



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

March 12, 2004

Dear Stakeholder:

The Office of Children and Family Services plans to apply for its federal Title IV-B (2) funding from the Agency for Children and Families in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Our goal is to assist local social services districts to maintain services to vulnerable children and their families.

Title IV-B (2) provides funding for four key services. Federal planning guidelines anticipate an investment of approximately 20% of the federal funding in each of the following areas:

George E. Pataki
Governor

John A. Johnson
Commissioner

- Family Preservation Services. Federal guidelines define family preservation services as services for children and families that are designed to help families at risk or in crisis. These services are intended to:
 - Help children at risk of placement remain safely in their homes;
 - Safely return children to homes from which they have been removed; and
 - Place children in adoptive or other planned permanent living arrangements.
- Family Support Services. Family support services involve community-based services that promote the safety and well-being of children and families. Some of the outcomes expected from increased and successful implementation of family support services include improved parenting skills, more stable and supportive family environments and enhanced child development. Day care, aftercare and post adoption services can be covered under family support expenditures. Many of the programs noted under Family Preservation Services are also applicable under Family Support Services.
- Family Reunification Services. Family reunification services describe the entire spectrum of services that are provided to facilitate the safe and timely return of children to the home of their parents or primary caregivers. Counseling, substance abuse treatment, mental health services, assistance for victims of domestic violence as well as other necessary services are included in this category. Such services are limited to a 15-month period that begins when the child enters foster care. Certain temporary child care, transportation and therapeutic services are covered under the umbrella of family reunification services.

Capital View Office Park

52 Washington Street
Rensselaer, NY 12144-2796

- Adoption Services. Adoption services include an entire array of services to promote and support the adoption of children. Such services are intended to serve the best interest of the children and expedite the adoption process. Service delivery designed to support adoptive families are also authorized. These supports involve parents and children, adoptive and foster families, and the many service providers committed to the encouragement and finalization of adoption throughout New York State.

A combination of federal, State and local funds underwrite the costs of services and supports to maintain vulnerable children safely in their own homes and, when this is not possible, to achieve alternatives that provide permanency. In 2002, the enactment of Governor Pataki's Child Welfare Finance Plan augmented available federal funds with State reimbursement for 65% of local spending, net of federal funding, for child protective, preventive, adoption, aftercare and independent living services.

In his proposed 2004-2005 Executive Budget, Governor Pataki has maintained his commitment to providing uncapped 65% State reimbursement to localities for child welfare services. In fact, these services include and go beyond those funded through Title IV-B (2). However, localities will be impacted by a reduction in Temporary Assistance to Needy Families funding due to keen competition for those resources across the State. The availability of Title IV-B (2) funding will reduce the demand on localities to increase their local investment to maintain critical services to children and their families.

The *Title IV-B Child and Family Services Report* and the plan amendment required to access Title IV-B (2) will be available for review on the website of the Office of Children and Family Services by March 16th.

Thank you for your continued advocacy for vulnerable children and their families. The planned investment of Title IV-B (2) funds is consistent with our shared agenda for supporting the safety, well-being and permanency of the State's children.

Sincerely,

John A. Johnson
Commissioner