

New York State Office of Children and Family Services

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OCFS Announces Over \$1.4 Million for Child Safety *Funds Will Help Create 10 New Child Advocacy Centers*

New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) Commissioner Gladys Carrión today announced the award of grants totaling more than \$1.4 million that will create 10 Child Advocacy Centers (CAC) that centralize and increase access to necessary services for child victims and non-offending family members. These latest awards are part of New York State's ongoing commitment to providing funds that help keep children safe by providing communities with increased resources. Currently, there are 16 existing child advocacy centers statewide.

"It is critical that we continue to strengthen partnerships that keep the needs of our children and families at the forefront of everything we do," said Commissioner Gladys Carrión. "These awards go a long way in helping to improve the lives of New York's vulnerable children and families by making it easier for stakeholders to work together to protect and keep our children safe."

The grants -- totaling \$1,407,433 and administered by OCFS -- will also be used to establish or improve local or regional multi-disciplinary teams (MDT) and enhance their ability to investigate, prosecute and manage cases of child abuse and neglect, particularly physical abuse, sexual abuse and other violence directed at children. The grants will also enhance the ability of MDT's to improve coordination among law enforcement, child protective services, health care and other community agencies involved in child abuse investigations and in the protection of abused and neglected children.

Anyone suspecting child abuse or neglect in New York State should call the State Central Register (SCR), more commonly known as the Child Abuse Hotline, at 1-800-342-3720. Individuals are urged to call local law enforcement authorities if a child is thought to be in immediate danger. Information on child safety tips and about the Child Abuse Hotline and Child Protective Services can be found on the OCFS website: www.ocfs.state.ny.us.

Grant recipients, listed alphabetically by county, and the amount of the grants are:

Albany County

Albany County Department of Children, Youth, and Families -- \$150,000

To establish a CAC for investigations, case review, treatment and management of cases.

Allegany/Cattaraugus Counties

Southern Tier Health System -- \$150,000

To collaborate with two rural counties, Allegany and Cattaraugus, for development of two functioning MDTs that will share interview sites and protocols in child-friendly locations.

Bronx County

Safe Horizon -- \$150,000

To establish a new, fully co-located CAC in the South Bronx to enhance the investigation and treatment of alleged cases of child abuse and neglect in the borough through collaboration with New York Police Department and Administration for Children Services.

Cayuga County

Cayuga Counseling Services -- \$57,638

To create a child-friendly interview site that will be the impetus for a fully functioning CAC in the future. This site will allow 8 of the 13 collaborating agencies to be housed under one roof.

Chautauqua County

Chautauqua County -- \$150,000

To build upon the accomplishment of its MDT and develop a not-for-profit CAC that will coordinate investigations, treatment and management of cases of sexual abuse, physical abuse, serious physical injury and domestic abuse toward children.

New York County

Safe Horizon -- \$150,000

To develop a co-located centralized CAC in Manhattan that will utilize the current MDT/CACs within the county while developing and implementing a plan for a centralized CAC.

Ontario County

Partnership for Ontario County -- \$149,795

To establish the Ontario County Child Advocacy Center as a single point of contact and co-location of services provided by members of the Finger Lakes Child Response Team.

Rockland County

Rockland County Department of Social Services -- \$150,000

To establish a centralized child-friendly CAC and merge all the existing components into the process, including all interview and case review components needed to coordinate the investigation efforts of all agencies involved with a case.

Suffolk County

Education and Assistance Corporation -- \$150,000

To assist in establishing a fully functioning CAC in Suffolk County, complete with a medical unit.

Westchester County

Westchester County District Attorney's Office -- \$150,000

To allow for a full-time coordinator to help the MDT bring together the investigations of the county's 43 law enforcement agencies. The MDT will coordinate cases through development of a CAC at the Westchester Institute for Human Development.

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