



Child and Family Services Plan

For

**New York State
Office of
Children & Family
Services**

New York State

FFY 2005-2009

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**David A. Paterson
Governor**

**ANNUAL PROGRESS AND SERVICE
REPORT**

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**New York State
Annual Progress Services Report
June 2008**

INTRODUCTION

The Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) was established in 1998 to improve, strengthen and integrate services to the State's children, youth and other vulnerable populations. The creation of OCFS responded to a growing recognition of the complexity and interrelatedness of today's problems and solutions. All children, youth and adults require the support of their families and communities. Fundamental to securing the safety and well-being of all State residents is the ability to access supports, without regard for funding sources, service capacities, or having to reconcile differing approaches to services among providers. The OCFS' mission is to serve New York's public by promoting the well-being, permanency and safety of our children, families and communities. We will achieve results by setting and enforcing policies, building partnerships, and funding and providing quality services.

This mission statement guides the OCFS' administration of over \$3.5 billion in public funds aimed at meeting its multiple service delivery responsibilities. In addition to directly providing services, OCFS funds and supervises local social services districts, youth bureaus, child care programs and community and voluntary agencies in directly providing or collaborating with other agencies to provide a wide range of developmental, preventive and remedial supports to New York State's citizens. To succeed, OCFS must focus on efficiently and effectively maintaining and strengthening the self-sufficiency of families.

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

OCFS continues to specify and demand that outcomes be established and met for its substantial investment in the community. The ability to measure outcomes and define success continues to be a top priority for OCFS. OCFS' operating principles and strategies have been well chronicled in earlier updates.

There are many exciting initiatives in which OCFS participates that are detailed in this report. They reflect the efforts of countless committed professionals, families, volunteers and the communities in which they live and work. They reflect child care, youth development, juvenile justice, adult and child welfare and other services that are the responsibility of this agency. Most

importantly, however, they reflect the diverse character and needs of the vulnerable populations found from the Manhattan skyline to the Niagara Frontier to the Adirondack Mountains.

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

On May 23, 2007, a Joint Planning Conference was held. Representatives from OCFS and the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) (Junius Scott and Shari Brown) participated. This meeting was used to highlight some key elements of the Title IV-B funded activities in New York, and to provide ACF with the opportunity to identify points that needed emphasizing in the Annual Progress and Services Report (APSR). At this meeting, it was also decided by mutual consent, that the APSR submission will be streamlined. It was agreed that information that remains basically the same from year to year does not need to be repeated. Additionally, the extensive amount of information available on OCFS intranet and internet (link) sites now includes detailed information previously provided in the various descriptive sections of the APSR.

In preparation for this year's submission, OCFS and ACF have maintained monthly conference calls to share information related to New York State's APSR. These calls have served as both information sharing and suggestive guidance. This APSR is the final update to the current Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) for 2005-09.

OCFS has changed some Divisional names since last submission. Note that the Division of Development and Prevention Services (DDPS) is now the Division of Child Welfare and Community Services (CWCS), and the Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) is now the Division of Juvenile Justice and Opportunities for Youth (DJJOY).

QUALITY ASSURANCE AND PROGRAM SUPPORT

Quality Assurance and Accountability remains a priority. OCFS is committed to the principles of good management and accountability, both within its own operations and in those it supports. The approach must be coordinated to address the various funding mechanisms and partnerships with which OCFS is involved. The approved Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) Program Improvement Plan (PIP) is another process being incorporated into quality assurance activities to further strengthen the OCFS service delivery system. Guidance provided by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) confirmed that the PIP is to be incorporated in the Annual Progress Service Report (APSR) and efforts continue to fully incorporate necessary elements of the PIP into the APSR as instructed.

New York's State-supervised, locally administered system requires quality assurance efforts at the state, local government, and not-for-profit levels. The OCFS Office of Audit and Quality Control's (AQC) audit function plays a role at all levels. In addition to local district audits, AQC also conducts risk assessments and audits of targeted contract agencies. Statutory and regulatory

frameworks provide the standards against which performance can be measured and provides guidance for social services districts and contract agencies in establishing and carrying out their programs. Contractual language incorporates outcomes against which contractors can be measured. In addition, AQC coordinates the review of the audited financial statements received from local districts and sub-recipient agencies that are required by the federal Office of Management and Budget, Circular A-133. Extensive internal controls are in place to support these activities.

AQC maintains regional offices in Buffalo, Rensselaer, and Manhattan. AQC audit staff at those locations audit the activities of social services districts related to eligibility for Title IV-E Foster Care.

During the past year, AQC reviewed Title IV-E foster care eligibility determinations in eight social services districts. In addition, ten follow-up reviews were initiated on audits previously completed, with eight final reports issued. The information collected serves as a barometer of social services district performance in this area. The findings are informing technical assistance and training to districts in efforts to improve performance.

Quality Assurance also is a priority for OCFS' Division of Child Welfare and Community Services (CWCS) (formerly the Division of Development and Prevention Services). The monitoring of social services district and contract agency compliance with program regulations and practice standards is a joint responsibility between home office in the Bureau of Program Monitoring and Performance Improvement (BMPI) and staff in the Regional Offices in the Office of Regional Operations and Practice Improvement (ROPI). As noted below, the Regional Offices and BMPI work together to plan and to conduct reviews of local child protective services programs, called On-going Monitoring and Assessments (OMAs), in upstate social services districts. District-specific reports are developed as a result of these reviews with the requirement that the district prepare and implement a plan to address areas in need of improvement. Since 2000, CWCS has been monitoring social services districts' adherence to regulatory requirements and practice standards in foster care and adoption. This Safety and Permanency Assessment (SPA) assesses social services district performance in key areas related to Title IV-E of the Social Security Act. The protocol for this review was significantly revised in 2006 to incorporate New York State law, Chapter 3 of the Laws of 2005, commonly referred to as the "Permanency Law", which increased the frequency of judicial reviews and required a detailed report of the status of every foster child's safety, permanency and well-being. During 2007, SPAs were completed in 11 local districts, comprising a case review of 237 children and youth in foster care. For 2008, a SPA will be conducted in six local districts.

OCFS child protective services reviews are either comprehensive reviews or smaller sample Ongoing Monitoring and Assessments (OMA). Both include an examination of a random sample of cases to ascertain whether children are protected and whether adequate case assessments and decision-making occur during child protective investigations. All upstate districts and each New York City borough have been reviewed either through the Comprehensive or Ongoing Monitoring and Review process and continue to be reviewed on a four year monitoring cycle. The Bureau of Monitoring and Performance Improvement works with the Regional Offices to maintain an annual monitoring plan for OMA reviews. In 2007, a total of 20 OMA reviews were

completed, comprising a case review of 326 child protective investigations. For 2008, an OMA will be conducted in 10 local districts.

In 2007-2008, the OCFS New York City Regional Office (NYCRO) continued to monitor and oversee the Administration for Children's Services (ACS) and voluntary agencies in the New York City Region in all program areas. In adoption, ongoing monitoring occurs through the Adoption Monitoring and Data Warehouse Systems and direct contact and collaboration with ACS and the voluntary agencies. In addition, NYCRO staff conducted two sets of case reviews to identify barriers to permanency. Over 162 visits, and 5 program reviews were made involving ACS and voluntary agencies, focusing upon timely and appropriate processing of children toward permanency and the provision of quality services to children and families. The promotion of timely distribution of information to a broad range of stakeholders and ongoing collaboration between NYCRO, ACS, the New York State Office of Court Administration and the New York City Family Courts also supports this effort.

NYCRO coordinated observations of 77 NYC Family Court Permanency Hearings in all five Boroughs by OCFS staff from foster care, child protective, preventive, adoption and Audit and Quality Control. The purpose of the observations was to determine that appropriate persons were invited and attending, permanency reports were submitted timely and to all parties, caseworkers were prepared and to identify barriers to the permanency hearing process. A survey was completed by each participant, was analyzed and the results shared with the ACS to facilitate better and timely service to children and families.

The voluntary agencies were monitored and assessed through the ongoing Voluntary Agency Reviews (VAR) that is conducted on a three-year cycle. In this reporting period, thirteen voluntary agency reviews were conducted and reports of assessment findings were issued. Field work occurred for the program assessment of six additional foster care programs and reports of findings are in development. Performance improvement plans were requested and corrective actions plans were submitted by agencies for further follow up and provision of technical assistance by NYCRO foster care staff... NYCRO foster care staff continued to work with ACS on the findings resulting from OCFS' safety, permanency and life skills assessment of services for adolescents in ACS custody and ACS' development of the corrective action plan. Five monitoring visits were made to foster care agencies for discussion of specific areas of service provision and the utilization of best practices in engaging and serving families.

Program assessments and re licensure occurred for nine domestic violence programs and reports of assessment findings were issued. Program assessments and re-licensure recently occurred for three additional domestic violence programs with reports and findings in development.

In the area of Prevention, Program Assessment and Improvement (PPAI), NYCRO conducted on-site monitoring visits to the Purchased Preventive Services (PPRS) agencies that contract with ACS to provide preventive services. The visits included interviews of staff, reviewing preventive only cases and providing technical assistance. In addition, cases at PPRS agencies being provided with both preventive and CPS services were reviewed on CONNECTIONS. The PPAI unit made visits to 163 community based programs covering 75 PPRS agencies from May 2007 to March 2008. Visits will continue through September 2009 with each of the 207 community based programs at a minimum of one visit per year.

NYCRO foster care staff provided technical assistance to and monitored foster care agencies preparatory process for CONNECTIONS Build 18 Case Management implementation and ACS' development of Build 18 Case Management business practices.

Seventeen program assessments were completed for recertification of domestic violence programs. Domestic Violence beds in New York City will be increasing in the near future with the licensing of two new shelters with a combined capacity of 55 beds.

Fire safety inspections were conducted of 747 foster care and domestic violence residential facilities during the past year.

NYCRO Institutional Abuse (IAB) staff continuously monitors the congregate care and the juvenile justice detention programs through onsite investigations of reports of suspected abuse and maltreatment in residential facilities filed with the Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment (SCR).

Additionally, NYCRO's Child Protective Services (CPS) staff monitors and supervises ACS' CPS program, through the investigation of complaints received from the public and private sectors regarding ACS' investigation of SCR reports in familial, foster care and day care settings. This supervisory function is also a prime activity for NYCRO CPS during the review of ACS' investigation of child fatality reports. ACS staff is provided on-going technical assistance during the investigation phase. NYCRO staff compiles the mandated Child Fatality reports and requires Corrective Action Plans (CAP) as necessary. CPS monitors ACS' submissions of CAPs that are reviewed for acceptance.

Program staff in OCFS' six regional offices throughout the state provides ongoing technical assistance to social services districts and youth bureaus and perform monitoring tasks within the framework of supervisory oversight, ranging from routine review of agency programs to review of specific complaints.

Another continuing quality assurance initiative involves the review of a sample of cases from each district and OCFS to determine ASFA compliance. OCFS Division of Legal Affairs staff evaluates court documents to determine ASFA compliance. Feedback is provided to the districts and corrective action recommendations, which involve the Regional Offices, are made as needed.

OCFS maintains several data systems which assist OCFS in tracking client outcomes, and which provide aggregate data that help inform policy and program decisions. These data systems will be used to track the performance targets included in this five-year Child and Family Services Plan. Program data for Child Protective Services is available from CONNECTIONS. Program data for Preventive Services and Foster Care will come from the Child Care Review Service (CCRS). Adoption data is available from CCRS and the Adoption Monitoring System (AMS). Specific program data concerning Home Visiting will be drawn from the Home Visiting Data Management System and Family Resource Center data will be tracked in the Family Resource Center Program Data System.

The Monitoring and Analysis Profiles (MAPS) are data packages that provide specific annual data and trend data on the major child welfare services provided by the social services districts. Those packages are available in public folders in the exchange system. This provides faster access to the data by social services districts and voluntary authorized agencies that are on the exchange system. By having the data packages in the public folder, users are afforded the opportunity to reformat the data for their own purposes. The MAPS packages are used regularly to support the program monitoring role of regional offices and are used by both county and State staff in child welfare planning.

CWCS is also developing a specialized unit, “Continuous Quality Improvement” which focuses on data collection and utilization to assist OCFS and local districts identify trends and needs in child welfare. This is a fledgling effort, but is expected to be a critical function in our PIP development and monitoring.

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

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

The Round 2 PIP is expected to build upon many of the Round 1 PIP initiatives, such as family engagement, concurrent planning, safety and well being of children in residential care, permanency options, adolescent services and outcomes, workforce and supervisor development, and cross systems collaboration. Widespread input from internal and external stakeholders will be sought throughout the entire two-year PIP development and implementation phase.

Child and Family Services Plan

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

Planning in New York State continues to be a joint activity, with the focus of activity occurring in the social services districts and youth bureaus. OCFS’ role is to provide guidance to assist

social services district planning efforts, including youth bureau involvement, to reflect the goals and performance targets established. In partnership with those social services districts, New York State continues in the direction of achieving the various outcomes established within the CFSP. This partnership between the social services districts, youth bureaus, stakeholders, state agencies and OCFS is critical to the achievement of outcomes noted in the CFSP and this APSR. Described initiatives in this document include those supported with federal Child Welfare Services funds (Title IV-B, subpart 1); federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment funds (CAPTA); federal Title IV-E funds, including the application for and other information regarding the Chafee Foster Care Independent Program; Runaway Homeless Youth Act; Child Care Development Fund; and other state and federal sources.

Title IV-B, subpart 2 funds, Promoting Safe and Stable Families, for providing service delivery of family preservation, community-based family support, time-limited family reunification and adoption promotion and support, as well as planning and service coordination, were requested and received by New York State. Additionally, the state does support various programs with other federal and state funds that by definition fall under these categories. This Plan Amendment is further evidence that New York State will take every opportunity to explore whether the State is eligible to receive such funds.

The Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) and the Annual Progress and Services Reports (APSR) will be made available to: social services districts; other state agencies involved in major joint projects with OCFS; and the Indian Tribes. OCFS will provide specific notification to related providers on the availability of the Report. In addition, OCFS will notify the public of the availability of these documents. Additionally, this year the Child and Family Services Plan's Annual Progress and Service Report will be made available on the OCFS website.

OCFS Data Warehouse

The data warehouse initiative provides users, including local district, contract, regional, and State OCFS staff access to management reports and ad-hoc reporting on data in CONNECTIONS and legacy systems (child welfare-related data). Local Districts and Voluntary Agencies are able to obtain summary reports at the worker, caseload, local district, regional, and state levels. The OCFS Data Warehouse provides a series of standard reports that can be produced on demand at different levels of aggregation and time-periods and tools by which Local District and Voluntary

Agency staff can produce ad-hoc reports on clients or caseloads. The end result is improved management and analytical reporting capabilities for the OCFS services system.

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

Because the Data Warehouse can replicate the Federal data profiles, it gives local districts the ability to view child level data for each submitted measure. The Data Warehouse is used as a

data source in an increasing number of requests from districts, voluntary agencies, home office, the legislature, and general public.

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

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

Title IV-E Plan

On December 21, 2007, OCFS submitted the Title IV-E State Plan Amendment as required by Administration for Children and Families (ACF) Directive ACYF-CB-PI-07-03 that directed states to revise and submit a Title IV-E State Plan Amendment to comply with all Title IV-E statutory and legislative changes. On February 12, 2008, ACF approved New York State's amendments to the Title IV-E Plan.

CHILD WELFARE LAWS, POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES

The OCFS Internet provides extensive information on pertinent legislation, regulation, policy and procedure. In the program instructions for this APSR, ACYF-CB-PI-08-03, no new requirements have been added.

Physician Consultation to Access Health and Well-Being of Foster Children for Determining Appropriate Medical Treatment.

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 local departments of social services, who are the legal custodians and case managers, and the authorized foster care agencies with whom these departments contract to provide foster care services. Over 80% of NYS children in foster care are cared for by non-public foster care agencies (voluntary authorized agencies) rather than local departments of social services. OCFS routinely conducts site visits and provides technical assistance to departments and agencies to monitor the quality of services provided.

The models of delivery for health care services to children in foster care vary significantly across New York State. Some authorized foster care agencies deliver primary health care directly through on-site clinics. Some agencies have contractual agreements with health care providers; for example, an agency may contract with one psychologist in the community to conduct mental health evaluations on all new admissions. Most agencies have medical staff that provide some

tracking and oversight of routine and specialty health services. Children residing in foster homes often use community health providers.

While OCFS does not provide direct clinical services to children in foster care, OCFS has promulgated regulations regarding appropriate medical care. New York State Social Services Law (SSL) provides the statutory authority for OCFS to supervise local departments of social services and promulgate regulations. The regulations require that licensed medical professionals assess the health and well-being of children in foster care and determine appropriate medical treatment. OCFS has also provided practice guidance on necessary and optimal health services for children in foster care with our comprehensive manual, "Working Together: Health Services for Children in Foster Care". This manual was developed in close collaboration with our medical director (a pediatrician), and a representative group of foster care agency and social services staff that included medical professionals.

To support optimal health services for children in foster care, local departments of social services and foster care agencies use the services of licensed medical practitioners to inform policy and practice. For example, the NYC Administration for Children's Services (ACS) has a Medical Services Office that is led by a physician. This office provides policy guidance and oversees the health services provided to NYC children in foster care. They meet regularly with medical staff from the authorized foster care agencies to discuss new policies and address concerns.

NYC has a local coalition, the Committee of Mental Health and Healthcare Professionals in Child Welfare, which provides a forum for members to consult with each other on common concerns around health services for children in foster care. This group has also advised OCFS on the contents of CONNECTIONS, our SACWIS system. The Health Care Workgroup of the Council of Family and Child Caring Agencies (COFCCA) was instrumental in development of the Foster Care Initiative (FCI). FCI is a project in 2 NYC agencies that demonstrated new approaches for mental health services for children in foster care, including addressing trauma.

In the Albany area, a foster care agency has contracted with Albany School of Pharmacy to advise their medical staff on medication matters. In central New York, several counties have contracted the services of a child psychiatrist, who must approve all prescriptions for psychotropic medications for children in foster care before the prescriptions can be filled. This psychiatrist has also conducted chart reviews of medication usage for children in congregate care settings in Onondaga County and advised the county on the appropriateness of the prescribing practices.

The NYS Coalition for Children's Mental Health Services, headed by foster care agency directors, holds annual Public Policy Forums. These forums, attended by community health providers as well as foster care agencies, sponsor speakers and workshops that advance optimal, innovative care. The Office of Mental Health (OMH) is holding regional, public forums on their children's mental health plan. This allows our service providers to fully understand and provide input into the state plan.

The Coordinated Children's Services Initiative (CCSI) legislation requires that counties employ a collaborative approach to children with intensive cross-system needs. These collaboratives vary in accordance with local government and community resources, and typically include

representatives from social services, mental health, developmental disabilities, substance abuse services, schools, and community providers. The goal is to implement a comprehensive, coordinated, individualized service plan for each child.

At the state level, the OCFS medical director is involved in any regulatory or guidance documents disseminated on health issues. OCFS employs psychologists and a consultant psychiatrist. OCFS routinely engages local and national experts, including psychiatrists, physicians, pharmacists, and psychologists to assist in health-related initiatives. New activities in 2008 include a series of 3 teleconferences on trauma, the development and distribution of a guidance document on the use of psychiatric medication for children in out-of-home care, and an interagency collaboration to address Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD). OCFS has used an expert consultant to customize the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) assessment tool for use in our Bridges to Health foster care waiver program.

OCFS implemented a four year pilot of health care coordination for children in foster care in eight agencies across the state. The purpose of this pilot, which was conducted from 2003 - 2007, was to identify models for care coordination in a variety of settings and determine the impact of care coordination on the delivery of optimal health care to children in foster care. In addition to an evaluation component, now posted on our website, a white paper is being written on lessons learned at each site. Project directors and participants at the agencies included pediatricians, psychiatrists, nurses, and physician assistants. By their participation in this pilot, these medical professionals have helped us to define how care coordination can be successfully implemented in a variety of foster care settings. All pilot sites experienced positive outcomes, including the development of a Medical Passport at a Buffalo agency, and the creation of an on-site clinic for primary health care at a foster care agency in the Bronx. (Additionally, see Bridges to Health (B2H) noted in Goal 2).

Emergency Preparedness/ Disaster Plans

OCFS continues to refine and test its disaster plan to identify, locate and service children in care in the event of disaster. The approach will include responding to new cases as needed, maintaining communication with essential personnel, and how to maintain records and coordinate services under such circumstances.

OCFS plans address state and local needs as well as federal requirements to:

- identify, locate and continue availability of services for children under State care or supervision who are displaced or adversely affected by a disaster;
- respond to new child welfare cases in areas adversely affected by a disaster, and provide services in those cases;
- remain in communication with caseworkers and other essential child welfare personnel who are displaced because of a disaster; and
- preserve essential program records and coordinate services and share information with other States (Section 422(b)(16) of the Act).

The following plans are available:

- An updated copy of the OCFS Business Continuity Plan (BCP). The Plan serves as a foundation for all OCFS staff to continue to provide essential services during emergencies.
- An updated copy of the OCFS Business Continuity Plan Light. This Plan is an action document used to reestablish essential services during emergencies. It includes helpful information, such as divisional phone trees and contact information for local departments of social services.
- An updated copy of the OCFS Division of Child Welfare and Community Services (CWCS) Business Continuity Plan. This Division has the primary responsibility for the oversight of child welfare services delivered by local departments of social services.
- A copy of the template used by OCFS juvenile facilities to develop a “Ready Emergency Data Book”, which details each facility’s plan in the event of an emergency.

The BCPs provide the foundation for OCFS staff to continue to provide essential services during emergencies, and to facilitate an orderly recovery from emergency situations. In support of this, they

- Outline key concepts of business continuity operations;
- Identify roles and responsibilities of key OCFS staff;
- Describe how the agency and its five programs units will function in the event that their essential services are disrupted;
- Outline the mechanics and flows of communication within and outside the agency;
- Identify when and by whom the plan is activated and provides procedures for relocation and for a return to normal operations;
- Outlines agency requirements for BCP awareness training and exercises;
- Establish procedures to update and maintain the BCPs.

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.

OCFS conducted an agency wide Exercise of our Business Continuity Plan (BCP) on Wednesday, April 23, 2008, to confirm that the agency is able to respond and continue to provide essential services in the event of an emergency disruption. Emergency planning is not a one-time event but rather a perpetual cycle of training, exercising, and revision. Recommendations from our After-Action Report will be incorporated into our BCP to further enhance our objectives. The BCP Core Team will continue to meet throughout the year to keep the plan updated.

In June 2008, OCFS staff participated in a statewide hurricane preparedness exercise. OCFS carried out several roles during the five day exercise which stimulated a full activation of the Emergency Operations Center (EOC), due to a Category 2 Hurricane hitting the South Shore of Long Island. OCFS participated as a member of the Human Services General Population Temporary Sheltering Group. Upon completion of the exercise, OCFS staff attended the Participant Debriefing and Recovery Planning Discussion to review the collective response and provide feedback.

The week of June 9, 2008, in another preparedness exercise, one SCR hotline unit received hotline calls and processed Intake Reports at the “Cold Site” for their entire shift. This allowed staff to become acclimated with the Cold Site and determine that the site is fully functional. The “Cold Site” is the alternative space fully equipped to handle hotline calls.

Casework Visits

CFS regulation 18 NYCRR 441.21(d)(2) describes the requirement for the frequency of casework contact. New York State continues to operate an effective system to identify the content and frequency of casework visits for children in foster care. Efforts involved in the collection of this data are underway in accordance with timetable provided in the program instructions for this submission. OCFS submitted the initial report of the data required in accordance with the federal Child and Family Services Improvement Act of 2006 on October 31, 2007, for the time period of one year ending September 30, 2007. The total number of children in foster care was 38,333. The number of children visited each month was 4,414. The number of visit months was 23,065. The number of visit months at the child’s residence was 18, 479. The initial percentage reported for children visited each and every calendar month was 11.5%. The initial percentage reported for visits that occurred in the residence of the child for each and every month was 80.1%. This will serve as the baseline data for New York State to develop its yearly improvement target percentages (benchmarks) and as a guide to develop what steps New York State will take in order to achieve a 90% threshold of children in foster care being visited monthly by their caseworker as well as demonstrate that the majority of the visits will be in the child's residence by October 1, 2011.

Target percentages: 10/1/08 15%
 10/1/09 45%
 10/1/10 75%
 10/1/11 90%

OCFS has taken several steps in its strategy to come into compliance with this federal mandate. The first is to review the procedures used for the October 2007 submission for its conformance with recently articulated federal expectations that children who are AWOL and children placed out of state are to be included.

OCFS has redistributed the casework contact requirements and baseline results from October 2007 to OCFS Regional Offices for review and input. OCFS recently held the first of its conference calls with Regional Offices, Local District Commissioners and ACS. The next meeting will be with voluntary agencies in order to improve understanding of the casework contact legislation, review responsibility and documentation expectations, and request input from the various entities in how we can best come into compliance with this federal requirement, and

ultimately better service our youth and families to this end. OCFS is reviewing the CONNECTIONS reporting process and verifying that appropriate training is provided on casework contact requirements.

Child and Family Services Plan (replacing Integrated County Planning)

Beginning with the 2007-2009 three year county planning cycle, all counties in the state are now required to submit a single county plan from LDSS and county Youth Bureaus. This is a culmination of the Integrated County Planning Project that was built from a pilot with sixteen counties to statewide implementation.

Accomplishments for 2007-2008

- In June 2007, OCFS sponsored its statewide training conference, Strategic Collaborative County Planning: Moving Forward III. This event brought together LDSS, Youth Bureau, local Probation, voluntary agencies and local Health departments. Topics focused on planning, building cross systems collaborations, use of data, evidence-based programs and highlighted successful examples from counties, state agencies and national experts.
- Work continued on developing the county planning website (SharePoint). It currently remains for internal OCFS access only. Having the plans electronically has enabled OCFS to scan plans to collect information from these plans to aggregate it. Making it available to counties is complicated technically since Youth Bureaus and Probation at the county level are outside the OCFS fire walls.
- OCFS solicited suggestions via a conference call and survey of all counties for improvements in the planning process and required documentation. Information has been compiled and will be used to improve the process.

Plans for 2008-2009

- OCFS will continue to enhance the infrastructure of SharePoint site and will work to provide counties access to the site.
- DCPA will continue to jointly review and approve the PINS Diversion Component of the plan.

Foster Care/PINS/JD Policies

- OCFS convened an internal Task Group to explore how foster care policies and regulations could better accommodate the needs of our PINS and Juvenile Delinquent (JD) population served by voluntary agencies. The Task Group continues to focus on identifying ways that agencies can improve their services and supervision to this population and more effectively manage their facilities and programs. Agencies had expressed concerns that current foster care policies may not sufficiently respond to the

increasingly multi-faceted and complex needs of this population, particularly JDs placed with OCFS.

- The Task Group recommended that foster care program regulatory concerns regarding crisis prevention and search intervention, open facility requirements, and drug testing be resolved. The Task Group did some analysis comparing the foster care program standards to the OCFS standards and recommended consultation with the Council of Family and Child Caring Agencies (COFCCA). Drafts of revisions to regulations in the areas of restraint and isolation, searches, open facility requirements, and drug testing were circulated for review and comment among Task Group members. Legal and program staff analyzed a new federal statute concerning the restraint of residents. In addition, staffs have been keeping apprised of the Child Welfare League of America's (CWLA) efforts in the area of restraint and seclusion. To date no federal regulations have been issued and the anticipated CWLA guidelines have not been forthcoming. Demonstration projects have been funded elsewhere in the nation, and were watched closely.

Consultation, Coordination, and Service Integration

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

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

In addition to the broader avenues of input noted below, social services districts and voluntary authorized agencies interact with OCFS regional offices routinely for technical assistance, feedback on problem areas, and suggestions for improvement. Regional offices share those concerns/suggestions with OCFS home office on an ongoing basis. Monthly meetings provide a vehicle for advising and discussing with OCFS home office field concerns and for comparing various regional issues to determine how broad the issue may be or whether geographic location or county population is a factor.

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

and sharing feedback from the Tribes and for facilitating meetings for direct feedback to home office.

OCFS seeks the input of its partners in the social services districts, youth bureaus and voluntary authorized agencies using a variety of methods. Communication occurs through state level associations - the New York Public Welfare Association (NYPWA), the Council of Family and Child Caring Agencies (COFCCA), the Empire State Coalition of Youth and Family Services (Empire State Coalition), the New York State Juvenile Police Officers Association (NYSJPOA), 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.

The Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) and OCFS Faith- and Community-Based Partnership was formed in 1998 in response to the federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Charitable Choice provisions. Both agencies have expanded the opportunities for all faith- and community-based organizations to help serve families and children in need. To support this partnership, each agency has designated faith-based coordinators and liaisons that act as a bridge between the two agencies and the faith- and community-based organizations. This partnership builds upon long-standing faith- and community-based activities, which have been developed throughout New York State.

The vision of the partnership is to assist the faith-and-community-based groups to become high quality human services providers by maximizing the availability of information and resources administered by OCFS and OTDA. The primary focus of this partnership is on helping small organizations gain access to any of the materials, resources, and technical assistance that may be available. A website, www.ocfs.state.ny.us/main/faith, has been developed and is currently operational.

Coordination and Service Integration Efforts

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

An example of these efforts is the Strategic Collaborative County Planning training held in Syracuse in June 2007. Staff from over 50 local districts attended this event and five state agencies were represented. The focus of the training was to promote county planning activities and reinforce successful efforts to integrate local planning processes.

In addition to these activities, the collaborative efforts noted in the chart beginning on the following page describe several coordination and service integration efforts that provide

excellent opportunities for consultation, discussion, and input from various agencies and constituencies regarding a wide array of services to children, youth and families. The various groups, depending upon their charge, are comprised of representatives from State and local, public, and private entities.

Cross Systems Collaborations:

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

In December 2007, a meeting of state agency commissioners serving children was held to discuss the need for cross system collaborations for children with service needs that involve more than one service delivery system. Commissioners from the following agencies attended: OCFS, the Office of Mental Health (OMH), the Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (OMRDD), the Office of Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS), the Department of Health (DOH), the Division of Probation and Correctional Alternatives (DPCA), the State Education Department (SED), and the Commission on Quality of Care and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities (CQCAPD). The Commissioners meet quarterly to continue the discussion and to develop and implement joint solutions to improve the lives of children, youth and families.

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

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

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

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

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

For the past few years, OCFS has worked closely with the NYS 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 NYS outside of NYC, which does the training itself. OCFS is also collaborating with OPDV in the planning of regional forums on working with fathers.

OCFS, OMH, OMRDD, and DOH continue to work to provide comprehensive services to children with cross-systems needs. Most recently, this work resulted in the federally approved OCFS Bridges to Health Home and Community Based Medicaid Services Waiver (B2H) for children in foster care. This waiver program serves children with serious emotional disturbance, developmental disabilities, and medical fragility. The program will serve 3,305 children at one time and is being implemented incrementally over a three-year period. All children in this program will receive health care integration services and up to 13 additional services that are supplemental to the services they already receive in foster care.

In addition to the B2H Waiver, OMH and OCFS work together to provide over 300 OMH Home and Community Based Waiver slots that are dedicated to provision of waiver services to children in the child welfare system through the use of state and local preventive funding and federal Medicaid funding. Both agencies provide resources and are key members of the Coordinated Children's Services Initiative (CCSI), a multi-agency family initiative that focuses on maintaining children with cross-systems needs in their homes and communities.

Permanent Judicial Commission on Justice for Children (Commission): The Commission is chaired by Chief Judge Judith S. Kaye. In addition to OCFS Commissioner Carrión, other members include judges, lawyers, advocates, physicians, legislators, and state and local officials.

NYS Child Welfare Court Improvement Project (CIP) began in 1994 and was administered from its inception through the Fall of 2006 by the Commission. In 2006, the increased focus on court operational issues prompted the transition of the administration of the project to the Office of Court Administration's Division of Court Operations. The CIP continues to operate with the support, advice, and counsel of the Commission.

Permanency Now Workgroup is a joint initiative among the courts, OCFS, NYC ACS and local districts. The Permanency Now Workgroup was formed in 2002 to help expedite adoptions for the State's children who are available for adoption through NYS' foster care system. This Workgroup has disseminated tangible projects designed to inform practice, such as a best practice timeline for children with a goal of adoption, the Freed Child Permanency Hearing Best Practices paper and supporting video, and the Adoption Attorney Guide.

Adoption Panel Reviews: One of the major initiatives of the Permanency Now Workgroup was the formation of Adoption Panel Reviews in all regions of NYS. Adoption Panels identify child specific barriers to the timely adoption of foster children. The Panels are multidisciplinary teams that include OCFS regional adoption specialists, local court staff, and local district and contract agency staff that provide services to foster children.

The Adoption Panels have been very successful in getting workers from different disciplines to work together to find solutions and help to expedite the adoption of freed children. They have also provided a wealth of information to OCFS on systemic barriers to adoption.

The Statewide Permanency Planning Team (SPPT), convened by OCFS in 2003, is comprised of representatives of the Unified Court System, NYS Executive Branch agencies (OMRDD, DOH, OASAS, SED, OMH, DPCA, and OCFS), local government entities, institutions, and individuals who represent children and parents. This Team is discussed in more detail later in this document.

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.

Child Welfare-Substance Abuse Collocation Project: The Child Welfare-Substance Abuse Collocation Project is a three-year demonstration project sponsored by OCFS and the NYS Office of Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services that involves the collocation of Credentialed Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Counselors, mentors, and alcohol and substance abuse prevention workers in Child Protective Services (CPS) Units and offices that serve PINS (Person in Need of Supervision) in nine counties: Erie, Genesee, Livingston, Onondaga, Fulton, St. Lawrence, Westchester, Dutchess and Orange. The focus of this collocation model is to provide early identify of chemical dependency problems in CPS and PINS cases, facilitate access to treatment and prevention services, link clients with support services, increase client engagement and retention in treatment, and improve service planning and coordination. OCFS and OASAS have partnered with the University at Albany, Center for Human Services Research, to conduct a randomized control trial; results are not yet available.

Child Protective Services (CPS)/Domestic Violence (DV) Collaboration Projects: The CPS/DV collaboration projects outstation a DV advocate from a local non-for-profit DV agency in the local CPS office to participate in joint home visits, joint safety planning and interventions, consultation, case conferencing, cross-training and protocol, and team development. OCFS currently supports 13 CPS/DV projects in 5 regions: one in the Rochester region, three in the Albany region, three in the Syracuse region, four in the Yonkers region, and 2 in the Buffalo region. (More information related to this project is noted in Goal 3)

In-Depth Technical Assistance (IDTA): In 2006, NYS was awarded an In-Depth Technical Assistance (IDTA) opportunity from the National Center on Substance Abuse and Child Welfare (NCSACW) following a joint application by OCFS, OASAS and OCA. The purpose of this work is to enhance collaboration to improve outcomes for families with substance abuse issues involved in the family court and child welfare system. The results of this work include a soon-to-be published set of documents that will provide a framework and guidance for districts to increase local collaboration between systems, and the development

and identification of cross-systems training opportunities to increase the understanding by workers in each of the systems of each other's work.

Ready By 21-Quality Counts Initiative: OCFS began this new initiative in September 2007 to support the work already in progress with New York State's Youth Development Team. OCFS is the lead intermediary agency working with The Forum for Youth Investment, The Center for Youth Program Quality (formerly High Scope Youth Development Group), Cornell University Assets Coming Together (ACT) for Youth Center of Excellence, and the NYS Department of Health (DOH) to improve youth development by improving program quality. Onondaga, Orange, Broome, and Rockland County are the initial counties OCFS is partnering with as this initiative begins implementation. Ready by 21-Quality Counts' primary focus is to look at and improve program quality at the point of service between the youth and family, program landscape, policy, and youth worker training.

GOAL #1

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

ASSESSMENT OF NEED AND CURRENT STATUS

Between 1995 and 2005 admissions to foster care declined steadily. In 2006, there was a 24.2% increase in admissions. For 2007 admissions are down 4.6 % from 2006.

An analysis of foster care admission data reveals that the two age cohorts most highly represented in the current foster care admission population are children under the age of two and children age 14 -17. This reflects the same age cohorts as 2006. Children under the age of two (19.8%) and children age 14-17 (33.1%). The percentage for admissions for the age group 2-5 years was down slightly to 16.6 %. Percentage for admissions for 6-9 years and 10-13 was unchanged. The older age group is most likely to come into care after contact with the juvenile justice system.

The percentage of foster care readmissions as a function of all admissions remained stable.

In the year 2004, readmissions were 14.4% of admissions. For 2005, readmissions were 13.7%, and in 2006 they were 11.8%. For the current year 2007, the number is 11.9%.

2005-2009 PERFORMANCE TARGETS

Recurrence of CAM

A state meets the national standard for this indicator if, of all children who were victims of substantiated or indicated child abuse and/or neglect in the first six months of the reporting period, 6.1% or fewer children had another substantiated or indicated report within six months.

NEW YORK STATE PERFORMANCE:	2003	14.3%
	2004	14.0%
	2005	12.7%
	2006	13.7%
	2007	12.3%

When the performance target is not met (on a local district level), there is a recommended 10% performance improvement target. New York State meets the performance improvement target.

Data Source: OCFS DATA WAREHOUSE

State and Local Activities

Healthy Families New York (HFNY)

The Healthy Families New York (HFNY) Program is a voluntary home visiting program that offers systematic assessment of pregnant women and new parents for risks that may lead to child abuse and poor health/ development outcomes. Families identified with high risk factors are offered long term home visiting services until the child is in school or Head Start the home visiting services focus on supporting parents and building on the inherent strength of families.

HFNY is administered by OCFS in partnership with Prevent Child Abuse New York (PCANY) and the Center for Human Services Research (CHSR) at SUNY Albany. The initiative is modeled after Healthy Families America (HFA), the most widely disseminated home visitation program in the nation. New York is one of only four (4) states to have earned a HFA multi-site certification in a very rigorous credentialing process. In addition, based on the results from a rigorous randomized trial, it has been nationally recognized by the Rand Promising Practices Network as a “Proven Program”.

All of the programs are located in high need areas. In 2007, 3,237 families were assessed and 4,975 families received 61,067 home visits. Since the HFNY program began in 1995, 19,309 families have been served and 573,957 home visits have been provided.

2007-08 Accomplishments:

The State Budget for 2007-08 included \$25.2 million dollars for HFNY. A Request for Proposals was issued to expand HFNY to 6-10 new high need communities across the state. Awards were announced in the spring of 2007 with contract start-up dates of September 2007. Ten new programs began serving families, four in New York City, one on Long Island, and the remainder in upstate NY. More information on grants to community agencies and program evaluation are available on the OCFS internet.

OCFS staff provides onsite and regional technical assistance and monitoring to the sites. During 2007, monitoring visits were conducted to all 39 programs. OCFS staff focused their visits on the management of the program, community relationships, and ability of sites to meet HFA standards for providing quality home visits. OCFS staff reviews all of the sites’ policy manuals and practices to determine if policies and practices are in compliance with New York State and HFA standards.

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

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

Plans for 2008-09:

Plans for 2008-2009 include continuation and exploration of additional funding streams for the HFNY Program. The outcome evaluation will continue to track outcomes for families served and the third year of the random assignment data analysis will be completed. The seven year study has begun and data will continue to be collected and analyzed. OCFS staff will continue to provide technical assistance and monitor funded sites to promote the provision of quality services. The programs will continue to add families as they serve their current caseload. The Home Visiting Council with OCFS will finalize the Strategic Plan and begin implementation.

HFNY evaluation results show that the program has positive outcomes for children when working with families early on in their pregnancy. HFNY has been working on gathering information and developing policy and guidelines and tools for programs to reach families during this critical time in their pregnancy. A pilot with four to five programs will begin during the summer of 2008 using these materials.

Also as a result of evaluation, HFNY has drafted a guidebook for staff to use when working with families believed to victims of domestic violence. The guidebook is being reviewed by program staff and will be disseminated to the field and implemented during this year.

Other activities:

The NYS Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS) created a Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) Task Force to help develop a comprehensive statewide strategic plan to reduce the prevalence of such disorders among New York's newborns. As a result of this planning process, the Buffalo Home Visiting Program was selected by the Task Force as one of three service delivery systems targeting women of childbearing age that OASAS focused on for this initiative. The project was funded by the federal Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration FASD Center for Excellence, through a contract with Northrup Grumman. The Task Force was charged with identifying and offering services to women who are at risk for alcohol exposed pregnancies. In 2006, the Buffalo Home Visiting Program implemented a focused approach to preventing FASD in the Buffalo Prenatal Program. This includes, screening each mother for alcohol use/abuse, providing education about FASD, providing education and referrals for effective birth control, and using the techniques of motivational interviewing, which has been successfully utilized with substance abusing individuals to encourage them to participate in treatment programs. Although funding for this pilot has ended, the Buffalo Prenatal Program continues to implement this approach and assisting OCFS with replication to other HFNY programs. A manual, to be used for replication in other HFNY programs, was developed and published in 2007. In 2007, training on motivational interviewing began at additional programs through out the state system with a plan to train all

program staff in this method of working with families and replicating this project in all 39 program sites.

OCFS with the Capital District HFNY programs participated in a Safe Babies event at Crossgates Mall near Albany, NY, in November 2007. The event was geared to increase public awareness of injury prevention and tips to keep infants safe. Other HFNY sites participated in local safe babies events.

Work has begun to engage and incorporate more information for fathers within the HFNY program. Many programs added fatherhood specialists to their program staff. Together with OCFS staff the group is working on sharing ideas, discussing data to be collected, and working together to do presentations at conferences and meetings.

CAPTA Initiatives

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 support the management of the federal Children's Justice Act programs, the Healthy Families New York (HFNY) Program, the William B. Hoyt Memorial Children and Family Trust Fund and the federal Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention program. In addition, funds support a statewide Prevention Information Resource Center that operates a 24-hour prevention helpline for parents and distributes printed child abuse and neglect prevention materials.

CAPTA project coordination provides that the state's utilization of CAPTA funds is in compliance with federal requirements and guidelines and that CAPTA projects meet stated objectives. The CAPTA Coordinator assumes the role of State Liaison Officer and works with the Office's policy and legal staff to fulfill that responsibility. The CAPTA Coordinator oversees the Children and Family Trust Fund, Basic State Grant, the Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention Grant, and coordinates activities with the Children's Justice and Assistance Grant, and the HFNY Program as needed. The CAPTA Coordinator also facilitates collaboration and integration with other child welfare and other services for children and families, responds to individual requests for information on programs available in New York State, and responds to complaints from individuals that are brought to the attention of the Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families (ACF).

Chapter 485 of the Laws of 2006 took effect on December 14, 2006. Amending section 422-b of the New York's Social Services Law (SSL), it added the ability of local and regional fatality review team to investigate fatalities where there was an open preventive services or CPS case and authorized such teams to investigate any unexplained or unexpected death of any child under the age of 18. It added to the required members of such teams: county health and Emergency Medical Technicians. It clarified that a mandated member must be a pediatrician or comparable medical professional, preferably with expertise in the area of child abuse and maltreatment. It added to the list of permissive members: domestic violence agencies, substance abuse programs and Family Court.

Subdivisions 4-6 of section 422-b of the SSL were added relating to access to records and meetings, qualified immunity of members of the team and the release of individual and annual reports by the team.

Accomplishments in 2007-08

OCFS continues a variety of strategies and initiatives to prevent and treat child abuse and maltreatment.

The Prevention Information Resource Center (PIRC) & Parent Helpline is PCANY's umbrella program for helping people throughout New York State understand how to prevent child abuse and maltreatment and to support strong, safe, nurturing families. Under that umbrella, the Prevention and Parent Helpline provides direct assistance, in the form of information and referrals, to parents, family members, service providers and other community members. During 2006-07, 3,758 New York families and professionals were directly assisted through the Helpline. Of those, 64% were from the five boroughs of New York City with largest number of callers parents. Callers are referred directly to the Helpline through NYC ACS publications and website, and the New York City's 311 government services line.

PIRC's public education includes a variety of outreach, from literature development and distribution, to presentations and exhibits, media activities, and website. More than 75,000 people received prevention information through these avenues this year.

A new PIRC project undertaken last year is the 0-5 Evidence-Based Parenting Education project, now called the New York State Parent Education Partnership (NYSPEP). This project was made possible by Prevent Child Abuse New York's involvement in the national PREVENT Child Maltreatment Institute, along with OCFS, NYS Department of Health, and the Children and Family Trust Fund. During this year, we conducted a survey to capture information about parenting education services that are available in all parts of New York State, and building on this work, plan to pilot another survey instrument that seeks information from the parenting education providers about their use of evidence in their programs. Working in partnership with state agency colleagues the first public-private state task force meeting was held in March 2007. The keynote speaker from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) presented findings on effective parenting programs. The NYSPEP Steering Committee continues to lead this effort and through a workgroup process is focused on its mission of enhancing parenting skills, knowledge and behavior through a strong, statewide network that promotes and improves parenting education. Workgroup activities will continue in 2008 by compiling survey results, launching the NYS Family Resource website www.familyresources.org, identifying professional development opportunities for parent educators, and developing a social marketing plan.

PCANY hosted the Child Sexual Abuse Prevention train the trainer institute, Care for Kids, in New York City in March, 2008. Registration for Rochester was not sufficient to hold the training. The Care for Kids Program is a comprehensive community-based approach to child sexual abuse prevention that provides early childhood educators, parents and other professionals with the information, materials and resources to communicate positive messages about healthy sexuality to young children ages 3-7. The program originated in Canada; the 2-day institute was conducted by Prevent Child Abuse Vermont.

The annual New York State Child Abuse Prevention Conference, Investing in Children, Investing in Our Future, co-sponsored with the Children and Family Trust Fund, built the knowledge and skills of 550 professionals, advocates, community leaders, and parents who are concerned about preventing child abuse and assuring healthy growth and development for children. Returned evaluations indicated 93% - 94% of the participants found the conference relevant and that they gained new knowledge, skills and tools to take back to the community.

During the year, the project conducted 33 exhibits and presentations, reaching 6,600 people. New this year was a "Kids Day" at thirteen Kohl's stores. Two newsletters were published and disseminated to 7,000 New York professionals and advocates, and e-news was distributed monthly to approximately 2,000 subscribers. A Child Abuse Prevention Month packet was developed and sent to 80 partner organizations across the state. Program staff provided 13 media interviews and 13 stories/press releases regarding child abuse prevention during the year. Planning is underway to launch a 2008 Pinwheels for Prevention CAP Month campaign with PCANY'S statewide partners.

Expansion and realignment of the PIRC and Parent Helpline program were largely responsible for the successes this year. The addition of a project manager made it possible to carry forward the NYS Parenting Education Partnership, including the portions of the work that relate directly to the Helpline's services and overall coordination, thereby enabling the Partnership to grow and function. The staffing also allowed for an increase in child abuse prevention presentations to schools and professionals and the addition of two part-time bilingual associates enhanced the agency's capacity to provide immediate assistant to Spanish speaking callers. Additionally, Project staff continued to work with the Children and Family Trust Fund / OCFS *NY Loves Safe Babies* project.

Federal Family Violence

Federal Family Violence funding provides financial support to residential and non-residential programs experiencing low occupancy or needing health and safety enhancements to their residential program.

Children's Justice Act

The federal Children's Justice Act (CJA) Program Grant continues to enhance OCFS'S ability to develop, establish, and operate programs designed to improve (1) the handling of child abuse and maltreatment cases, particularly cases of child sexual abuse and exploitation, in a manner which limits additional trauma to the child victim (2) the handling of cases of suspected child abuse and maltreatment related fatalities; and (3) the investigation and prosecution of cases of child abuse and maltreatment, particularly child sexual abuse and exploitation.

Children's Justice Act program funds are primarily used to promote start-up and/or improved functioning of local community coordination of the investigation, prosecution and treatment of child abuse and neglect cases, particularly sexual abuse cases and fatality cases. Through the implementation of local multidisciplinary investigation teams, child advocacy centers and child fatality review teams, child protective services, law enforcement, and prosecution, medical and

mental health agencies are better able to coordinate, collaborate and communicate on cases. The goals of all funded programs are to reduce additional trauma to child victims after their disclosure and improve the handling of cases for all agencies involved and improve the skills and knowledge of all professionals involved.

The federal Children's Justice Act Program has allowed OCFS to expand its efforts to develop and maintain multidisciplinary investigation teams, child advocacy centers and child fatality review teams across the State. Beginning in 1996, OCFS funded the NYS Child Advocacy Resource and Consultation Center (CARCC). Services provided by CARCC include specialized and/or interdisciplinary training, team functioning analysis, and coordination of a statewide coalition of child advocacy centers and MDTs wishing to develop child advocacy centers (CACs). CARCC also assists MDTs throughout the state with access to current information and research on: child sexual abuse; child fatalities; child abuse and neglect data from a multidisciplinary perspective; training resources and opportunities, including a directory of discipline specific consultants and technical assistance material to assist in team development.

CARCC has provided information to professionals, students and concerned citizens across the state, and throughout the nation, responding to over 250 requests for information on issues related to child sex abuse, the multidisciplinary approach and especially The NYS Children's Justice Task Force Forensic Interviewing Best Practices (FIBP). CARCC's resource library has expanded and offers users a wealth of printed, audio and video materials.

Training Opportunities for the benefit of professionals involved in multidisciplinary teamwork. CARCC's trainings will be designed to strengthen both investigatory and team management skills. Other services and networks in which CARCC are involved include:

- New York State Children's Alliance
- Case Tracking Database Project
- Forensic Interviewing Project

Training and other educational activities are also continuing. In the fall of 2007, CARCC organized and managed the Building Justice for Children Training Seminar. The three day event will provide expert presenters on all disciplines involved with the investigation, treatment and case management of child physical and sexual abuse cases.

New York State Children's Justice Task Force Forensic Interviewing Best Practices Train the Trainer

The continued success of the Forensic Interviewing Best Practices Trainings relies on the actual teaching of the curriculum. To confirm the integrity and the reliability of the best FIBP Trainings, CARCC actively recruits professionals to become FIBP Trainers. This relieves some of the training demands and helps to perpetuate the level of skilled trainers as well as interviewers around the state. CARCC has implemented a selection process for all prospective trainers factoring such requirements as expertise, teaching style and demonstrated commitment to the children of New York State.

Child Abuse Prevention Evaluation and Treatment: A Toolkit for Medical Providers

For the past three years, CARCC, the Child Abuse Medical Provider Program (CHAMP), a group of physicians, nurses, nurse practitioners, social workers, and other non-medical professionals in the child abuse field from across New York State have been working together with Dr. Ann Botash on a Toolkit for primary care, urgent care and emergency providers that addresses the issues of providing care to all types of abused children. This resource provides guidance on prevention methods, recognition, reporting methods, management and referral needs for the abused child. The website www.ChildAbuseMD.com may be accessed for more details.

Child Abuse and Disabilities Training Project

With administrative support from CARCC, the Children's Justice Task Force supported development of a CD-Rom "Child Abuse and Children with Disabilities" for MDT investigators interviewing children with disabilities, one of the most vulnerable populations for all forms of abuse. The CD-Rom was released in 2005.

Marketing Program

CARCC continues to assist teams and centers with initiatives to support training and awareness events. The project co-sponsors such events by providing financial assistance for promotional materials announcing upcoming events and trainings. Teams and centers are eligible for monetary and in-kind support for promotional and event expenses, including postage and printing.

Mentoring Program

CARCC continues to encourage and support the mutual benefits of mentoring matches between counties. These relationships are vital to the multidisciplinary team process as teams learn from each other and work through practical solutions to problems. To help facilitate this relationship, CARCC matches teams and provides financial support to both the traveling team and the host team by reimbursing for expenses such as travel and lodging.

Toll Free Telephone

CARCC operates a toll free telephone number in order to accommodate those teams who have limited or no long distance access. This has helped facilitate program access to more professionals in the field.

Child Advocacy Center /Multidisciplinary Team Program Standards

The CJA/NYS funds for multidisciplinary investigation teams are currently being used to fund 14 Tier I and 12 Tier II grants to assist counties in establishing or enhancing child advocacy centers and local multidisciplinary teams for the purpose of investigating reports of suspected child abuse or maltreatment--particularly cases of sexual abuse, physical abuse and family violence--in a manner which limits additional trauma to the child victim(s). Minimally, all teams investigate child sexual abuse cases. These projects have recently been categorized based upon quantifiable and qualifiable standards that support New York State expectations and the National Children' Alliance Standards. All projects must have accomplished or demonstrate significant progress towards achieving the 10 program standards for CACs which have been listed in earlier admissions of the APSR.

Child Fatality Review Teams

The CJA/NYS funds for start-up or enhancement of child fatality review teams (CFRTs) are being used to fund three counties. These multidisciplinary review teams minimally include child protective services, police, District Attorney, a medical examiner or coroner, and a physician. The CFRTs review fatality cases reported to the Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment and fatality cases where the child's custody has been transferred to an authorized agency. The primary activities of these teams include: developing a mission statement and goals; developing interagency protocols; implementing a review process; actively conducting reviews; and developing a mechanism for collecting and reporting data. Teams may also review all suspicious, unexplained or unexpected deaths, but grant monies may not be used for this purpose. Such reviews are paid for by CFRT agency members. On December 14, 2006, 06-OCFS LCM-13 Notification to OCFS of the death of children in open Child Protective or Preventive Services cases was released.

Children's Justice Act funds are also used to support the annual New York State Police Sex Offense Seminar, which is a five-day comprehensive training program for state and local police officers. CPS workers and other team members who work with police as an investigative team are also invited. The program reaches about 200 professionals a year. Starting in November 2006, this seminar was expanded to include child physical abuse training and will be presented as a two part "Crimes Against Children Training Seminar".

Citizen Review Panels

Chapter 136 of the Laws of 1999, commonly referred to as the Governor's CAPTA (Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act), details the state's compliance with the federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act Amendments of 1996. CAPTA established three citizen review panels. One panel is established in New York City for the purpose of addressing issues particular to the City. The other two panels are located in Buffalo and Albany.

Citizen Review Panel Members:

- Must be volunteers who are broadly representative of the community, in which the panel is established, including members who have expertise in the prevention and treatment of child abuse and neglect. No person employed by federal, state, county or municipal agencies, which directly deliver child welfare services may be a panel member.
- Cannot disclose any identifying information about any specific child protection case to any person or government official. A member who knowingly violates this duty of confidentiality may be subject to a civil penalty not to exceed one thousand dollars and removal from the panel.
- Must elect a chairperson for each of their respective panels.
- Must meet not less than once every three months.

OCFS continues to provide technical assistance. As requested by the panels, each panel will maintain regular meetings and will continue to examine aspects of New York State's child welfare system to evaluate the extent to which the state and local child protective service agencies are effectively discharging their child protective responsibilities. It should be pointed out that the members of the New York State Citizen Review Panels have exhibited an enthusiastic willingness to commit themselves to the task for which they have volunteered, and have gone beyond the minimum federal mandate of quarterly meetings. Citizen Review Panels are required to submit an annual report of their activities, findings and recommendations. A copy of the most recent Citizen Review Panel report is with this plan submission (Appendix A).

William B. Hoyt Memorial Children and Family Trust Fund Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention Program

Trust Fund priorities include support for intensive home-based services such as Healthy Families New York home visiting programs in partnership with family resource centers, in addition to the continued support, expansion and development of the NYS Family Resource Center Network, school/community collaborations, teen parenting home based services, supervised visitation in domestic violence cases, school-based domestic violence and child sexual abuse prevention programs, and services for the elderly at risk of abuse in New York State. The Trust Fund continued to provide funding for Healthy Families Clinton, Healthy Families Schenectady, and Healthy Families Sullivan during 2007/08.

The Trust Fund provides continued funding to support two shaken baby syndrome hospital-based education program campaigns; the pilot project in the Western New York and Finger Lake regions implemented in 1998, and the Hudson Valley Shaken Baby Prevention initiative implemented in 2004. The two regions combined encompass 28 counties, 60 hospitals and approximately 53,000 annual births. The purpose is to educate all parents of newborns to the dangers of shaking and reduce the incidence of Shaken Baby Syndrome. The Upstate Region reports a 45-50% sustained reduction in the incidence of SBS in the eight years since the program's inception. The Hudson Valley Region reported that in the five years prior to the program's inception, the region's hospitals referred one case of SBS every four months. In the 28 months since the program's inception there have been four cases of SBS referred for a 54% reduction. Replication of New York's model continues throughout the country and abroad. Pediatricians in both regions are partnering with both projects to disseminate the same information at the time of the first immunization or pediatric visit. Likewise, each site does follow up telephone surveys to obtain feedback from the target population about the program. Both programs were awarded funding to expand the program statewide to reach New York City, Long Island and remaining counties in upstate NY. The expansion will be launched in June 2008.

Chapter 219 of the Laws of 2004, signed in October 2004, institutionalized the hospital-based approach by requiring every maternity hospital and birthing center to show the video, "Portrait of Promise" to all parents prior to discharge, and asking them to sign a consent form indicating they either viewed the video or declined to participate in the educational program.

The Trust Fund continues its sponsorship of the NY Loves Safe Babies Campaign with the Department of Health, NYS Center for SID (Sudden Infant Death) and Healthy Families New

York Home Visiting Program. The Trust Fund maintains its work with state agency partners, local programs, the Trust Fund Advisory Board, and the Skipper Initiative to promote the safety of infants and children by educating parents and caregivers on how serious injuries can be reduced and/or prevented. This year was once again highlighted by the availability of a series of safety tips entitled Helpful Tips to Keep Your Baby Safe. Materials developed as part of the campaign including a *Personalized Safety Tips and Emergency Contact Sheet for Baby Sitters* that is also available as a magnetic memo board with safety information for caregivers, and a New York Loves Safe Babies Spanish DVD, companion to the original English version. These materials were made available at a local mall in the capital district in November 2007. Local community-based programs, local health departments, and social service districts participated in the event that offered a variety of resources, arts and crafts, Child Safe ID cards, and entertainment. Requests for materials remain robust. Over 200,000 New York Loves Safe Babies publications are disseminated annually statewide. The campaign will go forward with continued efforts to expand to other regions of the state including New York City.

The Trust Fund recognizes the multi-generational nature of family violence and emphasizes primary prevention by supporting domestic violence and elder abuse prevention and intervention programs. Domestic violence prevention programs focus on education of students K-12, trauma counseling for children, and supervised visitation services for families affected by domestic violence. Elder abuse prevention programs focus on educating both seniors and communities regarding the problem/risks of elder abuse, outreach and services to reduce these risks, providing coordination, counseling, and advocacy services to victims of elder abuse, a public awareness campaign, and a prevalence study on elder abuse.

Accomplishments in 2007-2008

During 2007, state and federally funded programs administered under the Trust Fund served approximately 16,700 children, parents, caregivers and professionals through direct services and training opportunities. New programs awarded funding as a result of the 2007 RFP include: (1) Cattaraugus Community Action, Salamanca, NY (2) Oswego County Opportunities, Inc, Oswego, NY (3) Putnam Northern Westchester Women's Resource Center, Mahopac, NY (4) The Salvation Army, Jamestown, NY (5) Equinox, Inc., Albany, NY (6) Family Justice Center of Erie County, Buffalo, and (7) Lifespan of Greater Rochester, Rochester, NY. These new programs met the criteria to develop, continue and/or enhance existing programs that emphasize primary and secondary prevention, broad family support services and provide appropriate and effective interventions for individuals experiencing family violence in all its forms, child abuse, domestic violence and elder abuse.

The federal 2007 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 and domestic violence services. Trust Fund initiatives also support some of the strategies of the NYS OCFS Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) Program Improvement Plan such as increased efforts to support strength-based and family centered practices that engage parents, enhance family support and strengthen family functioning to promote safety, permanency and child well being. Applicants in receipt of federal and state funding for child abuse prevention and family support services include: *Statewide Public Education targeting all parents of newborns* (1) Kaleida Health/Women Children's Hospital of Buffalo, Buffalo, NY, (2) Children's Hospital

Foundation at Westchester Medical Center, Valhalla, NY; *Parenting Education and Support services targeting families at risk including young parents and fathers* (3) Gateway Longview, Buffalo, NY (4) Women's Prison Association, Brooklyn, NY (5) SCO Family of Services, Bronx, NY (6) Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County, Ithaca, NY (7) Homes for the Homeless, Bronx, NY; *School-based prevention education targeting elementary students and school personnel*; (8) Child Abuse Prevention Services, Long Island, NY; *Family Resource Centers providing early and comprehensive support to parents and caregivers of young children*; (9) North Country Prenatal/Perinatal Council, Watertown, NY, (10) Child Care Coordinating Council of the North Country, Plattsburgh, NY, (11) Child & Family Resources, Penn Yan, NY, (12) Cornell Cooperative Extension of Cortland, Cortland, NY, (13) Catholic Charities of Fulton and Montgomery Counties, Amsterdam, NY, (14) Chinese American Planning Council, New York, NY, (15) Mothers and Babies Perinatal Network of SCNY, Binghamton, NY, (16) ProAction of Steuben and Yates, Bath, NY, (17) Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tioga, Owego, NY, (18) Niagara Falls City School District, Niagara Falls, NY (19) Family Resource Centers of Crestwood Children's Center, Rochester, NY, (20) Phipps Community Development Corporation, Bronx, New York, (21) Association to Benefit Children, East Harlem, NY.

OCFS applied for and received federal CBCAP grant funds to complement Trust Fund child abuse and domestic violence prevention efforts in 2007. A grant award of \$1,616,083 allows OCFS to continue new programs implemented in January 2008 under a 2007 Request for Proposals (RFP), supports an outcome evaluation of family resource centers, and contributes to New York's annual child abuse prevention conference. The 2008 Conference, "Possibilities" held in April, once again afforded the Trust Fund the opportunity to showcase best practices and to recognize parent partners who demonstrate their leadership as a result of participation in local programs. Trust Fund-sponsored programs and staff are regular presenters at the conference. Funds also support networking activities, training and technical assistance, parent involvement and leadership training opportunities, and the Program Self-Assessment and Peer Review Process developed in collaboration with the New York State Family Resource Center Network, OCAN, FRIENDS National Resource Center, the National Alliance of Children's Trust and Prevention Funds, and other stakeholders.

The Trust Fund-sponsored Family Resource Center Network meets on a quarterly basis for the purpose of receiving technical assistance and training related to program development, service delivery, evaluation, and fund development. Training opportunities this past year focused on lessons learned from peer reviews, assessing effectiveness of parenting education programs, creating standards for family resource centers, social marketing and planning for the outcome evaluation to be implemented in 2008. The Network in partnership with the Trust Fund created draft guidelines and a brochure to raise awareness both at the local and state levels.

Four Self-Assessment and Peer Reviews were held in March, May, and December 2007, at the Family Room (Amsterdam, Montgomery County), Family Connections (Plattsburgh, Clinton County), Gouverneur Activity and Learning Center (St. Lawrence County), and Southwest Family Resource Center (Rochester, Monroe County). A consultant continues to assist with Center planning and conducting the self-assessment, in addition to preparing for the peer review site visit. Based on the reviews, additional tools and materials are developed and disseminated to the Network as part of the Program Self-Assessment and Peer Review manual. Feedback from the reviews indicates that the process provides the opportunity for parents to take leadership

roles, to be heard in new ways and to acknowledge their contributions. It is also a means to identify gaps in services and address community needs through collaboration with local partners. Additional work includes supporting efforts by FRIENDS National Resource Center to develop a peer review self-assessment tool that could be utilized by a broad range of family support programs. The consultant was invited to contribute to this work based on her wealth of experience with NY's peer review process.

In an effort to guide the continuing evaluation of family resource centers and their impact on families, work continued this year with CHSR and the Network to develop an outcome evaluation that will examine the effects of programs on developing healthy parenting attitudes, fostering positive parenting behaviors, enhancing social support and other protective factors associated with a reduced risk of child maltreatment. The study was launched in January 2008 in six sites: Rochester (2 sites), Owego (2 sites), Tupper Lake and Geneva. The evaluation will include the use of combining portions of standardized instruments: the Parenting Practices Interview, the Adult-Adolescent Parenting Inventory (AAPI), and the Maternal Social Support Index.

The Trust Fund continues to work with the Family Resource Information Education Network Development Services (FRIENDS) as part of the CBCAP and PART (OMB Program Assessment Rating Toll) Outcomes Subcommittee on the Efficiency Measures and Evidence-Based Practices. The work focused on developing guidelines for CBCAP lead agencies to support the new federal requirement of documenting local programs use of evidence-based and evidence-informed programs and practices continued. The Trust Fund volunteered to pilot the Protective Factor Survey developed by the committee with two FRC sites participating.

Strengthening families through early care and education continued as a Trust Fund priority this past year with New York's participation in ZERO to THREE Network's Preventing Child Abuse and Neglect (PCAN): Parent-Provider Partnerships with Child Care initiative. As the state liaison for the project, the Trust Fund partnered with OCFS Division of Child Care, Council on Children and Families, NYC Administration for Children's Services, New York State Child Care Coordinating Council, New York State Department of Education (Office of EETV and Public Broadcasting), Prevent Child Abuse New York, and 40 trainers who attended a 3-day training in June 2007 in New York City. Through cross-systems partnerships, the New York initiative is engaged in providing professional development experiences to family resource center staff, early childhood educators, social workers and home visitors as well as others in an effort to lower incidence of child abuse and neglect. By building the knowledge, skills and practice of these diverse professionals, the NYS Team, through the PCAN initiative, emphasizes transformative learning and reflective practice to create strong responsive early childhood centers, with supports that carry over to the family life of the children participating in these programs.

The target audience under this project is child care directors, supervisors and teaching staff from across the state and New York City. Each trainer committed minimally to provide two one and a half hour workshops. To date, trainers have conducted 23 workshops reaching close to 300 child care staff. Additional goals under this partnership include:

- Build strategic relationships between trainers of various disciplines to reach families in a supportive capacity;

- Enhance the capacity of statewide training to support the efforts of child care providers, early childhood educators, and family home visitors to identify suspected or actual child maltreatment, and to reduce or prevent abuse from happening to children;
- Integrate the training into existing curricula, where child care and social workers train as a team, and offer the training through new technologies to create a sustainable change in practice.

Plans for 2008-2009:

In February 2008, a follow-up training was held in Albany for 27 of the trainers. Consultation from ZERO to THREE will continue until October 2008. Other supports offered to the trainers include monthly distance learning opportunities, and video conferencing that address the content of the curriculum and the goals of this initiative.

In 2008-09, CAPTA funds will be utilized to support a number of initiatives aimed at improving the child protection system in New York State. The areas that will be targeted include:

- The use of Citizen Review Panels to review policies, procedures and practices of State and local agencies to evaluate the extent to which the agencies are effectively discharging their child protective responsibilities. The contract for Administration was awarded to the Schuyler Center for Advocacy and Analysis (SCAA). SCAA has taken a proactive role in helping the three Panels develop specific workplans.
- Implementing Program Standards for all Child Advocacy Centers and Multidisciplinary Child Abuse Teams in New York State. The Standards were developed through input from New York State Children's Alliance, Multidisciplinary Team/Child Advocacy Center projects, and the Children's Justice Task Force
- Developing, strengthening and supporting child abuse and neglect prevention, treatment, and research programs in the public and private sectors which is a focus of the Community Based Child Abuse Prevention Grant Program (CBCAP) and the William B. Hoyt Memorial Children and Family Trust Fund; and
- Developing and enhancing the capacity of community based programs to integrate shared leadership strategies between parents and professionals to prevent and treat child abuse and neglect at the neighborhood level which is a focus of all of OCFS' program development efforts including the Healthy Families New York Home Visiting Program, the Trust Fund, and the Community Based child Abuse Prevention Grant Program. These efforts are described below and throughout this plan.

The 2008-09, CAPTA Basic State Grant funds will continue to support initiatives related to the OCFS Performance Improvement Plan. CAPTA funds will continue to support the Parent Information Resource Center and the statewide Prevention Conference sponsored by Prevent Child Abuse New York. The funds also support the development of materials for the Safe Babies Campaign, an initiative of OCFS in collaboration with the State Health Department and local community based organizations. In addition to these existing initiatives, OCFS may use funds for additional child protective improvements, which have yet to be determined.

The Children's Justice Act funds will support a number of new initiatives including the following:

Multidisciplinary Training Program on the New York State Forensic Interviewing Best Practices

A three-day training program, New York State Children's Justice Task Force Forensic Interviewing Best Practices has presented 21 regional training sessions over the last three years. A one day training course will be developed and introduced to professionals not directly involved with interviewing of child victims, but who should be aware of the components of a sound forensic interview. The training will be targeted to County Attorneys, prosecutors, judges and members of local multidisciplinary teams.

Child Abuse and Children with Disabilities: Reporting, Investigation and Intervention

The success of the CD-ROM *Child Abuse and Children with Disabilities: A New York State Perspective* lead the NYS Children's Justice Task Force to recommend development of a website to provide more information and easier accessibility to professionals involved with reporting, investigating and interventions with disabled children. The New York CJA program will reach out to other States to link with this program and include service providers and experts from their respective States on the website as well. The website will outline basic information which should be known by all members of the various multidisciplinary teams related to characteristics of these children that might impact upon interviewing, data gathering or "reasonable accommodations" that may be needed in investigative and/or support procedures. It will also describe the current policies and federal/state specific guidelines that exist to date which directly affect the appropriate handing of these cases so that these children are not further victimized on any level.

The website will provide sample case studies and a listing of other statewide resources available. This site will also include short interviews with a variety of experts from New York State and its consultants over the years, who share their work and suggestions related to enhancing the provision of appropriate reporting, investigation and intervention of child abuse involving children with disabilities.

Other initiatives such as Child Abuse Training for Prosecutors and Multidisciplinary Teams, Multidisciplinary Team Management of Children Who Act Out Sexually and The CAC/CASA Partnership Project: Improving Advocacy for Children will also continue to receive support.

William B. Hoyt Memorial Children and Family Trust Fund Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention Grant Program

A Request for Proposals (RFP) released in April 2007 resulted in 28 programs awarded grants to address all forms of family violence including child abuse, domestic violence and elder abuse. Program implementation is slated to begin in January, April, June and September 2008. \$1.96 million in funding to continue these new initiatives was included in the 2008/09 state budget. Key initiatives worthy of note are the *Elder Abuse Prevalence Study* being conducted by Lifespan of Greater Rochester in partnership with NYC Department for the Aging and Cornell Institute for Translational Research on Aging (CITRA). It is the first of its kind in the country

and will examine prevalence rates among reported and unreported cases, characteristics of victims, types of abuse reported and current referral patterns.

Expansion of the highly successful *Upstate New York Shaken Baby Syndrome Prevention Education* program will be launched in June 2008 to reach maternity and birthing hospitals in New York City, Long Island, and the remaining upstate counties not covered by the Western, Finger Lakes, and Hudson Valley regions. This joint effort will reinforce the 2004 State law requiring hospitals to talk to parents about the dangers of shaking a baby and to have a plan for coping with crying. A joint brochure and protocols will be developed as part of this project.

The *Outcome Evaluation* for Family Resource Centers (FRC) will be conducted during 2008/09. The Center for Human Services Research at the University of Albany designed the outcome study to assess changes in parenting attitudes and behaviors and social support over time. Study respondents will have participated in one of the following FRC programs: formal parent education classes, home visits, group support (e.g., Parents Anonymous), playgroups and drop-in play. The parents will be surveyed at two points: at baseline, which will be the first or second time they participate in one of the programs listed above, and 6 months later. The respondents will be asked to fill out a questionnaire that includes standardized measures of parenting and social support commonly used in similar evaluations: the Parenting Practices Interview, the Adult-Adolescent Parenting Inventory, and the Maternal Social Support Index. The baseline measures will be administered by FRC staff and the 6-month follow-up will be conducted by mail survey. The outcome study will examine the effects of the programs on developing healthy parenting attitudes, fostering positive parenting behaviors, enhancing social support and other protective factors that are associated with a reduced risk of child maltreatment. We will analyze these results to see whether there are changes in variables identified as risk factors in child abuse, and how these changes are related to the number and types of programs attended. Preliminary results from the evaluation will be reported next year. It is hoped the study will help shape future initiatives to demonstrate the value and impact of FRC services.

A Trust Fund 8-page tabloid publication will be disseminated to government, locally funding programs, and statewide partners to further promote the mission and purpose of the Trust Fund. It is intended to raise awareness and visibility of what the Trust fund does and highlight effective programs that address family well-being and prevention of family violence. Elements of the publication will be adapted for the Trust Fund website.

State-Local Youth Violence Reduction Strategy

The New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services, working with several other State agencies concerned with youth, has developed a strategy for reducing youth violence in New York State. The *New York State Youth Violence Reduction (YRV) Strategy* is designed to promote and support a coordinated approach, at both the State and local levels, for reducing youth violence. Recognizing that effective intervention systems will differ from one locality to another, the Strategy proposes a common set of principles to guide the development and implementation of local systems. The strategy is outlined in *New York State Youth Violence Reduction (YVR) Strategy: Goals and Guiding Principles* and can be found at the Division's website at www.criminaljustice.state.ny.us.

Promotion and support of the State's YVR Strategy will be accomplished through the *State-Local Youth Violence Reduction (YVR) Partnerships* initiative. Specifically, its purpose is to encourage and facilitate coordinated planning that will culminate in the implementation of well-integrated systems of interventions in localities. These partnerships will also help to inform the State-level strategic planning process by increasing awareness of local needs and problems. Initially, the implementation of the State-Local YVR Partnerships initiative will be limited to successful applicants for the Juvenile Accountability Incentive Block Grant (JAIBG) in 12 high-crime areas that were selected based on population size and violent crime rates: Albany, Buffalo, Mount Vernon, Newburgh, Niagara Falls, Poughkeepsie, Schenectady, Syracuse, Rochester, Utica, Yonkers and Troy.

DCJS and OCFS are working to better connect statewide initiatives at the local level. We want to cross share local contacts between DCJS Operation Impact, YVRS local planning teams and Operation Reentry with our regional Community Services Team staff and regional offices. Lists of contacts are being generated to be distributed.

Preventive Respite Care and Services for Families and Respite Care and Services For Foster Parents

The provision of respite care and services for families and foster families has been included in the "continuum of services" planning effort by OCFS. OCFS staff has responded to requests by social services districts, including New York City, regarding implementing local programs for the provision of respite care.

Mental Health/Juvenile Justice Diversion Project

The Mental Health/Juvenile Justice (MH/JJ) Diversion Project distributes approximately \$1.3 million in municipal contracts for the purpose of identifying and diverting Juvenile Delinquent youth with identified mental health and substance abuse treatment needs from OCFS residential placement in either a voluntary or state operated facility. The MH/JJ project utilizes local partnerships and resources previously established through participation in the PINS Adjustment Services, Integrated County Planning and CCSI programs.

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

The Family Unification Program (FUP) is a federal initiative under the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) which provides limited Section 8 assisted housing to families whose children are at risk of foster care placement or whose return to the family is delayed primarily due to a lack of adequate housing. Families must be certified as eligible for the service through the public child welfare agency, which in New York is the local department of social services. Eligibility in New York State parallels eligibility for mandated preventive services. HUD program rules require that the program include both public housing authority and public child welfare agency participation for locating, identifying and assisting eligible families. In New York State this involves the New York State Division of Housing and Community Renewal (DHCR) and its Section 8 Local Administrators and OCFS and its social services districts.

Accomplishments in 2007-2008

HUD has not made new monies available to increase the number of vouchers in recent years. OCFS met with DHCR on April 28, 2008, in preparation of future grants applications to benefit our youth aging out of foster care. HUD published its Fiscal Year 2008 "SuperNOFA" on May 7, 2008.

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

Project oversight is provided by the MH/JJ State Workgroup comprised of representatives from OCFS, NYS Education Department (SED), NYS Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS), NYS Office of Mental Health (OMH), NYS Council on Children and Families (CCF), NYS Division of Probation and Correctional Alternatives (DPCA), and NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS).

Project sites include the following counties: Broome, Columbia, Dutchess, New York City-Kings, Orange, Schenectady, and Westchester.

Preventive Housing Services

Preventive Housing Services provides housing assistance in the form of special cash grants, including rent subsidies, to families to prevent placement or re-placement of a child into foster care or to reunite children in foster care with their families when lack of adequate housing is a primary factor in risk of placement or re-placement or is a barrier to reunification. Preventive Housing Services cash grants are primarily given for ongoing rental subsidy but they may also include one-time payments of rental or mortgage arrears to allow a family to continue living in their current home, broker's or finder's fees for locating housing, security deposits, essential repairs to bring housing up to standards where health and safety of the child or family are at risk, or other assistance sufficient to obtain adequate housing.

Preventive Housing grants of up to \$300 per month may be made to a family in addition to any other payments or benefits such as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families assisting the family. In no event may the subsidy exceed the actual rent cost of the family nor may the actual cost of rent exceed 150% of established fair market rents based on Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development rates published annually. Grants are also time-limited to a maximum of 36 months or a total dollar expenditure of \$10,800 per family.

Early Intervention Services For Infants and Toddlers With a Developmental Delay Or Disability

This federal entitlement program is intended to provide early intervention services to meet the developmental needs of children under the age of three who have a developmental delay or disability. When families with children with special needs are identified and offered supports and services to directly meet the child's special needs and to enhance the family's abilities to care for the child and cope with related pressures, the risk of abuse/maltreatment of that child or other children in the home is reduced. Based on this premise, OCFS has been an aggressive partner in

the implementation of Early Intervention (EI) Services for Infants and Toddlers with a Developmental Delay or Disability.

With the New York State Department of Health (DOH) being the lead agency, OCFS continued its involvement in the Early Intervention Coordinating Council, the advisory body on implementation of this program by DOH. Materials related to the program, such as training announcements; continue to be distributed to social services districts by DOH. Reflective of a change in federal regulations, an OCFS day care staff is the designated EICC member from OCFS. The OCFS representative to the EICC brings child welfare issues raised by the Council to the attention of appropriate staff.

Families Affected By Substance Abuse

In 2007-2008, OCFS continued to lead the In-Depth Technical Assistance (IDTA) Project in New York State.

The priority outcome of this initiative is to achieve child safety, permanency and wellbeing by supporting family recovery and helping families to prevent the need for involvement with the courts. New York State has undertaken to create a holistic approach to working with families by bringing key systems into collaboration. All these systems and their partners recognize the need to work differently with these families; to treat the parent for myriad problems, help foster recovery and create services plans with the client's input that reflect manageable requirements and facilitate success. These systems and their representatives are committed to work together in the best interest of the child, by supporting the entire family.

The New York Partnership for Family Recovery seeks to provide guidelines and best practices to assist counties, services providers and court officials working with families at the intersection of the three systems. These guidelines are designed to help parents and families recover while keeping their children safe and to provide needed treatment and services to support healthy child development. As adapted by various counties and cities, this document will be recommended for use in all future initiatives and RFPs to achieve more effective outcomes for children and families by incorporating the following cross-systems objectives.

Goals and objectives:

- To establish a set of core values and principles that will guide implementation of collaborative policies and practices.
- To provide practice guidance for jurisdictions related to: family engagement; screening and assessment; cross-system referrals; information sharing and service coordination; discharge planning and aftercare.
- To better engage parents/caretakers and their children in order to support better outcomes, reduce recidivism and interrupt multi-generational system involvement.
- To identify opportunities throughout the life of a case to improve engagement, assessment, referral and service coordination, since alcohol and other drug problems are often not present in abuse/neglect petitions filed with the court, even though many respondents in family court are suspected of alcohol and other drug abuse.
- To underscore the need to address the service needs of children impacted by AOD as a part of a package of family-centered comprehensive services.

This initiative focuses on families with substance abuse problems that are involved with both the child welfare and court systems, which are often the same families with repeated involvement in one or all of the systems, as well as the end users of the most expensive system resources.

“Family” in this context is defined broadly enough to include, for instance, adolescents in congregate care, multigenerational households, and other non-traditional constellations.

Many of these families present with a history of intergenerational issues including substance abuse, mental health, physical disabilities, domestic violence and parenting deficits rooted in their own experience of child neglect or abuse. It is recognized that families fall on a continuum of need, development, and progress, and services must be able to accommodate families at any point along that complex continuum.

New York State’s lead systems:

- Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS),
- Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS), and
- Office of Court Administration (OCA).

Key collaborative partners:

- New York City Administration for Children’s Services (ACS)
- New York Public Welfare Association
- Association of Substance Abuse Providers (ASAP)
- Office of Temporary and Disabilities Assistance (OTDA)

The Child Welfare-Substance Abuse Collocation Project was designed to improve the safety, permanence, and well-being of children, youth and families involved in both the child welfare and chemical dependency systems. The target population consists of: parents who are reported to CPS for child abuse or neglect and screen positive for chemical dependency, and their family members who are deemed to need chemical dependency prevention or treatment services; and Persons in Need of Supervision (PINS) who screen positive for chemical dependency, and their family members who are deemed to need chemical dependency prevention or treatment services.

The collocation model is based on the theory that service integration across the child welfare and chemical dependency service systems can help to improve both child welfare and chemical dependency outcomes by increasing the early identification of CPS and PINS-involved families with chemical dependency problems, facilitating access to treatment and prevention services, enhancing linkage with support services in community, increasing engagement and retention in treatment, and improving service planning and coordination between chemical dependency service providers and child welfare workers or probation officers.

The project involves the collocation of the project team at child welfare and/or probation office, consisting of Credentialed Alcohol Substance Abuse Counselors, mentors/coaches, prevention specialist, project director, and data entry person; chemical dependency treatment and prevention services in the community; support services in community; screening and assessment tools; cross-training in chemical dependency and child welfare issues; information sharing and coordinated case planning; and data management system to support evaluation, quality assurance, and program management.

This project is being implemented in the following nine counties: Dutchess, Erie, Fulton Genesee, Livingston, Onondaga, Orange, St. Lawrence, and Westchester.

Advantage After-School Program

New York State created the Advantage After-School Program (AASP) in 2000, to provide quality youth development programming to school-age children and youth during the after school hours. AASP programs must offer a broad range of educational, recreational and cultural age-appropriate activities that integrate what happens in the school day. Each program represents a partnership between a community-based organization and a school. The total appropriation for SFY 2008-2009 is 27.2 million to support approximately 26,000 students at 277 program sites across New York State.

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

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

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

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

Funds are made available to not-for-profit and faith based organizations through a competitive Request for Proposal process and awardees are eligible for five years of funding.

TANF-Funded Preventive Services

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funds are provided to OCFS and local social services districts to support the provision of preventive services. Services provided through this allocation are subject to the eligibility rules for TANF 200% of Poverty. Districts may use the funds to support direct service provision or for purchase of service from private providers.

Services funded through this allocation must meet one of the four following purposes of TANF.

1. Provide assistance to needy families so children may be cared for in their own home or in the homes of relatives.
2. End the dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage.
3. Prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies and establish annual numerical goals for preventing and reducing the incidence of these pregnancies; and
4. Encourage the formation and maintenance of two parent families.

Like much of the nation, New York State has begun considering strategies to both promote and maintain healthy marriages as part of the fourth purpose of TANF. Data proves persuasively the damaging consequences of being reared in single parent households. Yet research has lagged in identifying effective strategies to successfully promote marriages in low-income families (i.e., those currently found to be most vulnerable to the negative impacts of single parenthood). While identifying potential strategies to encourage and support marriage, OCFS has placed an emphasis on preventing family dissolution through investments in a wide range of preventive activities, including youth development programs, child welfare prevention programs, and community-based organizations committed to mentoring children and/or parents.

In addition to meeting one of these four purposes, TANF-funded services must meet the TANF definition of “Non-assistance.” In general terms, these are services or benefits that are not intended to provide ongoing, basic, economic support. Examples of services which may be funded through TANF non-assistance monies include Home Management, non-medical Drug Abuse Treatment Services and Alcohol Abuse Treatment Services, family counseling and education to support vulnerable children and their families, Adoption Services and Home Visiting Programs.

Accomplishments in 2007-2008

An Eligibility Manual for Child Welfare Programs developed in response to social services district requests for assistance in the eligibility determination process was updated in May 2007 and is available online.

The list of services that were originally identified as appropriate for TANF 200% of Poverty funding was expanded. The Welfare Management System (WMS) was modified to support authorization of the additional service types.

OCFS continued to participate in the TANF 200% of Poverty Workgroup, an interagency workgroup that also includes representatives from the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance, Office of Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services, Department of Labor, Department of Health, and Division of Budget. The goals of this workgroup are to provide a forum in which questions about the 200% of Poverty program can be discussed, and to be sure that the rules and

guidelines governing the provision of services are consistent across the many service providers in New York State that are funded with TANF non-assistance monies.

Training

OCFS will continue the process of restructuring its training system for child welfare. OCFS has worked with the Child Welfare Institute, social services districts, and its university-training partners to implement a system of training that supports the development of outcome-focused practice skills. OCFS continues in the process of converting all of its child welfare training to be outcome-based. Training has been reorganized to provide all staff with a set of fundamental skills that are necessary to protect children and to develop families that are able to provide for children's safety, well-being, and permanency.

The Child Welfare/Child Protective Services Caseworker Common Core is the foundation component for line staff. The Supervisory Core was implemented in 1999 is currently being revised. This program is the foundation for training supervisory staff. The Child Protective Services Response Specialty Component was implemented in 2001. The Adolescent Services Resource Network, designed to prepare youth for self-sufficiency, is fully implemented. The Adoption Specialty “Best Practices in Achieving Permanency Through Surrenders and Termination” was piloted in 2005 and 2006 and implemented in 2007. The Adoption Specialty “Building Adoptive Families” will be developed in 2008. The rollout of the Family Preservation/Reunification Specialty training began in 2005. These trainings are designed to provide non-CPS child welfare caseworkers with the knowledge and skill to achieve expected outcomes. The Core Essential Skills for Experienced Caseworkers Specialty, developed specifically for experienced caseworkers, was fully implemented in 2002 in all regions of the state. This eight-day residential program is designed to build practice skills in more experienced staff.

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

The child welfare-training program continues in transition. OCFS is continuously exploring ways to expand the use of computer and distance-based learning technologies to enhance accessibility to child welfare staff.

Training Provided in Federal Fiscal Year 2007-2008

- **Casework Documentation Training**
This training program prepares caseworkers to effectively document on-going case activities, decisions and milestones with families and children in a manner consistent with

the practice framework, policy, and procedures of NYS. The program provides a structure for the management of the case through assessment, service planning, implementation, and evaluation. A separate component of this project focuses on Family Assessment and Service Planning (FASP). It supports the implementation of CONNECTIONS Case Management Electronic Caser Recording System.

1974 trainees
216 training days

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

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

375 trainees
15 offerings
45 training days

- **Sexual Abuse Training Child Welfare Staff**

This statewide training is provided for caseworkers in all child welfare services program areas on the dynamics of sexual abuse as well as the treatment modalities currently utilized to protect and support victims and to treat and support the family. The program builds the knowledge base that caseworkers need to identify the presence of intrafamilial sexual abuse, to make accurate and effective safety assessments, interventions, risk assessments and service plans to keep children safe and reduce the risk of future harm. This course is provided to a combined audience of Child Protective and other Child Welfare caseworkers. This year an additional 2.5 days of specialized training was provided to SCR intake staff and supervisors.

509 trainees
16 offerings
48 training days

- **Training for Experienced CPS Caseworkers**

This is advanced level training for child protective service caseworkers who have completed basic training. These trainings enable experienced caseworkers to strategically apply the skills they acquired in foundation training in a variety of critical areas of practice. The topics include Legal Issues, Medical Issues, and Sexual Abuse Interviewing. For those acting in an On-Call capacity, an online Learn-Linc class is offered as well as the two-day traditional classroom offering.

843 trainees
21 offerings
1 Teleconference
44.5 training days

- **Child Protective Services Response Specialty**

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

490 trainees
18 offerings
136 training days

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

This program is required for all new CPS caseworkers and strongly recommended for all new caseworkers. The objective of the training is to equip new workers with the knowledge, attitudes, and skills to practice effectively. The training provides caseworkers with opportunities to practice using a set of skills that research and best practice standards have shown to positively impact the achievement of child safety, permanency, and child and family well being outcomes. Twenty days of classroom training are provided for practice on interpersonal helping, decision-making and case management skills. There are two days of integrated CONNECTIONS Systems training for a total of 22 classroom days. The program also includes self-instructional materials and on-the-job training to impart knowledge on policies, procedures and casework practices that will prepare trainees for the skills-based classroom portion of the training.

636 trainees
26 offerings
635 total training days

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

Supervisory Core is composed of three components: Module I Foundations, a five-day course for all supervisors that focuses on leadership, supervisory effectiveness behaviors, and generic supervision. Module II A, the Child Protective Services Specialty, a six-day course for CPS supervisors focusing on supervising the child protective response; and Module II B, the Child Welfare Specialty, a five-day course for Child Welfare supervisors. Module I and Module II A have been developed and rolled out. Module II B is scheduled to be developed in 2008.

Module I
267 trainees
14 offerings
65 training days

Module II A
387 trainees
20 offering
116 training days

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

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

188 trainees
13 offerings
104 total training days

- **Outcome-Based Training and Technical Assistance**

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

461 days of technical assistance
1718 pre, mid and post core conferences

- **Family Preservation/Reunification**

This is an 8-day specialty course for preventive, foster care and adoption staff. It follows the Common Core and is presented in two modules. This program builds upon the generic caseworker skills and abilities developed by trainees during their participation in the CWS/CPS Common Core training. It focuses on the strategic use of interpersonal helping, assessment and service planning skills to work with families to promote children's safety and to achieve rapid permanency. Module I is designed for Preventive, Adoption, and Foster Care caseworkers, and is a prerequisite for Module II. Module II is designed for Adoption and Foster Care caseworkers. In 2007, all deliveries of Family Preservation were cancelled due to other priorities, especially in NYC.

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

The focus of the training and TA is on the individual, unit and organizational practices that directly strengthen family involvement in assessment, service planning and plan implementation/family change efforts. The six Family Engagement Specialists guide a wide

range of activities, often at the request of the local districts or Regional Offices. This work with local districts is on-going.

- **Directors of Services Leadership Institute**

OCFS introduced the Directors of Services Leadership Institute (formerly the Local District Directors of Services Forum) in 2006. This is an annual three-day event intended to provide local district Directors of Services with the knowledge and skills necessary to apply generic and program-specific management principles and skills to Child Welfare (Child Protective Services, Preventive Services, Foster Care, and Adoption Services). (This accomplishment also applies to Goal 2.)

62 trainees
1 offering
3 training days

- **Child Welfare Eligibility Training**

The purpose of this project is to provide social services districts with training so that staff will have the knowledge and skill needed to accurately, effectively, and efficiently determine eligibility for federal funding of child welfare and Medicaid programs. Topics include the history and rationale of federal funding streams, how to define and understand the distinct use of each category of eligibility, the use of the Welfare Management System (WMS) and how to identify and access the resources available to help accomplish these objectives.

220 trainees
17 offerings
10.5 training days

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

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

Component I
50 trainees
1 training days
2 offerings

Component II
28 trainees
2 training days
1 offering

Component III
548 trainees
N/A training days
13 offerings

Training Planned For Federal Fiscal Year 2008-2009

Nearly all of the training programs provided in 2007-2008, as described in Goal 1 of the APSR, will be offered again in the coming year.

- Child Welfare Common Core provides outcome-based training for all new child welfare services (CWS) and child protective services caseworkers. It focuses on building skills that are most likely to lead to positive outcomes for clients and the achievement of program objectives. The training utilizes a variety of methodologies, including self-instructional materials, to impart knowledge on policies, procedures and practice concepts. Twenty days of classroom training will be provided for practice of interpersonal helping, decision-making and case management skills. An on-the-job training component will be conducted by social services districts and authorized voluntary agencies to reinforce and integrate the knowledge and skills portions of the training with the realities of the job.

An additional feature of the core training is an enhanced trainee evaluation process. OCFS developed a feedback loop between core trainers and trainee supervisors to provide a developmental feedback on the trainees' participation in and progress through core. A midpoint and final conference will be conducted. Developmental progress will also be assessed through embedded evaluation instruments, which will help trainees, trainers and supervisors assess trainees' grasp of concepts and skills during training. A written assessment tool was developed in 2007 and will be piloted and implemented in 2008.

- In 2007, OCFS incorporated an enhancement to the classroom legal training: this component uses LearnLinc to introduce basic legal concepts and terminology to Common Core trainees. The purpose of the LearnLinc component is to better prepare participants for the classroom legal training. By covering some of the basic legal concepts and terms during the LearnLinc session should improve trainee understanding and retention of the classroom material. Also in 2007, OCFS developed and piloted a LearnLinc component to enhance the Child Development segment of the Common Core.

837 trainees
31 offerings
620 training days

- Child Welfare Supervisory Core provides competency-based training for new and existing child welfare and child protective services supervisors. The Supervisory Core has three components: Module I Foundations, a five-day course for all supervisors (preceded by two LearnLinc sessions); Module II A, the Child Protective Services Specialty, a six-day course for CPS supervisors; and Module II B to be developed in 2008, the Child Preventive Specialty, a five-day course for non-CPS supervisors. These courses focus on building skills in leadership and the supervision of CWS/CPS casework practice. Training will also be provided to supervisors and program managers statewide on their role in developing and assessing new staff through the on-the-job training component of the new caseworker and supervisor core program.

Module I, Foundations

360 trainees

15 offerings

75 training days

Module II A, CPS Specialty

550 trainees

22 offerings

110 training days

Module II B, CW Specialty

144 trainees

6 offerings

30 training days

- Technical Assistance (TA) will be delivered in groups or on a one-on-one basis and training on the Common Core, Supervisory Core, Core Essentials Skills, Family Preservation/Reunifications, Best Practices in Achieving Permanency, Building Adoptive Families as well as service plan review as well as Service Plan Review training to local districts. Supervisors and caseworkers will receive technical assistance to maintain Outcome-Based Training system in their local districts. This includes pre, mid and post core conferences with supervisors and caseworkers to assess training skills learned in the classroom and on-the-job training components and to develop a plan for ongoing training needs. Technical Assistance may also include training of trainer activities; providing training and follow-up training to large local districts that provide their own Core training.

405 Days of Technical Assistance

4479 Pre, mid, and post-core Conferences

- **Child Welfare Casework Documentation Training**

This program continues to reflect and support CONNECTIONS. Through a process of guided self-instruction, classroom training, and small group workings, caseworkers will learn how to use case documentation to facilitate their case practice and meet requirements of child welfare legislation and regulation. The training will continue to incorporate modifications to reflect further development of CONNECTIONS as needed. At the direction of OCFS, case reviews will be conducted. These case reviews will provide for an evaluative approach to support the training and assess the transfer of learning. Training for this year has been expanded to include training and technical assistance on the Family Assessment and Service Plan (FASP). This training is delivered in collaboration with trainers who teach the navigation component. The purpose of the collaboration is to provide trainees with strategies to navigate efficiently through the CONNECTIONS Case Record.

7000 trainees

350 training days

- **Family Preservation /Reunification**

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

Module I
192 Trainees
8 Offerings
30 Training Days

Module II
96 Trainees
4 Offerings
12 Training Days

- **Adoption and Adoption Specialty Training**

This project includes two courses; “Best Practices in Achieving Permanency Through Surrenders and Termination” and “Building Adoptive Families.” Both courses are for adoption and foster care caseworkers and supervisors. This training will provide participants with the basic knowledge and skills to assess the effectiveness of diligent efforts; determine the appropriateness of setting a goal of adoption; prepare children for adoption; use the legal process to free children for adoption and to comply with Title IV-E and State statutes. This training will also include training delivered by an attorney on diligent efforts, how to obtain a TPR and take a voluntary surrender. Portions of the program will be delivered through LearnLinc or comparable technology.

Best Practices in Achieving Permanency Through Surrenders and Termination

120 Trainees
5 Offerings
30 Training Days

Building Adoptive Families
72 Trainees
3 Offerings
9 Training Days

- **Child Protective Services Response Training**

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

700 trainees
28 Offerings
168 Training Days

- **Training for Experienced CPS Caseworkers**

Advanced level training for child protective service caseworkers who have completed basic training. These trainings enable experienced caseworkers to strategically apply the skills they acquired in foundation training in a variety of critical areas of practice. The topics include Legal Issues, Medical Issues, and Sexual Abuse Interviewing. For those acting in an On-Call capacity, an online learn-line class is offered as well as the two-day traditional classroom offering. Additional offerings of the basic advanced courses as well as other topic areas are added this year to support the annual 6 hour in-service requirement.

1470 trainees
33 offerings
2 Teleconference
63.5 training days

- **Sexual Abuse Training for Child Welfare Staff**

Statewide training provided 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.

550 trainees
24 offerings
57 training days

- **Foster/Adoptive Parent Training**

Foster/Adoptive Parent Training, in the year 2007-08, consists of an integrated, comprehensive series of training courses that will be available to foster and adoptive parents from pre-placement of a child to continuing placement. This project begins with training that prepares agency staff and foster parent teams to deliver a 10-week mutual Group Preparation and Selection (GPS) training program for prospective foster and adoptive parents. It also includes COMPASS training, an in-service foster-adoptive parent-training program that supports the GPS program, and continues with the provision of specialized training through the Therapeutic Foster Boarding Home training project. Foster/Adoptive Parent training also consists of modules that respond to the needs of foster/adoptive parents. Child development, communication, interpersonal helping skills

and many other related topics are addressed in this program. In response to popular reception, the distance learning format i-Linc will be featured as a way to reach foster/adoptive parents in their homes via their own personal computers at times they are available for training.

248 offerings
3248 trainees
367 training days
257 technical assistance days

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

Provide training for experienced Child Welfare and Child Protective Services caseworkers. The training focuses on building skills most likely to result in positive outcomes for clients and the achievement of child welfare outcomes. This 8-day program builds core skills for experienced staff that are consistent with skills presented in the Common Core training, supporting staff's ability to achieve safety and permanency for children. Up to 30 days of Technical Assistance may be used to provide Skills Clinics for Supervisors. The Skills Clinic "Engagement Practices for Supervisors" was rolled out in 2006. Other Skills Clinics will be developed as needed.

408 Trainees
17 Offerings
136 Training Days

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

This component will provide training and technical assistance to local social services districts and voluntary agencies in support of their program improvement plans. The focus of the training and TA will be on the individual, unit, and organizational practices that directly strengthen family involvement in assessment, service planning, and plan implementation/family change efforts.

This component has two segments:

Segment 1 – Child-centered, Family-focused Practice: Training and Technical Assistance
Segment 2 – Family Meetings: Training and Technical Assistance

Directors of Services Leadership Institute

This component, introduced in 2006, is a three-day event intended to provide local district Directors of Services with the knowledge and skills necessary to apply generic and program-specific management principles and skills to Child Welfare (Child Protective Services, Preventive Services, Foster Care and Adoption Services). (This component also applies to Goal 2.)

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

75 trainees
1 offering
3 training days

- **Safety and Risk Refresher Course and Technical Assistance**

This two-day training will provide supervisors with knowledge and skills to make accurate and timely decisions regarding safety and risk. . It is delivered on demand.

20 Training Days

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

OCFS is piloting a model of service delivery by casework teams with 9 local districts. The project is designed to support local districts to provide effective and efficient protective, preventive or foster care services by assigning casework teams instead of individuals. Training and technical assistance include team building, the process of group supervision and case conference facilitation, family engagement skills, and other strategies as identified by the individual pilot districts.

- **Family Assessment Response Training**

In response to recent legislation enabling NYS to pilot an alternative response to CPS investigations, OCFS is working with six local districts to develop and implement alternate response pilots in each of those districts. Training and technical assistance will be provided to district administrators, managers, supervisors, and caseworkers so that pilot staff have the knowledge and skills necessary to implement an alternative protective response.

- **Child Welfare Eligibility Training**

The purpose of this project is to provide social services districts with training so that staff will have the knowledge and skill needed to accurately, effectively, and efficiently determine eligibility for federal funding of child welfare and Medicaid programs. Topics include the history and rationale of federal funding streams, how to define and understand the distinct use of each category of funding eligibility, how to determine and document each category of eligibility, the use of the Welfare Management System (WMS) and how to identify and access the resources available to help accomplish these objectives. Training has been converted to an i-Linc format for 2006.

600 Trainees
40 Offerings
20 Days of Training

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

The purpose of this project is to provide all OCFS out-of-home facility staff in social services districts, juvenile justice and voluntary agencies with training so that staff will be better informed on how to provide appropriate access and management of children's health services needs, identification of health risk factors integration of the new health standards into permanency planning and case management. The training to be offered in

2008 will address the need for a broader knowledge base on psychotropic medications and consistent application of the regulations and guidelines for consents in the health services field.

556 Trainees
16 Days of Training
1 Teleconference
1 i-Linc Training

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

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

Component I
400 Trainees
10 Training Days
10 Offerings

Component II
23 Trainees
7 Offerings
7 Training Days

Component III
495 trainees
14 offerings
N/A training days

GOAL #2

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

ASSESSMENT OF NEED AND CURRENT STATUS

On December 31, 2007, there were 26,733 children in foster care. This was a 1.7% decrease from the census of 27,191 children in foster care on December 31, 2006.

As of December 31, 2007, 76.5% of children in care statewide were in foster family care, including approved relative foster homes.

In 2007, the population of foster children in approved relatives' homes continued to increase. The number of children in approved relatives' homes was 5,440 in 2005, 6113 in 2006, and 6164 in 2007.

In 2007, there were 12,266 children in care within New York State who were part of a sibling group, a decrease from 12,345 in 2006. Of these children 49% (6,016) were separated from at least one other sibling in care.

Placement Stability. Of all children who were in foster care for at least 8 days but less than 12 months between 4/1/06 and 3/31/07, 90.4% had two or fewer placement settings. This compares favorably to the national median of 83.3%. Of all children who were in foster care for at least 12 months but less than 24 months between 4/1/06 and 3/31/07, 72.4% had two or fewer placement settings (compared to the national median of 59.9%).

As of December 31, 2007, 5,612 (21.0%) of the children in care were in a placement outside of their county and 584 (2.2 %) were in a placement outside of New York State. Of these, kinship placements accounted for 8.2% of the out-of-county placements and 42.3% of the out-of-state placements.

Of the children in care on December 31, 2007, 52.5% had a Permanency Planning Goal of return to parent or guardian.

Length of Time to Permanency. Of all children who were admitted to foster care for the first time in 2004, 57% achieved permanency through reunification, discharge to a relative, or adoption within two years of their entry into foster care. The percentage reaching permanency within two years was unchanged from the percentage observed for the cohort of children admitted to foster care in 2001. Of all children who were in foster care on January 1, 2004, 45% reached permanency through reunification, discharge to a relative, or adoption within two years (i.e., by December 31, 2005). In comparison, 43% of the children in care on January 1, 2001 exited to a permanent home within two years (i.e., by December 31, 2002).

There were 2,469 children discharged to adoption in calendar year 2007, a decrease of 8.1% from 2006 when 2,686 children were discharged to adoption.

Of all children in care on December 31, 2007, 26.8% had a Permanency Planning Goal (PPG) of Adoption. This is the same as last year.

There were 6,998 children in care on December 31, 2007, with the goal of adoption.

Of adoptions finalized during 2007, 74.8% of the children for whom ethnicity was known were minority children.

Of children discharged to adoption in 2007, 96.7% received an adoption subsidy.

Of all children with a goal of adoption on December 31, 2007, 50.9% were not freed after 12 months of having the goal.

Of all freed children, 76.4% were not placed within 12 months of being freed.

Of all placed children, 49% had not had their adoptions finalized after one year.

For children under eight years of age, discharged to adoption in 2007, the length of time from the establishment of the goal of adoption to discharge, was less than two years for 57.8% of the children, between two and three years for 19.1%, and over three years for 23.1%.

For children over the age of eight, the time between goal setting and discharge was less than two years for 31.6% of the children, two to three years for 17.9% and over three years for 50.6%.

State and Local Activities

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

Kinship Care

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

The federal Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) that amended Title IV-E of the Social Security Act authorized the exemption of children placed in foster care with relatives from the requirement that there must be a petition to terminate their parents' parental rights if they have

remained in care for fifteen of the most recent twenty-two months. This is a recognition that children placed with their relatives may be in circumstances where legally freeing them may not be in their best interests. New York state and regulations allow documenting that a child is in a kinship foster home as a justifiable reason for not filing a termination petition against the child's parents. However, case planners in New York are advised that a child in kinship foster care is not automatically exempt from ASFA termination requirements, and that every case must be assessed on its individual circumstances.

In kinship foster care situations where it is determined that children are unlikely to be returned home, exploration of the relative's willingness to adopt is generally the next best alternative. Kinship adoptions have increased over the last few years. However, there are other times when a relative is not interested in adopting her/his kin where the child may remain with the relative in foster care for a more extended period. While social services districts have had increasing success in decreasing lengths of stay for these kinship foster children, their lengths of stay in foster care remain higher, on average, than that of other foster children. Children residing in kinship foster care are increased in real numbers, and as a percent of the total foster care population for the first time in a number of years. More than 6,300 foster children are currently placed in foster care with a relative, which represents approximately 24% of the total foster care population. New York State does not have a subsidized kinship guardianship program as an alternative for children who cannot safely return to their birthparents, but who do not wish to be adopted, or whose committed caretaker relatives do not wish to adopt. However, under Article 6 of the Family Court Act, relative custody or guardianship is an option.

Approved relative and certified foster homes are governed by the same standards, except that there is the authority to waive a non-safety standard for an approved relative homes, while there is no comparable provision for certified homes. The regulations allow approving relative homes on an emergency basis. OCFS also extended the maximum period of time when a home can be in that status from 60 to 90 days (although no Title IV-E funds are claimed during the "emergency" period). This regulatory provision allows for a single placement for a child when a relative is available at the time of an emergency child protective services removal, is able to provide safe care to the child, and can continue to provide care until the child can safely be returned home or another permanency outcome can be achieved. Additionally, the regulations permit more distant relatives, godparents or other persons with a positive pre-existing relationship with the family to be used as an emergency placement resource if such a home meets the regulatory requirements that exist for relatives (again, no Title IV-E is claimed until final certification is completed).

New OCFS regulations were promulgated effective on May 11, 2005, that expanded the circumstances in which a relative or other significant adult in a child's life may be approved or certified on an emergency basis. Formerly, such emergency approval or certification process was only permitted to occur for placements involving abuse or neglect, and only at the time the child was entering foster care. The regulatory amendments permit foster parents to be approved or certified on an emergency basis in any circumstance where a child is entering foster care. Moreover, foster parents may be approved or certified on an emergency basis when a child is already in foster care, there is a compelling reason why the child needs to move to a prospective foster parent, and there is insufficient time to approve or certify such relative or other significant adult as a foster parent using the non-emergency process.

In 2003, Chapter 657 of the Laws of 2003 was enacted. This law reinforced existing statutory requirements and policy that requires that relatives be sought and explored as possible placement resources in situations when a child may need to be removed from the child's home. Chapter 657 of the Laws of 2003 specified that the court must direct the local social services district to locate "all the child's grandparents" when placement is being explored. Moreover, it required the grandparents, and any other relative being explored as a placement resource is informed "of the opportunity for becoming foster parents or for seeking custody or care of the child, and that the child may be adopted by foster parents if attempts at reunification with the birth parent are not required or are unsuccessful." Chapter 671 of the Laws of 2005, which became effective on December 5, 2005, strengthened the requirements to actively seek out the existence of relatives who have played a significant role in a child's life, if a child needs out of home placement.

OCFS continues to support any federal action that would allow the use of Title IV-E funds for kinship guardianship payments.

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

Utilizing approximately \$2.15 million in state and TANF funds, the *New York State Kinship Caregiver Program* allows programs to deliver a wide range of services that address the multiple needs of caregivers and the children in their care including:

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

Accomplishments for 2007-08:

Thirteen community-based organizations deliver these services to caregivers in 20 counties. Families in "informal" kinship care as well as those that are in kinship foster care are eligible for services. It is estimated that 5,733 caregivers as well as 3,337 children have been served since 2006.

The New York State Kinship Navigator Program is among the 14 programs funded through OCFS. Developed jointly by OCFS and lead agency Rochester Catholic Family Center, the program is designed to creatively assist kinship caregivers and the children in their care in all counties in gaining access to information and community support services. Any caregiver residing in any part of the State is able to utilize a toll-free phone line or website to identify kinship care related services in their home locale. In addition, kinship specialists are available to assess caregiver needs and develop a plan of action.

Training and technical assistance was provided by OCFS to promote quality programs. In addition, steps have been taken to collaborate with state agencies, kinship care coalitions, the legal community and other stakeholders such as AARP to help develop coherent policies and coordinated services for kinship caregivers throughout New York.

Plans for 2008-09:

The second anticipated initiative is the development and promulgation of a handbook for relatives raising children that would be provided to identified relatives of children needing out of home placement. This handbook will provide general information about the advantages and disadvantages of caring for a relative child as a foster care placement versus as a non-foster care caretaker. OCFS is working collaboratively with our sister agency, OTDA, and with a workgroup of local districts as well as with a contractor to produce the handbook. Promulgation of the handbook will assist with implementation of key provisions of Chapter 657 of the Laws of 2003, which addressed the rights of grandparents in regard to seeking custody of their grandchildren as well as implementation of Chapter 671 of the Laws of 2005, which requires that local departments of social services attempt to locate relatives of children needing out of home placement.

Institutional Abuse/Maltreatment Investigations (IAB)

OCFS continues to investigate and make determinations in those cases containing allegations of abuse or neglect of children in residential care that are registered by the Statewide Central Register of child Abuse and maltreatment (SCR) concerning congregate care facilities within New York State. In those cases determined to be indicated, OCFS, through its regional offices, promotes the development and implementation of appropriate and effective plans of prevention and remediation. Additionally, IAB investigators are empowered to send letters of concern to those agencies that are found to have programmatic issues regardless of the individual case determination.

OCFS organized the IAB Quality Assurance Priority into three distinct areas. The first group focused on the development of an updated IAB manual for use by investigators and supervisors. The team determined that this could be accomplished most efficiently by updating the 1996 manual. Chapters were assigned to members and proposed revisions reviewed by the entire team. The second team developed a Peer Review Process as a quality assurance mechanism. The third team developed a Communication Strategy and staff development recommendation. The work of all three teams continued through 2007 and 2008.

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

Accomplishments for 2007-08 .

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

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

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

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

Plans for 2008 -09:

Plans include a comprehensive case review of all IAB cases determined in February of 2008. The objective of the review is to identify targeted training areas for all IAB staff statewide. This will enable a more focused and effective use of resources. Also in 2008, additional information and training supports continue to be provided regarding trauma informed models of residential care. A three part teleconference series on Trauma and Mental Health will be broadcast throughout 2008.

Since the beginning of 2008, OCFS Division of Legal Affairs has been reviewing all recommended determinations made in cases investigated by the Commission on the Quality of Care of the Mentally Disabled.

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

OCFS was successful in securing training supports to sponsor the participation of 10 voluntary agencies in training in the Sanctuary Model of residential care. This model is a promising practice of organizational change designed to create a therapeutic community milieu where children and adolescents who have been impacted by trauma in their lives can heal and move forward to positive futures

In 2008, five additional residential voluntary agencies and four OCFS facilities began the process of shifting their practices and procedures to trauma-sensitive environment and approaches through the adoption of the Sanctuary Model® for organizational change and continuous improvement. The Sanctuary Model®; an evidence based, trauma-informed initiative for residential childcare agencies, supports the program improvement strategy “Improving Child Welfare Outcomes” and helps agencies establish safe environments for staff, youth, families and administrators.

There is a heightened recognition within the child welfare field that a majority of the youth placed in residential care suffer from complex psychiatric conditions and have experienced traumatic events such as abuse, neglect, loss of loved ones, or family and community violence. Implementing the Sanctuary Model® is creating safe facility environments to help these young people heal by accepting what has happened to them and begin to move into lives of promise and fulfillment.

By involving everyone within the organization in comprehensive trauma training, adopting a common language and instituting multi-disciplinary teams that identify necessary changes and develop alternatives, the facility environments become less confrontational and become more focused on treatment. The features of Sanctuary Model® environments, in addition to the multi-disciplinary teams, include twice daily Community Meetings, Safety Plans for youth and staff, Red Flag reviews, psycho-education in trauma, team meetings, treatment planning conferences, a commitment to 7 program principles, and continuous feedback and self evaluation by staff and the resident youth.

As staff begins to better understand the causes of the behaviors of the youth in their care, they will improve and individualize their approaches and begin to see the youth for what has happened to them, as opposed to what they have done. The focus of staff shifts from reacting to facility behaviors, to helping youth learn to manage their emotions, therefore reducing violence and the need for physical restraints. There is a shift from an environment of control to one of collaboration. Children are taught how to make connections between their behaviors and their emotions and to find new ways to help them express themselves productively.

Each facility has a Sanctuary Model Steering Committee comprised of the top decision makers and a Core Group comprised of a broad representation of staff and disciplines within the agency. Within OCFS, a central - Home Office - Steering Committee has been established to support the work of the OCFS facilities in the project.

Plans for 2008-09

Looking ahead to 2009, sixteen additional OCFS facilities will begin the process of adopting a Sanctuary Model® environment to create a residency milieu that supports improved safety and well being of children in their care.

Bridges to Health (B2H)

OCFS submitted three Home and Community Based Medicaid Waivers to the federal Department of Health and Human Services' Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) in April 2007 and received approval for Bridges to Health (B2H) from CMS on July 26, 2007, with a 3 year phase-in starting January 2008. The three waivers have been implemented as a single program, B2H, to serve children in foster care with serious emotional disturbances, developmental disabilities, and medical fragility. Each waiver will address a subset of children and youth in foster care, with B2H services following the child upon discharge from foster care. These clinical diagnoses are sufficiently severe to result in placing the children in a medical institution. B2H services are not provided by the foster care system and are not supported through state or federal funding available for foster care services.

OCFS and New York State Department of Health (DOH) are responsible for the operation and oversight of the B2H waivers. B2H was designed with considerable input from providers, LDSS, clinicians, biological, foster, and adoptive parents, and children themselves. All of the B2H services are intended to serve children within their support network, as children in foster care have many people involved in their lives – including birth families, foster and adoptive families, caregivers, LDSS, providers, clinicians, courts, and advocates. The B2H services are as follows: Health Care Integration, Planned Respite, Skill Building, Day Habilitation, Family/Caregiver Supports and Services, Prevocational Services, Intensive In-Home Supports and Services, Supported Employment, Special Needs Community Advocacy and Support, Immediate Crisis Response Services, Crisis Avoidance, Management and Training, Adaptive and Assistive Equipment, Crisis Respite and Accessibility Modifications.

To promote efficiency and allow for regional flexibility, OCFS has entered into provider agreements with Health Care Integration Agencies (HCIAs) across the State to complete related administrative activities prior to DOH's enrolling the provider in eMedNY. The HCIAs are not-for-profit voluntary child serving agencies. In addition, they must demonstrate experience in providing community-based services to individuals with disabilities. These agencies will recruit providers, prepare enrollment packages for LDSS approval, propose individualized health plans (IHPs) to the LDSSs, arrange for waiver services and assist in waiver administration.

OCFS prepared multiple implementation documents through the summer and fall of 2007, including a Program Manual, a Request for Applications (RFA) for HCIAs, a Provider Agreement between the HCIAs and OCFS, and a Model Subcontract between HCIAs and Waiver Service Providers. OCFS secured a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with DOH to operate the Waivers along with a MOU with the Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (OMRDD), as OMRDD will assist OCFS in providing a portion of the eligibility assessment for children in the B2H DD waiver. In addition, OCFS developed and posted the approved B2H rates.

OCFS facilitated changes in CONNECTIONS for children in B2H. CONNECTIONS will support enrollment, services, and discharge data for B2H. In addition, OCFS has adopted the evidenced-based Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) instrument for B2H that will allow providers to track progress for children. CANS B2H scores will quantify the progress of children. CONNECTIONS will maintain the CANS scores so that OCFS can evaluate progress both on a specific case by case basis as well as on a system-wide basis.

In the fall of 2007, OCFS implemented a training schedule that included dissemination of information to essential stakeholders. OCFS held multiple offerings of trainings:

- Training #1 for Local Department of Social Services (LDSS) Commissioners, Voluntary Agency Executive Directors and Administrators, who will demonstrate an understanding of the structure, eligibility and guidelines of the B2H Program;
- Training #2 for administrators, supervisors and caseworkers from the LDSS or the Division of Juvenile Justice and Opportunities for Youth (DJJOY), who will demonstrate an understanding of: the structure, eligibility, and guidelines of B2H; the role and

responsibilities of LDSS and DJJOY within the B2H; and the identification of children and youth who qualify for the B2H;

- Training #3 for Administrators from HCIAAs and WSPs who will demonstrate an understanding of: the structure, eligibility, and guidelines of B2H; the role and responsibilities of the HCIAAs and the WSPs; the documentation and billing requirements of B2H; and the quality management requirement of the B2H;
- Training #4 HCIs and HCI Supervisors, who will demonstrate an understanding of: the structure, eligibility, and guidelines of B2H; the identification of children and youth who qualify for B2H the role and responsibilities of the HCIAAs, HCI and the WSPs; the services of the B2H; and the documentation, billing and quality management requirements for B2H and
- Training #5 is a series of workshops will include sessions that fulfill training requirements for WSPs.

Plans for 2008-09:

B2H began serving children January 1, 2008, in the OCFS Rochester, Albany, and New York City regions. OCFS will continue to expand the B2H Program to serve the lower Hudson Valley and the Syracuse Regions, while continuing to increase the number of opportunities in Rochester, Albany, and New York City. OCFS has projected that it will serve an additional 843 children by the end of 2009. OCFS will continue to work diligently with the provider community to explain the benefits of the B2H Program and to educate voluntary child care staff so they will refer potential applicants to the program. OCFS will continue to monitor the enrollments of children in the B2H Program in the 5 roll-out regions. The B2H program is expected serve 3,305 children statewide as it is implemented over the next three years.

OCFS will continue to implement training schedule to essential stakeholders. OCFS will hold multiple offerings of trainings for LDSS Commissioners, Voluntary Agency Executive Directors and Administrators, supervisors and caseworkers from the LDSS or the Division of Juvenile Justice and Opportunities for Youth (DJJOY), Administrators from Health Care Integration Agencies (HCIAAs) and Waiver Service Providers (WSPs), Health Care Integrators (HCIs) and HCI Supervisors regarding the structure, eligibility, and guidelines of the B2H Program.

To promote efficiency and allow for regional flexibility, OCFS will continue to enter into provider agreements with Health Care Integration Agencies (HCIAAs) across the State to complete related administrative activities prior to DOH's enrolling the provider in eMedNY. OCFS plans to release the Request for Applications (RFA) for B2H to potential HCIAAs in April 2008 and subsequently provide Information Sessions in May 2008. OCFS will enter into Provider Agreements with the HCIAAs with the start date of the B2H Program in Syracuse and Lower Hudson Valley regions being January 1, 2009.

Health Care Services For Children in Foster Care

The changing and increasing mental, physical, developmental, and dental needs of children in our foster care system spurred the creation of a series of activities aimed at improving the systematic responses to caring for children. Working with representatives from the DOH, Office of Mental Health (OMH), Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS), and

OMRDD, OCFS continues to address a series of administrative activities designed to improve access to care. Progress on the administrative activities has been steady and DOH and OCFS have worked very diligently to accomplish many activities. A webpage on the OCFS intranet provides extensive information about this program. Other OCFS activities related to health care for children in foster care include:

- OCFS has been working with numerous voluntary agencies on establishing Medicaid Rates. The voluntary agencies are generally seeking to serve children who have higher needs and require services that are enhanced to meet these needs. On any given year, OCFS provides technical assistance to 5-7 agencies who are seeking Medicaid Rates. OCFS assists these agencies and provides information on Medicaid policies.
- DOH, as the single state Medicaid agency in NYS, proposed Article VII legislation in the 07-08 Executive Budget to expand Medicaid coverage for children in foster care up to age 21. This was enacted and will help to reduce the number of uninsured, as well as provide continuity of services for children leaving foster care up to the age of 21. This is important to sustain the health services for children as they leave foster care.
- In 2002, Continuous Coverage for Medicaid was expanded to all children; DOH subsequently submitted a State Plan Amendment to the CMS to provide categorical eligibility for Medicaid for children in foster care in 2005. Currently, OCFS provides ongoing technical assistance to LDSS staff that is responsible for determining Medicaid eligibility for children in foster care to make sure that the aforementioned policies are being implemented properly.
- OCFS and Office of Mental Health (OMH) have worked in conjunction for LDSS to participate in the OMH Home and Community Based Waiver. The OMH Waiver slots have been utilized by LDSS, as they have used their preventive funds to participate. There have been 395 slots allocated for LDSS for the OMH Waiver to date.

In addition, OCFS is actively developing a plan in conjunction with DOH to create an interface between the CONNECTIONS system and the Title XIX Medicaid system for purposes of eligibility and payment. The interface is intended to minimize gaps in health care coverage by automatically re-certifying cases initiated by CONNECTIONS every 12 months, updating demographic information between CONNECTIONS and WMS, facilitating payment to voluntary agencies, supporting WMS subsystems (e.g. Client Notice, Prepaid Capitation, and Third Party Health), and providing continuous coverage for qualified discharged children initiated by CONNECTIONS.

OCFS will continue to work with representatives from the Department of Health (DOH), Office of Mental Health (OMH), Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS), OCFS, Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (OMRDD) and OCFS Regional Offices to address a series of administrative activities aimed at improving the delivery of health care to children in foster care.

Plans for 2008-09

- Work with numerous voluntary agencies on establishing Medicaid Rates. The voluntary agencies are generally seeking to serve children who have higher needs and require services that are enhanced to meet these needs. On any given year, OCFS will provide technical assistance to 5-7 agencies who are seeking Medicaid Rates. OCFS will assist these agencies and provides information on Medicaid policies.
- Provide ongoing technical assistance to LDSS staff that is responsible for determining Medicaid eligibility for children in foster care to make sure that the aforementioned policies are being implemented properly, as related to Continuous Coverage for Medicaid was expanded to all children and categorical eligibility for Medicaid for children in foster care.
- Collaborate with OMH on the OMH Home and Community Based Waiver to make sure that the LDSS slots that are being utilized. Continue to collaborate with OMH to assist LDSS in differentiating when the access the OCFS Waiver Program, B2H, versus the OMH Waiver for children with serious emotional disturbances.

Foster Care and Adoption Recruitment and Retention Activities

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

Heart Gallery

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

“Reel” Kids

"Reel" Kids is a travelling exhibit featuring brief video clips of children sharing their thoughts about the hope of finding an adoptive family. Video clips are assembled by case work staff or by professionals who donate their time, resources, and expertise. Where “Reel” Kids exhibits are developed, they are combined with Heart Gallery exhibits at the same adoption event.

Permanency Now Panel Reviews

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

Adoption Day, Week or Month Celebrations

Celebrations associated with successful adoption activities occur throughout New York State. They provide an opportunity to highlight the collaborative work and supports needed to achieve adoption (especially for hard to place children) and generate positive publicity for ongoing adoption efforts.

Adoption Exchanges

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

Training

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

Publicity

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

Additional information on recruitment and retention activities for foster care and adoptive families is available at the OCFS Internet site.

Post Adoption Services

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

In addition, social service districts provide preventive services to those adoptive families experiencing turmoil that threatens to result in placement of their child (ren). Two factors curtailed expansive and effective provision of these post-adoptive services: (1) lack of service providers with expertise to serve adoptive families and (2) reliance on social services districts to routinely develop and deliver (either directly or through purchase) specialized services.

Plans for 2008-09

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

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

The Child Welfare Finance Legislation, Chapters 53 and 83 of the Laws of 2002, provides local districts uncapped state matching reimbursement for local spending on protective, preventive, aftercare, independent living and adoption services. OCFS has conducted regional training to train on the implementation of this spending. Among other things, the uncapped reimbursement allows districts to consider expansion of existing services or use of innovative strategies for supporting adoptive families.

The Adoption Album

The Adoption Album is a web-based system which caseworkers throughout New York are using to photo-list children on the Internet, and register and photo-list potential adoptive families. OCFS uses the Adoption Album to publish the printed version of the Adoption Album and to respond to emails from prospective adoptive parents with photo-listing inquiries. The Adoption Album continues to be an invaluable recruitment tool for providing prospective adoptive parents the ability to view New York State children available for adoption on line. The Album provides general information on the individual needs of each child. The internet version of the Adoption Album provides the name and phone number of each child's photo-listing contact on line. This eliminates the need for prospective adoptive parents to contact OCFS for that information.

Local caseworkers across the state have been trained to use the system, and OCFS continues to provide technical assistance as needed to caseworkers. Along with personalized one-on-one training by phone, OCFS staff is available to provide statewide training. OCFS Regional Office Adoption Specialists are also available to provide training and technical assistance.

In order to better serve the families interested in adopting children photo-listed on the OCFS website, OCFS has made the Family Adoption Registry form an on-line form that can be completed by an out-of-state family. Currently, New York State families are registered by the caseworker at the agency. Out-of-state families interested in registering on New York State's Family Adoption Registry must: (a) complete the form online; and (b) submit to New York State Adoption Services YSAS with the appropriate verification identifying that they have an approved home-study. NYSAS reviews the registration and the supporting documentation and, if all materials are acceptable, the family is then placed into the Family Adoption Registry. This new online form allows an out-of-state family to complete the registration online and electronically submit the information to NYSAS. The family will then mail the appropriate

verification to NYSAS. Families can also submit a photo via mail that can also be placed on the Family Photolisting Registry. Once NYSAS receives and reviews the family's information, the family can be registered. The family will receive an e-mail message with notification that their family has been registered. Implementing the online registration eliminates the need for NYSAS to data enter the family's information into the Family Registry and helps to expedite the process of registration.

OCFS staff considers the Adoption Album to be a quality resource that offers improvements over paper-based versions with regard to the quality of information about children and families, and the accessibility of adoption resources for those with access to online technologies.

There are currently 268 prospective adoptive families registered in the Family Registry. A total of 180 children were adoptively placed this year and 277 children were photo listed.

“Permanency Now” Initiative

New York's "Permanency Now" is a collaborative initiative among OCFS, the Office of Court Administration (OCA), New York City Administration for Children's Services (ACS) and, ultimately, all social services districts. It represents a commitment by these parties to hasten the achievement of a safe and permanent home for the children in New York freed for adoption but not yet adopted. It recognizes that OCFS, the Family Courts and the social services districts share operational and oversight responsibility for adoption finalizations. Outcomes established through the federal Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) and the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) add to New York's interest in better serving its children and families. By working together to influence the respective systems, barriers that can delay or prevent adoption finalizations can be addressed. In short, the intensified cross-systems collaboration efforts that comprise the "Adoption Now" initiative will improve this process.

The goal of expediting adoption finalizations is not a new one. Throughout the year, various activities focus on moving children to permanency through adoption. For example, in November of each year, during National Adoption Month, "National Adoption Day" is held. Chief Judge Judith Kaye and the Commissioners of both OCFS and ACS participate in the festivities honoring that success.

The first phase of this process was to reconcile the disparity in OCFS and OCA data regarding adoption cases that were filed in court awaiting completion of the adoption process. The next steps involved identifying the characteristics of the adoption-ready population and the possible impediments to timely adoption finalizations, and then to develop strategies for remedying the problems and moving the children to finalization.

An important first step was the development of a workgroup consisting of key staff from each of the stakeholder groups. It includes key staff of OCFS, ACS and the New York City Family Courts, as well as key individuals from Family Courts and social services districts from Westchester and Erie counties. This workgroup also consists of members of the court improvement projects throughout New York State who are able to share progressive best practice models that are working. This workgroup is the working arm of the 'Adoption Now' initiative. Sub-committees are focusing on specific problem areas and allow for an expansion in the

number of agency, court and OCFS staff directly involved with the movement of children to permanency.

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

Some of the areas where OCFS is focusing its efforts are the Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children (ICPC), the Adoption Subsidy Program, Criminal History Record Checks and the SCR. The initial findings suggest that the effective and timely provision of each of these services is dependent upon other sources. The ICPC depends significantly upon the cooperation of other states; the SCR requires local districts to provide case records to help them expedite their processes, etc. The processes are inter-dependent and the solutions complex, but the cooperation and collaboration of all stakeholders is demonstrating that we are on the right path.

Among OCFS' efforts are the following:

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

Putative Father Registry web based application

In 2007, OCFS developed a web based application to enable Family Courts statewide direct electronic access to information maintained by the Putative Father Registry. This collaborative effort which also included the Office of Temporary Disability Assistance (OTDA) has resulted in a web based application that provides court staff with immediate access to the Putative Father Registry database to assist them in conducting searches for fathers listed on the registry.

Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance (ICAMA)

In December of 2006, New York State (NYS) became an Associate Member of the Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance (ICAMA). The OCFS and the Department of Health (DOH) have jointly agreed to facilitate the provisions of ICAMA. ICAMA provides specific guidelines to states when arranging benefits and services for both Title IV-E eligible and non-Title IV-E eligible children who are receiving federal adoption assistance or State Adoption Subsidy and moving into or out of NYS. Upon issuance of the OCFS Informational letter providing local departments of social services with guidance on the process and the provisions of ICAMA NYS children who are receiving state-funded (non-Title IV-E) Adoption Subsidy, while residing in another state, will be eligible to receive Title XIX Medicaid in those ICAMA member states that have agreed to provide reciprocity. In 2007 the Association of Administrators of the Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance (AAICAMA) notified all Compact members of New York State's recent Associate Membership in the Compact.

Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC)

In July 2007, OCFS issued guidance in an informational letter to remind districts of their responsibility to provide and maintain a copy of the foster home license, certificate or approval for homes in compliance with Title IV-E requirements and submit a copy of such document in all ICPC requests. Compliance with this requirement will allow ICPC requests to be processed and approved in a timelier manner.

In 2007, development of an Imaging and Enterprise Document Repository (I/EDR) was completed to facilitate the scanning of 4,000 hardcopy back files and the ongoing scanning of all current ICPC documents and files. The repository provides ICPC staff with immediate access to electronic copies of scanned ICPC documents eliminating the need for staff to search for hardcopy files and reducing time spent on filing and processing ICPC requests.

Adoption Subsidy

Improvements in delivery of adoption assistance continue and include new provisions to provide adoption assistance to adoptive parents prior to finalization, changes to the statutory provisions of continuance of adoption subsidy in the event of the adoptive parent(s) death and recent progress on moving toward delivery of adoption subsidy payments by direct deposit and debit card methods .

Criminal History Unit: Expediting processes for criminal history background checks for adoption-related cases. Rapid turnaround of requests for current documentation is being provided as cases are identified through the case review process.

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

Mediation: New York's Quality Enhancement Fund are being invested in mediation programs to help move children through to permanency more quickly.

Attorney supports: As attorneys prepare much of the work product involved in adoption finalizations, OCFS is working closely with ACS to provide incentives for the quicker preparation and filing of adoption petitions. The goal is the prompt filing of complete petitions so that calendaring of the court action is facilitated. The Adoption Now work group is currently working on developing a model Attorney Client Retainer Agreement to benefit both foster parents and adoption attorneys. Additionally, a work group including attorneys, judges, social workers and OCFS convened in 2004 to explore issues surrounding the Termination of Parental Rights. This group's ongoing work is to identify barriers to adoption related to unclear lines between custody and guardianship, the TPR process and the need to explore methods to expedite appeals.

In 2007, The Adoption Now workgroup initiatives aimed at expediting adoptions statewide included the following accomplishments:

- Revising the Lawyers Guide to Adoption for the purpose of publishing this document as a statewide guide of the responsibilities of attorneys in the adoption process.
- The Comprehensive Adoption Report (CAR) is now available online for use by local departments of social services and voluntary agencies. The CAR was developed to provide a standard model/template that will guide practice and training on the contents of an agency's adoption report to be submitted to the court. The CAR provides a guide so that adoption reports prepared and submitted by agencies meet the requirements of State statute and the courts. In NYC, CAR training was provided to ACS, voluntary agency and the court personnel in an effort to initiate use of the CAR in all 5 boroughs.
- Continued work on implementing changes in an effort to simplify and expedite the adoption subsidy approval process.
- Continued work on improving resolution of inter-county jurisdictional issues.
- Continued work on improving education of prospective adoptive parents on matters related to medical assistance, social security numbers for adopted children and birth certificates.
- Collaborative effort to focus on the needs of older youth in foster care, the services available to them and improving permanency planning for these youth

Collaboration to AdoptUSKids:

The Collaboration to AdoptUSKids is a service offered by the Department of Health and Human Services' (DHHS) Children's Bureau. This is a national foster care and adoptive initiative to recruit new foster care and adoptive families for children in our foster care system. In 2003 AdoptUSKids launched a national recruitment campaign. A statewide collaboration of OCFS, NYC Administration for Children's Services (ACS) and the NYS Citizen's Coalition for Children, Inc. (NYSCCC) worked together to design and implement a formal statewide approach toward expanding current outreach and recruitment of foster and adoptive parents. Given New York's size and geographic complexity two Recruitment and Response teams were formed: one for NYC and one for Rest-of-State (ROS). Established in 2004, the Response and Recruitment Teams' responsibilities include:

- Responding to family inquiries within two (2) business days of receipt of contact information from AdoptUSKids.
- Linking families to the state/county/local agency responsible to provide pre-service training and home study process.
- Reconnecting with the families until they have an agency worker assigned to provide ongoing support.
- Reporting information back to AdoptUSKids within a defined period of time.

- Participating in ongoing and developmental training provided by AdoptUSKids.

The NYS Citizen's Coalition for Children operates the ROS Response Recruitment Team and has signed a Letter of Agreement with the Adoption Exchange Association (AEA)/The Collaboration to *AdoptUsKids* for 2007-2008.

Faith and Community-Based Partnership

The OCFS and Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) Faith and Community-Based Partnership is working in conjunction with the OCFS Adoption Services, OCFS NYCRO and ACS to launch AdoptUSKids Faith-Based Foster and Adoptive Parent Recruitment events in New York City. Several additional Faith-Based Foster and Adoption Parent Recruitment events are being planned which will include several upstate areas.

Another example of ongoing recruitment activity involves the Muslim Family Partnership. The Muslim Family Partnership is a group of Islamic men and women who work in the field of sociology, psychology and education to improve the lives of Islamic people emigrating to the U.S. They currently are interested in working with OCFS and ACS to assist in the placement of foster children of the Islamic faith. They wish to provide knowledge, understanding and training to the foster families of Muslim children. Staff from OCFS participated in a joint meeting in New York City with key ACS faith-and community based staff to develop a plan that would incorporate Muslim Family Partnership's members with recruitment of Islamic families as foster families for all children.

TANF Funded Post Adoption Services

OCFS currently provides \$3.1 million in TANF Prevention funding to support programs and services for 13 not-for-profit contractors statewide. Contractors began start-up in the spring of 2006, and as of February 2007 have provided services to over 1000 adopted children and over 600 adoptive families state wide. All children and families served by these programs must meet TANF income eligibility requirements. Post adoption services provided include but are not limited to: an information and referral "warmline" or self help hotline, advocacy, collaboration with local service providers including family court, customer satisfaction surveys, crisis intervention including respite care, information and referral, youth support groups, parenting skills, and adoptive parent support groups. OCFS plans to provide a second year of TANF Prevention funding to continue support for the post adoption programs until December 2008.

Training Provided in Federal Fiscal Year 2007-2008

- Training and Technical Assistance to Support Social Services District Permanency Planning
A regional, child welfare training resource project provides district-specific training and technical assistance to improve caseworker, supervisor, and managerial skills, enhance district foster parent recruitment and retention efforts, and to effectively use the legal system to advocate for and obtain permanency for children. Also provides training consultation to OCFS Home Office.

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

Training for New York City Voluntary Agencies, development and operation of a training consortium (a network of training providers), provides a competency-based foundation program for child welfare caseworkers and supervisors, and develops training resources available to voluntary agencies. Technical assistance is provided. A one-day conference for child care staff was also delivered in NYC.

85 Training Days

- **Group Preparation and Selection/Model Approach to Partnerships in Parenting (GPS/MAPP)**

This program consists of several components: Train the Trainer, Pre-certification Preparation and Selection-GPSII/MAPP, Caring for Our Own, Shared Parenting, Mini MAPP, and Deciding Together.

Train the Trainer: A nine day training program that prepare local district and voluntary agency staff to deliver the 30 hour GPSII/MAPP training program for their agencies.

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 to foster and adopt children.

Caring For Our Own: This 5 day train the trainer program prepares local district and agency staff to prepare relatives of children in care for their role as care giver and prepares agency and local district caseworkers to provide necessary supports.

Shared Parenting: This 4 day leader certification training of trainers for certified CPSII/MAPP leaders prepares them to deliver the Shared Parenting Program to foster parents.

Mini-MAPP: Prepare CPSII/MAPP certified trainers to provide an overview of the basic concepts in the GPSII/MAPP training program to child welfare staff and foster and adoptive staff within the agencies.

Deciding Together: Provides training to individual families to prepare them to foster or adopt.

9,536 trainees
517 training days

- **Foster/Adoptive Parent In-Service Training**

A basic and advanced training program provided to trainers of foster parents and directly to foster parents. In addition, regional foster parent training seminars, training for foster/adoptive parent associations and technical assistance is offered statewide. Efforts continued with the redesign of the basic and advanced in-service training to complement and support Group Preparation and Selection (GPS), with linkages to the child welfare caseworker core training. Work to translate the curriculum and materials into Spanish will be completed in 2008. Courses include COMPASS and “Fostering the Sexually Abused Child.”

- **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.

675 trainees
61 training days

- **HIV and AIDS Training**

HIV/AIDS training is offered to a broad child welfare audience, including local districts, voluntary agencies, foster and adoptive parents and respite care providers. The topics offered in this training resource system directly impact the populations being served who are affected by or infected with HIV/AIDS. Those serving this special needs population receive training on topics such as: agents of infection and modes of transmission; HIV transmission and prevention; Universal Precautions; stages of HIV disease; immune system function; medications for and adherence to HIV-related treatment; permanency planning/HIV case planning for families affected by HIV; talking with youth about HIV/AIDS; HIV risk assessment, counseling and testing regulations concerning foster care youth; and NYS HIV confidentiality and disclosure law.

1,450 Trainees
70 Training Days

Behavior Management, Crisis Prevention and Intervention in Residential Settings

Training is being provided to agency trainers on preventing, de-escalating, and intervening in crisis situations in institutional settings. The training leads to certification for both the Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI) trainers and the direct care workers. In addition to the core program, refresher training and technical assistance is provided to previously trained staff, to assist them in keeping their certification current.

1,656 trainees
241 training and technical assistance days

- **Child Welfare Training and Technical Assistance**

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

214 training and technical assistance days

- **Foster/Adoptive Family Recruitment and Retention**

This project offers foster/adoptive parent recruitment materials development for specific county or regional use. Provides districts and voluntary agencies with training and technical assistance in the following areas: training foster/adoptive parents as local or regional recruiters; developing innovative regional area/other area partnerships to enhance recruitment/retention; recruiting and supporting families able to care for sibling groups,

special needs children and adolescents; developing innovative recruitment plans and strategies at both the agency and regional level; planning recruitment activities in the context of concurrent planning, ASFA, Multiethnic Placement Act (MEPA), and other relevant statutes and directives; and assessing organizational development issues that may impact local recruitment/retention efforts.

225 training and technical assistance days

- **Post Graduate Certificate Program in Adoption Training**

The ten session post graduate certificate program in adoption therapy provides non-credit bearing advanced education and training for child welfare staff in specialized theories and practices for working with all members of the adoptive triad, including birth mothers and fathers; adoptive mothers and fathers; and the adopted person. The project includes a website to be used for announcement and recruitment purposes. The website also provides an overview of the course, an extensive bibliography and reading list as well as a complete listing of all students who have completed the course.

Up to 25 trainees
1 offering
15 training days

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

This project teaches local district and voluntary agency child welfare staff how to facilitate access to health care services for children in care, and how to coordinate services, identify health risk factors and integrate the current health standards into their practice and case management.

475 trainees
19 training days

Training Planned for Federal Fiscal Year 2008-2009

The training programs provided in 2007-2008, as described in Goal 2 of the APSR, have not only been judged effective, they continue to reflect an ongoing need. Therefore, all of these training programs will be offered in the coming year. In addition, the following programs will be offered or revised.

- The second Adoption Specialty course, “Building Adoptive Families,” will be developed. Conceptually, this program will address decisions and actions needed to place and maintain children in adoptive homes.
- Foster and Adoptive Parent Recruitment and Retention: In addition to providing training and technical assistance, we will continue to emphasize adoption/foster parent recruitment. An array of local and regional forums, and district-specific/agency-specific training and technical assistance will be conducted to assist social services districts to develop campaigns, strategies and materials to recruit families most appropriate to meet the developmental needs of children for both foster care and adoption. Retention strategies are emphasized as well.

GOAL #3

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

ASSESSMENT OF NEED AND CURRENT STATUS

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

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

2005-2009 PERFORMANCE TARGETS

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

Baseline: 13 counties were funded to implement protocol to work jointly on cases with both domestic violence and child abuse. All 13 projects continued to collaborate in 2007. Additionally, CPS/DV collaboration continued as a Program Improvement Strategy and an Advisory Group is assisting to create guidelines for collaborative efforts whether or not there is an out stationed DV Advocate at the CPS office.

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

Baseline: In 2007, 6,928 adults and 8,164 children were sheltered in residential programs and 30,098 adults and 10,725 children were served in non-residential programs. During that year there were 159 licensed residential programs with 2,907 beds (excluding safe home beds) and 89 approved non-residential programs.

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

Baseline: In 2007, 612 CPS workers were trained for a total of 3,289 CPS workers that have completed the mandated DV training.

State and Local Activities

Domestic Violence Services

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

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

Accomplishments for 2007-2008

- Federal Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FFVPSA) Funds – In 2007, OCFS received a FFVPSA award of \$4,139,655, five percent of the funds were applied to administrative expenses, \$274,000 to continue CPS/DV collaboration projects and the remaining \$3,932,672 in the amount of \$36,956 each to 99 approved residential and/or non-residential domestic violence programs. The grants support program maintenance, health and safety improvements and/or program enhancements.
- Domestic Violence Information System (DVIS) – During 2007, the domestic violence data system to support the statistical requirements of the mandated annual report was further developed. The goal of the system is to improve the accuracy and timeliness of the annual report and make related information more accessible to users and other stakeholders. By the end of 2007, DV providers were trained and set up to enter their 2007 data into the new system. The only exception being NYC providers who already report data to the Human Resources Administration (HRA) in NYC. Our data system was able to import data from the HRA system directly so these providers would not have to duplicate efforts.
- CPS/DV initiatives - During 2007, significant progress was made towards improving safety outcomes for families experiencing both domestic violence and child abuse and maltreatment.

- 13 CPS/DV collaboration projects continued in 2007. The collaborations have an out-stationed domestic violence advocate at the Local CPS office. Common outcomes were established for the projects with a goal end result of reportable outcome data.
 - Recognizing the growing impact of domestic violence on the child welfare caseload, CPS/DV collaboration continued as a Program Improvement Plan (PIP) Strategy in 2007. The goal of this strategy is to improve safety, reduce recurrence and hold abusers accountable. A draft of guidelines for collaborating on cases that involve both CPS and DV issues was produced by the PIP advisory group with assistance from a national consultant from the Federal Family Violence Prevention Fund.
 - A Roundtable was conducted in June 2007, which included a CPS and a domestic violence representative from each of the OCFS funded CPS/DV collaboration projects. The group addressed emerging trends and provided guidance on next steps related to the PIP strategy.
 - The curriculum for the 2-day mandated domestic violence training for CPS workers was completed and rolled out into the field in 2007. This training is designed to improve CPS capacity to intervene with families experiencing both domestic violence and child abuse and maltreatment.
 - OCFS continued working with OPDV on revising the one-day child welfare curriculum to move from knowledge-based training to a skills- based training, to assist foster care, preventive and adoption case workers to assist families experiencing domestic violence.
- Non-residential Programming – Additional efforts were made to support the network of non-residential domestic violence programs across the state. In 2007, county plans were reviewed by OCFS. Included in the plans are the appendices for approving non-residential domestic violence programs. Also during this year, staff conducted site visits to many of the stand alone non-residential domestic violence programs. In response to site visits and county plan reviews, home and regional office staff, together with local districts, addressed regulatory, contractual and best practice issues
 - Fatherhood Initiatives- OCFS has been working with national consultants and experts in the field of Fatherhood initiatives to bring the issue of DV into the forefront. The goal is to find ways to keep victims safe when DV is involved while still working with fathers to improve their parenting skills and interactions with their children.

Plans for 2008-2009

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

OCFS will continue to support CPS/DV collaborations. These collaborations are designed to improve safety for families experiencing both domestic violence and child abuse/maltreatment. Other anticipated outcomes include preventing reoccurrence of child abuse/maltreatment, and reducing out-of-home placements. An advisory group of representatives from the child protective

and domestic violence fields, the courts, and batterer programs, will continue to work on finishing guidelines to assist domestic violence programs and child protective workers to collaborate on cases where there is both domestic violence and child abuse and maltreatment. The guidelines will include screening questions to assist in identifying domestic violence and focus on new ways to work with batterers while keeping safety of the victims of paramount concern. NYS has been selected to receive technical support in this venture from The Federal Family Violence Prevention Fund. With their assistance the advisory group will produce a final draft of these guidelines. Office staff will continue to assist in the provision of domestic violence training to child protective workers across the state and will continue to assess the need to integrate domestic violence training into other child welfare service areas.

The internet based DV Information System will continue to be developed and New York City DV agencies will begin using the system to enter their data. This will allow staff to identify information that will be useful to programs and communities in identifying trends and gaps to assist in further supporting and enhancing services for victims of domestic violence. OCFS will collaborate with other state agencies on collecting and reporting information that can support community development.

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

OCFS will continue to collaborate with other state agencies to help achieve consistency and coordination regarding funding and program quality. OCFS will work with the Office of Prevention of Domestic Violence as they hold regional forums around the issue of working with fathers involved in domestic violence situations. OCFS will continue to incorporate the knowledge of the domestic violence community into the work of other child welfare areas.

Training Provided in Federal Fiscal Year 2007-2008

- **Domestic Violence Training for Child Welfare Caseworkers**
This training provides caseworkers with the knowledge to identify domestic violence within their caseloads, to conduct comprehensive safety and risk assessments, and to develop service plans that promote safety, permanency, and well being, in compliance with Chapter 280 of the NYS Laws of 2002, which mandated Domestic Violence training for all CPS staff.

146 trainees
10 offerings
20 training days
- **Domestic Violence Training for Child Protective Workers**
This training provides CPS staff and supervisors with the knowledge and skills to identify domestic violence within their caseloads, to conduct comprehensive safety and risk assessments, and to develop intervention strategies in cases where domestic violence is present that promote child safety, permanency, and well being. Chapter 280 of the NYS Laws of 2002 requires this mandatory training for all CPS workers.

637 trainees
10 offerings
77.5 training days

Training Planned for 2008-09

The training provided in the current year has not only been judged effective but also continues to reflect an ongoing need. Therefore, the Domestic Violence and Child Welfare training, as described in Goal 3 of the APSR, will be offered in the coming year. In addition, the following course is now complete and being offered to appropriate LDSS staff and supervisors.

Domestic Violence Training for Child Protective Workers

This two-day training is designed to provide a comprehensive skill base for child protective workers. Course topics will include: The Nature and Dynamics of Domestic Violence; The Impact of Domestic Violence on Children; Harm Experienced by Children, Prevention of Foster Care Placement, Legal Remedies, Cultural Factors Involved in Responding to Domestic Violence, Obstacles to Leaving, and Coordination of Services and Community Resources Including Domestic Violence Service Providers. The training will be delivered to CPS workers in LDSS offices throughout the State.

400 trainees
16 offerings
32 total training days

Domestic Violence Training for Child Welfare Staff

Provides training in Domestic Violence including the dynamics of family abuse and safety planning interventions for child welfare caseworkers and supervisors who are working with families experiencing domestic violence. Special consideration is given to preparing these caseworkers to conduct case planning to meet the needs of children.

750 trainees
30 offerings
60 training days

GOAL #4

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

ASSESSMENT OF NEED AND CURRENT STATUS

During the period 1995 to 2006, the number of youth with a goal of independent living, now Another Planned Living Arrangement with an adult resource, or APLA, steadily declined from a high of 5,563 for the year 1995 to a low of 2,543 for the year 2006. For the year 2007, the number rose to 2,977, an increase of 18.5% over 2006.

Of the youth discharged from care during 2007, 1,483 or 11.2% were discharged to APLA. This represents a decrease from the previous year of 0.5 %.

The mean length of stay at time of discharge for youth with a goal of APLA is 6.5 years.

In 2007, 34.3% of the youth leaving care after their fourteenth birthday had spent three or more consecutive years in care. Thus, for these youth, their residential care experience extends over a period of time in their development when the acquisition of self-sufficiency skills is very important.

2005-2009 PERFORMANCE TARGETS

Youth eligible for vouchers under the Education and Training Voucher (ETV) program are foster care youth and former foster care youth who have not yet attained the age of 21 years, youth eligible for services under the CFCIP, and youth adopted from foster care after the age of 16. A youth participating in the ETV program when he or she attains 21 years of age may remain eligible until the youth attains 23 years of age.

Accomplishments for 2007-08

ETV Funded 07-8: 783 students:

Age 21 and up: 322which is 41% of the funding

Returning: 291 of the 21years of age or older are returning students – they are 90% of the returning students

10% Newly funded this year, 31 students are 21 years of age or older

New York ETV 2006-2007 Financial Information		
Purpose	Totals	Ratios
Tuition	\$676,514.19	22.49%
Loans	\$361,946.00	12.03%
School Supplies	\$493,241.52	16.40%
Computer	\$389,975.20	12.96%
Housing	\$121,881.00	4.05%
Childcare	\$12,340.00	0.41%
Healthcare	\$1,693.00	0.06%
Transportation	\$439,326.65	14.61%
Living Expenses	\$511,065.44	16.99%
Grand Total	\$3,007,983.00	100.00%

Education and Training Voucher 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 up to \$5,000 per year to attend a post-secondary education or vocational training program. The following categories of individuals may be eligible to receive vouchers under the Education and Training Voucher program: (1) youth otherwise eligible for services under the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program; (2) youth adopted from foster care after attaining age 16; and (3) youth participating in the voucher program on their 21st birthday, until they turn 23 years old, as long as they are enrolled in a post-secondary education or vocational training program and are making satisfactory progress toward completion of that program.

Plans for 2008-09

OCFS will continue to contract with the Orphan Foundation of America (OFA) to administer and serve as New York State's fiscal agent for the Education and Training Voucher Program. Local 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.

Services to youth

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

OCFS Direct Residential Care

OCFS directly operates the Independent Living Skills Program for its direct care residential population as part of the Focus Intervention Process-counseling program. Youth prescriptively receive Independent Living sessions based upon their risk evaluation scores. The program is

designed to help youth improve their capacity to make good decisions and develop needed skill sets.

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

Making Good Decisions

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

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

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

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

Services and Supports for Youth in local district custody

New York State's Permanency legislation, Chapter 3 of the Laws of 2005, brought about many changes to laws that will affect adolescents. The law includes a requirement to provide life skills services to foster care youth beginning at age 14, regardless of permanency goal. Implementing OCFS regulations were initially filed on an emergency basis. These regulations became effective as final regulations on December 20, 2006. With these new regulations, the discharge-planning goal of independent living has been renamed "Discharge to another planned living arrangement with a permanency resource." This permanency planning goal is to assist foster care youth in their transition to self-sufficiency by connecting the youth to an adult permanency resource, equipping the youth with life skills and, upon discharge, connecting the youth with any needed community and/or specialized services. An adult permanency resource is a caring committed adult who has been determined by a social services district to be an appropriate and acceptable resource for a youth and is committed to providing emotional support, advice and guidance to the youth and to assist the youth as the youth makes the transition from foster care to responsible adulthood.

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

OCFS' Supervised Independent Living (SILP) Program assists older youth in making the transition to self-sufficiency. On February 13, 2008, new OCFS regulations were adopted governing the approval and operation of Supervised Independent Living Programs and Supervised Independent Living units. The regulatory amendments implement the legislative change enacted by Chapter 160 of the Laws of 2004. The regulations enable authorized agencies that operated supervised independent living programs approved by OCFS to certify homes or apartments as supervised independent living units. In addition, the regulatory change adds the definition of a Supervised Independent Living Unit. 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. 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, OCFS currently offers its Independent Living Core Curriculum, "Introduction to Self- Sufficiency," to child welfare caseworkers in voluntary authorized agencies and social services districts, working with adolescents in foster care who will be discharged to independent living. This outcome-based training program is designed to give caseworkers and caregivers the knowledge, values, and skills that they need to prepare youth to lead self-sufficient and productive lives after they leave care. The Independent Living Core Training Program was developed in partnership with the Adolescent Services Resource Network staff (formerly known as the Independent Living Training Network), a network of four regionally based training centers, which provides training and technical assistance to those preparing youth 14-21 for self-sufficiency, and an advisory committee of social services district and voluntary authorized agency caseworkers, administrators and caregivers. The Independent Living Core is interactive and focuses on building the skills needed to achieve positive outcomes for youth through the use of case scenarios, group work and role-plays. The Independent Living Core is comprised of five days of classroom training, pre-training reading, and on-the-job training activities.

In addition to the Independent Living Core Training Program, OCFS provides a series of advanced courses for caseworkers that have completed the Independent Living Core. These programs highlight skill building around issues such as education and employment, and accessing community resources. Regionally requested training and technical assistance are also

given through the Adolescent Services Resource Network. The Network offers regional training conferences and an annual “Youth Speakout” that gives foster care youth the opportunity to voice their concerns and feelings about being in placement, to State and local administrators, family court staff, and of course, their peers.

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

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

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

Accomplishments for 2007-2008

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

On October 29, 2007, the Office issued 07-OCFS LCM-15 advising local social services districts of the process for applying for FFY 2007-2008 Education and Training Voucher program funds, the process of selecting program participants, and information on eligible expenditures and match requirements.

The priorities for selecting eligible participants for the Education and Training Voucher program for FFY 2007-2008 were as follows: (1) Priority is given to youth over the age of 21 who had received an ETV award in 2005-06 who continue to be enrolled in and attending a post-secondary educational or vocational training program and making satisfactory progress toward completion of that program; (2) Second priority is for any other youth who received an ETV award in FFY 2005; (3) Third priority is for youth who are 20 years of age and will be 21 by

September 30, 2007, and who are enrolled in and attending a post-secondary or vocational training program and are making satisfactory progress toward the completion of that program. These youth would not have received an ETV award in FFY 2005-05. (4) Fourth priority is for youth who are 17, 18, 19 and 20 years of age who are enrolled in a post-secondary or vocational training program and making satisfactory progress toward the completion of that program.

Youth in Progress (YIP)

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

“To enhance and advance the lives of today’s and tomorrow’s foster care youth by giving them a sense of self and responsibility. To do this, YIP pledges to educate everyone involved in the foster care system to the realities of this experience. We will accomplish this mission by listening to youth in care and by offering them guidance that will allow them to achieve success in their lives and to realize their full potential.”

YIP has identified a number of key priorities including the following:

1. Dispel the negative stereotypes of youth in foster care.
2. Improve policies and practices regarding family and sibling contacts.
3. Increase youth involvement in selecting, assessing, and retaining service providers.
4. Improve available services for youth while in foster care and when leaving foster care, including trial discharge services.
5. Improve practices to meet the clothing needs of youth in foster care, and increase youth opportunities to make decisions about clothing.

From 2003 to the present, YIP has achieved an impressive number of results. They have co-written a handbook for youth in foster care, held regional speak-outs, participated in the filming of a video to accompany the handbook, enacted regional distribution plans for the handbook, produced a video on clothing, developed a proposal on clothing in partnership with OCFS which was incorporated into an Informational Letter issued by OCFS to social services districts and authorized voluntary agencies on meeting the clothing needs of foster care youth ages 12 through 20 years of age, produced a video to address issues related to the stereotyping of youth in foster care, co-written a pamphlet on law guardians for youth in foster care, and continues to meet with state legislators and are participating in local, statewide and national events featuring Youth Voice. Last summer, August 2007, approximately 25 youth were trained and certified by Foster Club, a national organization, to teach other youth about the importance of permanency for older youth in foster care. This training is being used in New York State to train service providers as well as youth.

Members of YIP are active members in the CFSR PIP Strategy regarding Adolescent Services and are providing an articulate voice to OCFS, local districts and other service providers regarding the needs of adolescents in foster care.

The major efforts in 2007-2008 were geared to continue the implementation of the Chafee Foster Care Independence Act of 1999 (CFCIP), including the Chafee Education and Training Voucher Program. To continue implementation of the provisions of the CFCIP into the program design, OCFS is developing a practice guidance paper and preparing revisions to program regulations.

OCFS is refining its strength-based Life Skills Training program throughout its direct care system as a key core component of the OCFS residential treatment program. Additional life skills interventions will be identified and prescriptively provided for youth in OCFS direct care programs from the "Counselor's Toolbox".

OCFS continued to oversee the remaining period of a federal Department of Labor grant to prepare and support eligible youth with lifelong learning skills to enhance their educational and employment prospects. The PASSport (Preparation, Access, and Support Services) system will link youth with comprehensive services designed to help in the transition to adulthood and self-sufficiency. OCFS received continued funding from Casey Family Programs for the same purpose during 2007-2008, since federal funds no longer will be available.

The following pages provide information about the in-care population in receipt of Independent Living Services. The data is presented for 16-21 year olds and for the previously State-funded population 14-15 year olds. The data for 14-15 year olds includes only those children who have a goal of APLA. It does not capture information about other children who, because of the service needs identified, are receiving Independent Living Services, even though their primary goal is not Independent Living.

Children in Foster Care Receiving Independent Living Services

Ages 14 & Older

Age	Frequency	Percent
14	704	11.8
15	1046	17.5
16	1273	21.3
17	1194	20
18	658	11
19	252	4.2
20	723	12.1
21+	121	2
Total	5971	100

Gender	Frequency	Percent
F	2739	45.9
M	3232	54.1
Total	5971	100

Race/Ethnicity	Frequency	Percent
AFR-AM	2308	38.7
HISPANIC	1106	18.5
WHITE	1563	26.2
OTHER	212	3.6
UNKNOWN,NOT REPORTED	782	13.1
Total	5971	100

Ages 14 & Older cont.

Current Living Arrangement	Frequency	Percent
RUNAWAY SHELTER	14	0.2
INSTITUTION	2273	38.1
GROUP RESIDENCE	154	2.6
GROUP HOME	793	13.3
AOBH	267	4.5
FOSTER HOME	1777	29.8
APPVD REL HOME	587	9.8
SNF	1	0
RTF	1	0
NON-SEC DET FAC	48	0.8
SEC DET FAC	5	0.1
CFR DEV CENTER	1	0
ICF-DD	3	0.1

VOL COMM RES	7	0.1
PROP RES SCHOOL	8	0.1
VOL RES SCHOOL	2	0
UNION FREE SCHOOL	1	0
SCHOOL HANDICAPPED	2	0
RES TREAT FAC	18	0.3
CERT OUT-PAT FAC	1	0
TRAINING SCHOOL	1	0
PSYCH CENTER	2	0
CHILD PSYCH CTR	1	0
SUPERVISED LIV	4	0.1
Total	5971	100

Duration of Foster Care	Frequency	Percent
UP TO 6 MOS.	1264	21.2
7-12 MOS.	1147	19.2
13-18 MOS.	705	11.8
19-24 MOS.	382	6.4
25-36 MOS.	487	8.2
37-48 MOS.	401	6.7
49-60 MOS.	307	5.1
61+ MOS.	1278	21.4
Total	5971	100

Plans for 2008-09

OCFS will continue to provide technical assistance and support to independent living program sites serving youth in its custody and on aftercare status. Those youth who are in residential placement in OCFS operated facilities receive independent living skills as part of the Focus Intervention Process. This process is part of the OCFS counseling program, which addresses those risk factors that may lead youth to recidivate. In addition, OCFS will work to enhance Life Skills programming through training, site visits including group observations and the provision of various materials to support this program.

The major efforts in 2008-2009 will be geared to enhancing the implementation of the Chafee Foster Care Independence Act of 1999 (CFCIP), including the Chafee Education and Training Voucher Program. OCFS will continue implementing the new policy framework through training and monitoring service provision to adolescents in foster care in order to strengthen and enhance positive outcomes for youth in care.

OCFS will be instituting a new, evidenced-based, strength-based Life Skills Training program throughout its direct care system as a key core component of the OCFS residential treatment program. Additional life skills interventions will be identified and prescriptively provided for youth in OCFS direct care programs from the newly developed "Counselor's Toolbox".

OCFS will continue to expand the number of independent living program sites serving youth in its custody and on aftercare status. Those youth who are in residential placement in OCFS operated facilities receive independent living skills as part of the Focus Intervention Process. This process is part of the OCFS counseling program, which addresses those risk factors that may lead youth to recidivate.

Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention And Services Program (APPS)

The Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention and Services (APPS) Program provides funding for communities to provide or access a comprehensive array of services for at-risk, pregnant and parenting adolescents. Responsibility for this program was transferred to DOH in the enacted SDFY 08-09 State Budget.

Beginning in 1984, a comprehensive, statewide initiative was developed to address the crisis of adolescent pregnancy in New York. The APPS Program was made permanent in the Laws of 1990. APPS is a primary tool for developing youth assets through a range of preventive services located in the youth's community. In addition, APPS supports the development of an integrated community response, jointly planned and provided by numerous local organizations within a specific community. The planning and selection of service providers is the responsibility of a Community Council. This Council oversees both the development of service programs and coordination of services with existing providers of service within the community.

Currently, 26 Community Service Projects (CSP's) throughout the state are supported through \$7.3 million in APPS funds. The projects are located in high-need urban, suburban, and rural areas and are designed to provide a comprehensive array of services to at-risk, pregnant, and parenting adolescents in communities with high rates of adolescent pregnancies. Services are varied and can include counseling, health information, parenting skills, vocational placement and other activities that promote critical decision making and self-sufficiency. Primary referrals include education, family planning, physical health, and employment services. Unique projects, e.g. peer counseling training or a teen service directory compilation, as well as collaborative efforts such as health fairs or interagency seminars were made available in communities throughout the state.

Accomplishments for 2007-08

In the 2007 program year, 25,353 single contact services such as information and referral were provided while approximately 67,000 adolescents participated in group activities. During the same reporting period, 7,343 youth received on-going comprehensive services addressing peer relationships, family issues, education concerns, recreational needs, and other topics related to asset development for preventing unwanted pregnancies.

APPS Programs target to communities that have pregnancy rates that are much higher than either the state or the New York City averages. APPS Programs are located in communities that are in the top 20% of all communities statewide for incidence of adolescent pregnancy. Rates in these communities are often more than twice the state average. However, based on a review of data submitted by each program, 97% percent of females enrolled in the program did not become pregnant during their participation in APPS.

The data system for APPS programs, managed in concert with the SUNY Albany School of Social Welfare, collects information necessary for program monitoring, measuring performance targets, and for preparing legislatively mandated Annual Program Reports. These reports demonstrate, through valid information, the efficacy of APPS programs. The data information, along with APPS project descriptions, is contained in the APPS Annual Report.

Training Provided in Federal Fiscal Year 2007-2008

- Adolescent Services Resource Network for Training and Technical Assistance
This network of four regionally based training provides training and technical assistance to caseworkers, voluntary agency staff, and foster parents who work with all youth ages 14-21 preparing them for self-sufficiency. A variety of specialized programs address regional needs around independent living services/skills. This includes the outcome based Adolescent Services Core Training “Introduction to Self Sufficiency” and the Adolescent Services “Toolbox” Skills Development Training that is delivered statewide. Youth leadership will be emphasized through youth forums and speak outs statewide. Additionally, supportive informational and training materials, curricula, videos, etc. are maintained in a central location to be loaned to persons working with youth and their caregivers. The New York State Adolescent Services Resources Network works with the Regional and Statewide Youth Advisory Leadership Team called “Youth in Progress” (YIP). YIP consists of a team of foster care youth, including youth in OCFS facilities who represent each of the six regions in New York State. SUNY Albany Professional Development Program oversees this group.

1460 training days

Adolescent Services Resource Network

The member contractors are SUC Buffalo, SUNY Albany, SUNY Stony Brook and CUNY Hunter College.

The Adolescent Services Resource Network provides resource materials, curricula and individualized training and consultation to support preparation of foster care youth for discharge and independent living. Each regional provider offers services in all competency areas of independent living services/skills. They assist workers with the skills needed to engage and motivate youth through the developmental steps required to achieve self-sufficiency in the community. Services are provided through training, educational forums, technical assistance, materials distribution, newsletters, curriculum seminars, practicums, etc. The network provides an integrated network of coordinated services.

The outcome-based Adolescent Services Core Training called “Introduction to Self Sufficiency” is offered throughout the State. This outcome-based Core Curriculum will give caseworkers the knowledge, skills, and value base they need to prepare youth to achieve self-sufficiency. Some of the of focus include: using interpersonal helping skills with adolescents; special needs of youth leaving care; assessment and case planning; developing and enhancing supportive relationships; and identifying and building community supports. The Adolescent Services “Toolbox” training gives caseworkers and foster parents the tools needed to assist youth in developing competencies needed for transition to adulthood.

Training Plans for 2008-09:

To offer outcome based Core Adolescent Services Core “Introduction to Self-Sufficiency” and Adolescent Services “Toolbox” Training, and customized regionally specific training and technical assistance in compliance with 1999 Chafee Legislation and to support the efforts of social services district and voluntary agency caseworkers, supervisors, foster parents, and Title IV-E funded OCFS facility staff to help foster care youth transition from care to self-sufficiency.

OCFS will continue to support the regional and statewide Youth Advisory Leadership Team, “Youth in Progress” (YIP) which consists of a team of foster care youth, including youth in OCFS facilities who represent each of the six regions in New York State. The mission of YIP is to enhance and advance the lives of today’s and tomorrow’s foster care youth by giving them a sense of self responsibility. To do this, YIP pledges to educate everyone involved in the foster care system to the realities of this experience. We will accomplish this mission by listening to youth in care and by offering them guidance that will allow them to achieve success in their lives and to realize their full potential.

The statewide youth advisory group, Youth in Progress formed in August 2003, addresses and provides input into improving the CW system. This group is composed of foster care adolescents and their adult mentors, including youth in OCFS facilities and representing each of the six regions in New York State. YIP focuses on making targeted improvements in the quality of foster care services and improving positive outcomes for children and families. YIP training activities for 2007 focused on strengthening the practice around permanency for youth in care. YIP youth were trained by FosterClub which is part of the All American Program, to deliver the course “Getting Solid” which talks about permanency. In addition they have developed a pamphlet titled “Law Guardians” which talks about what every youth needs to know about their law guardian. YIP youth continue to serve as members of the CFSR PIP Adolescent Strategy Workgroup.

Other Activities:

Hunter College maintains the statewide Adolescent Services Network Library consisting of nearly 4,000 items. Among them are more than 1,000 videos on various topics and numerous books, teaching games, curricula and a variety of other resource materials used in hands-on teaching of life skills to youth. Hunter also hosts the Adolescent Services Network Website and the statewide Foster Care Youth Advisory Team “YIP” website presenting current information and issues as well as links to the websites of the other members. It is anticipated that this function will continue to increase.

Assess regional needs around adolescent services and program development.

Support local adolescent services programs through technical assistance and individualized agency assessment.

Each Network member presents an annual youth speak out and leadership development event that gives youth the opportunity to inform agency and OCFS and LDSS administrators, judges and elected officials of issues of youth in care.

The training programs that focus on adolescent issues support state and federal legislation including ASFA and the 1999 Chafee Foster Care Independence Act. They continue to reflect an ongoing need. Therefore, all of those training programs, as described in Goal 4 of the APSR, will be offered in the coming year.

- Adolescent Services Core Training and Advanced Adolescent Services Courses

Designed for child welfare caseworkers in social services districts, voluntary agencies and foster parents working with adolescents in foster care to help them develop life skills needed to work toward self-sufficiency. This includes a competency-based, four-day program called “Introduction to Self Sufficiency” and “Adolescent Services Tool box” a two-day Course to further assist youth to develop competencies needed for self sufficiency. Support for regional youth speak outs and activities, Youth In Progress (YIP) youth leadership training, district/agency specific training and technical assistance will also be offered to each district on how to improve their independent living programs. A library and website of materials to support training and youth development will be maintained. Special events/workshops will be held statewide. Advanced topic driven courses, slated for 1020 training days, will be developed and delivered.

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 state and local district staff, field instruction, curriculum development as well as short term training and workforce development.

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

GOAL #5

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

ASSESSMENT OF NEED AND CURRENT STATUS

The 55 Native American children in foster care on December 31, 2007 lived in nine upstate counties plus NYC and the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe Reservation, with the majority of those children being located as follows: 31% in Erie/Niagara counties; 16.4% in New York City; 20 % in St. Regis Mohawk Tribe Reservation; 9.1% in Cattaraugus County and 7.3% St. Lawrence County. This number of Native American children represents 0.24% of the total foster care population. This number is the same as last year. During 2007, 42 Native American children entered foster care and 56 Native American children were discharged from foster care. Of the 32 children in foster boarding homes or adoptive homes, ten (31%) were in foster families whose ethnicity was also Native American.

There were twelve Native American children with a goal of adoption in foster care on December 31, 2007. Six had a goal of adoption but were not freed for an average of 7.1 months. Two were freed for adoption but were not yet placed in an adoptive home for an average of 66.4 months. On December 31, 2007, there were four Native American children who were placed in an adoptive home for an average of 10.7 months while waiting to be adopted. In December 2006, there were no children in this category.

2005-2009 PERFORMANCE TARGETS

Indian Child Welfare

- Increase to 50% the number of Native American children who are placed in foster care families of the same ethnicity over a five year period.

Baseline: The number of Native American children who are placed in foster boarding homes or adoptive homes of Native American ethnicity in 2003.

2003: 23 Native American children of the 77 in placement (29.9%)

Current Data:

2004: 26 Native American children of the 75 in placement (34.6%)

2005: 36 Native American children of the 80 in placement (45%)

2006: 34 Native American children of the 65 in placement (52.3%)

2007: 45 Native American children of the 74 in placement (60 %)

Projected Targets:

2008: not below 50% *

2009: not below 50% *

*It is anticipated that the identification of Native American children will continue to increase based on extensive ICWA trainings from 2006-2008. It is not known if the number of licensed Native American Foster Homes will meet such increase of identified Native American children. Improved preventive efforts and kinship placements may factor into the performance targets.

OCFS reviewed this data by county in year one. Interim benchmarks are incremental: year two - 40%; year three -43%; year four -47%; and year five -50%.

Placement of Native American children and youth in Native American homes and programs whenever possible remains a state policy. Some of the data reported in this target comes directly from the field including contacts with Native American services agencies in New York State.

Many Native American children are not placed in Native American homes because of the type of placement required. These placements are often for youth and children with special needs. Some placements in non-Native homes have been reviewed by either tribal staff or Native American services agencies, which have approved the placements. These placements, as well as “relative or kinship placements” are included in the data above. Tribal consultation and information gathered during the development of the PIP process will continue to be used to support achievement of this performance target.

Data Source to measure progress for the performance target above: CCRS 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 the of 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 took place throughout

2001-2008. The result of the earlier meetings included a cooperative agreement to license the Akwesasne Youth Group Home in March 2001.

The Seneca Nation of Indians and their various administrations have expressed an interest in improving their working relationship with local districts. OCFS Native American Services Unit has been involved in an ongoing dialogue regarding such a relationship. Throughout 2001-2002 OCFS arranged for several training events to meet the needs identified by Seneca Nation. In 2002, the Seneca Nation developed and endorsed a tribal protocol for child protective services. Meetings between OCFS, local districts and Seneca Nation continue to refine this protocol on a quarterly basis.

Although the Oneida Indian Nation no longer accepts federal Indian Child Welfare funding, it staffs a Family Services Program and has continued to work closely with Native American Services on ICWA issues and training. OCFS has responded to training needs identified by Oneida Nation. OCFS provided on-site Mandated Reporter training for Oneida Nation staff in December 2006.

The Tuscarora Nation, Tonawanda Senecas, and the Onondaga Nation do not operate ICWA programs on their reservations or accept federal funds.

The Long Island Tribes, the Shinnecock Tribe and the Unkechaug Nation, do not receive funds for and do not operate programs for other reasons, including a lack of sufficient numbers on the Reservations to qualify for funding.

The interactions that take place through Native American Services (NAS) are complemented and strengthened by ongoing interactions between the social services districts, OCFS and those who provide services to Native Americans.

In December 2004, an ICWA desk aid was developed for use by local districts and voluntary agencies. Copies were distributed to the Indian Nations and OCFS Regional Offices in January 2005. An update to include information on use of a Qualified Expert Witness was added to the desk aid in December 2005. The new desk aids were distributed to the local districts through 06-OCFS-INF-07 letter in October 2006 along with an updated list of tribal contacts.

In November 2006, OCFS responded to a variety of training needs identified by tribal representatives by offering a statewide Indian Child Welfare Conference. The first conference in 12 years drew more than 200 participants from Tribes and social service organizations from throughout the state. The 3-day conference provided a well-received forum to discuss best practices for ICWA compliance.

After a year of collaboration OCFS completed an IWCA DVD training tool in December 2006. The DVD titled “ Indian Child Welfare Act: What Caseworkers Need To Know”, includes interviews with Tribal representatives including Chiefs, Clan Mothers, judges, attorneys, ICWA Directors and caseworkers. The DVD was developed with tremendous support from and collaboration with tribal stakeholders. The training tool was introduced to the local districts and voluntary agencies throughout 2007. At the request of ACF, a copy of this DVD has been forwarded to Region II offices.

To continue efforts to improve child welfare services in Native American families, sixteen additional training events were held to train local districts and voluntary agency staff on ICWA compliance issues throughout 2007.

Description of Native American Population in New York State

The Native American population in New York State resides in every county across the State in urban and rural areas, with concentrations near urban areas and near Reservations. Approximately ten per cent of the Native American population resides on Reservations. The Urban Centers are located in New York City, Buffalo and Niagara Falls, Syracuse and Rochester. Available data also reports that over 40% of the Native Americans living in New York State reside 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
<u>Iroquois:</u>			
Cayuga Nation of Indians	No reservation	484	0
Oneida Indian Nation	Oneida Nation Territory	1100	74
Onondaga Nation	Onondaga Reservation	1959	900
St. Regis Mohawk Tribe	St. Regis Mohawk	12,375	12,375
Seneca Nation of Indians	Total Tribal Enrollment Allegany Reservation Cattaraugus Reservation Other	7,610	1,359 2,520 3,731
Tonawanda Band of Senecas	Tonawanda Reservation	1100	600
Tuscarora Nation	Tuscarora Reservation	1200	1500
<u>Algonquin:</u>			
Shinnecock Tribe	Shinnecock Reservation	250	500
Unkechaug Nation	Poospatuck Reservation	128	250

St. Regis Mohawk Tribe

The St. Regis Mohawk territory, known as Akwesasne, "Land Where the Partridge Drums", is located in northern New York State and crosses the international border and the St. Lawrence River, extending into Canada. The St. Regis Mohawk Tribal Council is the duly elected and recognized government of the Mohawk people. The Tribe provides comprehensive services to the community through four basic divisions: Education, Environment, Health and Human Services, Planning and Economic Development.

Education programs include support for students enrolled in the public schools to encourage their continuation, Head Start, GED programs, higher education and vocational training, including college extension services and Job Training Partnership Act Program services. Health and Human Services include a medical clinic, opened in 1991 and serving more than 7,000

Mohawks, a Dental Clinic, WIC, alcohol/chemical dependency program, Teen/Women Health program, nutrition services and mental health services, and a program to empower young mothers. Human Services staff address the needs of the children, senior citizens, families and disabled residents in the community while maintaining the integrity of the Mohawk family unit. Indian Child Welfare Act services provide support services for families at risk of dissolution, providing a vital link to families while insuring the maintenance of cultural values. The social services program provides mandated preventive, foster care, adoption, child protective services and adult protective services on the Reservation through the State/Tribal Agreement with OCFS. A Family Support program provides respite services for families of the developmentally disabled and supportive apartments provide services to allow developmentally disabled residents to transition from home to a sheltered, independent environment. OCFS has licensed a tribally operated Youth Group Home to serve 12 at-risk Native American youth.

Seneca Nation

The Seneca Nation operates with an elected form of government. Elections for Tribal Council members and officers including President, Treasurer and Tribal Clerk occur every two years. The Seneca's first judicial election for Surrogate Judges, Peacemakers, and a Court of Appeals was November 1993. Most judges serve four-year terms. The Tribal Council administers all Tribal programs on both the Cattaraugus and Allegany Reservations.

The Indian Health Services provides state-of-the-art health clinics on both Reservations. In addition, mental health, alcohol and substance abuse, domestic violence, job training, Head Start and day care programs, Indian education, housing, and a senior nutrition program are provided through staff that spend time alternating between the Cattaraugus and Allegany Reservations.

In addition to the above, the following Indian Nations or Indian organizations provide limited Indian Child Welfare services.

Cayuga Nation

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

Summary of Governmental Structures

The Indian Nations in New York State have adopted a number of different forms of governmental and administrative structures. There is interaction and consultation between these structures in the decision making process which also includes the Clan Mothers. This respect and inclusiveness of differences within the communities has an impact on the decision-making process.

Indian Nation/ Tribe	Governing Structure	Administrative
Cayuga Nation of Indians	Hereditary Chiefs	Council of Chiefs One Selected as Chairperson
Oneida Indian Nation	Tribal Appointment	Representative Acts as CEO
Onondaga Nation	Hereditary Chiefs	Council of Chiefs One Selected as Chairperson
St. Regis Mohawk Tribe	Tribal Elections/Chiefs	Chiefs Council
Seneca Nation of Indians	Elections/ Tribal Council	Tribal Council with President
Tonawanda Band of Senecas	Hereditary Chiefs	Council of Chiefs One Selected as Chairperson
Tuscarora Nation	Hereditary Chiefs	Council of Chiefs One Selected as Chairperson
Shinnecock Tribe	Tribal Elections	Trustees Serve as President, Secretary and Treasurer
Unkechaug Nation	Tribal Elections/Trustee	Trustees Elected to 1, 2, 3 year terms

ICWA Funding:

Three of the Indian Nations receive ICWA funds to provide Indian Child Welfare Services. The following outlines the Indian Nations/Reservations that operate ICWA programs and the counties that are included in their service area.

Indian Nation/Reservation	County Service Area
St. Regis Mohawk Tribe/ St. Regis Mohawk Reservation	Franklin, St. Lawrence counties primarily, but also statewide for Mohawk children
Seneca Nation of Indians/ Allegany Reservation Cattaraugus Reservation	Erie, Cattaraugus and Chautauqua counties
Cayuga Nation are served through administrative staff; there is no Reservation	Cayuga members only, statewide,
Oneida Indian Nation,* Oneida Nation Territory	Oneida members only, Oneida, Onondaga, Herkimer, Chenango, Madison and Cortland

*The Oneida Indian Nation declined their federal share of BIA/ICWA funding beginning federal fiscal year 1999, but still operates a Family Services program with Tribal revenues.

Urban Indian Centers

Local non-profit Urban Centers provide a wide range of programs, including job training, alcohol and substance abuse and services for the developmentally disabled. The New York City Urban Center programs include a Youth Council and Health Services. The Buffalo/Niagara Falls Urban Centers provides ICWA services including preventive counseling, foster care recruitment and certification, intervention, AIDS training and outreach, a program for seniors, youth and cultural programs.

Since 1997, the Urban Indian Centers do not receive federal Indian Child Welfare funding, but do provide services to the following service 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
Syracuse	Onondaga County.

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 2007-08

Throughout 2007-2008, the Native American Affairs Specialist met on a formal basis with various Tribal Leaders across New York. A formal protocol for regular and on-going dialogue and consultation with Tribal Leaders was established for 2007-2008. Two formal Tribal Consultation meetings were held in May 2007 and November 2007 with then OCFS Deputy Commissioner Jane Lynch.

Regular consultation with the Indian Nations regarding child welfare issues has occurred primarily at the service provider level or as it relates to specific issues and/or children and families. The NAS Specialist and OCFS Buffalo Regional Office staff continued facilitation of a multi-disciplinary workgroup with the Seneca Nation of Indians from 2001-2008, which included Child Protection workers from Erie, Cattaraugus and Chautauqua County. This resulted in the first written tribal protocol for CPS investigations for Seneca Nation families. The tribal protocol was presented to each county's Director of Services and continues in use.

Site visits are conducted to Indian Reservations in New York by the Native American Affairs Specialist. The primary purpose of the site visits was to assess the needs of the Indian Nation and to address concerns related to the delivery of child welfare services. As a result of the site visits, many follow up meetings were held at the St. Regis Mohawk and Seneca Nation reservations from 2000 to the present.

The NAS Specialist continues to hold regular Indian Child Welfare meetings throughout New York State with tribal and social services staff members. The NAS Specialist has agreed to continue to chair the meetings of the well-formed network known as the Native American Family Services Commission. The meetings feature guest speakers from OCFS and other agencies that provide information on how to improve services to Indian children and families.

OCFS Tribal Consultation

The Deputy Commissioner of Child Welfare & Community Services, the Native American Affairs Specialist and the Syracuse Regional Director participated in two Tribal Consultation Meetings with Tribal Leaders and delegates in 2007. These meetings provided an opportunity for OCFS to present updates on initiatives for ICWA compliance. The Tribal Consultation forum allowed OCFS to engage the state's Indian Nations/Tribes in the Family Services Review (CFSR) and Program Improvement Plan (PIP).

With the support of the Center for Development and Human Services (SUCB), Native American Services was able to conduct five meetings with the Native American Family Services Commission in March, June, September, and November 2007 and March 2008. The Commission was expanded to include more tribal caseworkers and administrators from around the state, as well as local districts and voluntary agencies. The quarterly meetings provide an excellent forum to introduce other OCFS supported initiatives such as Protective Services for Adults, to Tribal and agency staff who need program support to serve their respective Tribal and Urban Indian communities. Other guest speakers this year were representatives from OASAS, NACASA, SUNY Albany, Akwesane Group Home and OCFS Bureau of Training.

Tribal Training Initiatives

There were several ICWA training events sponsored or supported by OCFS beginning in late 2006 and continuing through 2008; the foremost being the statewide ICWA Conference in November 2006. The first statewide conference in 12 years brought together over 200 participants from Indian Nations, local districts and voluntary agencies for three days of plenary and workshop sessions to improve ICWA compliance in New York. The conference evaluation were extremely positive and indicated that this event was an overall success.

OCFS also supported a training request on behalf of the Tuscarora Nation to host a training event entitled "Positive Indian Parenting" in May 2007. Tribal and local district staff was able to participate in a 3-day Training of Trainers to utilize Indian Parenting curriculums developed by the National Indian Child Welfare Association.

Native American Services presented 16 Regional Indian Child Welfare training to child welfare workers in 2007, three of which trained tribal staff. The OCFS Native American Specialist also presented training on the ICWA DVD and its impact on ICWA compliance in New York State to audiences at the Annual National Indian Child Welfare Association Conference in April 2007, the United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc. Annual Conference in June 2007 and the Northwest Bureau of Indian Affairs Conference in August 2007.

OCFS was able to support the sponsorship of thirteen tribal representatives at the 2007 NYS Adult Abuse Training Institute last October. This is the fifth year of participation of tribal staff statewide in our effort to support more tribally based adult abuse prevention efforts.

The Native American Affairs Specialist also presented cultural competency training to the New York State OCA Judicial ICWA Conference in Buffalo in November 2007 and an overview of working with Native American families to OCFS Home Office staff also in November 2007.

Indian Child Welfare Training Resources

- In November 2007, A Caseworker Guide was completed to accompany the ICWA DVD training tool. The two training resources were combined into an interactive training tool in March 2008. The web-based training will be made available to local districts, voluntary agencies and tribal organizations this year.
- In November 2006, OCFS completed the DVD entitled “Indian Child Welfare Act: What Caseworkers Need To Know”. The DVD features interviews with tribal experts including the author of the ICWA Handbook, Tribal Judge BJ Jones. The DVD includes six chapters providing a historical view of ICWA as well as the process to identify Native American children and provide proper tribal notification. The DVD also provides relevant information on active efforts and tribal court proceedings. The DVD was premiered at the Statewide ICWA Conference. A training guide to accompany the ICWA DVD was completed in December 2006, and was used to train local district and voluntary agency Case Supervisors. There was 16 Regional “Train the Trainers” sessions in 2007 to get the training tool to the front line of caseworkers.
- OCFS publication #4757 (Guide To Compliance with the Federal Indian Child Welfare Act in New York State) continued to be distributed to local districts and voluntary agencies in 2007. The guide was posted on the OCFS Native American Services website.
- The Proud Heritage booklet (OCFS publication #4629) is posted on the OCFS Native American Services website and continues to be distributed at various forums, local district activities and tribal meetings.

Regional Office of Practice Improvement (ROPI) Teams Established

The Buffalo ROPI staff continued to work closely with Native American Services staff throughout 2007-08. Meetings of the Seneca Nation of Indians multi-disciplinary workgroup continued throughout 2007. This provided an opportunity for Buffalo Regional Office and Native American Services to assess how well the CPS Tribal protocol is working. The multi-disciplinary work group included representatives from Erie, Cattaraugus and Chautauqua Counties and Seneca Nation staff.

Two on-site training events were held at Seneca Nation in early 2008 to promote collaboration and cross training for tribal staff. The first session provided an overview of the OCFS – Seneca Nation multi-disciplinary workgroups accomplishments and updates to NYS regulations on permanency. The second session held in March 2008 focused on ICWA specific training and provisions that must be adhered to by New York State. Both sessions included tribal participants representing the Child & Family Services staff, tribal law enforcement and tribal court personnel. Local district staff was also invited to participate.

Albany ROPI staff and Native American Services continued meetings and site visits to the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe to address on-going child welfare program operational needs.

New York State will continue to utilize existing structures to promote that appropriate federal Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) continued goals can be identified in consultation with the Tribal Leadership. There continues to be a need to reinforce social services district requirements to inform Tribes of involvement with Native American children and families.

Principles of ICWA will provide focus for any actions:

- Indian parents and tribes have the right to notice of and to intervene in state proceedings involving Indian children;
- special preference for placement of Indian children with (1) member of child's extended family, (2) other members of the child's tribe, or (3) other Indian families;
- active efforts to prevent breakup of the Indian family including use of tribal community services and culturally appropriate programs; and
- use of tribal courts in child welfare matters, tribal rights to intervene in state proceedings, or to transfer the proceedings to the jurisdiction of the tribe.

Plans for 2008-09

To continue efforts to improve child welfare services for Native American families, a Caseworker Guide will be made available through an on-line training site accessible to local district and voluntary agency staff in 2008. On-going ICWA training will also be planned with a concentration in the New York City area in 2008-09.

Throughout 2008-2009, the Native American Affairs Specialist will meet on a formal basis with various Tribal Leaders across New York. A formal protocol for regular and on-going dialogue and consultation with Tribal Leaders has been established for 2008-2009. Two formal Tribal Consultation meetings are planned with the first occurring in June 2008 with OCFS Deputy Commissioner.

OCFS will continue to promote interaction with directors of services from social services districts to reiterate and strengthen awareness regarding the need to identify Native American children and to make the appropriate notifications with assistance from the NAS staff.

OCFS' Native American Services Unit will continue to participate in quarterly meetings with Tribal and local district representatives in both urban and reservation settings to improve ICWA services to this population.

OCFS will be available to support efforts of Tribes interested in establishing or expanding services under a State/Tribal Agreement.

OCFS will continue to support regional and statewide training to social services districts, other public and private agencies, tribal staff and community members to develop strategies to keep Indian families intact and to identify Native American resources to support at-risk families.

OCFS will continue efforts to improve child welfare services in Native American families, regional training events are being planned to address cultural competency and ICWA issues.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Juvenile Justice Transfers

The number of youth transferred to juvenile justice facilities in FFY 06-07 was 217 youth, an increase from 198 FFY 05-06. This population consists of children that:

- Were in CCRS shown as in LDSS custody as a result of a legal hearing with 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 disposition of Transfer Custody and Guardianship (Surrender or Terminated Parental Rights only) or care and custody to a local social services district, or
- Have a voluntary or emergency removal, and
- Have a subsequent hearing with a disposition of OCFS Custody during FFY 2007 (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 2007, and
- Do not have an open admission in the juvenile justice system between the last movement and discharge in CCRS.

Inter-Country Adoptions

On October 6, 2000, the federal Intercountry Adoption Act (ICAA) of 2000 (P.L. 106-279) was signed into law. The ICAA provides for the implementation by the United States of the Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect to Intercountry Adoption.

As residents of New York State, children adopted from other countries have access, if they otherwise satisfy the eligibility standards to mandated preventive services. The State provides TANF funding for Regional Post Adoption Centers where such families, if TANF-eligible, can apply for services. In addition, all New York State authorized agencies providing inter-country adoption programs are regulated and supervised by OCFS. Prospective adoptive parents are evaluated for suitability to adopt through a home study process, which includes a criminal history record review and a check against the Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment data base.

04-OCFS-LCM-05 requires social services districts to collect and maintain information on foster placements of children who are adopted from other countries. Efforts to collect this data are continuing and it is anticipated that analysis of this information will be available in future plan submissions. Extensive Legislation information is available at the OCFS internet site. OCFS has no foster care placements of children involved in Inter-Country Adoptions to report for this year's submission.

Child Welfare Demonstration Projects

New York State is not participating in the Child Welfare Demonstration Project

Foster and Adoptive Parents Recruitment

Specific Strategies to Reach All Parts of the Community

There are numerous individualized strategies that social services districts and voluntary authorized agencies employ to reach the community. The State has established regulatory requirements that essentially guarantee that all foster care placement agencies reach out to the community. There are two regulatory standards which act in combination that primarily promote community outreach. First, OCFS regulation, 18 NYCRR 430.11(c), requires that, in order for a child to be deemed to be placed appropriately, wherever possible place the child in a home that will provide "continuity in the child's environment." Specifically, the case planner must document that the child has been placed in a foster care setting that enables the child "to maintain ties to his or her previous school, neighborhood, peers and family members, or show the reasons why such placement was not practicable or in the best interests of the child."

Combined with the requirement for children to be placed in an environment that provides each child with a sense of continuity, is the requirement in OCFS regulation, 18 NYCRR 443.2 (a), that agencies operating a foster boarding home program must reach out to the community to seek to recruit persons with the ability and motivation to serve children in need of substitute family life.

OCFS Regional Office staff work with social service districts and voluntary authorized agencies to:

- keep the community served by the entity informed about the development and progress of the program and the needs of the children who require boarding home care;
- offer information about the program and the need for boarding homes to organizations, agencies, media representatives and other persons who may be a referral source in the community;

In order to meet the requirements stated above, each agency develops its own strategy for recruiting in the community (ies) that it serves.

OCFS supports specific and targeted initiatives such as "Bridge to Permanency." Bridge to Permanency is a collaborative effort involving judicial staff, service administrators and child welfare providers focusing on reducing children's length of time to adoption. This initiative, which addresses issues identified in the Program Improvement Plan, also provides for examination of adoption-related practice and policy concerns. Additionally, this setting provides an opportunity to consider systemic solutions to the intricate intersections of judicial, child welfare and other related issues that impact on the time it takes to finalize adoptions.

While OCFS conducts publicity and outreach for its foster care and adoption programs, through the Information Line, *The Adoption Album*, *Our Children Our Families* and periodic media events, the development of specific outreach strategies is the responsibility of the social services districts. They must reach out to their community members and organizations in their local planning process for purposes of assessing community needs and developing the appropriate strategies for responding to those needs. While local planning cuts across the entire spectrum of needs and services, the needs of children in foster care and those awaiting adoption hold a prominent place in this process.

Diverse Methods of Disseminating Both General and Specific Information

One of the major areas where social services districts and voluntary authorized agencies have requested that OCFS take a more active role is in supplementing their efforts of disseminating information on foster care through the use of the media. A statewide media strategy was developed with an emphasis on public education material (video's, brochures, posters, etc.) to be used locally on an as-needed basis. A statewide 800-number (345-KIDS) supports this initiative to answer questions and disseminate information. Each of OCFS' six regional offices has liaisons with the social services districts and agencies to support and assist with this initiative. Each social services district and voluntary authorized agency periodically sponsors information sessions for interested families.

Section 1017 of the Family Court Act and other sections of State law require that the Court direct the social services district seeking to place a child in foster care to look first as to the availability of relatives, including a grandparent, as a placement resource. Relatives can be utilized either as a foster care placement resource or as a direct custodial placement, which would be an alternative to a foster care placement. This search/placement requirement in relation to disseminating information to prospective foster parents represents the only circumstances in which we engage in child-specific recruitment activities. Given that the large majority of foster care placements are directed to children who have been abused or maltreated and who are in need of immediate out-of-home care, it is not feasible or appropriate, except as it pertains to relatives, to engage in child-specific recruitment.

Strategies for Assuring that All Prospective Parents Have Access to the Home Study Process

In relation to prospective foster parents, agencies develop strategies to provide that such prospective foster parents do not get excluded based on their unique availability circumstances. Pursuant to OCFS regulation 18 NYCRR 443.2 (b), agencies must respond in writing within 10 days to each inquiry and must offer an appointment to each person inquiring about the foster boarding home program or must arrange for them to attend an orientation meeting. The use of the terms "offer" and "arrange" are intended to convey that the agency must be flexible in relation to the prospective parents' circumstances and preference. OCFS regulation, 18 NYCRR 443.2(c), requires authorized agencies to complete a home study within four months unless delays occur as a result of circumstances beyond the control of the agency or "unless the schedule for interviews is changed by mutual consent of the applicant and the agency representative." Such regulatory requirements underscore the need for agencies to make significant efforts to meet the needs of prospective foster parents. Notwithstanding regulatory requirements, such efforts are clearly in the best interests of an agency so that a pool of certified foster parents who can meet the community's need for foster boarding home care continues to be available.

Strategies for Training Staff to Work With Diverse Cultural, Racial, and Economic Communities

Outreach, recruitment and preparation of foster families is supported by OCFS training contracts, including the following.

"Foster and Adoptive Parent Recruitment and Retention" is a project in which trainers with skills in reaching out to all communities, most particularly minority and previously untapped communities, work with individual agencies to develop a recruitment/retention plan.

"Group Preparation and Selection for Resource Families" is a program OCFS continues to support and promote statewide. This approach provides opportunities for informed mutual decision-making to become a foster or adoptive parent; formation of partnerships between agency, foster parent, birth parent, and the child; preparation for the role of foster or adoptive parent; and establishing a knowledge base for meeting the needs of a foster or adoptive child.

"Foster and Adoptive Parent Training" is the basic, essential "train the trainer" program for home finders.

While the first project noted is very specifically targeted to diverse communities, all training incorporates the issue to the degree it is appropriate to the specific topic being discussed.

Each of these projects trains from a common set of policies and principles: that the health and safety of each child is of paramount importance, that each child should be placed in the least restrictive setting possible, and a setting which offers the child continuity of his or her environment; that kin be sought as the placement of first preference (section 1017 of the Family Court Act); that siblings be placed together (section 1027-a of the Family Court Act); and that the placement offer the opportunity for regular contact with birth family, neighborhood, school and extended family and friends. This means that each social services district's/voluntary authorized agency's foster care and adoption program must have available a full range of families, from all communities.

Strategies for Dealing with Linguistic Barriers

In areas where large numbers of non-English speaking families and children reside, most notably New York City, recruitment efforts are carried out in other languages, and caseworkers fluent in those languages conduct recruitment training and on-going work. In addition, the minority voluntary authorized agencies, which received start-up funds and technical assistance from OCFS several years ago, continue to specialize in reaching out to the communities across the State in which they are located and recruiting minority families for the children in need of placement.

Non-Discriminatory Fee Structure

No fees are charged to prospective foster parents with regard to the certification, approval or placement process. A minimal fee may be charged by a third party for the purpose of taking of fingerprints.

Procedures for Timely Search for Prospective Parents for a Child Awaiting Adoption

Current recruitment activities have been sufficient to meet the need.

Description of the Characteristics of Children Awaiting Adoption

Social services districts and voluntary authorized agencies are kept informed about the characteristics of children awaiting adoption in several ways:

OCFS produces data on a quarterly basis from its Child Care Review Service (CCRS), which includes profiles of children in foster care, including those who are awaiting adoption.

OCFS publishes annually the Monitoring and Analysis Profiles for each social services district and for the State. Among the data in these profiles are the characteristics of each district's, and the entire State's, population of foster children, including those awaiting adoption.

OCFS' Adoption Monitoring System makes available on-line the characteristics and status of children waiting in foster care available to OCFS regional adoption specialists, social services districts and agencies. The information is current as of the date of the inquiry.

Of the total number of children freed for adoption as of April 30, 2008, 56.3% of the children are from NYC, while 43.7% are from the rest of the State. This includes children in adoptive placements and children waiting to be placed.

The following page shows the statewide characteristics and the status of children waiting to be placed, which is drawn from an inquiry as of April 25, 2008.

ADOPTION MONITORING SYSTEM
APRIL 25, 2008 - FREQUENCY COUNTS FOR STATEWIDE
TOTAL POPULATION - 1382

Age Groups	NUMBER	PERCENT
0 TO UNDER 2	38	2.7
2 TO 5	231	16.7
6 TO 9	242	17.5
10 TO 13	359	26.0
14 TO 17	449	32.5
OVER 17	63	4.6
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TOTAL	1382	00.0

Race and ethnicity	NUMBER	PERCENT
WHITE	359	26.0
BLACK	508	36.8
HISPANIC	177	12.8

Sex	NUMBER	PERCENT
FEMALE	588	42.5
MALE	794	57.5
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TOTAL	1382	100.0

Number of siblings	NUMBER	PERCENT
01	1190	86.1
02	81	5.9
03	34	2.5
04	30	2.2
05	14	1.0
06	27	2.0
07	6	0.4
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TOTAL	1382	100.1

Specific Strategies to Reach All Parts of the Community-Adoption

Section 372-b of Social Services Law requires that adoption services, including recruitment of adoptive parents, be provided for all children freed for adoption. In accordance with OCFS regulation, 18 NYCRR 421.10, authorized agencies operating an adoption program must:

- carry out recruiting efforts specifically directed at communities or populations that have ethnic, racial, religious or cultural characteristics similar to those of the children identified annually by OCFS as composing the largest number of waiting children;
- keep the community informed about the development and progress of the program and the needs of the children who require adoption;
- offer information about the program, the need for adoptive homes and the availability of adoption subsidy, to organizations, agencies, media representatives, and other persons who may be a referral source in the community;
- seek to recruit persons with the ability and motivation to serve children in need of permanent substitute family life.

OCFS maintains the Family Adoption Registry, which provides social services districts and voluntary authorized agencies with a list of adoptive applicants throughout the State who are willing to adopt children who have special needs or who are hard to place. When prospective adoptive parents indicate a willingness to adopt a hard-to-place or handicapped child, they must be informed that their names will be placed on the Registry in accordance with section 372-b (2-a) of the Social Services Law. They must be informed that the information will be available to adoption staff throughout the State who can access the Registry to locate waiting families for their waiting children. If another agency makes an inquiry about their availability as adoptive parents, the initial contact will be between staff of the two agencies.

OCFS' policy directives establish guidance for agencies within the statutory and regulatory framework of the adoption program. The following guidance pertains to recruitment efforts.

Recruitment of families for children in need is an ongoing, year-round function, so that an agency will have a pool of approved adoptive families available for children who are waiting and children who will soon be free for adoption. With the acceptance of the view that New York's waiting children are part of the family of New York, agencies authorized to place out the State's children have a responsibility for and commitment to all waiting children in need of families. Special outreach efforts to various groups should be made to publicize the agency's program and promote the widest utilization of its services. Recruitment efforts are made in a manner consistent with MEPA.

An essential component of the recruiting process is a physical one, that of being present in the communities where recruitment needs to be emphasized. Orientation meetings should be conducted in meeting space available in churches, community centers, community organizations or national organizations that are ethnically identified such as the Urban League, NAACP, etc. Establishing a viable network of organizations with special affiliations or interests will greatly expand the potential for referrals or inquiries about adoption.

Use of the various media (radio, television, newspapers and magazines) should be made continually, but the recruitment process goes beyond advertising in the media. Wherever the interest in adoption is found, be it church groups, unions, or work sites, agency staff should be made available to speak and offer information about the program, including the need for homes and available subsidy. Recruitment in rural districts involves tapping into the natural helping systems and sub-systems. Adoptive parents are frequently a resource in locating other adoptive parents. This process can be facilitated by having parents who have adopted successfully become a part of the agency's recruiting efforts.

While OCFS conducts publicity and outreach for its foster care and adoption programs, through the Parent and Kin Connection Helpline, the Adoption Album and periodic media events, the development of specific outreach strategies is the responsibility of the social services districts. They must reach out to their community members and organizations in their local planning process for purposes of assessing community needs and developing the appropriate strategies for responding to those needs. While local planning cuts across the entire spectrum of needs and services, the needs of children in foster care and those awaiting adoption hold a prominent place in this process.

OCFS has a contract with the State University of New York at Buffalo that supports six out-stationed Adoption Specialists to work with social services districts and voluntary authorized agencies on specific strategies and training to recruit from and educate their communities on New York's Waiting Children. Adoption Exchanges, fairs, and coalitions are encouraged with emphasis on involving as much of the community as possible. New York participates in the "One Church, One Child" initiative and there are several similar programs, as well throughout New York State. Each year during November, National Adoption Month, OCFS sponsors events around the State that attract publicity and disseminate adoption information to all communities. Adoptive parents often assist us in these efforts.

Diverse Methods of Disseminating Both General and Specific Information

Since 1973, New York State has maintained a child-specific photo listing service for all children freed and not placed for adoption within ten days. The Adoption Album has been the vehicle for thousands of children being placed in adoptive homes. Presently there are approximately 600 state and national subscribers to the Adoption Album. The child photo listing component of the system automates the photo listing process and replaces the photo listing prototype available on the Internet. It allows caseworkers to submit an electronic photo listing referral and mail a printed copy of the referral along with a photograph of the child to New York State's Adoption Service administered by OCFS. The system also allows family photo listing to be published on OCFS' Intranet. The system is built for eventually linking Internet capacity with CONNECTIONS for sharing photo listing information among approximately 12,000 CONNECTIONS users, as appropriate.

In 2006, OCFS automated the New York State Parent and Kin Connection Helpline (800-345-KIDS). The Helpline was established to assist New York State families with information and referral for general inquiries related to statewide services for children and families. The Helpline number is found on most OCFS publications distributed to the public and receives nearly 1,000 general and child specific calls monthly. Automation provides families with the ability to receive general information 24 hours a day. Callers contacting the automated Helpline, day or night, are directly transferred to emergency numbers such as the SCR and the Domestic Violence Hotline. In the past the Helpline was the mechanism for prospective adoptive parents to receive a contact name and phone number for NYS photo listed children. This information is now provided on the internet so prospective adoptive parents no longer need to make the additional call to Adoption Services to receive that information. Adoption Services also responds to over 400 inquiries from our website monthly.

The regional adoption specialists, based in six OCFS regional offices throughout the State, are also available to answer questions to assist those interested in adoption.

Certain children may need targeted efforts in recruiting a family for them. The description of a specific child may be selected for presentation at a regional or statewide adoption exchange, or to local or national foster parents or adoptive parents associations that recruit families. The child's story and picture may also be presented on television or in print media, to community, religious, and labor organizations. After each recruitment effort for a specific child, the results of the effort are to be assessed and a new plan of action is to be developed if no promising placement

possibility is found. Resources should be drawn from agencies in close proximity to the custodial agency as well as from agencies within the State and nation. These efforts are performed in a manner consistent with the federal MEPA standards. OCFS continues to highlight a NYS child awaiting adoption each month on the Adoption Services website by placing their photolisting and child narrative on the home page. Each month a new child is featured from a different region of the state.

Strategies for Providing all Prospective Parents Have Access to the Home Study

OCFS has established specific requirements for initial contact with prospective adoptive parents as set forth in OCFS regulation 18 NYCRR 421.11. Agencies operating an adoption program are required to have a designated adoption or home finding unit that can handle inquiries from the public on adoption. That unit is to receive all adoption inquiries coming into the agency. Inquiries regarding adoption received elsewhere in the agency are to be referred immediately to the adoption unit.

A response to an adoption inquiry must be made within five business days of receipt, and an invitation must be offered to either an individual or a group meeting to take place within thirty days of receipt of the inquiry. Experience shows that, while families do come forward and show interest, a large number withdraw between the initial inquiry and the initial orientation interview. Such persons feel extremely vulnerable and fear that they will not be accepted as adoptive parents for one reason or another. The rate of withdrawal is reduced when families receive a prompt and personal face-to-face contact with an agency worker and are made to feel accepted in that contact.

Orientation sessions must be held at convenient hours for those invited and should include evening sessions. In each session the characteristics of the children available for adoption should be discussed, and New York State's Waiting Children (The Adoption Album) must be shown and explained. The Adoption Album will provide families with information on the kind of children available and may expand a family's interest in adopting a child from age groups or with special needs other than those originally desired.

The procedures for applying to adopt, the adoption study process and the availability of adoption subsidies must be discussed. During the orientation session, the discussion of subsidies should remove income as a barrier to adopting.

Within five days of an orientation session, an agency must contact persons who have inquired about adoption and have been invited to an orientation session, but have failed to attend. Such persons should be invited to another orientation session, or if they are unable to attend a scheduled orientation session, offered an individual orientation session.

Approved applicants on waiting lists must be invited to an orientation meeting at least once every six months, at which time the characteristics of children waiting, the kinds of applicants to be given priority, and the preferences of applicants must be discussed.

Strategies for Training Staff to Work with Diverse Cultural, Racial, and Economic Communities

Outreach, recruitment and preparation of foster families is supported by OCFS Training contracts, notably:

"Foster and Adoptive Parent Recruitment and Retention" is a project in which trainers with skills in reaching out to all communities, most particularly minority and previously untapped communities, work with individual agencies to develop a recruitment/retention plan.

"Finding Adoptive Families for Waiting Children" training provides child-specific recruiting techniques and is targeted to New York City, where the vast majority of waiting children reside.

"Group Preparation and Selection for Resource Families" is a program that OCFS continues to support and promote statewide. This approach provides opportunities for informed mutual decision making to become a foster or adoptive parent; formation of partnerships between agency, foster parent, birth parent, and the child; preparation for the role of foster or adoptive parent; and establishing a knowledge base for meeting the needs of a foster or adoptive child.

"Foster and Adoptive Parent Training" is the basic, essential "train the trainer" program for home finders.

While the first project noted is very specifically targeted to diverse communities, all training incorporates the issue to the degree it is appropriate to the specific topic being discussed.

Each of these projects trains from a common set of policies and principles: that each child should be placed in the least restrictive setting possible, and a setting which offers the child continuity of his or her environment; that kin be sought as the placement of first preference (section 1017 of the Family Court Act); that siblings be placed together (section 1027-a of the Family Court Act); and that the placement offer the opportunity for regular contact with birth family, neighborhood, school and extended family and friends. This means that each social services district's/agency's foster care and adoption program must have available a full range of families, from all communities.

Strategies for Dealing with Linguistic Barriers

In areas where large numbers of non-English speaking families and children reside, most notably New York City, recruitment efforts are carried out in other languages, and caseworkers fluent in those languages conduct recruitment training and on-going work...

The New York State Citizens Coalition for Children (NYSCCC), working in conjunction with OCFS and the national AdoptUSKids initiative, has compiled information from Westchester, Nassau, and Suffolk counties regarding services for Spanish speaking prospective parents. Currently, NYSCCC is surveying and compiling information from other upstate counties to develop a comprehensive list of services available for Spanish speaking families.

Non-Discriminatory Fee Structure

Social services districts are precluded by State law (section 374(6) of the Social Services Law) from charging a home study or placement fee to a person seeking approval as an adoptive parent in accordance with OCFS regulations, 18 NYCRR Part 421. A voluntary authorized agency under contract with a social services district to provide adoption services to prospective adoptive parents for children who are in the custody and guardianship of a social services district does not charge a home study or a placement fee to a prospective adoptive parent. The expenses of the voluntary authorized agency are reimbursed through the contract by the social services district. To the extent that an adoptive parent incurs expenses directly related to the adoption of a child with special needs, the adoptive parent is eligible for payments for non-recurring adoption expenses pursuant to section 453-(a) of the Social Services Law. Regarding discrimination, OCFS regulation, 18 NYCRR 303.1(a), provides that no social services district or contract agent may discriminate against an individual on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion or handicap. OCFS regulation, 18 NYCRR 303.2, precludes a social services district from purchasing any service from any organization that discriminates on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion or handicap. OCFS regulation, 18 NYCRR 421.16(j), states that race, ethnic group, and religion shall not be a basis for rejecting an adoption application.

Procedures for Timely Search for Prospective Parents for a Waiting Child

For children whose permanency planning goal is discharge to adoption, diligence of effort standards are set forth in OCFS regulation, 18 NYCRR 430.12 (e). The regulation requires that for children who are not legally free for adoption, an action to legally free the child must be initiated within 30 days of establishing the permanency planning goal of adoption and the child must be freed within 12 months after the establishment of the goal of adoption. For children who are legally free for adoption but are not in an adoptive home, they must be placed within six months of being freed. For children who are in adoptive home, such adoptions must be finalized within 12 months after being placed in an adoptive home. OCFS regulation 18 NYCRR 430.12 (e) provides that if the child's permanency goal is adoption, the uniform case record must document steps taken to find an adoptive family and to finalize the adoption. Documentation must include specific recruitment efforts.

In addition, Section 1055-a of the Family Court Act provides for expeditious review of a child who has been freed for adoption and not placed in a prospective adoptive home or who has been freed for adoption and placed in a prospective home and no petition for adoption has been filed.

Legally freed children are photo listed with an accompanying description in New York State's Waiting Children publication (The Adoption Album) that is distributed by OCFS to authorized agencies and other appropriate groups. OCFS regulation, 18 NYCRR 420.2, requires each legally freed child who has received foster care from an authorized agency for three months, including any period of foster care immediately preceding the date on which the child was legally freed for adoption, must be referred to the State Adoption Service within 10 working days from the end of that three-month period. The referral must include a recent photo of the child and a written description of the child; a waiver of photo listing is requested. Subsequent changes in the status of the child are to be reported to the State Adoption Service within five working days after the change in status.

OCFS regulation, 18 NYCRR 421.13, requires authorized agencies operating an adoption program to respond to applications for adoption home studies on a priority basis. The first priority group is those applicants interested in adopting children having the characteristics of the largest proportion of waiting children, foster parents seeking to adopt a child who has been in their care for 12 months, and Indian families seeking to adopt Indian children. Second priority is given to those applicants seeking to adopt other children listed in the adoption photo-listing of children available for adoption in the agency for which there is not a waiting list of approved families. Third priority includes all other applicants seeking to adopt children.

OCFS regulation, 18 NYCRR 421.14, requires agencies to maintain separate lists of first, second and third priority applicants and establishes time frames for home studies accordingly.

Agencies must offer to start a home study for first priority applicants within 30 days of receiving a completed application and must complete the study within four months of the completed application. Second priority applicants must be offered a home study, which must be completed within six months of receipt of the completed application. Extension of the four month period are available where the application is available. In addition to initiation of adoption studies, regulations also require that agencies give priority to assignment of staff, scheduling of individual and group appointments and conferences to review studies and make decisions.

Adoptive Incentive Payments: New York State did not receive Adoption Incentive funding in 2007-08.

Fiscal Attachments

Appendices