, the first three modules will become a single multipart course, and all three modules will be required for completion. Module four will a stand-alone advanced course called "Attachment and Separation Issues in Child Welfare," included in the Supplemental Training.

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 $7,575.
Estimated cost per training day for one and two day Supplemental training courses is $700.
Estimated cost per training day for the three-day Attachment and Separation Issues course is $840.

Core Training

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2015-2016 (actual)	3216	20	60
2016-2017 (proposed)	100	5	60

Supplemental Training

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2015-2016 (actual)	357	22	30.5
2016-2017 (proposed)	700	38	50

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 or CPS Foundation training and applying them to the CPS role and responsibilities in the context of the CPS Response. This course is directed by policy as a foundation course for all CPS caseworkers. It 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 seven days of classroom training supplemented by web-based training.

Training is provided by University Partner SUC Buffalo – CDHS/ICHP.

Estimated cost per delivery is $79,850.

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2015-2016 (actual)	467	21	147
2016-2017 (proposed)	375	15	105

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.

This is an elective training. However, participants must first take one of the three foundation training programs: Common Core, CPS Foundation Part 1 and Part 2, Core Essential Skills, or Core Training for Voluntary Agencies.

The training is provided by the University Partner SUC Buffalo – CDHS/ICHP.

Estimated cost per delivery is $107,700.

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2015-2016 (actual)	36	3	18
2016-2017 (proposed)	60	4	24

CHILD WELFARE SUPERVISORY TRAINING PROGRAMS

Sections 421(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
2015-2016 (actual)	93	5	30
2016-2017 (proposed)	100	5	30

Training is provided by University Partner SUC Buffalo – CDHS/ICHP.

Estimated cost per delivery is $39,600.

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
2015-2016 (actual)	475	83	83
2016-2017 (proposed)	612	102	102

Training is provided by University Partner SUC Buffalo – CDHS/ICHP.

Estimated cost per delivery is $5,780.

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 is provided by University Partner SUC Buffalo – CDHS/ICHP.

Estimated cost per delivery is $9,200.

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2015-2016 (actual)	190	17	17
2016-2017 (proposed)	90	6	6

Supervising CPS

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.

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2015-2016 (actual)	45	3	12
2016-2017 (proposed)	60	4	16

Training is provided by University Partner SUC Buffalo – CDHS/ICHP.

Estimated cost per delivery is $38,565.

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

2015-2016 (actual)	67	1	2
2016-2017 (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 is provided by University Partner SUC Buffalo – CDHS/ICHP.

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). It is recommended that this series be taken in sequence, as skills from module one are built upon in the subsequent modules.

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2016-2017 (proposed)	300	12	24

Training is provided by University Partner SUC Buffalo – CDHS.

Estimated cost per delivery is $9,592.

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, CPS Foundation Part 1 and Part 2, 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 follow-up training.

Training is provided by University Partners SUC Buffalo – CDHS/ICHP and SUNY Albany - PDP.

Estimated cost per delivery is $9,900.

Year	Training Days
2015-2016 (actual)	15
2016-2017 (proposed)	48

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. The first component of this work plan focuses on Progress Notes, and the second component focuses on the Family Assessment and Service Planning (FASP) instrument where caseworkers document casework practice. The Progress Notes curriculum was updated in 2015.

Year	Trainees	Training Days
2015-2016 (actual)	1326	160
2016-2017 (proposed)	1185	190

Training is provided by University Partner SUNY Albany – PDP.

Estimated cost per delivery is $4,185.

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	
2015-2016 (actual)	823	45	94	
2016-2017 (proposed)	1018	50	102	

Training is provided by SUNY Stony Brook, Fordham University and Safe Horizon.

Estimated cost for Interviewing Children Skills Clinic per delivery is $11,200.
Estimated cost for Advanced Medical and Legal Issues per delivery is $14,115.
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 is provided by University Partners SUNY Stony Brook/Fordham University.

Estimated cost per delivery is $19,125.

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2015-2016 (actual)	396	16	48
2016-2017 (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 (WASAF) as well as Special Topics classroom deliveries. This is a one-day classroom training.

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2015-2016 (actual)	639	43	43
2016-2017 (proposed)	825	45	45

Training is provided by University Partner SUNY Albany – PDP.

Estimated cost per delivery is $2,100 (Special Topics) to $2,700 (WASAF).

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.

Beginning in 2016-2017, Safety and Risk Refresher will be included in Special Topics days.

In 2015-2016, training was provided by University Partners SUNY Albany – PDP and SUNY Stony Brook.

Average cost of delivery was $10,580.

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days

2015-2016 (actual)	20	1	2

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 is provided by University Partner SUC Buffalo – CDHS/ICHP.

Estimated cost per toolkit delivery is $6,300.

Implementation

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2015-2016 (actual)	1318	192	100
2016-2017 (proposed)	1890	270	135

Toolkit Training

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2015-2016 (actual)	918	81	134
2016-2017 (proposed)	636	53	132.5

Training and Technical Assistance for Child Welfare Teams

OCFS supports a model of service delivery by casework teams, with 13 teams in seven local districts: Albany, Columbia, Orange, Schenectady, Richmond, Rockland, and Westchester counties. 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 2016 along with team expansion in districts already having one team or more.

Training is provided by University Partner SUC Buffalo – CDHS/ICHP.

Estimated cost per delivery is $3,500.

Family Assessment Response Training

FAR became a permanent child protective service in June 2011. Currently, there are 23 counties implementing FAR, they are: Allegany, Cayuga, Chemung, Columbia, Jefferson, Kings, 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 increase the use of FAR by training university partners and staff members in some local districts.

Training is provided by University Partners SUC Buffalo – CDHS/ICHP and University of Colorado – Butler Institute for Families.

Estimated cost per training/coaching day is $7,540.

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training/Coaching Days
2015-2016 (actual)	731		70
2016-2017(proposed)	900		109

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 is provided by SUC Buffalo – CDHS/ICHP.

Estimated cost per delivery is $775.

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2015-2016 (actual)	457	45	27
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 by 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 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.

Training is provided jointly by the New York State Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and SUC Buffalo – CDHS/ICHP.

Estimated cost per delivery is $7,440.

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2015-2016 (actual)	349	21	42
2016-2017 (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 is provided by New York State Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence.

Estimated cost per delivery is $8,590.

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2015-2016 (actual)	330	21	42
2016-2017 (proposed)	400	20	40

Adolescent Services

The courses that are considered foundation courses are "Promoting Positive Youth Development and Well-Being" and "Adolescent Services Life Skills 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.

Training is provided by SUNY Albany Professional Development Program.

Estimated cost per delivery is $16,300.

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.

Topic Specific Classroom Training

This training is offered as full or half day training and is delivered statewide. For 2016, topic specific training will focus on promoting youth well-being, what workers can do to help youth feel safe and provide youth with the skills they need to transition into adulthood.

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, as well as youth in OCFS facilities who represent each of the six regions in New York State. Youth In Progress adolescents will continue to meet on a regular basis to receive training, skill practice, awareness and practical guidance on how to assess and use the resources available to them to help transition to self-sufficiency.

Regional Youth Voice Events will continue to be held across the state. These events provide youth with a voice in identifying issues they have with policies and practices that influence their lives. Youth in care have an opportunity to present their individual issues and concerns to a panel of regional policy makers who can effect local change. These events will also present an opportunity for the youth to take part in the recruitment of new

members for regional youth leadership programs.

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2015-2016 (actual)	3771	364	205
2016-2017 (proposed)	3700	370	335

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 in-service). 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

County	CPS Active	CPS Compliant	CPS Not Compliant
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
	2864	**2313**	**551**

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)
Adjustable Rate Category*				

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. [18 NYCRR 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 [18 NYCRR 427.6(e)(3)].

Training required by 18 NYCRR 446.5(a) 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 [18 NYCRR 446.5(b)].

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/MAPP, Shared Parenting/MAPP, and Deciding Together/MAPP. 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/MAPP: A preparation program specifically for relative caregivers given over a period of nine weeks.
- Shared Parenting/MAPP: 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/MAPP: Seven consultations are provided in this model to individual families to prepare them to foster or adopt.
- Special Topics are offered either in classroom or through distance learning on such topics as Loss and Separation, Preparing Children for Adoption, Managing Difficult Behaviors, Sexual Abuse, Child Development and Discipline, among others.
- There is also classroom training on Trauma for Caregivers.
- In addition to the above there is a GPS/MAPP 2 day seminar.
- For 2016-2017, two one-day Foster Parent Seminars to provide training on HR4980 and NYS initiatives have been added.

Year	Trainees	Training Days
2015-2016 (actual)	3151	357
2016-2017 (proposed)	4191	440

- In 2015-2016, an additional 347 days were spent on curriculum development.

Training is provided by University Partner SUC Buffalo – CDHS/ICHP.

Estimated Cost per delivery is $6,145

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 is provided by University Partner SUC Buffalo – CDHS/ICHP under a subcontract with People Places, Inc.

Estimated cost per delivery is $4,190.

Year	Trainees	Training Days
2015-2016 (actual)	435	86
2016-2017 (proposed)	81	42

Behavior Support, Crisis Prevention and Intervention in Residential Settings

The Behavior Support Crisis Prevention and Intervention Train the Trainer creates a cadre of agency-based trainers who prepare staff within residential and congregate child care agencies to maintain the safety and well-being of youth through a behavior support, crisis prevention and intervention system. This system teaches staff to effectively manage acute crises, reduce the potential for injury to children, and learn constructive ways to handle stressful situations in order to reduce the incidences of physical interventions and to create safe environments for the children in their care. This five-day trainer program leads to certification of Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI) trainers. In addition to the core program, one and two-day refresher trainings and technical assistance are provided to previously certified TCI trainers, to assist them in keeping their certification current.

Training is provided by Cornell University.

Estimated cost per training day is $8,685.

Year	Trainees	Training Days
2015-2016 (actual)	633	10
2016-2017 (proposed)	830	98

Other Training Improvement Anticipated in 2016

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.