



# **Office of Children and Family Services**

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

### **2018 Annual Progress and Services Report Submitted June 2017**

#### **Submittal 17-01**

#### **Application for Funding:**

- **Stephanie Tubbs Jones Child Welfare Services (CWS) Title IV-B of the Social Security Act, Subpart 1**
- **Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) Title IV-B of the Social Security Act, Subpart 2**
- **Chafee Foster Care Independence (CFCIP) and Education and Training Vouchers (ETV) Programs**

**New York State Office of Children and Family Services  
Website:**

**<http://ocfs.ny.gov>**

**New York State CFSP and APSR Contact:**

**Robert Dick, Jr.  
52 Washington Street  
Rensselaer, NY 12144  
518-474-3475  
[Robert.Dick@ocfs.ny.gov](mailto:Robert.Dick@ocfs.ny.gov)**

## Table of Contents

<b>New York State OCFS Overview.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Annual Progress and Services Report (APSR).....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>County Plans .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Child and Family Services Review.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Title IV-E Plan.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Title IV-E Foster Care Eligibility Review (FCER).....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Adoption and Foster Care Analysis Reporting System (AFCARS).....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>FY 2016 APSR.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>1. General Information.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Collaboration.....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>2. Assessment of Performance.....</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>3. Plan for Improvement.....</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>4. Services Description.....</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>Populations at Greatest Risk of Maltreatment.....</b>	<b>72</b>
<b>Services for Children Under the Age of Five.....</b>	<b>76</b>
<b>Services for Children Adopted from Other Countries.....</b>	<b>79</b>
<b>5. Program Support.....</b>	<b>81</b>
<b>Training and Technical Assistance provided.....</b>	<b>85</b>
<b>OCFS Evaluation and Research.....</b>	<b>86</b>
<b>6. Consultation and Coordination Between States and Tribes.....</b>	<b>91</b>
<b>7. Monthly Caseworker Visit Formula Grants.....</b>	<b>104</b>
<b>8. Adoption and Legal Guardianship Incentive Payments.....</b>	<b>109</b>

9. Child Welfare Waiver Demonstration Activities.....	112
10. Quality Assurance System.....	117
Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) Overview.....	126
New York State Children and Family Trust Fund (Trust Fund) and Federal Community Based Child Abuse and Prevention Program (CBCAP).....	145
Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP).....	154
Statistical and Supporting Information.....	170
CAPTA Annual State Data Report Items.....	171
Information on Child Protective Services Workforce.....	171
CPS Caseload and Workload Requirements.....	173
Juvenile Justice Transfers.....	174
Child Maltreatment Death Reporting.....	174
Education and Training Voucher (ETV) Program.....	175
Inter-Country Adoptions.....	178
Monthly Caseworker Visit Data.....	179
Targeted Plans within the CFSP.....	181
Foster and Adoptive Parent Diligent Recruitment Plan Update.....	182
Health Care Oversight and Coordination Plan Update.....	188
Disaster Plan Update.....	195
Training Plan Update.....	202
Cost Allocation for Training Summary.....	239

**Appendices:**

**Appendix “A” 2016 New York State Citizen’s Review Panels Annual Report**

**Appendix “B” New York State Annual Report Response**

**Appendix “C” 2015-2016 New York State Annual ETV Report**

**Appendix “D” 2016 Child Protective Services Training – Local Districts**

**Appendix “E” ETV Awards Chart**

**Appendix “F” Fiscal Attachments (CFS – 101s)**

**Appendix “G” 2017 Office of Children and Family Services Organizational Chart**

**Appendix “H” CW Practice Model Work Plan/Logic Model**

**Appendix “I” 2016 Average Caseworker Caseload Size**

**Appendix “J” Cost Allocation Plan**

# Overview

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

In New York State (NYS), services are locally administered through 58 social services districts (including the five boroughs of New York City [NYC]), the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe (hereinafter included in the term LDSS), and county youth bureaus. State dollars are allocated to fund services at the community level. A framework of regulation, policy and procedures is established by the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) and operationalized by the 58 LDSSs. While OCFS has responsibility for direct oversight of some services and program development, the daily responsibility to serve clients accessing the various services available within the social services environment rests with the LDSSs. Approximately one-third of NYS's LDSSs are considered rural. OCFS works with these LDSSs to fund and provide services and programs to address the needs of these rural populations.

Planning in NYS continues to be a joint activity, with the focus of activity occurring in the social services districts and youth bureaus. OCFS' role is to provide guidance to assist LDSS planning efforts, including youth bureau involvement, to reflect the goals and performance targets established. In partnership with those social services districts, NYS continues in the direction of achieving the various outcomes established within the CFSP. This partnership between the LDSSs, youth bureaus, stakeholders, state agencies and OCFS is critical to the achievement of outcomes noted in the CFSP.

Described initiatives and activities in this document include those supported with federal Child Welfare Services funds (*Title IV-B, subpart 1, the Stephanie Tubbs Jones Child Welfare Services Program*); federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act funds (*CAPTA*); federal *Title IV-E funds*, including the application for and other information regarding the *Chafee Foster Care Independent Program*; *Runaway Homeless Youth Act*; *Child Care Development Fund*; and other state and federal sources. *Title IV-B, subpart 2 funds, Promoting Safe and Stable Families*, for providing service delivery of *family preservation, community-based family support, time-limited family reunification and adoption promotion and support*, as well as planning and service coordination, were requested and received by NYS. The state supports various programs such as Healthy Families New York, post-adoption services, kinship programs, safe sleep efforts, and primary prevention programs with other federal and state funds that by definition fall under these categories. This Plan is further evidence that NYS will take every opportunity to explore whether the state is eligible to receive such funds.

The Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) and subsequent Annual Progress and Services Reports (APSR) are made available to: LDSSs; 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 APSR. In addition, the public will have access to these documents through LDSSs.

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

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

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

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

All counties in the state are required to submit a single county plan from LDSS and county Youth Bureaus. Counties were required to submit a new multi-year plan in the fall of 2011, effective January 1, 2012. Counties are then required to submit Annual Plan Updates (APU) through 2017. OCFS reviews and approves the plans, and in conjunction with the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS), Office of Probation and Correctional Alternatives (OPCA) approves the Person in Need of Supervision (PINS) Diversion Services Plans.

OCFS facilitates a five-year county-level Child and Family Services Planning process. County plans include information from the following program areas:

- Child Protective Services
- Preventive Services
- Foster Care and Adoption Services
- Youth Development
- Child Care
- Detention
- PINS Diversion (co-approved by OCFS and New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS), Office of Probation and Correctional Alternatives (OPCA)
- Domestic Violence
- Exploited Youth
- Adult Services

The plans, and the annual plan updates, are reviewed and approved by individual program areas. The child welfare component is reviewed to determine that the County Plan is complete, signatures are included, appropriate interagency consultations have been held, and that the narrative contains a needs assessment, targeted outcomes, and other sections such as a needs assessment and strategies aimed at meeting the target outcomes.

In preparation for the 2018-2022 county planning cycle, OCFS is revising the County Plan format to better align with the Child and Family Service Review (CFSR) outcomes and indicators. To that end, OCFS extended the annual update through 2017. During 2017, OCFS will be working with the LDSSs to implement a continuous quality improvement (CQI) process, whereby the

counties will collect and analyze their child welfare data, determine underlying conditions for their performance on the key measures, and identify strategies and steps to monitor success of the strategies. This information will be the basis for their five-year county plan.

### **Accomplishments for 2016-2017:**

- As a result of a state (OCFS) and county workgroup, OCFS has prioritized the county planning process and developed several strategies designed to overhaul the county planning process. These strategies include: development of a new web-based platform for the submission of county plans, a new format with measureable indicators included, and a review process that will be developed through the Governor's LEAN initiative.
- The Office of Probation and Correctional Alternatives (OPCA) of the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) continues with its partnership with OCFS to jointly review and approve the PINS Diversion Services Plan Component of the plan. The review and approval process was completed by way of phone conferences between OCFS staff and OPCA staff allowing for shared dialogue, coordinated review/approval of plans, and direct support to districts.
- OCFS has involved LDSSs, voluntary authorized agencies, and cross departmental staff in the development, review, and approval of the County Plans.
- OCFS, as described later in this APSR, has continued its work on the Child Welfare Practice Model to further improve state and local planning.
- OCFS has worked with the LDSSs on a CQI process that will be used to develop their five-year County Plan.
- OCFS has shared data with the counties and has provided technical assistance and support on analyzing data.

### **Plans for 2017-2018:**

- A work group continues to meet and explore opportunities to employ the upcoming 2018-2022 Child and Family Services Plans (County Plans) as a tool to more explicitly assess our progress to achieve the desired outcomes that are identified in our Practice Model and throughout the CFSR. Since 2015, OCFS has been working toward implementing a CQI process that includes: Strengths and Needs Assessment, Program Planning and Implementation, and Testing Effectiveness. The CQI cycle has become embedded in many of OCFS's data trainings and within the newly revised local program improvement plan (formally corrective action plans). We anticipate that

the County Plans will utilize the CQI cycle to strategically identify key underlying factors related to performance, targeted strategies, and indicators of success. As OCFS reviews and approves 2017-2021 County Plans, our goal will be to identify trends and strategies that show promise that we may want to evaluate or build upon, regionally, and ultimately statewide.

- OCFS is working with the Social Work Education Consortium within the University at Albany to modify the County Plan instructions and the template to better align with the CQI process. We will also work with SUNY Professional Development Program to develop trainings to improve the skills of both OCFS and county staff.
- May-September 2017, the County Plan template will be finalized and the data system will be revised. In October 2017, the revised template will be discussed with the LDSS Directors of Services, and at that time, regional offices will begin working with LDSSs to improve understanding the new CQI-focused county plan model.

### **Child and Family Services Review (CFSR)**

OCFS received the findings from the Child and Family Services Review that was conducted the week of June 13, 2016, on December 27, 2016. OCFS submitted the New York State's Program Improvement Plan on March 27, 2017.

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

New York (NYS) submitted a Comprehensive Title IV-E State Plan in accordance with ACYF-CB-PI-13-05, issued April 17, 2013. On September 3, 2013, NYS submitted a plan amendment documenting procedures for the transfer of responsibility for the placement and care of children under a State title IV-E program to a Tribal title IV-E agency or an Indian Tribe with a Title IV-E agreement. The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Administration for Children and Families approved the amended plan effective July 1, 2013. Further, as a result of the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act of 2014 (Public Law (P.L.) 113-183), and as required by ACYF-CB-PI-14-06, NYS submitted a Title IV-E State Plan Amendment (Submittal 15-01) on January 20, 2015. DHHS approved NYS's plan amendment with an effective date of January 1, 2015. On September 29, 2015, NYS submitted a revised title IV-E Plan Amendment (Submittal 15-03) with additional supporting regulatory amendments submitted on January 21, 2016, to address section 475(5)(C)(iv) of the Social Security Act, that address the requirement in the case plan to include health and education records of the child, including the most recent information available regarding records of immunizations. DHHS approved the plan amendment effective July 1, 2015.

## **Title IV-E Foster Care Eligibility Review (FCER)**

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

NYS passed this FCER with ACF findings of two error cases and two cases with improper payments. ACF commended NYS for its continued efforts on improvements to court orders that contain detailed child-specific information and for ensuring that judicial expectations are clear when determining actions to achieve the desired permanency outcomes. These improvements could not have occurred without the hard work and diligence of the LDSSs, Family Courts, voluntary authorized agencies, and other local and state partners over the last three years.

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

## **AFCARS**

In December 2016, new regulations governing the submission of federal Adoption and Foster Care Reporting Systems (AFCARS) data were published in the federal register. The new regulations greatly expand the number of data elements required to be collected and give states two years (until October 1, 2019) to add these elements to their AFCARS work. In response to this mandate, OCFS' Bureau of Research, Evaluation and Performance Analytics (BREPA) convened the AFCARS 2.0 work group in January 2017. The work group is composed representatives from multiple areas within OCFS, including: Child Welfare and Community Services, Native American Services, Adoption, Policy, Legal, Finance, ITS, and BREPA.

The work group meets on a biweekly basis and is in the process of reviewing each data element required as part of AFCARS 2.0., in order to: 1) evaluate gap(s) between federal requirements and existing system capacity in terms of ITS/Connections capacity, practice, policy, legal, training and/or other needs, and 2) formulate recommendations and timelines for addressing said gaps. Once the gap analysis is complete, initial recommendations for system and practice changes will be shared with OCFS leadership and LDSS field staff for discussion and comment.

# **2018 Annual Progress and Services Report**

## **1. General Information**

OCFS serves as the Title IV-B Agency for NYS. OCFS is dedicated to improving the integration of services for New York's children, youth, families and vulnerable populations; to promoting their development; and to protecting them from violence, neglect, abuse and abandonment. The agency provides a system of family support, juvenile justice, child care and child welfare services that promote the safety and well-being of children and adults.

OCFS is responsible for programs and services involving foster care, adoption and adoption assistance, child protective services including operating the Statewide Central Register for Child Abuse and Maltreatment, preventive services for children and families, and protective programs for vulnerable adults. OCFS is also responsible for the functions performed by the State Commission for the Blind (NYSCB) and coordinates state government response to the needs of Native Americans on reservations and in communities.

OCFS provides oversight and monitoring of regulated child care (family day care, group family day care, school-age child care and day care centers outside of New York City), legally exempt child care, child care subsidies, child care resource and referrals, and the Advantage After-School Program, and also provides services and programs for infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and school-age children and their families.

The Executive Office of OCFS, encompassing the Office of the Commissioner, the Office of the Executive Deputy Commissioner, the New York City Executive Office, the Office of the Ombudsman, the Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity Development, and Executive Services, provides overall leadership, management, coordination, and administration of agency operation and mission-driven priorities.

OCFS divides its responsibilities into two main areas: program and support. The program divisions/offices include: Division of Child Care Services (DCCS), Division of Child Welfare and Community Services (CWCS), Division of Juvenile Justice and Opportunities for Youth (DJJOY), and the New York State Commission for the Blind (NYSCB). The support divisions/offices include: Division of Administration (Admin), Division of Legal Affairs (Legal), Office of Communications (Communications), Office of Strategic Planning and Policy Development (SPPD), and the Office of Special Investigations (SIU).

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

OCFS operates 12 juvenile justice facilities (one of which has a reception unit), for youth placed in the custody of the OCFS Commissioner. There are also 12 Community Multi-Services Offices (CMSO) and two satellite offices, statewide, that are responsible for the provision of services to the youth and his/her family from day one of OCFS placement. OCFS staff also works with local

detention and community providers including LDSSs, probation, parole, mental health, schools, and others to implement DJJOY initiatives at the county and regional level.

OCFS maintains regional offices in Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse, Albany, Spring Valley, and NYC to support LDSSs, agency programs and partnerships with stakeholders and providers.

### *Mission Statement*

OCFS serves NYS' by promoting the safety, permanency and well-being of our children, families and communities. We will achieve results by setting and enforcing policies, building partnerships, and funding and providing quality services.

### *Collaboration*

The creation of OCFS was accompanied by a statutorily created Children and Family Services Advisory Board comprised of 24 members. The board's purpose is to help OCFS construct a better system of services for NYS' children, families and individuals. The governor appoints 12 members and the State Senate and Assembly appoint six each. Its duties broadly include consideration of matters relating to the improvement of children and family services, review of proposed rules and regulations of the OCFS prior to their adoption, advocacy for OCFS programs, and liaison with local stakeholders.

The OCFS Native American Services (NAS) unit actively interacts with the Indian Tribes/Nations to offer general forums for discussions of issues, as well as to address specific child/family circumstances and consult with the Tribal/Nation communities. Monthly meetings with Tribal representatives provide the opportunity for ongoing dialogue. NAS is active in supporting and sharing feedback from the Tribes/Nations and for facilitating meetings for direct feedback to the OCFS home office.

OCFS is also committed to hearing the voice of youth impacted by service systems. To that end, OCFS has supported the development and growth of Youth in Progress (YIP), a statewide foster care youth leadership advisory board. This group of young people, accompanied by adult mentors, has provided ongoing input related to a wide range of topics that impact their experience in foster care and beyond.

OCFS seeks the input of its partners in the LDSSs, youth bureaus and voluntary authorized agencies using a variety of methods as OCFS works to address safety, permanency, and well-being for the children, youth, and families of NYS. Communication occurs through state level associations - the New York Public Welfare Association (NYPWA), the Council of Family and Child Caring Agencies (COFCCA), the Empire State Coalition of Youth and Family Services (Empire State Coalition), the New York State Juvenile Police Officers Association (NYSJPOA), Foster and Adoptive Parent organizations and the Association of New York State Youth Bureaus

(NYSAYB). OCFS staff participates in association meetings and conferences, and frequently communicate with individual members of sub-groups as needed and appropriate.

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

The second level of the collaboration with OCA is the Statewide Multidisciplinary Child Welfare Work-group – this work group consists of representatives from OCA, OCFS, and the New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services, selected LDSS commissioners or their designees, Family Court judges, court attorney referee, attorneys for the parents, attorneys for children, executive directors of foster care agencies, county attorneys, a physician and coordinators from the counties with the highest foster care populations. Work group members are selected based on their reputation for excellent work and depth of knowledge. The group operates as a “think tank” and strategic planning body, providing information to the Leadership team, as well as to the local collaborative teams, pertaining to improving collaboration between Family Court, LDSSs, attorneys for children and parents, and other stakeholders. The work-group identifies systemic issues that need to be resolved at the leadership level and programmatic issues that need to be resolved on the local level. Training and technical assistance to the local collaborations is arranged by the work-group.

The workgroup developed a logic model that identified system gaps. These gaps became the focus of team meetings in which we looked at trauma and its impact on childrearing; the need for trauma informed lawyers, judges and caseworkers; and misunderstanding about the roles and

responsibilities of the players in child welfare proceedings and a need for stakeholders to better understand child safety structured decision-making. Trainings on these topics are developed and are being provided to selected counties.

The third level of collaboration with OCA is the Regional Collaborative Work that groups representatives regionally from county collaborative teams and is composed of administrators and staff from LDSSs, Family Court judges, attorneys for children and parents and any other local stakeholders. Training is offered at the regional level and includes opportunities for networking with peers from nearby counties. The regional collaborative meetings allow county teams to learn from each other and share successes and challenges. The Regional collaborative meetings/events are supported by OCFS and OCA staff relative to training, data, and technical assistance.

### *Examples of ongoing collaborations*

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

The collaborative efforts noted below and on the following pages describe several coordination and service integration efforts that provide excellent opportunities for consultation, discussion, and input from various agencies and constituencies regarding a wide array of services to children, youth and families. The various groups, depending upon their charge, are comprised of representatives from state and local, public, and private entities.

### **Accomplishments for 2016-2017:**

Since December 2007, a meeting of state agency commissioners (or their designee) serving children is held to discuss the need for cross system collaborations for children with service needs that involve more than one service delivery system. Commissioners from the following agencies attended: OCFS, the Office of Mental Health (OMH), the Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) Office of Probation and Correctional Alternatives (OPCA), the Office for People With Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD), the Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS), the Department of Health (DOH), the Division of Criminal Justice Services' (DCJS), Office of Probation and Correctional Alternatives (OPCA), and the State Education Department (SED). The commissioners meet quarterly to continue the discussion and to develop and implement joint solutions to improve the lives of children, youth, and families. One accomplishment of this process is the Regional Interagency Technical Assistance Teams (RTATs). RTATs are teams that are comprised of representatives from many different systems and are crucial to NYS' cross-systems work. Currently there are five RTATs in New York State in the regions of Central New York, Hudson River, Long Island, NYC, and Western New York.

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

### Office of Court Administration (OCA)

The Statewide Multidisciplinary Child Welfare Workgroup met three times in 2016. Regional groups met on the day after each of the statewide trainings in September 2016. The OCFS/OCA Leadership Team met four times and person to person communication between systems takes place regularly.

### *Statewide System Reform Program*

Across New York State, the foster care population of very young children has been rising due to the pervasiveness of the use of heroin and other opiates. A coordinated response from child welfare, family court and the chemical dependency system was formed to address some of the difficult challenges of assisting these families and moving children in a timely manner from foster care to permanency. Staff from the Office of Court Administration (OCA), OCFS, and the Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS) have been collaborating on the Statewide System Reform Project aimed at three areas:

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

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

staffing and travel; roll out of a statewide screening tool that will flag the need for further alcohol and substance abuse assessment; and, pilot testing of evidence-based practices within the LDSS and/or treatment system. Eight pilot counties were selected and began testing the identified practices in April 2016.

The work of the eight pilot counties is ongoing (see map included in item 29 for location of counties with this pilot in place in the NYS CFSR State Wide Assessment submitted April 14, 2016). Local districts participating in the pilot use the UNCOPE+, a screening tool to aid in the early identification of child welfare families who are experiencing chemical dependencies issues, referring them to appropriate substance abuse assessment and treatment where indicated. These cases are then monitored through Family Court in an effort to reduce the amount of time children are spending in foster care. The initial data from the pilot counties is being assessed by the SSRP Executive Committee and plans are being made to identify and address areas in need of additional training or support.

NYS was asked to send a panel of members from each system to present workshops at the 2016 Child Welfare League of America and the 2016 National Association of Drug Court Professionals annual conferences in Orange County, California last summer. These workshops were well received.

### *Multidisciplinary Training*

In 2016, OCFS and OCA co-sponsored a number of multidisciplinary trainings based on needs identified by the Statewide Multidisciplinary Child Welfare Work Group. Training was provided to a multidisciplinary audience on Child Safety and Risk to the following counties: Albany, Chautauqua, Dutchess, Oneida, Rockland, Ulster and New York City (NYC). The training was developed to enhance the understanding of the judges, attorneys and child welfare staff on risk assessment and safety decision-making in the child welfare process.

A two-day training on Reducing the Use of APPLA was delivered in Syracuse to a multidisciplinary audience of representatives from across the state in the fall of 2016.

### New York State Department of Health

Collaboration with the NYS Department of Health (DOH) continues in an effort to promote child safety and well-being. In 2016, OCFS continued its efforts to improve infant safe sleep practices and reduce the number of child fatalities due to unsafe sleep by providing free cribs to low income families in need. A total of 1,672 cribs were distributed to LDSSs, voluntary authorized agencies and select community-based organizations that provide home visiting and/or parenting programs. LDSSs and voluntary authorized agencies requested these cribs on behalf of families who need them to keep their babies safe. Over the past four years, OCFS has given away nearly 5,600 cribs to families in need in New York State. In an ongoing effort to enhance public education

around critical child safety issues, OCFS has distributed publications and videos to LDSSs, health agencies, voluntary authorized agencies and community programs. These materials include tip sheets, brochures, magnets and other items with information about safe sleep environments, coping with crying and additional topics. Helpful Tips to Keep Your Baby Safe are posted on the OCFS website and are available in six languages. Other materials OCFS developed include *Personalized Safety Tips and Emergency Contact Sheet for Caregivers*, a video called “Helpful Strategies for Keeping Infants and Young Children Safe video,” and a brochure called *Keeping Sleeping Babies Safer*. These are available in English and Spanish. 67,101 publications and videos were provided in 2016, reaching families in 51 counties throughout New York State. Publications can be ordered or downloaded from the OCFS website.

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

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

In 2016, 199 children enrolled in the Bridges to Health program reached their permanency goal of adoption, making the overall number of children enrolled in the Bridges to Health program finding permanency through adoption at 2,436.

### *Child Fatalities*

The NYS DOH and OCFS have continued to work collaboratively on prevention of child deaths, and to promote multidisciplinary review of child fatalities. DOH, the lead agency in the National Institute for Children's Health Quality Collaborative Improvement & Innovation Network to Reduce Infant Mortality (CoIIN) and subcommittee co-chair OCFS, address unsafe sleep deaths of infants across NYS. As materials are collected and reviewed in conjunction with activities underway, there continues to be a need to provide a consistent message across the state to educate new parents and other caregivers about how to keep a baby safe while they sleep.

In 2016, OCFS funded local programs to distribute portable cribs to families who have no safe place for their infant to sleep. OCFS will work closely with the CoIIN to identify and implement other preventive initiatives identified by the multidisciplinary statewide team.

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

OCFS is committed to working with LDSSs, the DOH, community-based organizations, and other stakeholders, to develop strategies to significantly reduce the prevalence of unsafe sleep-related infant fatalities. Some of the more recent activities aimed at improving safe sleep environments include:

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

New York Safe Babies continues to show all parents an educational video about the dangers of shaking a baby, and have added a safe sleep component. The name of the video is "Never, Ever, Shake a Baby."

OCFS launched a pilot project in 2016 to be coordinated by CFRTs with community hospitals. Standardized education was provided to new parents about safe sleep. All new parents will be provided a "Safe Sleep Bag," containing an infant sleep sack, a book on safe sleep,

a safe sleep DVD, an informational door hanger, a window cling, a magnet, and a brochure on the “ABCs of Safe Sleep.” Parents who consent to be contacted will be asked to complete a survey 30 days after discharge. The survey asks questions about current sleep practices, the effectiveness of specific materials provided, and barriers to safe sleep. The number of unsafe sleep-related deaths will also be examined.

Community Pilots: Seven home visiting agencies are participating in a community pilot, giving safe sleep information to mothers and caregivers. DOH hosts monthly coaching calls for the agencies in NYC in the Bronx and Queens; and in five upstate counties: Chemung, Onondaga, Oswego, Orange, and Suffolk.

OCFS participates with the Administration for Children’s Services (ACS) and the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (NYCDOHMH) in Safe Sleep Key Stakeholders meetings. The meetings are a result of a 2015 NYC mayoral initiative designed to bring together agencies in NYC to craft a uniform message for families and caregivers on the subject of safe sleep. Attendees represent ACS, the American Academy of Pediatrics, NYCDOHMH, the Department of Homeless Services, the Human Resources Administration, the NYC Department of Education, the NYC Police Department, the Greater New York Hospital Association, among others. The purpose of this is to establish a cross-agency campaign to target unsafe sleep deaths through a series of regularly scheduled meetings and work groups.

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

OASAS is working in collaboration with OCFS to align the delivery of drug and alcohol services for OCFS’ juvenile justice facilities and aftercare services, as well as for local districts that need access to drug and alcohol treatment services to support family functioning, such as a co-location project described elsewhere in the plan. As mentioned earlier, OCFS continues to partner with OCA and OASAS on the Statewide System Reform Project with the eight pilot counties.

For the past few years, OCFS has worked closely with the New York State Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence (OPDV) in several areas, particularly in the area of training. OPDV delivers the required two-day training on domestic violence to every CPS caseworker in New York State outside of New York City, which does the training itself.

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

### *Kinship*

OCFS continues to be committed to developing a shortened version of the relative handbook *Having a Voice & a Choice, New York State Handbook for Relatives Raising Children* with tools to assist relatives and workers in making the best caregiving choice for their family. OCFS received feedback from relatives and the field that the handbook is too lengthy to effectively present the options to relatives in caring for their kin. In an effort to meet the need of a concise version but one that maintains the essential information that is needed to make important placement decisions.

In December 2016, OCFS developed and published a document to be used to assist relatives with the questions they need to ask themselves to make the best choice for their family. This informative, plain-language pamphlet highlights key information for each option relatives have for initial placements of children in their care. *Know Your Options: Kin Caring for Children*, is a multi-fold pamphlet that can be useful in introducing relatives/kin to the options available under kinship care.

### *Human Trafficking*

In 2016, OCFS added a permanent position within the Bureau of Vulnerable Populations to provide full-time support to the agency's anti-trafficking work. The staff began in June 2016 and is charged with supporting the agency's *Safe Harbour: NY* initiative and other anti-trafficking efforts. This position reports to the anti-trafficking coordinator.

OCFS continued to implement the requirements outlined in the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act throughout 2016-2017, and began planning to monitor this implementation. OCFS developed and issued several policies and other forms of guidance to ensure NYS maintained compliance with the provisions of this Act. An online training on human trafficking continues to be mandatory for all employees; the training is accessible via the Human Services Learning Center and is titled *Human Trafficking/Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC); An Overview*. OCFS provides ongoing technical assistance to partners in the field about this and other policies through regularly held conference calls and the maintenance of a general mailbox ([humantrafficking@ocfs.ny.gov](mailto:humantrafficking@ocfs.ny.gov)). OCFS will continue to monitor federal and state legislation and make any changes to policy and protocol required to remain in compliance with legislative requirements.

In 2016, OCFS released many technical assistance documents available to all child-serving professionals. These documents were circulated to child protection agencies statewide and, as of 2017, were made available to all child-serving professionals via the rebuilt OCFS anti-trafficking webpage (<http://ocfs.ny.gov/main/humantrafficking/default.asp>). These technical assistance documents include *Responding to Commercially Sexually Exploited and Trafficked Youth: A Handbook for Child Serving Professionals (Handbook)*, a guide for direct-care professionals working with vulnerable, trafficked, or sexually exploited youth; *Blueprint for Building a Child Welfare Response to Commercially Sexually Exploited and Trafficked Youth (Blueprint)*, a road map for Local Departments of Social Services (LDSS) to respond to the needs of trafficked and sexually exploited

youth and their non-offending family members in their localities; *Initial Trafficking Interview Tool for Youth*, an optional screening tool to help child-serving professionals navigate difficult conversations with youth about work, money, and sex, and many others. The *Initial Trafficking Interview Tool for Youth* was released alongside a computer based training to support implementation of the tool locally. The new webpage also serves as an information hub for the Safe Harbour: NY program and information and policies related to the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act.

Throughout 2016 and 2017, OCFS held presentations/trainings on human trafficking to various audiences throughout the state that included child protection and foster care supervisors, voluntary agency staff, Native American communities, and many others. In May 2016 OCFS provided training to the OCFS Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment to inform hotline specialists of how to identify potential cases of human trafficking. OCFS began offering a “Train-the-Trainer” model to the field to disseminate information on human trafficking and how to meet the needs of trafficked and vulnerable youth more widely.

In 2016, OCFS funded 23 counties, the five boroughs of YC, the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe, and four county youth bureaus to participate in Safe Harbour: NY. Through this program OCFS supports LDSSs and other partners to convene a Critical Team to drive the development of a county-based response to child trafficking led by the child welfare system. Critical Teams drive the development of local policies, procedures, and protocol, the creation and dissemination of public awareness campaigns and direct youth outreach efforts, and the provision of social services to trafficking victims and at-risk youth. In January 2017, OCFS funded a total of 27 counties, the five boroughs of NYC, the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe, and two county youth bureaus to participate in Safe Harbour: NY. In spring 2017, OCFS began convening quarterly regional meetings for Safe Harbour: NY partners to encourage partnership within regions.

In March 2016, OCFS hosted its first statewide summit on human trafficking. More than 100 participants came to the two-day event to network and workshop promising practices and common challenges in supporting this population. A second summit is being planned for October, 2017.

OCFS was further invited to present at a number of national anti-trafficking conferences, including the JuST conference in Washington, DC (November, 2015) and the Freedom Network conference in Chicago, IL (April, 2016). Presentations offered at these national events focused on the innovative work OCFS leads in implementing a coordinated, statewide response to human trafficking through the child welfare system.

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

In January 2017, OCFS marked Human Trafficking Awareness Month with several awareness activities, including promoting awareness information through our Facebook and Twitter accounts. OCFS also highlighted the awareness raising efforts of county partners.

### **Plans for 2017-2018:**

In addition to continuing the ongoing work outlined above, OCFS plans to:

- deliver “Train-the-Trainer” sessions regionally across the state to give a network of professionals the capacity to disseminate best practice information;
- bring on additional county partners to the Safe Harbour: NY program;
- host statewide summits in 2017 and 2018;
- revise forms created to support the screening and law enforcement notification of identified victims of trafficking per Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act to incorporate partner feedback based on practice experience;
- implement monitoring of all policies released from 2015-2017 per the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act; and
- enhance data collection and analysis related to identified human trafficking victims.

### *Close to Home Initiative*

A juvenile justice reform that was initiated in state FY 2012-13, has fundamentally restructured the delivery of residential rehabilitative services and aftercare for NYC youth adjudicated delinquent and placed in the non-secure and limited secure levels of care. The approach utilizes evidence-informed models of care that address the risks and needs of young people in the context of their families and their communities. OCFS continues its collaborative effort with ACS on this initiative. Phase 1, the non-secure level of residential care, was initiated in September of 2012. Phase 2, the limited-secure level of residential care, began in January of 2016. OCFS will continue to operate secure levels of care facilities for all youth statewide.

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

OCFS, with support from DOH, continued to implement the B2H Medicaid Waiver Program for Children with Serious Emotional Disturbance (B2H SED), Bridges to Health for Children with Developmental Disabilities (B2H DD) and Bridges to Health for Children with Medical Fragility (B2H MedF) Waivers across NYS. B2H is the first program in the nation to use Home and Community Based Medicaid Waivers to exclusively serve children in the child welfare system along with their caregiver network and does so within the federal principles of freedom of choice, strength based approach, person-centered and family focused service planning and delivery. In 2016 (October 1, 2016), 199 children enrolled in the Bridges to Health program reached their permanency goal of adoption, making the overall number of children enrolled in the Bridges to Health program finding permanency through adoption a total of 2,436.

### New York State Teaming Model

OCFS began to pilot the Teaming Model in early 2007 in an effort to provide more supports to the child welfare workforce, to counter the forces that contribute to caseworker turnover such as worker stress and isolation, and to support quality decision-making. At the end of the first quarter of 2017, OCFS and its training partner, the Center for Development of Human Services (CDHS), were providing support to twenty-six active teams in seven counties, including Staten Island and three new teams in Columbia County. Three more counties will begin to develop their Teams in May 2017, by participating in Teaming 101, which will be facilitated by CDHS. An additional county is expected to develop its Team later in 2017. All teams are provided ongoing technical support by our CDHS partners in the form of onsite consultation, team building and coaching activities and guidance through the various phases of team development. Efforts were focused in 2015 to align Teaming with the KEYS (Keys to Excellence in Your Supervision) model of supervision and the FAR (Family Assessment Response) practice model to better support caseworkers and supervisors, and improve safety, permanency and wellbeing outcomes for children and families. The first Supervisory Symposium was held on October 21, 2015, with the focus of effective supervision across all three strategies (KEYS, Teaming and FAR). The 2016 Supervisory Symposium was held on October 25, and included supervisors from districts throughout NYS. The focus was on using data to inform and improve practice as well as developing the critical thinking skills of workers by asking strategic questions. In 2016, OCFS, CDHS and NYC's ACS/Workforce Institute began collaborating on the development of a Teaming 101 Facilitator Guide. Planning is underway for a 2017 Leadership Forum.

### Office of Court Administration (OCA) Permanent Judicial Commission on Justice for Children (Commission)

The Commission is chaired by Chief Judge Janet DiFiore. In addition to the OCFS commissioner, other members include judges, lawyers, advocates, physicians, legislators, and state and local officials.

### The New York State Child Welfare Court Improvement Project (CIP)

CIP began in 1994 and was administered by the Permanent Commission on Justice for Children until 2006. At that time, the increased focus on court operational issues prompted the transition of the administration of the project to OCA's Division of Court Operations. OCFS and OCA have built a strong partnership to support effective collaboration between the Family Courts and the LDSSs with the highest foster care populations in NYS. Most of the work with CIP takes place through the Statewide Multidisciplinary Child Welfare Work Group. As described above, it is made up of stakeholders from across the state, designs and oversees the implementation of court/child welfare collaboration initiatives on the state, regional and local levels.

### The Seneca Nation Peacemaker Courts Collaboration

Begun in 2005 and includes judges and court personnel from the 8<sup>th</sup> Judicial District, the Seneca Nation of Indians and the Peacemaker Court judges. This collaboration provides a forum to discuss practices and procedures and provides a welcome point of contact for issues including the implementation of the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA), and the development of a tribal Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) program. Both OCFS and the Seneca Nation of Indians attended the Federal-State-Tribal Court Forum held on October 27, 2016. This spring a Federal-State-Tribal Court Forum was held on April 27, 2017.

### The Child Protective Services (CPS)/Domestic Violence (DV) Collaboration

Projects began in 1997. The projects outstation a DV advocate from a local non-for-profit DV agency in the local CPS office to participate in joint home visits, joint safety planning and interventions, consultation, case conferencing, cross-training and protocol, and team development.

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

### New York State Department of Education and the Courts

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

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

OCFS has continued to receive child specific education data for children in foster care. Since 2015, HESC and OCFS entered a data sharing agreement to identify youth in care eligible for maximized income-based Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) grant awards. For academic year 2016-17, this collaboration allowed for 1,336 students to receive an average award increase of \$2,140. Statewide, this resulted in an additional \$2,923,240 in TAP awards provided to current and former foster care youth.

In 2017, HESC and OCFS will continue to collaborate to improve college readiness and improve graduation rates by:

- continuing cooperative efforts to create brochures for youth, parents, caregivers, and counties about available higher education resources;
- creating multi-media information for youth, local departments of social services and voluntary agencies about ways to improve college outcomes;
- using education data and partnerships with local education agencies, targeting youth in 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grades to instill college aspiration and preparedness;
- development continues on “Campus Angels” through the SUNY and CUNY system to provide statewide mentors who meet with youth at least twice a month during their freshman year to improve freshman year completion rates by youth in care;
- planning a campaign for summer/fall 2017 to support “College Application Week” in the fall for youth across the NYS; and

- planning a campaign for spring 2018 to celebrate and inspire high school seniors in care who have made the decision to attend college in the fall.

### Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

In December 2015, ESSA was signed into law, amending the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). For the first time in federal education law, ESSA requires state and local education agencies (SEAs and LEAs) to collaborate with child welfare agencies to promote school stability and educational success for youth in care. ESSA recognizes that youth in foster care experience poorer educational outcomes, as compared to their peers not in foster care, including: higher rates of school suspensions and expulsions; lower standardized test scores in reading and math; high levels of grade retention and drop-outs; and far lower high school and college graduation rates.

**School Transportation** – Pursuant to ESSA, LEAs and child welfare agencies must collaborate on how transportation to maintain children in foster care in their school of origin, when in their best interest will be provided, arranged, and funded. LEAs must include in their local plans, assurances that they have developed and implemented clear written procedures around transportation to ensure school stability. The local school must cover the standard cost of transporting children in foster care to their school of origin for the duration of their time in foster care and until the end of the school year. States are urged to include transportation for extracurricular academic activities that extend beyond the normal school day and for summer programs.

**Funding “Additional Costs” of Transportation:** If maintaining children in their school of origin results in “additional costs,” agencies must determine how those costs will be funded. “Additional costs” have been defined, in federal guidance, as “the difference between what an LEA otherwise would spend to transport a student to his or her assigned school and the cost of transporting a child in foster care to his or her school of origin.” Federal guidance encourages agencies to collaborate and to use, and maximize, all available funding sources, including federal funds, to pay additional transportation costs.

The federal government encourages states to develop their own models to address “additional costs,” which can include the following:

- Certain federal funds that may be available, including Title IV-E foster care maintenance dollars for those children who otherwise meet the specific eligibility requirements set forth in section 472 of the Social Security Act. Additionally, education agencies are encouraged to use ESEA Title 1 dollars to support transportation costs
- State or regional contingency funds
- Standard division of cost responsibility based on common factors such as distance or time in care

- Sharing the additional costs between both agencies, using all available funding sources

**Transportation Dispute Resolution** - States are encouraged to develop joint dispute resolution procedures for resolving local transportation disputes to ensure consistency across districts.

**Other protections for students in foster care contained in ESSA include:**

**School Stability** – Children in foster care often experience a high number of school moves when they first enter foster care, when they move during their time in care or when they exit care. Under ESSA, SEAs and LEAs, in collaboration with child welfare agencies, must take steps to reduce the number of school moves a youth encounters and work toward promoting school stability. This includes allowing children to enroll or remain in their school of origin, unless a determination has been made that it is not in the child’s best interest.

**Immediate enrollment in school and transfer of records** – When a school change is warranted, schools must allow children in foster care to enroll immediately in a new school even if the child cannot produce school records typically required for enrollment.

**Points of Contact** – LEAs must identify local points of contact when their collaborating child welfare agencies have designated similar points of contact. Each system should share the names of the points of contact. The points of contact will help to streamline communication between the systems and help students connect and enroll in their school.

**Data collection and reporting** - For the first time SEAs will be required to report annually on student achievement and graduation rates for youth in foster care.

### **SED and OCFS: Implementation of ESSA in New York State**

SED and OCFS have worked collaboratively to implement ESSA:

- In December 2016, SED and OCFS issued a joint statewide guidance document to education and child welfare detailing the provisions of ESSA.
- Pursuant to ESSA, both SED and OCFS identified Points of Contact for both systems. The names of the points of contact were shared statewide and LEA and county child welfare agencies point of contacts are maintained electronically by both systems.
- In February 2017, SED and OCFS began developing more detailed joint guidance and various ESSA school stability requirements for children in foster care, including the roles and responsibilities for points of contact and guidance on making the best interests determination regarding the appropriate school placement of children in foster care. Also being developed is guidance detailing how to address transportation costs to avoid confusion and delay and resolve any interagency disagreements regarding additional transportation costs. The guidance is anticipated to include a statewide model transportation plan and transportation arrangement template that

LEAs and child welfare agencies can use to document any agreements to transport a child in foster care to the school or origin.

- In March 2017, SED and OCFS data teams met to enhance existing data sharing efforts.
- In an effort to promote collaboration among points of contact SED and OCFS are developing plans to host a joint statewide webinar and cross-system training.
- In or around the Fall 2017, SED and OCFS anticipates issuing a joint data report detailing the NYS Blueprint to improve educational outcomes for children in care.

### NYS Office of Probation and Correctional Alternatives

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

### Racial Equity and Cultural Competence Initiative

Since 2007, OCFS has implemented the Disproportionate Minority Representation (DMR) Initiative, renamed the Racial Equity and Cultural Competence (RECC) Initiative in 2009. The RECC work was developed to examine the issue of overrepresentation of Black and Latino children and their families in the state's child welfare and juvenile justice systems. In 2009, OCFS began to include Native American children and families in our data collections and in the work.

In 2009, the agency convened the first agency wide DMR workgroup, with the purpose of examining the over and under representation of children in the various divisions of OCFS, and how this impacts the provision of services that can prevent out-of-home placements, limit access to services, and present other barriers to achieving successful outcomes in child care, adult services and services to the blind. Each OCFS division has staff representatives on this committee. OCFS is also engaging local partners in this effort.

The OCFS Division of Child Welfare and Community Services (CWCS) now includes the Bureau of Strategic Partnerships and Collaboration. The Race Equity and Cultural Competence work is managed and led by the Bureau. The Division continues to work with regional office staff to begin to develop their capacity to provide leadership and technical support and assistance to the counties. Technical assistance takes the form of coaching and mentoring regional office staff in their efforts to work with LDSS and other stakeholders to address the high and sometimes extreme rates of foster care placement for Black, Native and Latino children. Technical assistance can also include providing access to input and support from experts including but not limited to

Casey Family Programs and the Center for the Study of Social Policy and other local or national resources.

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

During 2015, several counties continued to work with OCFS on local efforts to reduce the extreme and high rates of disparities for black children in out-of-home placements. OCFS continued to work with Family Court judges in Westchester County and the Bronx, and supported these efforts by providing presentations on data, promising practices, and access to national experts. OCFS' work with the judges has included sharing data on race and ethnicity, attending and participating in meetings that they convene locally, and making presentations to their staff on promising strategies and approaches. There has been some progress in two counties that have experienced lower rates of foster care placements for Black children, and a historical review of the work done in those two counties will take place in 2017.

OCFS continued to work with the Social Work Education Consortium, to develop a focus on race equity, and anti-oppressive and anti-racists practices in the curricula of the schools of social welfare and social work to encourage their consideration to add an emphasis on race equity, and racial and ethnic disparities as part of the curriculum. The University of Albany School of Social Welfare completed a review of the race equity work in Onondaga and Nassau counties and developed a paper on what may be promising strategies for other counties to consider. The paper, *Race Equity: Nassau and Onondaga County Report, December 2016* will be presented via a webinar that will be presented in the spring of 2017.

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

A white paper was developed by OCFS staff from the Bureau of Strategic Partnerships and Collaborations. A Racial Impact process and tools were pilot tested during the period and a presentation to the RECC steering committee is planned for June 2017. The Racial Impact process and tools were developed so that OCFS leadership, through the Race Equity Cultural Competence Steering Committee, would have an option to consider using Racial Impact

Statement (RIS) as part of the policy development process and when considering regulations and legislative proposals that may come from external sources, such as the legislature. Racial or Equity Impact statements are being used in several states across the nation to avoid the unintended disparities that can result from policy development that has adverse impact on certain communities and neighborhoods.

The OCFS Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment received cultural competence training for all staff during 2016. The training has been supplemented by a “Train-the-Trainer” process and curriculum.

From September through December of 2016, Mr. Waheed and the director of Strategic Partnerships for OCFS trained a cohort of staff to become presenters and facilitators of the race equity work. Another cohort of approximately 10 staff are scheduled to be trained in 2017.

### Fatherhood Initiatives

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

OCFS, OTDA and other stakeholders continue to sponsor and provide leadership for the of the “Dads Take Your Child to School Day” program. OCFS continued efforts to expand the program, which is now active throughout the state, and included more than 800 schools and child care centers.

A Fatherhood Summit was held in November 2016, in NYC with support from Casey Family Programs and included participation from local, voluntary agencies, and community based programs.

### Advantage After School Program

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

As of September 2016, OCFS has contracts with 137 incorporated not-for-profit community-based organizations and faith-based organizations to provide quality afterschool programs to school-

age children at 176 locations across NYS. The AASP serves approximately 17,000 children and youth as part of the \$22,255,300 appropriated for the AASP for SFY 2016-17.

The AASP partnered with the New York State Association of Youth Bureaus on October 25 and 26, 2016, for the 46<sup>th</sup> Annual Youth Development Training Conference, in Lake Placid, New York. The keynote address, "Soaring to New Heights," was delivered by Regina M. Clark, CSP, to motivate one to get moving towards one's personal and professional goals and create a fabulous future for tomorrow's youth. Ms. Clark is a highly respected International speaker, author and the founder of Creative Performance Solutions, LLC, a leadership development consulting firm in Goshen, NY.

The AASP contract managers delivered a very well attended workshop on 'Achieving a Successful Advantage After School Program.' OCFS had 59 AASP contractors represented with approximately 95 people in attendance at the conference. All 17 workshops offered were eligible for School Age Child Care (SACC) training credits.

The main audience for this conference was:

- County and Local Youth Bureaus, whose main function is administering and monitoring youth development funding to youth serving programs
- Advantage After School programs, which are directly providing services to school age children in the after school hours

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

# Update on Assessment of Performance

## **Monitoring Outcome Performance**

The outcome data cited within this APSR is based on the performance indicators developed by OCFS in light of the fact that the federal Children's Bureau has not promulgated any new data since November 2015.

Since the release of the outcome data, OCFS has taken several steps to better understand the state's performance on the new CFSR metrics and to promote a data informed CQI process. Prior to the release of the new CFSR metrics in November 2015, OCFS produced and disseminated county-level data packets during 2016. Packets summarized both statewide and local performance on a wide array of permanency- and safety-related measures, providing both recent snapshots and multi-year trends. Counties were encouraged to use these packets to monitor performance and formulate plans for system improvement.

With the adoption of new federal metrics, NYS has had to revisit and update the data packets. As a state-supervised, county-administered child welfare system, disseminating and examining how performance varied across localities on the new measures was a crucial first step. Using a modified version of the CFSR syntax provided by CB, OCFS has calculated local county performance on each of the CFSR metrics for which NYS was found to be performing below the national standard. To date, three waves of analysis (FFY 2013- FFY 2015) have been shared with state and local leadership through the creation and distribution of a CFSR performance packet. Included within each packet are charts displaying state and county level numerators, denominators and performance level for each metric, as well a series of "bright spots graphs." These graphs rank counties by performance, allowing readers to quickly identify how a particular county compares to its peers on a given indicator. Each county's packet also includes a series of tables displaying the county's performance on a given indicator broken out by demographics, including child age at admission, current age, sex, race/ethnicity, and other relevant variables (e.g., allegation type, perpetrator). Drill-down files, including the identifiable, child level data behind each outcome have also been shared with responsible counties, to provide local leadership with the tools needed to conduct a more qualitative review of the factors associated with their performance. These identifiable data are also available for counties to download from the OCFS Data Warehouse.

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

## **Assessment of Child and Family Outcomes and Performance on National Standards**

## **A. Safety**

### **Safety Outcomes 1 and 2**

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

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

### **State Response:**

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

- Recurrence of Maltreatment
- Maltreatment in Foster Care

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

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

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

The findings from the CFSR on-site review conducted the June 12, 2016, indicated that Safety Outcome 1 was in substantial conformity, with Item 1 a strength in 100 percent of the cases reviewed. Safety Outcome 2 was not in substantial conformity, with Item 2 rated a strength in 96 percent of the cases, and Item 3 an area needing improvement, with 73 percent of the cases rated a strength.

## **B. Permanency**

### **Permanency Outcomes 1 and 2**

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

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

### **State Response:**

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

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

The findings from the CFSR on-site review conducted the week of June 12, 2016, indicated that Permanency Outcome 1 was not in substantial conformity. Items 4, 5, and 6 were all rated an area needing improvement. Item 4 was rated a strength in 75 percent of the cases, Item 5 was rated a strength in 28 percent of the cases, and Item 6 was rated a strength in 33 percent of the cases.

Permanency Outcome 2 was determined to be not be in substantial conformity. Items 7, 8, 9, 10, and 12 were all rated areas needing improvement. Item 7 was a strength in 83 percent of the cases, Item 8 was a strength in 73 percent of the case, Item 9 was a strength in 59 percent of the cases, Item 10 was a strength in 50 percent of the cases, and Item 11 was a strength in 62 percent of the cases.

## **C. Well-Being**

### **Well-Being Outcomes 1, 2, and 3**

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

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

### **State Response:**

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

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

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

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

The findings from the CFSR on-site review indicated that Well-being Outcome 1 was not in substantial conformity. Items 12, 13, 14, and 15 were all rated an area needing improvement. Item 12 was a strength 39 percent of the cases, Item 13 was a strength in 63 percent of the cases, Item 14 was a strength in 77 percent of the cases, and Item 15 was rated a strength in 56 percent of the cases.

Well-being Outcome 2 was determined not be in substantial conformity. Item 16 was rated as area needing improvement. Item 16 rated as a strength in 87 percent of the cases.

Well-being Outcome 3 was determined not be in substantial conformity. Items 17 and 18 were both rated as an area needing improvement. Item 17 was a strength in 79 percent of the cases, and Item 18 was a strength in 68 percent of the cases.

### **Assessment of Systemic Factors**

#### **A. Statewide Information System**

## **Item 19: Statewide Information System**

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

### **State Response:**

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

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

Findings from the CFSR rated Item 19 as an area needing improvement.

## **B. Case Review System**

### **Item 20: Written Case Plan**

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

### **State Response:**

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

Findings from the CFSR rated Item 20 as an area needing improvement. ACF noted that through the stakeholder interviews, it was noted that the written case plans were not always developed jointly with parents, and that some plans are prescribed for the parents.

### **Item 21: Periodic Reviews**

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

**State Response:**

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

Findings from the CFSR rated Item 21 as a strength. ACF noted Information collected during the interviews with stakeholders showed that periodic reviews for children in foster care occur no less frequently than once every six months. Stakeholders reported that courts often hear cases more frequently than every six months. Many stakeholders considered these court hearings as a mechanism for ensuring a periodic review, rather than the Service Plan Review.

**Item 22: Permanency Hearings**

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

**State Response:**

NYS assesses Item 22 as a strength as OCFS has a well-functioning system statewide to ensure for each child a permanency hearing occurs no later than 12 months from the date the child entered foster care and no less frequently than every 12 months thereafter. The data reveals that in 93 percent of the cases reviewed in 2015, a Permanency Hearing was held within the prescribed guidelines. While we are not able to get 2015 data from the Office of Court Administration (OCA) (data cannot be pulled until sufficient time has passed in 2016), 2014 data indicates that in 85 percent of the cases, an initial permanency hearing was held and completed within nine months from the date of entry into out-of-home care on behalf of children who remained in out-of-home care for at least nine months. OCFS and OCA work closely on this measure, with each agency sharing data in order to promote timely permanency.

Findings from the CFSR rated Item 22 as a strength.

**Item 23: Termination of Parental Rights**

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

**State Response:**

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

Findings from the CFSR rated Item 23 as an area needing improvement.

**Item 24: Notice of Hearings and Reviews to Caregivers**

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

**State Response:**

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

Findings from the CFSR rated Item 24 as an area needing improvement.

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

**C. Quality Assurance System**

**Item 25: Quality Assurance System**

How well is the quality assurance system functioning statewide to ensure that it is (1) operating in the jurisdictions where the services included in the CFSP are provided, (2) has standards to evaluate the quality of services (including standards to ensure that children in foster care are provided quality services that protect their health and safety), (3) identifies strengths and needs

of the service delivery system, (4) provides relevant reports, and (5) evaluates implemented program improvement measures?

**State Response:**

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

Findings from the CFSR rated Item 25 as an area needing improvement.

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

**D. Staff and Provider Training**

**Item 26: Initial Staff Training**

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

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

**State Response:**

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

Findings from the CFSR rated Item 26 as an area needing improvement.

**Item 27: Ongoing Staff Training**

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

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

**State Response:**

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

Findings from the CFSR rated Item 27 as an area needing improvement.

**Item 28: Foster and Adoptive Parent Training**

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

**State Response:**

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

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

Findings from the CFSR rated Item 28 as an area needing improvement. ACF noted that stakeholders reported varied experiences with effectiveness of ongoing training and that access to training, ongoing training requirements, and monitoring of training varies across the state. The state does not monitor compliance with training outside of the agency reviews that occur every three years; and there is no process in place to ensure that local offices are complying with training requirements.

## **E. Service Array and Resource Development**

### **Item 29: Array of Services**

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

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

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

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

#### **State Response:**

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

Findings from the CFSR rated Item 29 as an area needing improvement.

### **Item 30: Individualizing Services**

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

#### **State Response:**

NYS assesses Item 30 as an area needing improvement. While NYS has an array of services that are provided by LDSSs and the voluntary agencies with which they contract, services cannot always be made available or tailored to meet the unique needs of the children and families served by LDSSs and voluntary agencies. This is especially true for children who have dual diagnoses (such as mental health and substance abuse). Feedback from the attorneys for the parents has

indicated that parents are sometimes offered formulaic services that do not take into account the complex needs of the family. The array of services is seen by some as a “boiler-plate set of services” that are often over-broad and/ or vague. The feedback was obtained by Angela Burton, who conducted a survey of attorneys of parents across NYS. The exact number of attorneys surveyed is unknown.

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

Findings from the CFSR rated Item 30 as an area needing improvement.

## **F. Agency Responsiveness to the Community**

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

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

#### **State Response:**

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

Findings from the CFSR rated Item 31 as a strength.

### **Item 32: Coordination of CFSP Services with Other Federal Programs**

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

#### **State Response:**

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

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

Findings from the CFSR rated Item 32 as a strength.

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

### **Item 33: Standards Applied Equally**

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

#### **State Response:**

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

Findings from the CFSR rated Item 33 as an area needing improvement.

### **Item 34: Requirements for Criminal Background Checks**

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

#### **State Response:**

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

Findings from the CFSR rated Item 34 as an area needing improvement. ACF noted that even though voluntary agencies and LDSS are meeting the requirements for criminal background checks, the state does not monitor these processes to ensure compliance. The state forwards information on arrests for criminal activity on active foster homes to local offices but does not have a case planning process in place to ensure appropriate follow-up on these concerns to address the safety of foster care and adoptive placements for children.

### **Item 35: Diligent Recruitment of Foster and Adoptive Homes**

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

#### **State Response:**

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

Findings from the CFSR rated Item 35 as an area needing improvement.

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

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

#### **State Response:**

NYS regulations address Title IV-E requirements and state that authorized agencies may not delay or deny the placement of a child freed for adoption with an approved adoptive parent on the basis that the approved adoptive parent resides in a state or county different from the agency with jurisdiction of the child. NYS regulations also address the importance of concurrent planning in order to permit efforts to place a child for adoption or with a legal guardian concurrently with efforts to make it possible for a child to safely return home. The Safe and Timely Interstate Placement of Foster Children Act of 2006 resulted in regulations that require timely home studies for cross-state placements. Additionally, OCFS required the same timeframe for cross-county home studies, as was required by the federal law for cross-state home studies. In April of 2011, recognizing the critical role relatives play as resources for children, OCFS implemented the Kinship Guardianship Assistance Program (KinGAP) to enable a foster child to achieve a permanent placement with a relative who has been the child's foster parent for at least six months. OCFS regulations require authorized agencies to develop a comprehensive recruitment

strategy/plan for establishing a pool of waiting foster and adoptive parents that reflect the racial and ethnic diversity of the children in foster care. OCFS Regional Office staff monitor agency progress in implementation of the Comprehensive Recruitment Plans including reviewing a sample of cases of children waiting for adoption in each agency. The OCFS Child Welfare Practice Model identifies multiple strategies for agencies to use in order to facilitate safe out-of-home placements and rapid permanency including, but not limited to, Permanency Roundtables, Family Finding, Heart Galleries, KinGAP, kinship support, and post adoption education.

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

Findings from the CFSR rated Item 36 as an area needing improvement.

In addition to the findings of the onsite CFSR review, OCFS has utilized the following data in assessing our performance on the national standards. Individual county performance has been shared with each LDSS.

Indicator	National Standard	NYS Performance
Permanency Indicator 1-Permanency in 12 months for children entering foster care between 4/1/13 and 3/31/14	40.5%	34.2%
Permanency Indicator 2 – Permanency in 12 months for children in care 12-23 months as of 4/1/15	43.6%	28.5%
Permanency Indicator 3 – Permanency in 12 months for children in care 24 months or more as of 4/1/15	30.3%	29.2%
Permanency Indicator 4 – Re-entry to foster care in 12 months among P1 discharges	8.3%	10.7%
Stability of Placement	4.12	2.73
Safety Indicator 1 – Indicated reports involving children in foster care per 100,000 days of foster care in FFY 15	8.5	16.3
Safety Indicator 2 – Children with at least one indicated report in FFY 2014 with another indicated report within 12 months of the initial report	9.1%	18.0%

OCFS submitted its Program Improvement Plan to ACF on March 27, 2017 detailing the goals, strategies and activities that will be implemented over the next two years to address the state's performance on Safety Outcome 2, Permanency Outcome 1 and Well-being Outcome 1 and the systemic factors.

### **Performance Improvement Plan**

New York State submitted its Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) as part of the CFSR on March 27, 2017.

## Plan for Improvement

## **16. Plan for Improvement**

In 2015, OCFS began implementing the Child Welfare Practice Model (Practice Model), which provides the framework for a consistent and recognizable approach to child welfare practice across NYS, and addresses strategies to improve the child welfare outcomes. (Vision and outcome driven, OCFS is using this framework as the cornerstone of our child welfare work, and is using it to align all of our initiatives to drive performance.

Another key driver of NYS's child welfare agenda are the six safety and permanency indicators developed by the federal Children's Bureau as part of the CFSR process. Beginning with the new five-year county plan process, OCFS intends to collaborate with LDSSs to continue to understand key factors that contribute to our performance, develop and implement strategies to positively impact the outcomes, and monitor their effectiveness. Throughout this continuous quality improvement process, the LDSS will work through a diagnostic process that clarifies and improves its understanding of the underlying factors that contribute to both high and low performance.

Each LDSS has been asked to establish a County Planning Team. Throughout 2017, that team will systematically work through a process of: diagnosing the LDSS' performance, analyzing root causes, recommending solutions intended to improve outcomes, and developing methods to monitor the implementation of those strategies and its impact. By the end of 2017, LDSS will submit its strategies for improving performance over the five-year period of 2018 through 2022.

### **Data**

In September 2016, OCFS distributed its third CFSR Performance packet to LDSS administrators. Included in each packet were charts displaying state and county level numerators, denominators and performance level for each metric across all three waves of available CFSR data (FFY 2013-2015), as well a series of "bright spots graphs" for the FFY15 outcomes. These graphs rank counties by performance, allowing readers to quickly identify how a particular county compares to its peers on a given indicator. Also included in each LDSS' packet was a series of tables displaying the LDSS' FFY15 performance on a given indicator broken out by demographics, including child age at admission, current age, sex, race/ethnicity, and other relevant variables where appropriate (e.g., allegation type, perpetrator). Drill-down files, including the identifiable, child-level data behind each outcome have also been made available to responsible LDSSs, to provide local leadership with the tools needed to conduct a more qualitative review of the factors associated with their performance. A fourth packet, detailing CFSR performance in FFY16 is scheduled to be produced and shared in June 2017.

### **Training**

OCFS is committed to transforming the current training system to align with the Practice Model and its core competencies. In 2015, OCFS convened a Training Steering Committee including

representatives from small, medium and large counties to assist in designing a competency based training model for all caseworkers and supervisors. This approach is designed to be more behaviorally based and better able to support the growing number of staff needing training, as well as respond to emerging needs.

During 2016, a team of trainers worked with OCFS to develop the first phase of this model; "Foundations." A pilot of this program is slated to begin at the end of July 2017. OCFS will also be focused on strengthening supervisory practice in the upcoming Program Improvement Plan.

### **Planned activities for 2017-2018**

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

- Implementing the revised county plan process
- Piloting the competency-based foundational training to all caseworkers
- Disseminating county-specific data packets for safety and permanency measures
- Strengthening supervisory practice

## Update on Service Description

#### **4. Update on Service Description**

##### **Child and Family Services Continuum**

OCFS and its Local Departments of Social Services (LDSSs) and community-based partners provide an array of services designed to achieve the prevention, safety, permanency and well-being outcomes outlined in the Practice Model. Services are available beginning prenatally and through adulthood, and range from primary prevention to permanency and adult services. Listed below is the continuum of services available beginning prenatally and through adulthood, ranging from primary prevention to permanency. Included is a brief description of some of the significant services on the continuum. Additional information is available on the OCFS website:

##### **Services available in all local departments of social services**

- Prevention Services – mandated and optional preventive services offered directly by the LDSS and/or through a purchase of service agreement are designed to prevent child abuse and maltreatment and prevent out-of-home placements. Supportive and rehabilitative services for children and adults include, but are not limited to, day care, homemaker services, parenting training, transportation, clinical services, and respite and 24-hour access to emergency services.
- Protective Services for Children – investigation, assessment, counseling, therapy, training for adults, emergency shelter, rehabilitation services, case management and other support services as needed for children named in a report of child abuse and/or maltreatment.
- Foster Care – assessing needs and providing placement and services to children under 18 in a foster home or group care facility; medical services, alternatives to placement, counseling, independent living services, therapeutic services, after-care services and support for youth up to age 21.
- Bridges to Health Home and Community-Based Waiver program – provides expanded services to children with serious emotional disturbance, development disability and/or who are medically fragile.
- Adoption Support Services – assistance in securing an adoptive home and the provision of legal services, recruitment and training of adoptive parents, pre-placement planning, counseling, information and referral, respite and crisis services.
- Post-Adoption Services – provided directly by LDSS and through purchase of service agreements, these services address the unique needs of adoptive families and include respite, parenting support, support groups and counseling.

- Independent Living Services – the Independent Living Program for current and former foster care youth is offered directly by the LDSS or through a purchase of service agreement. The program provides youth in facilities with assessment services, counseling, educational, vocational and life skills services and other supports as needed.
- Aftercare Services - assisting children, youth and families to reduce the likelihood of those children or youth returning to either child welfare or juvenile justice placement. Aftercare consists of an array of supervision and support services.
- Youth Development - programs are designed to prevent juvenile delinquency and promote positive youth development through programs which provide general development, recreational and youth services for the young people under 21 years of age.

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

- Family Resource Centers (child abuse prevention programs) – Through NYS Children and Family Trust Fund dollars and the federal Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention grant, OCFS supports seven Family Resource Center (FRC) programs, with a total of 16 FRC sites across the state. FRCs offer evidence-based parenting training and other formal and informal supports to families. FRCs focus on families with children under five years of age aimed at improving parent resiliency, parenting skills, social connections and child development.
- Healthy Families NY Home Visiting Program (HFNY) – HFNY is an evidence-based prevention program which offers systematic assessments for pregnant women and new parents. Trained paraprofessionals from the community served provide home visiting services weekly for the first six months and less frequently until the child enters kindergarten or Head Start. Services include parenting, family support and linkages to community supports. HFNY programs are in place in 35 counties, including recent expansions into Orleans, Yates, Jefferson and Franklin counties.
- Domestic Violence Services – emergency shelter and supportive services, including shelter, hotline assistance, information and referral, advocacy, counseling, community education/outreach, children’s services, support groups, medical support, transportation, and translation. OCFS licenses 158 domestic violence residential programs and 81 approved non-residential domestic violence programs. Federal Family Violence Prevention and Services Act funds support 73 residential and non-residential programs to support evidence informed program models as well as general operating expenses, health and safety improvements, and/or program enhancements. Additionally, TANF funds are

used to support the provision on non-residential domestic violence services provided through LDSSs.

- Kinship Services – OCFS directly funds 22 Kinship support programs which address the multiple needs of Kinship caregivers, including financial stability, respite, parenting education, family support, and legal information and support groups.
- Post-Adoption Services - OCFS administers TANF funds directly to seven community-based programs to provide services to pre- and post-adoptive families to support adoption finalizations and reduce disruptions. By early 2017 OCFS will be funding 15 Regional Permanency Resource Centers (PRCs) that will provide a myriad of services to post-adoption and post- guardianship families. The services from the PRCs will be available to all families who have adopted a child both from child welfare and privately.
- Parenting Programs - In partnership with New York State Parenting Education Partnership (NYSPEP), the OCFS Children and Family Trust Fund will continue efforts to improve the quality and access to parenting education and to promote skill development for parenting educators. Dissemination of resources and information on the impact of evidence-based and evidence-informed parenting programs to LDSSs, community-based programs, and other key partners remains a priority. After many years of planning and development involving NYSPEP and the Council on Children and Families, a **New Parent Kit** was sent to several pilot sites for distribution in 2017. Designed to meet the specific need of parents with newborns to have access to reliable information on parenting, child development and family support resources, the kit offers a cohesive and consistent package of information that will support New York families' ability to provide their new baby with a nurturing environment that promotes their child's healthy development. NYSPEP's kit provides parents with an easy to use guide called *Starting Life Together*, a baby board book and a copy of *What to Do When Your Child Gets Sick*. These materials streamline key information parents need to support their child's physical, social, and emotional health at a critical time.
- Substance/ Alcohol Abuse and Mental Health Services – Identification of families in need of services is the focus of the CPS/Behavior Health project. A total of 14 counties were funded in 2015 for two years to employ or contract with a Behavioral Health Specialist to help screen parents and children to determine if further assessment is needed. Counties with unspent funds will be allowed to carry them forward, but all funds must be expended by October 31, 2017. Additionally, OCFS is collaborating with OCA and OASAS on a grant from OJJDP called Statewide System Reform Project. Eight counties have been selected to pilot the use of the UNCOPE+ screening tool, that will be used to screen families who will benefit from a Family Treatment Court or an Infusion Court along with evidence-based services related to their addiction. Lessons learned from the eight pilot counties will be used to inform future infusion of the model statewide.

- Multidisciplinary Investigation Team (MDT), Child Advocacy Center (CAC) and Child Fatality Review Team (CFRT) – Local community coordination of the investigation, prosecution and treatment of child abuse and neglect cases is supported through the federal Children’s Justice Act Program Grant. The goal of these funded programs is to reduce additional trauma to child victims after they disclose, improve handling of cases for all agencies involved, and improve the skills and knowledge of all professionals involved.
- Public Private Partnerships - OCFS funds collaboration projects in nine counties and NYC. The projects are required to include local partnerships with private, non-profit entities working alongside local county entities to achieve mutually identified objectives. Some examples of funded projects include: supporting children who have been terminated from or are at risk of being terminated from child care programs due to challenging behaviors; working with disconnected youth at risk of out-of-home placement; providing funding for at-risk families with children ages 0-3 to provided home visits by teachers and family development specialists; providing trauma-informed training to entire county-based, cross-system team; and piloting the use of evidence-based intervention with families with children ages 0-3.
- Safe Harbour: NY – OCFS funds anti-trafficking collaboratives in 28 counties and NYC. These collaboratives provided technical assistance from OCFS to build and sustain a child-welfare centered, county-wide response to youth who have been victims of or who are at risk of being Commercially Sexually Exploited (CSEC) or trafficked for either labor or sex. These collaboratives, headed by the LDSS or the youth bureau, include local, state, federal, and tribal law enforcement (where appropriate), probation, runaway and homeless youth providers, youth bureaus, mental health, health, immigrant service providers, service providers for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community, among others. Safe Harbour supports counties in building a system to raise awareness, identify youth, and provide services and responses to youth and their non-offending families.

### *Services Coordination*

LDSSs are required to submit annual Child Welfare plans which address Child Protective Services, Preventive Services, Foster Care Services and Adoption Services and in doing so, must consult with other government agencies concerned with the welfare of children residing in the LDSSs, authorized agencies and other concerned individuals and organizations. Examples of these agencies/organizations include: Youth Bureaus, Departments of Probation, Family Court judges, mental health agencies and legal and law enforcement agencies.

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

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

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

### **Advocacy Groups**

The Deputy Commissioner for CWCS has also met with several advocacy agencies during 2016 such as associations representing foster care agencies, as well as advocates representing post adoption services, kinship services and domestic violence programs. These groups meet regularly with OCFS leadership to present their ideas related to funding, services and policy development.

### **Citizen Review Panel**

Citizen Review Panel Chairs met with the OCFS CWCS Deputy Commissioner on August 25, 2016, to discuss the annual New York State Citizen Review Panels for Child Protective Services 2015 Annual Report and Recommendations. Many of the recommendations align with the work of OCFS in implementing, and many of the recommendations are aimed at funding and legislation that is not within OCFS's authority to authorize. At this meeting, communication strategies to more fully support joint priorities were discussed.

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

### **Courts and Judicial Staff**

Additionally, OCFS meets frequently with the New York State Office of Court Administration (OCA) on three levels. There is the OCFS/OCA Leadership Team, which consists of high-level staff from OCA and OCFS; Specifically, from OCA: deputy chief administrative judge for outside of New York City, the administrative judge for New York City, and the supervising judge of Family Court in the ninth district, the coordinator for the Court Improvement Project; and from OCFS: the acting commissioner, the deputy commissioner for CWCS, the associate commissioner for the Office of Prevention, Permanency and Program Support, the associate commissioner for the Office of Youth and Young Adult Services, the associate commissioner for the Office of Youth

and Young Adult Services, the associate counsel for the Office of Legislation and Special Projects, the assistant commissioner for the Office of Regional Operations and Practice Improvement, and the deputy counsel for the Division of Legal Affairs. This group oversees the implementation of New York State's collaborative efforts to improve safety, permanency, and well-being at the state level and at the local level through the work of county multidisciplinary collaboration teams. The OCFS/OCA Leadership Team contributes to improved child safety, permanency and well-being by identifying systemic obstacles to improving child welfare outcomes and engaging in joint planning to address these concerns.

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

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

The OCFS/OCA Leadership Team met on July 25, 2016, to discuss the following issues: preliminary CFSR finding, LEAN, Permanency Hearing Reports, guardianship proceedings, the Permanency Summit, Wendy's Wonderful Kids, Every Student Succeeds Act, and OCFS/OCA fall conference. The Statewide Multidisciplinary Child Welfare Group met on three occasions, April 18, September 12, and December 12 of 2016. The topics included upcoming trainings, human sex trafficking, promoting well-being through the use of appropriate evidence-based services, alternatives to APPLA, adopting older youth, and youth participation in court. The discussions from these meetings are used to help frame work that is needed by both the child welfare and court systems.

Additionally, OCFS works collaboratively with the Unified Court System and the Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) to address systemic reform for status offenders and juvenile delinquency matters. The collaboration, known as the NYS Partnership for Youth Justice (Partnership), originated as the implementation of state scale of the Annie E. Casey Juvenile

Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI). The Partnership includes state stakeholders and local districts and is inclusive of probation, LDSS, family courts, police and community groups. The Partnership met on March 1, May 10, August 9, and December 13. Issues related to reducing the placement of youth who violate of probation, reducing the use of detention and placement for status offenders and increasing the use of alternatives to placement were discussed. The Partnership held a state-wide conference on September 21-22 in Syracuse, to identify strategies to reduce racial and ethnic and gender disparities in the youth justice system in NYS.

### **Foster/Adoptive Parents**

OCFS funded Fostering Futures NY (FFNY) a nonprofit program in New York's Capital Region that recruits and trains teams of volunteers from the community to provide natural and practical support to foster families. FFNY teams provide stability, enriching experiences, and vital community connections for foster families and children. OCFS will look to work with this program on the feasibility of expanding it throughout New York State.

### **Local District Staff**

At each session of the New York Public Welfare Association conference (held twice a year), acting Commissioner Sheila J. Poole met with local commissioners to discuss current issues facing LDSSs, and to raise topics of concern on the state level. These sessions were held on January 26, 2016, and July 18, 2016. The exchange of concerns and issues is used in developing trainings, policies, and other supports to the LSSs.

In 2016, Commissioner Poole held a two and a half-day (May 3-5, 2016) forum with LDSS commissioners whereby the following topics were discussed: Reasonable and Prudent Parenting standards; an overview of the many child welfare priorities and activities, and facilitated a panel of LDSSs with Public Catalyst to demonstrate the opportunities to use child welfare data and Lean processes to improve time to permanency for children in foster care.

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

- LDSS/voluntary agency data is reviewed with a focus on several key areas:
  - Making sure the data is accurate;
  - The timely entry of data; and
  - Analysis of data in determining strategies
  
- The implementation of key strategies on which workers have been trained

- Progress made on any corrective actions that resulted from case record reviews and complaints
- Review of current policy directives

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

### **OCFS Advisory Board**

The creation of OCFS was accompanied by a statutorily-created Child and Family Services Advisory Board comprised of 24 members. The board's purpose is to help OCFS construct a better system of services for New York's children, families and individuals. The Governor appoints 12 members, and the State Senate and Assembly each appoint six members. Its duties broadly include consideration of matters related to the improvement of children and family services, review of rules and regulations of OCFS prior to their adoption, advocacy for OCFS programs, and liaisons with local stakeholders.

In 2016, the Advisory Board was briefed on the CFSR held in June, and updated on the implementation of the Health Homes as part of the Children's Medicaid Redesign process, and the systems responses by OCFS regarding several high profile cases.

### **Sister State Agencies**

Since December 2007, a meeting of state agency commissioners (or their designees) serving children is held to discuss the need for cross system collaborations for children with service needs that involve more than one service delivery system. Commissioners/designees from the following agencies attended: OCFS, the Office of Mental Health (OMH), the Office for Persons with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD), the Office of Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS), the Department of Health (DOH), the Division of Probation and Correctional Alternatives (DPCA), the State Education Department (SED).

NYS DOH and OCFS have continued to work collaboratively on prevention of child deaths, and to promote multidisciplinary review of child fatalities. DOH, as lead agency in the National Institute for Children's Health Quality Collaborative Improvement & Innovation Network to Reduce Infant Mortality (CoLIN), has invited OCFS to participate and to co-chair the subcommittee to address unsafe sleep deaths of infants across NYS. OCFS and DOH participate in quarterly conference calls to improve collaboration around efforts to provide safe sleep and abusive head trauma information and education. Conversations include selecting the materials that will be distributed as a result of legislation directed towards the education of parents about these dangers. OCFS is collaborating with DOH on a Safe Sleep Pilot project, which involves distributing safe sleep materials to four maternity hospitals in NYS. As part of this project, OCFS developed a "Safe

Sleep Kit” which includes: a tote bag; a door hanger with safe sleep information; written information on safe sleep; a board book on safe sleep; safe sleep DVD; and a Halo infant sleep sack. There is an evaluation component to this project; the findings and evaluation will be used to provide necessary recommendations for improving safe sleep educational strategies and materials.

### *Technical Assistance Received*

OCFS is also collaborating with OASAS on an in-depth technical assistance (IDTA) received from the National Center on Substance Abuse and Child Welfare. The focus of this IDTA is on pregnant and parenting women with substance use disorders and their substance exposed infants. This population of mothers and babies is particularly vulnerable, and in great need of services. Onondaga County was chosen to participate in this IDTA because they reflect a location that is, with the exception of racial composition, representative of NYS. Moreover, Onondaga County has an increasing number of pregnant women admitted to substance use disorder treatment, and an increasing number of babies born substance exposed, with Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome. Finally, Onondaga already has the basis of a collaboration to bring in additional stakeholders for a more comprehensive cross-systems team. DOH and OCFS are also part of this state team for this project. This team will work together on the following goals: increase universal screening of infants and pregnant women; increase access to treatment for women and infants, including outreach to women in marginalized populations; and develop a scope of practice for the use of peer services with this target population of women. In the out-months of this project, the plan is to explore expansion to other counties across the state. This work will engage all programs that work with families that may be touched by substance abuse including those programs that are funded by CBCAP.

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

### **Tribes/Nations**

The OCFS Native American Services (NAS) unit actively interacts with the nine NYS Tribal/ Nation leaders through a general forum that is held twice a year for discussions on a variety of topics, as well as to address specific child/family circumstances and consult with the Tribal/Nation communities. All Tribal Nations are invited to the forums.

Quarterly meetings with Tribal/Nation representatives, which are typically geared towards caseworkers and supervisors, provide the opportunity for ongoing dialogue related to the work of the tribes/nations on the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA). NAS is active in supporting and sharing

feedback from the Tribes/Nations and with OCFS Home Office. These meetings also serve to identify training needs for the Tribes/Nations and development of training initiatives; provide input into the CFSP Title IV-B plan; and to strengthen service delivery to Native American children and families. These meetings also provide an excellent forum to introduce other OCFS-supported initiatives such as court collaboration, Protective Services for Adults, Chaffee Independent Living Services to Tribal/Nation and agency staff who need program support to serve their respective Tribal/Nation and urban Native American Communities.

In 2016, the NAS conducted four quarterly meetings (that assisted in identifying the tribal/nation needs and issues in regards to ICWA. Several of the needs directly related to child welfare and included: Native foster parents/homes, transportation assistance, domestic violence/women's shelter, youth programs, and parenting workshops. OCFS will be working with the Tribes/Nations to identify resources to help address some of their needs.

## **Voluntary Agencies**

In 2016, OCFS worked collaboratively with a number of voluntary agencies providing enhanced supervision to identified areas of needed improvement within the campus setting. Providing guidance to agencies about strategic planning, improving residential policies, enhanced programming focused upon finding ways to engage youth and families to improve permanency outcomes. OCFS's Division of Child Welfare and Community Services (CWCS) partnered with the Division of Juvenile Justice and Opportunities for Youth (DJJOY), conducting statewide joint campus visits bringing a different focus upon safety, permanency, and well-being for our youth in residential settings. OCFS partnered with the OASAS and OPWDD to provide additional technical assistance to our voluntary agencies working with a complex population. In 2017, OCFS will continue these collaborations and host a statewide voluntary agency convening bringing agencies together to identify best practices and supports to improve outcomes for our youth.

## **Youth**

OCFS is also committed to hearing the voice of youth impacted by service systems. To that end, OCFS has supported the development and growth of Youth in Progress (YIP), a statewide foster care youth leadership group. This group of young people, accompanied by adult mentors, has provided ongoing input on a wide range of topics that impact their experience in foster care and beyond. In addition, OCFS has expanded opportunities for youth voice by establishing relationships with the statewide organization, Youth Empowerment, and with the Bravehearts, a youth-led association with chapters in Westchester County and other localities.

In 2016, OCFS contracted with the Professional Development Program (PDP) to hire Youth Engagement Specialists in each of the six regional offices. These specialists trained district and voluntary agency staff on topics related to youth development and improving outcomes for youth in care. They are responsible for the YIP meetings and organized "speak-outs." The speak-outs

took place on August 22, at Valley Oak Center; August 10, at NYU Kimmel Center; August 23, at Queensbury Hotel; August 29, at Rockland Community College; and October 1, at the Java Center. The number of people who attended the events across NYS was 665. YIP support meetings between OCFS and PDP occurred monthly on the following dates: January 12, February 9, March 8, April 12, May 10, June 14, July 12, August 9, September 13, October 11, November 8, and December 13.

OCFS hired twelve youth in foster care as summer interns who were placed across the state in regional offices and in the Rensselaer home office. The interns helped to organize a focus group regarding the state's implementation of the reasonable and prudent parenting standard, bill of rights for foster care, transition plan, credit checks and required documents. The OCFS summer interns also played a leadership role at the speak-outs.

Additional collaborative initiatives planned over the next five years include:

- Bridges to Health - The Bridges to Health (B2H) Medicaid Home and Community Based Waivers were authorized by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. OCFS fully intends to reauthorize B2H and will do so with NYS's strong desire to enroll all Medicaid recipients into Medicaid Managed Care.

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

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

As part of the transition to Medicaid Managed Care, OCFS continues to work with DOH, OMH and OASAS to align all Medicaid Home and Community Based Waiver Programs into a single benefit package to be authorized under the 1115 Managed Care Demonstration Authority. By doing so, NYS expects to expand the number of children eligible for the aligned waiver services as there will be no slot limitation

- CPS/DV Collaboration Projects – OCFS will continue to support CPS/DV Collaboration Projects whereby a DV advocate is out-stationed at the local CPS office. These collaborations are designed to improve safety for families experiencing both domestic violence and child abuse/maltreatment. Other anticipated outcomes include preventing recurrence of child abuse/maltreatment and reducing out-of-home placements of children. OCFS will be implementing quality assurance reviews of these programs and will continue to assist in the provision of domestic violence training and guidance for child protective workers and other child welfare workers across the state.
- Educational Stability – In December 2015, the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) was signed into law, amending the Elementary and Secondary Education Act

(ESEA). For the first time in federal education law, ESSA requires state and local education agencies (SEAs and LEAs) to collaborate with child welfare agencies to promote school stability and educational success for youth in care. ESSA recognizes that youth in foster care experience poorer educational outcomes, as compared to their peers not in foster care, including: higher rates of school suspensions and expulsions; lower standardized test scores in reading and math; high levels of grade retention and drop-outs; and far lower high school and college graduation rates.

**School Transportation** - Pursuant to ESSA, LEAs and child welfare agencies must collaborate on how transportation to maintain children in foster care in their school of origin, when in their best interest will be provided, arranged, and funded. LEAs must include in their local plans, assurances that they have developed and implemented clear written procedures around transportation to ensure school stability. The local school must cover the standard cost of transporting children in foster care to their school of origin for the duration of their time in foster care and until the end of the school year. States are urged to include transportation for extracurricular academic activities that extend beyond the normal school day and for summer programs.

**Funding “Additional Costs” of Transportation** - If maintaining children in their school of origin results in “additional costs,” agencies must determine how those costs will be funded. “Additional costs” have been defined, in federal guidance, as “the difference between what an LEA otherwise would spend to transport a student to his or her assigned school and the cost of transporting a child in foster care to his or her school of origin.” Federal guidance encourages agencies to collaborate and to use, and maximize, all available funding sources, including federal funds, to pay additional transportation costs.

The federal government encourages states to develop their own models to address “additional costs”, which can include the following:

- Certain federal funds that may be available, including Title IV-E foster care maintenance dollars for those children who otherwise meet the specific eligibility requirements set forth in section 472 of the Social Security Act. Additionally, education agencies are encouraged to use ESEA Title 1 dollars to support transportation costs.
- State or regional contingency funds;
- Standard division of cost responsibility based on common factors such as distance or time in care; and
- Sharing the additional costs between both agencies, using all available funding sources.

**Transportation Dispute Resolution** - States are encouraged to develop joint dispute resolution procedures for resolving local transportation disputes to ensure consistency across districts.

SED and OCFS have worked collaboratively to implement ESSA:

- In December 2016, SED and OCFS issued a joint statewide guidance document to education and child welfare detailing the provisions of ESSA.
  - Pursuant to ESSA, both SED and OCFS identified Points of Contact (POCs) for both systems. The names of the POCs were shared statewide and local education agencies and county child welfare agencies point of contacts are maintained electronically by both systems.
  - In March 2017 SED and OCFS data teams met to enhance existing data sharing efforts.
  - In an effort to promote collaboration among POCs, SED and OCFS hosted a joint statewide webinar and cross-system training in April 2017.
  - By fall 2017 SED and OCFS will issue a joint data report detailing the NYS Blueprint to improve educational outcomes for child in care.
- Human Trafficking - OCFS remains an active partner on the Statewide Interagency Task Force. Together with the OTDA, DCJS, Division of Criminal Justice Services(DCJS), Department of Labor and Department of State, OCFS created a website for the Statewide Interagency Taskforce to house information about the Taskforce's efforts, anti-trafficking laws and referral information (<http://ocfs.ny.gov/main/humantrafficking/>). OCFS created a child trafficking sub-committee in 2016, to focus on interagency approaches to responding to child trafficking in NYS. Additionally, OCFS held a 2-day summit on March 9-10, in Albany with over 100 attendees. This summit was primarily targeted at LDSS but included partners from NY State Police, runaway and homeless youth providers, Children's Advocacy Centers, and DCJS.
  - Kinship Support Services - OCFS conducts quarterly conference calls with OCFS-funded Kinship programs and the NYS Navigator in an effort to increase Kinship care, including KinGAP, as a permanency option. In 2017 there will be 22 kinship programs statewide and 15 Regional Permanency Centers serving post-adoption and post guardianship families.
  - A Statewide Implementation Team (SIT) with representation from LDSSs and voluntary authorized agencies focused on kinship and KinGAP in 2016. THE SIT put out a newsletter supporting the value of kinship placements and encouraging the use of KinGAP as a permanency option. The SIT has crafted a kinship/KinGAP package of materials including data, a practice guide, a kinship survey and an executive summary of the findings of the survey, and frequently asked questions for distribution to all LDSSs and voluntary authorized agencies in 2017.

The training curriculum “Kinship Care Overview – Presenting Options to Kin/Relative Caregivers” was developed with CDHS in 2015 to train regional office, LDSSs and voluntary authorized agency staff on all permanency options available to caregivers and continues to be provided by CDHS and OCFS regional office staff as needed.

- Parenting Programs - In partnership with New York State Parenting Education Partnership (NYSPEP), the OCFS Children and Family Trust Fund will continue efforts to improve the quality and access to parenting education and to promote skill development for parenting educators. Dissemination of resources and information on the impact of evidence-based and evidence-informed parenting programs to LDSSs, community-based programs, and other key partners remains a priority. Results from local “Community Cafés” will be compiled into a final report, identifying best practices, lessons, learned and barriers, with recommendations for continued promotion of this family engagement strategy.
- New York State Teaming Model - OCFS will continue to support counties in the implementation of the Teaming Model designed to provide supports to the child welfare workforce, reduce turnover and support quality decision-making. OCFS and its training partner, the Center for Development of Human Services (CDHS), continue to adapt its Teaming Model and expand to additional counties. During 2015, the New York City Administration for Children’s Services (ACS) brought four (4) Family Support Units (FSU) from Staten Island into the training delivery and three (3) new teams were added in upstate LDSSs. In 2016, two (2) ACS Protective Diagnostic units implemented Team and four (4) new teams were added upstate. A Teaming Facilitators Guide was developed in 2016 based on the Teaming 101 outline and Teaming Guidebook. ACS plans to utilize the guidebook to further expand Teaming.

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

#### CBCAP

- Promotion of the Safe Babies New York program, which includes parenting education of all parents of newborns with information on shaken baby syndrome and safe sleeping practices, will continue in all maternity and birthing hospitals in the state. Further tracking of the incidence of shaken baby syndrome in the Western New York, Finger Lakes and Hudson Valley regions as well as efforts to assess the effects of this combined message will be undertaken. OCFS will continue to track child fatality data as it relates to unsafe sleeping practices, requests for our child safety publications, and

feedback from family service agencies as a means to monitor the geographic incidence and community response to this child safety issue.

In 2016, CBCAP funds supported innovative strategies to meet the needs of individuals served, to build protective factors within families and communities, and to promote the well-being for children by providing both evidence-based and innovative parenting education strategies to build parents' skills, confidence and knowledge. Family Resource Center (FRC) staff will continue to network and share experiences to strengthen their engagement skills and increase participation by families at high risk for child abuse. FRC's and child abuse prevention programs continue to implement evidence-based and evidence-informed programs which will be supported with federal funds including the Incredible Years' (IY), Parents as Teachers, Triple P, the Nurturing Parenting Program, the Parent/Child Home Program, and other parent education programs and strategies. Prevent Child Abuse New York (PCANY) is a long standing partner of OCFS with a shared mission to promote the safety and well-being of all children and families. The agency addresses individual, community, and societal responsibility through four inter-related strategies: the Parent Helpline, the New York State Parenting Education Partnership, prevention education including the Enough Abuse Campaign, and an annual professional training conference.

The Helpline provides direct assistance, in the form of information and referrals, to parents, family members, service providers and other community members and assisted 7,152 individuals.

### CJA

- The CJA program in collaboration with the New York State Children's Justice Task Force (CJTF) has developed a new set of three-year recommendations for 2015 through 2018. The recommendations are:
- A Regional Child Advocacy Center (CAC) should be established in order to reach the Rural and historically underserved regions in New York State.
- Improve upon the reliability of data collection and develop the ability to assess state-wide trends.
- Assess the recording of forensic interviews of children state-wide and how that practice may support better outcomes.
- Improve upon the collaboration efforts between the CJTF and the court appointed attorneys and attorneys for children.
- Improve collaborations with stakeholder agencies to increase the number of trained medical providers available to child abuse victims.
- The CJTF will become familiar with the New York State Child and Family Service Review (CFSR) and the Annual Program Service Review (APSR).

CJA activities in 2016 included:

- An Invitation for Bid (IFB) was issued to provide services currently supported through the CARCC program. CARCC will continue to serve as a resource for CJA staff and multi-disciplinary team (MDT)/CAC programs across the state. Services and resources provided by CARCC are available upon request
- CJA staff continued to collaborate on intra-agency initiatives with the OCFS Bureau of Training, Regional Operations and Office of Strategic Planning and Policy Development. During 2016, a RFP was issued for forensic interviewing to address the need for more offerings. The awardee of that RFP went to the SUNY Professional Development program in conjunction with the Gunderson National Child Protection Training Center (NCPTC) to provide Child Welfare Forensic Interview training statewide.
- CJA staff also provided technical assistance to the Child Fatality Review Team (CFRT) program, OCFS regional offices, the Safe Harbour: NY program, child sexual abuse prevention initiatives, and written directives related to investigation, treatment and/or management of child abuse cases. OCFS will continue to implement program standards for all Child Advocacy Centers (CACs) and Multidisciplinary Child Abuse Teams (MDTs) in New York State. The standards were developed through input from New York State Children's Alliance, Multidisciplinary Team/Child Advocacy Center projects, and the Children's Justice Task Force. All 43 MDT/CAC's are currently approved according to the OCFS standards. OCFS staff now verifies and documents that all MDT/CAC programs are functioning as Tier 1, fully functioning CAC programs. CAC Programs demonstrate compliance with OCFS Multidisciplinary Team/Child Advocacy Center Program Standards and NYS Social Services Law Section 423-a. OCFS staff continues to make tremendous strides in the development and approval of CAC programs across the state. OCFS staff continues to receive inquiries from other counties and agencies looking to develop programs modeled after existing Tier 1 programs. Additionally, established CAC programs have been providing guidance and sharing resources with contiguous counties that lack a CAC.

A growing number of MDT/CAC programs are exploring the feasibility of expanding services into surrounding counties. During 2016, Clinton County formalized CAC collaborations with Essex, Franklin and St. Lawrence counties by establishing satellite locations, which included a satellite location on the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe reservation. In addition, the Clinton County CAC worked to create the first CAC on a tribal nation. The Genesee County Justice for Children CAC Program expanded to Orleans and Wyoming counties. The Chemung County CAC is used by Tioga and Schuyler counties and the Ontario CAC is used by neighboring Seneca county. Recognizing the collaborations that are naturally occurring among counties, OCFS plans to issue a Request for Proposals to help further fund regional CACs as a model to provide access to CACs for a greater number of child victims.

- To meet the growing need for sound data collection methods, CJA staff continues to work with CARCC to establish effective case tracking systems for MDT/CACs. In 2015, CARCC collaborated with the National Children’s Alliance (NCA) and OCFS to transition away from the Case Tracking Database (CTDB) system in New York State. NCAtrak has become the primary data collection system for MDT/CACs. With NCAtrak, a MDT or CAC can track case-specific information in a user-friendly manner. There is also a feature that allows a MDT or CAC to produce a specialized report tailored to their individual queried needs, regardless of organizational structure. Technical assistance for NCAtrak will be available to all NYS CACs through the NCA. Technical assistance will also continue to be provided by CJA staff, CARCC staff and Jonathan Picklesimer. In addition, a workgroup has been created in order to establish guidelines around how to define and track a case and the capabilities of the system that teams are not currently accessing. The workgroup plans to finalize the guidelines in spring, 2017.
- OCFS will continue to support the Citizen Review Panels which review policies, procedures and practices of state and local agencies to evaluate the extent to which the agencies are effectively discharging their child protective responsibilities. The contract for administration of the panels is held by the Welfare Research Institute (WRI). WRI has taken a proactive role in helping the three panels develop specific work plans.

#### FFVPSA

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

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

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

## *Service Description*

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

In an effort to improve safety, permanency and well-being outcomes, services supported through IV-B Part 2 are focused on family engagement strategies. Family engagement work begins with the “knock on the front door” by child protective services. Child protective investigations are usually perceived by families as adversarial since there is, by definition, a questioning of a parents’ ability to adequately care for their children. The caseworker needs to engage the family as partners in identifying the resources and needs of the family, and in securing the safety and well-being of the children.

From the initial contacts and through-out the life of the case, family engagement is at the core of helping a family address their children’s need for safety, permanency and well-being. In addition to the casework relationship itself (including regular and consistent casework contact with the child and parent/caregiver with a focus on assessing safety and risk of the child) and the impact of that relationship on influencing change, several family engagement strategies will be supported and further evaluated over the course of the next five years. These are:

### Family Meetings

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

### Locating and Engaging Fathers

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

### Coached Family Visiting

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

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

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

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

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

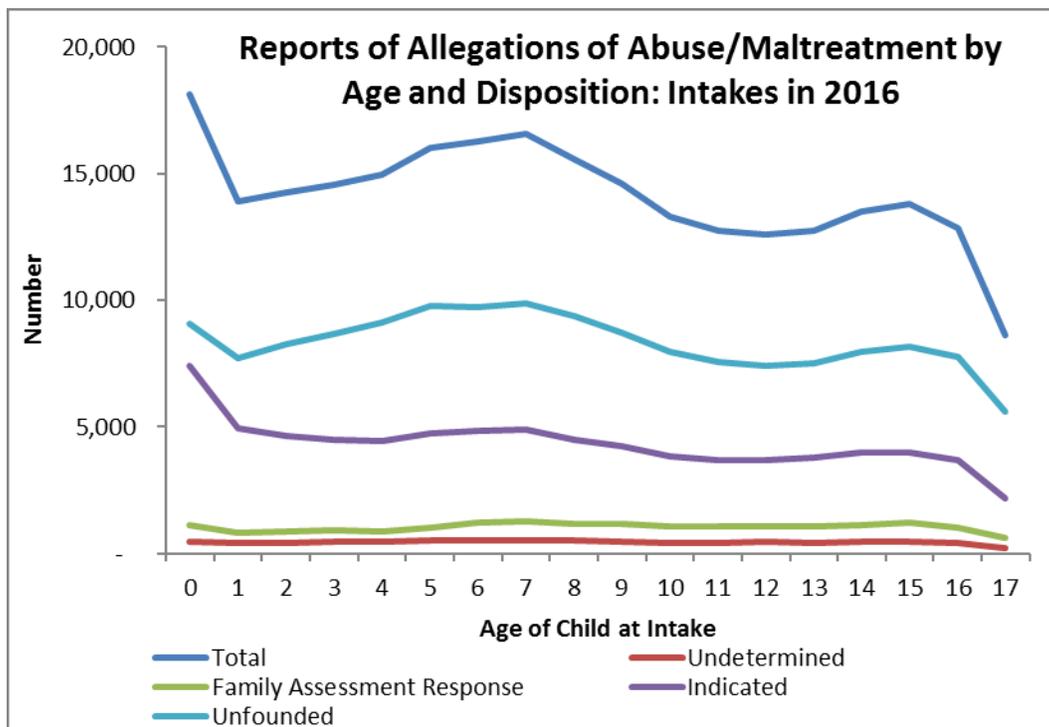
## **Populations at Greatest Risk of Maltreatment**

## Populations at Greatest Risk of Maltreatment

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

Many factors are likely to impact maltreatment risk, age, geographic area, cultural risk factors, availability of services, to name a few. Statewide, approximately 3.7 percent of NYS children are involved in a report to the Statewide Central Register of Abuse and Maltreatment (SCR). The percentage of children under 18 years of age with a SCR report in calendar year 2016 from the 11 largest counties is between 1.4 percent and 6.4 percent of the county's child population and the statewide median was 5.7 percent.

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

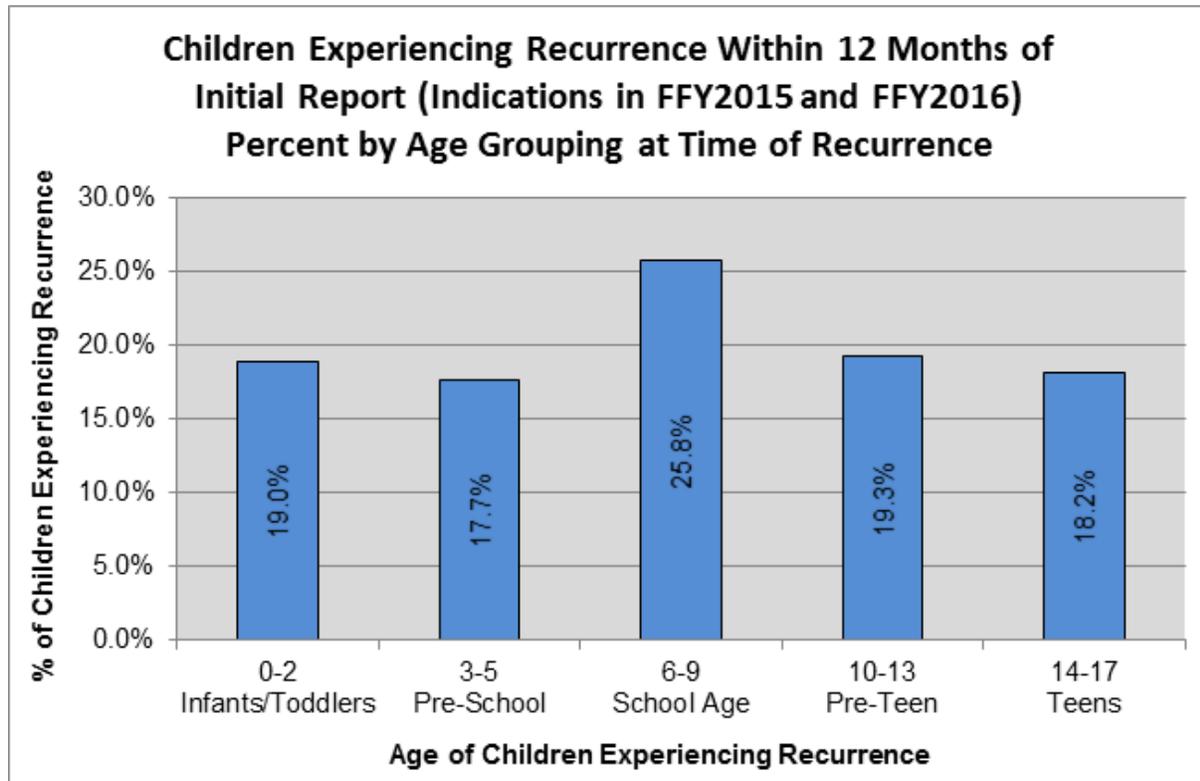


NYS also compiles data on the frequency of risk factors identified in during the preliminary risk assessment profile for indicated reports. Statewide, the top five most frequently noted factors that place a child at risk of abuse/maltreatment within the next two-year period are:

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

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

## Services for Children Under the Age of Five



OCFS continues to implement Permanency Roundtables to assist LDSSs in identifying children in foster care who would benefit from a review of their case to assist in identifying activities that can be taken to find permanency for the child. Counties with a large number of children under the age of five in care, and for who they are struggling to obtain permanency would be included in the roundtable. OCFS held Permanency Roundtables in Ontario County in 2016 and the following counties held a PRT in 2016, after being introduced to the process by OCFS. Monroe, Steuben, and Chemung. Additionally, PRTs were conducted in the following voluntary agencies: Edwin Gould Services, Little Flower Services, Mercy First, St. Dominic's, Children's Home of Jefferson County, The House of Good Shephard, Hillside Children's Center Varick Campus.

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

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

**Services for Children Adopted from Other  
Countries**

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

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

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

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

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

OCFS provided TANF funds to support post-adoption programs. The 2015-16 enacted state budget added \$1,570,000 in TANF funding which enabled OCFS to extend the three contracted programs and add an additional four programs which will all be funded until October 31, 2017. Based on annual reports submitted by the three programs for the contract year ending October 31, 2016, the Post Adoption programs served 260 families, serving over 600 adults and children. By early 2017, OCFS will have 15 Regional Permanency Resource Centers (PRC’s) in place. The PRCs will increase the state’s capacity to strengthen families by providing critical services to children, parents, caregivers and siblings, and are programs designed based on the unique needs of adoptive, and guardianship families. This funding is based on a provision of the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act which included a requirement mandating that the State spend an amount equal to the amount of savings, if any, resulting from delinking in Title IV-B or Title IV-E child welfare services. Title IV-E agencies must use the savings to supplement, not supplant, any federal or non-federal funds used to provide any service under

Title IV-B or Title IV-E. At least 30 percent of the calculated savings must be spent on post-adoption services, post-guardianship services and services to support positive permanent outcomes for children at risk of entering foster care.

# **Program Support**

## **5. Program Support**

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

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

OCFS has a specific liaison in every region and in the home office. The liaisons are responsible for providing training services and other related activities to assist regional office, LDSSs and voluntary agency staff in various initiatives planned by the OCFS Division of Child Welfare and Community Services. Through the design and implementation of statewide and LDSS-specific training and training support activities, OCFS staff will assist districts to identify areas of practice and performance in need of improvement and to develop and implement change strategies and performance supports. The following is a summary of the work completed in calendar year 2016:

### **Engage families**

OCFS provided technical assistance to counties in improving practice in conducting family meetings, locating and engaging absent fathers, coaching family visits and child centered family focused practice. The data obtained in the yearly case reviews has helped OCFS identify which strategies will be most helpful to the LDSSs.

OCFS staff also encouraged districts to continue with Family Assessment Response (FAR). Using information obtained in case reviews OCFS has improved training and has encouraged counties to increase those families experiencing the FAR track.

### **Engage youth and provide normative experiences**

Through the use of public forums OCFS staff met with youth in foster care to solicit their feedback on their experiences with the child welfare system. Based on the information gained in these forums OCFS has developed training to support Reasonable and Prudent Parenting, and has planned to pilot, with Columbia University an improvement of job skills with youth in care. OCFS created Youth Engagement Specialists in every region to focus on seeing that youth in each region are linked to positive youth development activities. In 2016, OCFS also continued to develop its relationship with the SED to improve data sharing.

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

### **Strengthen caregiver capacity to protect and provide for children**

OCFS staff provided various trainings and strategies to caseworkers to assist them in strengthening caregiver's capacity to protect and provide for children. OCFS worked with the statewide foster parent trainers to address consistency in parenting messages, two foster parent conference and one leaders seminar were held. Topics included: Reasonable and Prudent Parenting, Principles of Partnership, working with Amish and Mennonite families, parenting the hurt child, and enhanced adoptions. Additionally, OCFS staff are involved in improving how districts work with families impacted by domestic violence, by facilitating crucial conversations with providers and LDSSs.

### **Facilitate safe out-of-home placements and rapid permanency**

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

OCFS staff continues to work with LDSSs on moving more children to permanency through the use of KinGAP. OCFS developed printed resources for caseworkers in explaining the various permanency options to families.

OCFS staff worked with numerous LDSSs to employ the Foster Parent as Recruiter Program. Funds were used to utilize current foster parents in the recruitment of prospective foster parents. Funds were also made available to support LDSS initiatives to recruit foster homes and to promote adoption.

### **Develop a trauma-informed system**

OCFS staff has been active in assisting LDSSs in coordinating Vicarious Resilience training. OCFS staff has continued to support the use of the "Rapid Screening Tool" which is related to screening of youth who may have been victims of sex trafficking, along with the referral process to law enforcement, and documentation in CONNECTIONS to help reduce additional trauma to the youth. The Safe Harbor Program has continued to expand and strengthen. OCFS continues to improve the forensic interview training to increase capacity of trainings and to increase

competency of the interviewers. Trauma-informed training has become standard practice for all new staff.

### **Support a racially equitable and cultural competent system**

Because of the various monitoring and evaluation reviews completed, OCFS staff have identified an increased need to incorporate cultural competencies into practice. OCFS focused resources on the Statewide Central Register in 2016, offering Race Equity and Cultural Competent customer service. OCFS staff has developed Cross-System Race Equity Learning Communities. OCFS staff has conducted training needs assessments with leadership in different districts and have secured consultants to assist the LDSS to decrease racial/ethnic disparities within their child welfare system. OCFS staff have worked with voluntary authorized agencies on how they support individuality – specifically, youth who identify as LGBTQ. OCFS also began creating an infrastructure of coaches and facilitators competent in having crucial conversations about race, culture and equity.

### **Develop organizational effectiveness**

OCFS staff work regularly with the federal performance data. OCFS staff created key performance indicators so LDSSs could report on targeted diagnostics. OCFS is encouraging data driven practice. This intense diagnostic work has stimulated LDSSs to examine underlying conditions and to begin thinking about strategies that will change practice.

OCFS continues its organizational change effort dedicated to the Principles of Partnership as outlined in the Practice Model. Three hundred individuals were trained in 2016. These principles have been incorporated into all foundational training products.

### **New Competency-Based training system**

OCFS has continued to develop strategies to improve compliance with 45 CFR 1356.60(b)(2) with regard to training activities under Title IV-E, and to assess other ways in which the training program should improve. The coordination of competencies and the organization of a model allows OCFS to identify gaps in training and leverage resources to improve training. This training will blend many different modalities to increase learning retention and offer more opportunities for all participants to attend. A comprehensive communication plan has begun and the training contracting system is gearing up to offer more capacity. This has been a major effort combining University Partners, LDSS and OCFS staff to design a foundations training that will meet multiple needs. The training is expected to pilot in the third quarter of 2017, and be fully implemented within the following 12-18 months.

### **Meeting LDSS Individual Training and Technical assistance needs**

OCFS provides individual training and consultation related to casework practice and organizational strategies to meet state and federal legal and regulatory standards upon request. The focus is on responding to training issues and practice improvement needs identified in statewide and local program improvement plans resulting from state and federal case reviews and audits, as well as from other sources of information regarding LDSS training needs. Altogether, OCFS offered over 175 days of LDSS specific training, technical assistance or coaching to well over 2,500 participants.

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

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

OCFS continues to expand the use of web-based and distance learning technologies to enhance accessibility to child welfare staff.

## **Evaluation and Research**

## **OCFS Evaluation and Research**

The OCFS Bureau of Research, Evaluation and Performance Analytics (BREPA) designs and conducts research studies in a wide range of program areas in order to: (1) evaluate the effectiveness of policies, programs, and practices in achieving desired goals; (2) assess whether a program is consistent with best practices in the field; (3) improve understanding of the extent, nature, causes and effects of particular problems or issues; (4) measure the performance of OCFS in improving outcomes for children, youth, and families; and (5) develop and validate risk and needs assessments. The Bureau also approves outside research proposals involving children, youth, and families served by programs operated, regulated, or supervised by OCFS, and provides technical assistance on research methodology, sampling, performance measurement, and data collection and analysis to OCFS staff.

BREPA provides on-going analytical support to NYS' CFSR planning and program improvement plan efforts. BREPA has adapted the CFSR syntax provided by the Children's Bureau to create county specific data packets depicting each jurisdiction's performance on the CFSR outcome metrics, with additional performance breakouts provided for key demographic sub-groups (e.g., age, gender, race/ethnicity). Packets are updated on a regular basis. In addition, to better understand the state's performance on safety measures, BREPA is conducting analyses aimed at uncovering systemic, family and child level factors associated with increased risk for recurrent maltreatment.

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

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

### **Evaluation of HFNY:**

During 2016, BREPA continued its evaluation of the Healthy Families New York (HFNY) project. HFNY is an evidence-based prevention program that seeks to improve the health and well-being of children in targeted high risk communities through the provision of intensive home visitation services to expectant and new parents. In 2016, BREPA continued collecting data for the HFNY 15-year follow-up RCT. Activities focused primarily on conducting interviews with the original 1,128 study mothers and their approximately 15-year-old target children. Since the study began in 2015, interviews have been conducted with 807 study mothers, 680 target children, and 29 caregivers. These interviews are expected to continue through mid-2017 as the remaining target

children turn 15 years old. OCFS also anticipates obtaining administrative data from various state agencies, including the juvenile justice system. Preliminary results are expected in 2019.

BREPA also anticipates obtaining administrative data from various state agencies, including the juvenile justice system. Additionally, HFNY supports research conducted by outside professionals and has a written policy describing the process that outside researchers must follow in order to conduct research on HFNY programs and families.

OCFS designed and/or supervised a variety of continuous quality improvement activities to support ongoing HFNY services during 2016. These activities included: 1) ongoing analyses of fathers' involvement in home visits and identification of areas where documentation of involvement can be improved, 2) developing a pilot study to examine the feasibility of new family enrollment strategies, and 3) understanding effective service delivery. The Healthy Family New York evaluation continues as an active research project in 2017.

#### Infant Safe Sleep Kits Parent Education Pilot:

Between August 2016 and April 2017, OCFS conducted and evaluated a pilot project, *Safe Sleep Kits*, to educate and encourage parents to use safe sleep practices with their newborn babies. Partners in this initiative include the OCFS Division of Child Welfare and Community Services (CWCS), the Bureau of Research and Evaluation, and Performance Analytics (BREPA), and the Human Services Call Center (HSCC), as well as several local Child Fatality Review Teams and four maternity hospitals in western New York, and the NYS Department of Health (DOH). *Pilot Goals* are: 1) to educate parents of newborns about safe sleep practices using the **ABC** message (**A**lone, on **B**ack, in a **C**rib) and 2) to determine if providing parents with the tools has an impact on safe sleep practices.

*Intervention:* Before discharge from the hospital, the hospital maternity nursing staff provides new parents with education on safe sleep practices using the OCFS-provided "Safe Sleep Kit" which contains safe sleep materials to take home from the hospital. The hospitals also encouraged parents to watch the OCFS safe sleep video. The kits include: a tote bag, a door hanger with safe sleep information, a board book about safe sleep, a safe sleep DVD, and a Sleep Sack, which is a garment for the newborn to sleep in. Educational materials for the kits are in English and/or Spanish language. DOH-provided Safe Sleep items - a magnet, mirror cling, and brochure - were also added to the tote bag at the hospitals.

*Evaluation:* After explaining each item in the kit, nursing staff ask parents to give (or decline) permission for OCFS to contact them for a follow-up survey about a month after the birth about their sleep practices. The hospitals share the contact information with the BREPA evaluation staff at OCFS. Evaluation staff email parents a link to an online survey or forward their phone numbers

to the HSCC, who contact the parents by phone. Parents have the option of completing the survey online or verbally over the phone with the HSCC.

*Project Status Highlights:*

- The Institutional Review Board at the New York State DOH approved OCFS's evaluation plan.
- Four hospitals in the western participated in the study.
- OCFS bought the items for the kits and shipped them to the local sites.
- The hospitals received enough kits to distribute for at least seven months of births.
- Kits were distributed to all parents of newborns at the four hospitals between August 2016 and early March 2017.
- The OCFS evaluator led monthly calls for all project participants to improve both response rates and to discuss preliminary survey results.
- By early March, 125 surveys had been completed.
- The last surveys were completed in April 2017, with a final count of 147 surveys. The responses are currently being analyzed, and a report is expected later this year.

## **Adoption and Foster Care Reporting Systems (AFCARS)**

In December 2016, new federal regulations governing the submission of federal adoption and foster care reporting systems (AFCARS) data were published in the federal register. The new regulations greatly expand the number of data elements required to be collected and give states two years (until October 1, 2019) to add these elements to their AFCARS work.

In response to this mandate, OCFS's Bureau of Research, Evaluation and Performance Analytics (BREPA) convened the AFCARS 2.0 work group in January 2017. The work group is composed representatives from multiple areas within OCFS, including: the Divisions of Child Welfare and Community Services, Native American Services, Adoption Services, Bureau of Policy Development, Division of Legal Affairs, Bureau of Finance Operations, and BREPA, as well as our sister agency, the New York State Office of Information Technology Services (OITS).

The group meets on a biweekly basis and is in the process of reviewing each data element required as part of AFCARS 2.0., in order to:

- 1) evaluate gap(s) between federal requirements and existing system capacity in terms of ITS/Connections capacity, practice, policy, legal, training and/or other needs, and
- 2) formulate recommendations and timelines for addressing said gaps. Once the gap analysis is complete, initial recommendations for system and practice changes will be shared with OCFS leadership and county level field staff for discussion and comment.

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

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

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

OCFS Bureau of Native American Services (NAS) continues to host quarterly stakeholder meetings with Tribal/Nation and LDSS caseworkers in both urban and reservation settings. The primary purpose of these meetings is to support and improve compliance with the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA). These meetings also serve in the development of training initiatives; provide input into the CFSP Title IV-B plan and to strengthen service delivery to Indian children and their families. The quarterly meetings provide an excellent forum to introduce other OCFS-supported initiatives such as Court Collaboration, Protective Services for Adults, and Chaffee Independent Living Services to Tribal/Nation and LDSS staff who need program support to serve their respective Tribal and Urban Indian communities.

Site visits are also planned to continue to Indian Reservations in New York by the NAS Specialist. The primary purpose of the site visits is to assess the needs of the Indian Tribes/Nations and to address concerns related to the delivery of child welfare services.

The interactions that take place through NAS are complemented and strengthened by ongoing interactions between the LDSSs, OCFS and those who provide services to Native Americans.

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

Consultation with tribes will continue to address the following:

- Notification of Indian parents, Indian custodians and tribes/nations of state proceedings involving Indian children and their right to intervene;
- Placement preferences of Indian children in foster care, pre-adoptive, and adoptive homes;
- Active efforts to prevent the breakup of the Indian family when parties seek to place a child in foster care or for adoption; and
- Tribal right to intervene in state child custody proceedings, or transfer proceedings to the jurisdiction of the tribe/nation.

### *Assessment of Need and Current Status Highlights*

Based on a review of data collected on Indian children in out-of-home placement as of December 31, 2016, it was found that 46 children were found to be subject to the provisions of ICWA. These

children lived in various parts of NYS, both on and off reservation territories. The geographic breakdown of these placements is as follows: 11 percent of these placements were in Western New York counties adjacent to or near Indian Nation reservations (Tuscarora, Seneca, and Tonawanda Seneca Nations). An additional 22 percent of the placements were in three Central New York counties near the Onondaga and Oneida Indian Nation territories. The northern portion of New York State accounted for 50 percent of Indian child out-of-home placements, with a majority of those placements on the St. Regis Mohawk Reservation. With the knowledge that our largest Native American population resides in the five boroughs of New York City and Long Island, OCFS found 17 percent of the Indian child placements in this area of the state. The total number of Indian child placements represents 0.11% percent of the total foster care population of New York State.

During 2017, OCFS reviewed 46 of the 129 **Indian child** placements. Ten of the Indian children achieved permanency by returning to their parents or through adoption. Of the 46 Indian children remaining in out-of-home placement, three Indian children required a higher level of care, including therapeutic foster homes or group home institutional settings. The remainder of the foster care placements of Indian children is as follows; there are 15 in kinship placements and 15 in certified foster homes that were consistent with ICWA placement preferences, one was adopted and two were freed for adoption.

OCFS is supporting this goal by involving tribal representatives in collaborative meetings with our administration, court personnel, and regional initiatives for Family Assessment Response (FAR) and Disproportionality Minority Representation (RECC) trainings and education. New York Tribes and tribal staff have been invited to participate in CORE caseworker and other training opportunities to strengthen their skills in the child welfare field and to develop better partnerships with local districts involved in their communities. OCFS also continues to build strong networking activities among tribal staff through quarterly stakeholder meetings sponsored by the OCFS NAS Unit.

### *Performance Targets*

#### Indian Child Welfare

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

Baseline: The number of Indian children who are placed in foster boarding homes or adoptive homes of Native American ethnicity in 2014.

#### Data Analysis:

2013: 42 Indian Children of the 93 in placement (45.1 percent)

2014: 35 Indian Children of the 90 in placement (38.8 percent)

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

2016: 18 Indian Children of the 46 in placement (39 percent)

Projected Targets:

2017: not below 50 percent \*

\*It is anticipated that the identification of Indian children will continue to increase based on ICWA trainings in 2016-2017. It is not known if the number of licensed Native American foster homes will meet such increase of identified Indian children. Improved preventive efforts and kinship placements may factor into the performance targets.

Placement of Indian 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 LDSSs in NYS. As demonstrated by the data, we have been successful in our efforts to increase the proper identification of Indian children. The data demonstrates a drop in placement resources that match the child's tribal/nation heritage. Of the 46 Indian children in placement, 21 were matched with placements to support their tribal/nation heritage. An additional three youth were placed in residential placements, which met their higher level of need. Factoring in the higher level of care required and the increased number of kinship placements, New York State is actually at 52 percent compliance rate in meeting ICWA requirements without factoring the application of the good cause exception in ICWA.

Some Indian 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/nation staff or Native American services agencies, which have approved the placements. These placements, as well as "relative or kinship placements" are included in the data above. It was also found that direct Tribal ICWA placements (18/18) were at 100 percent compliance in 2016 in placing Indian American children in Native American placements. The specific training activities and quarterly stakeholder meetings have also strengthened the ability to serve tribal/nation families under ICWA.

Data Source to measure progress for the performance target above: Data Warehouse and OCFS Native American Services Unit\*

*State and Local Activities*

State/Tribal Relationship

The St. Regis Mohawk entered into a State/Tribal Agreement with the predecessor of OCFS in August 1993 that was effective April 1, 1994. That Agreement contained two specific components: legal terms and conditions; and a service plan for the provision of foster care, preventive services and adoption services. The plan contained in the Agreement outlines strategies to: reduce the need for foster care through intensive preventive services; increase

recruitment and certification of foster homes on the Reservation; and promote the provision of foster care services in a way that maintains cultural and Tribal values and permit the earliest return of the child to natural family. Children freed for adoption will be placed in adoptive homes that will meet their personal and cultural needs. The delivery of child and adult protective services is addressed through an amendment to the State/Tribal Agreement and the tribe's updated services plan that became effective in April 2005. On-going meetings between the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe and OCFS to improve and expand services take place on a regular basis.

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

The Seneca Nation of Indians and their various administrations have expressed an interest in improving their working relationship with LDSSs. OCFS NAS Unit has been involved in an ongoing dialogue regarding such a relationship. OCFS arranged for several training events to meet the needs identified by Seneca Nation. In 2002, the Seneca Nation developed and endorsed a tribal protocol for child protective services. Meetings between OCFS, LDSSs and the Seneca Nation continue to refine this protocol and meet the child welfare staff development needs. OCFS continues to support the Seneca Nation of Indians in the development of their tribally approved foster homes. The tribally approved foster homes are exclusively funded and regulated by the tribal nation, and service only those children under their jurisdiction. To date there are five tribally-approved foster families.

The Seneca Nation Child and Family Services Program provides a variety of child welfare services including preventive and foster care services. In addition, Indian Health Services provides state-of-the-art health clinics on both Reservations. Mental health, alcohol and substance abuse, domestic violence, job training, Head Start and day care programs, Indian education, housing, and a senior nutrition program are provided through staff that spends time alternating between the Cattaraugus and Allegany Reservations. Onondaga Nation hired staff to support at-risk families on their tribal territory in 2010. They do not wish to enter into a formal agreement with the state at this time.

The Onondaga County DSS has assigned a liaison to work directly with the Onondaga Nation ICWA cases. The Onondaga Nation Family Protective staff has participated in OCFS Core Training for caseworkers and other staff development trainings offered by OCFS. They also participate in OCFS quarterly trainings and Tribal Consultation meetings.

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

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

Of the two Long Island Tribes, the Unkechaug Nation is not eligible to receive federal funds to operate ICWA programs. However, since the Shinnecock Nation received federally recognized tribal status, OCFS continues to support their development of child welfare services. Most of the OCFS training initiatives on Long Island support the cultural needs of children from both tribes.

The interactions that take place through the OCFS NAS are complemented and strengthened by ongoing interactions between LDSS, OCFS and those agencies that provide services to Native Americans.

To support compliance with ICWA, in 2017, an ICWA desk aid was developed by OCFS for use by LDSS and voluntary authorized agencies. Copies were distributed to the Indian Tribes/Nations and OCFS Regional Offices. An update to include information on use of a Qualified Expert Witness was added to the desk aid along with an updated list of tribal contacts. The ICWA desk aid is continuously maintained and updated to provide correct tribal contact information. The OCFS website also contains the ICWA desk aid.

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

In February 2017, OCFS also promulgated an amendment to 18 NYCRR 431.18 to reflect the amended ICWA standards. OCFS is currently in the process of issuing an ADM on the revised federal standards including a revised notice letter and ICWA FAQs.

## Description of Native American Population in New York State

The Native American population in New York State resides in every county across the State in urban and rural areas, with concentrations near urban areas and near reservations. Approximately 10 percent of the Native American population resides on reservations. The Urban Centers are located in New York City, Buffalo and Niagara Falls, and Rochester. Available data also reports that over 50 percent of the Native Americans living in New York State resides in the five boroughs of New York City.

The Native Americans who live outside of the reservations seek services and social interaction at the Urban Centers or with other Indian Tribes/Nations, if they are not located in close proximity to their own Tribe/Nation.

### *Native American Population in New York State as Reported by the Indian Nations/Tribes*

Indian Nation/Tribe	Reservation	Enrollment	Resident Population
<b>IROQUOIS:</b>			
Cayuga Nation of Indians	Seneca Falls Territory	525	40
Oneida Indian Nation	Oneida Nation Territory	1,000 *	500 *
Onondaga Nation	Onondaga Reservation	1,959 *	900 *
St. Regis Mohawk Tribe	St. Regis Mohawk	14,779	14,779
Seneca Nation of Indians	Allegany/Cattaraugus/Oil Springs  (All Seneca Territories)	7,978	22,796
Tonawanda Band of Senecas	Tonawanda Reservation	1,100 *	600 *
Tuscarora Nation	Tuscarora Reservation	1,200 *	1,500 *
<b>ALGONQUIN:</b>			
Shinnecock Tribe	Shinnecock Reservation	250 *	500 *
Unkechaug Nation	Poospatuck Reservation	128 *	250 *

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

## St. Regis Mohawk Tribe

The St. Regis Mohawk territory, known as Akwesasne, "Land Where the Partridge Drums," is located in northern New York State and crosses the international border and the St. Lawrence River, extending into Canada. The St. Regis Mohawk Tribal Council is the duly-elected and recognized government of the Mohawk people. The Tribe provides comprehensive services to the community through 10 basic divisions: Education, Economic Development, Environment, Community and Family Services, Planning, Justice, Health, Office of the Aging and Department of Social Services.

Education programs include support for students enrolled in the public schools to encourage their continuation, Head Start, GED programs, higher education and vocational training, including college extension services and Workforce Investment Act Program services. Health Services include a medical clinic, a Dental Clinic, WIC, alcohol/chemical dependency program, Teen/Women Health program, nutrition services and mental health services, and a program to empower young mothers. Community and Family Services staff addresses the needs of developmentally disabled children, families and disabled residents in the community while maintaining the integrity of the Mohawk family unit. The Community and Family Services program provides respite services for families of the developmentally disabled and supportive apartments provide services to allow residents who are developmentally disabled to transition from home to a sheltered, independent environment. The Department of Social Services provides support services for families at risk of dissolution, providing a vital link to families while insuring the maintenance of cultural values. The social services programs provide intensive preventive, foster care, adoption, child protective services and adult protective services on the Reservation through the State/Tribal Agreement with OCFS. The St. Regis Mohawk Tribe has incorporated the Family Assessment Response (FAR) as an alternative approach to providing protection to children by focusing on engaging families in support services to increase their ability to care for their children. OCFS has licensed the tribally operated Akwesasne Youth Group Home to serve 12 at-risk Native American youth which also operates under the Tribe's Department of Social Services. The Tribe's Indian Child Welfare Act staff advocates for Mohawk children throughout New York State and the United States.

## Seneca Nation

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

The Seneca Nation Child and Family Services Program provide a variety of child welfare services including preventive and foster care services. In addition, Indian Health Services provides state-of-the-art health clinics on both Reservations. Mental health, alcohol and substance abuse, domestic violence, job training, Head Start and day care programs, Indian education, housing, and a senior nutrition program are provided through staff that spends time alternating between the Cattaraugus and Allegany Reservations.

In addition to the above, the following Indian Nations or Indian organizations provide limited Indian Child Welfare services. Within New York State, all of Tribes/Nations receive Tribal notification letters.

### Cayuga Nation

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

### Onondaga Nation

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

## Summary of Governmental Structures

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

<b>Indian Nation/ Tribe</b>	<b>Governing Structure</b>	<b>Administrative</b>
Cayuga Nation of Indians	Hereditary Chiefs	Council of Chiefs
Oneida Indian Nation	Tribal Appointment	Men's Council
Onondaga Nation	Hereditary Chiefs	Council of Chiefs
St. Regis Mohawk Tribe	Tribal Elections/Chiefs	Chiefs Council
Seneca Nation of Indians	Elections/ Tribal Council	Tribal Council with President
Tonawanda Band of Senecas	Hereditary Chiefs	Council of Chiefs
Tuscarora Nation	Hereditary Chiefs	Council of Chiefs
Shinnecock Tribe	Elections/Tribal Council	Tribal Council with Chairperson
Unkechaug Nation	Tribal Elections/Trustee	Trustees Elected to 1, 2, 3 year terms

ICWA Funding:

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

**Indian Tribe/Nation/Reservation**

**County Service Area**

St. Regis Mohawk Tribe

Franklin, St. Lawrence counties

St. Regis Mohawk Reservation

primarily, but also statewide for Mohawk children

Seneca Nation of Indians

Erie, Cattaraugus and Chautauqua counties

Allegany Reservation

Cattaraugus Reservation

Cayuga Nation

Cayuga members only, statewide,

Seneca Falls Territory

are served through administrative staff;  
designated tribal territory Seneca Falls

Urban Indian Centers

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

Since 1997, the Urban Indian Centers do not receive federal Indian Child Welfare Act funding, but do provide some support services to the following areas:

New York City

Queens, Bronx, Brooklyn, Manhattan, Staten Island, Nassau, Suffolk, Putnam, Westchester and Rockland counties.

Buffalo/Niagara Falls

Niagara, Erie counties (off-reservation)

Rochester

Orleans, Genesee, Wyoming, Livingston counties

The Buffalo Urban Center provides ICWA services including preventive counseling, foster care recruitment and certification, and intervention through a purchase of services contract with the LDSS.

### **Accomplishments for 2016-2017:**

Throughout 2016, the OCFS NAS specialist met on a formal basis with various Tribal/Nation Representatives across New York. A formal protocol for regular and on-going dialogue and consultation with Tribal Leaders was established in 2002.

OCFS NAS also continued hosting quarterly meetings of the Native American Family Services Commission, which provides consultation with tribal stakeholders in both urban and reservation areas throughout New York State. These meetings helped to develop the training initiatives, provide input into the CFSP Title IV-B plan and to strengthen service delivery to Native American children and families. The quarterly meetings provide an excellent forum to introduce other OCFS supported initiatives such as Court Collaboration, Protective Services for Adults, and Chaffee Independent Living Services to Tribal and agency staff who need program support to serve their respective Tribal and Urban Indian communities. More recently, two formal Tribal Consultation meetings were held in June and November 2016, with the OCFS CWCS assistant commissioner presiding.

OCFS NAS also continues to be involved in supporting OCFS racial equality and cultural competency and addressing disproportionality minority representation in the foster care system. OCFS NAS has provided cultural competency trainings to various state agencies and local service providers.

Site visits are conducted to Indian reservations in New York by the OCFS NAS specialist. The primary purpose of the site visits is to assess the needs of the Indian Tribes/Nations and to address concerns related to the delivery of child welfare services.

From March 2016 – March 2017, OCFS participated in site visits to two of the nine Indian Nation territories. As a result of the site visits, child welfare protocols were strengthened, staff training needs were identified and family court personnel were introduced to tribal officials.

OCFS NAS continued to host quarterly meetings with Tribal and LDSS caseworkers in both urban and reservation settings. The primary purpose of these meetings was to support and improve compliance with ICWA. Such meetings were held in Albany in March and Syracuse in May and in NYC in December. OCFS hosted the first 2017 quarterly meeting in Buffalo in March.

Also in 2016-2017, OCFS supported ICWA compliance through trainings offered at various forums including LDSSs, voluntary authorized agencies and OCFS regional meetings. Approximately 350 workers attended the various trainings. An ICWA training on the new federal ICWA regulations was presented in January 2017 at the New York Public Welfare Associations' Winter Conference.

OCFS NAS offered technical assistance and compliance support to over 224 calls for assistance on ICWA cases identified by LDSSs, voluntary authorized agencies and Tribal/Nation staff in 2016-2017. OCFS distributed over 300 desk aids.

In early 2017, OCFS updated its "A Family's Basic Guide to ICWA" brochure. This brochure was distributed to all nine Tribes/Nations, Urban Native American Centers in Buffalo, Niagara Falls and New York City. The largest dissemination of the informational brochure was sent to New York City for use by the Legal Information for Families Today (LIFT) staff that provide advocacy in New York City's Family Courts.

### ***Tribal Recruitment and Retention Activities***

OCFS recognizes that the lack of certified or approved Native American foster homes can hinder compliance with ICWA. OCFS will continue to support recruitment efforts with Tribal/Nation Stakeholders.

The Tuscarora Nation, continues to collaborate with Niagara County Department of Social Services for foster care recruitment. The OCFS NAS specialist is available to the Nations to address any concerns.

As the OCFS NAS Specialist provides ICWA training to LDSSs and regional consortiums in 2016-17, the importance of recruitment of Native American foster and adoptive families will be presented. More than half of the previous year's trainings emphasized the need for recruitment of tribal/nation families.

## **Plans for 2017– 2018:**

- OCFS will continue to promote interaction with directors of services from LDSSs to reiterate and strengthen awareness regarding the need to identify Indian children and to make the appropriate notifications with assistance from the NAS staff.
- OCFS' NAS Unit will continue to facilitate the Family Service Commission quarterly meetings with Tribal/Nation and LDSS representatives in both urban and reservation settings to improve ICWA services to this population.
- OCFS will be available to support efforts of Tribes/Nations interested in establishing or expanding services under a State/Tribal Agreement.
- NYS will continue to utilize existing structures to promote ICWA goals that can be identified in consultation with the Tribal Leadership. There continues to be a need to support LDSSs to inform Tribes/Nations of Indian children and their families in preventive and child protective caseloads.
- OCFS will continue to support regional and statewide training to LDSSs, other public and private agencies, tribal/nation staff and community members to develop strategies to keep Native families intact and to identify resources to support at-risk families.
- OCFS will continue to make the NYS CFSP available to Tribes/Nations, as it will continue to support and provide assistance to the St. Regis Mohawks Tribe in its CFSP-County Plan submission.
- OCFS will continue efforts to improve child welfare services in Native American families. Regional training events are being planned to address cultural competency and ICWA related issues.
- St. Regis Mohawk Tribe has previously participated in CFSR review process and is encouraged to continue. ICWA trainings are provided by OCFS throughout the state as requested.

**Monthly Caseworker Visit Formula Grants  
and Standards for Caseworker Visits**

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

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

### Casework Contact with Parent or Relative

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

**Casework contacts must be made by one of the following individuals:** (a) the case manager; (b) the case planner<sup>1</sup>; (c) a caseworker<sup>2</sup> assigned to the case, as directed by the case planner; or (d) a parent advocate<sup>3</sup> when the contacts are directed, arranged, or otherwise coordinated by the case planner.

**Frequency:** (a) During the first 30 days of placement, casework contacts are to be held with the child's parents or relatives as often as is necessary but at a minimum, must occur at least twice unless compelling reasons are documented why such contacts are not possible. Such initial casework contacts within 30 days of placement must be made by the case manager, the case planner or a caseworker assigned to the case, as directed by the case planner; (b) After the first 30 days of placement, casework contacts are to be held with the child's parents or relatives at least once every month unless compelling reasons

---

<sup>1</sup> The case planner is the caseworker with the primary responsibility for providing or coordinating and evaluating the provision of services to the family. Case planning includes referring the child and his or her family to providers of services as needed, and delineating the roles of the various service providers. The case planner also must require collaboration among all the case workers assigned to the case so that a single family assessment and service plan is developed. Case planning responsibility also includes documenting client progress and adherence to the service plan by recording in the uniform case record that such services are provided, and making casework contacts or arranging for casework contacts as required.

<sup>2</sup> Case worker is any additional Department or Agency staff other than case manager or case planner directly involved in a child welfare case who provides services to any family member, or assesses, evaluates, makes casework contacts, and/or arranges or coordinates one or more aspects of service delivery. The case worker contributes to the development of the family assessment and service plan as directed by the case planner. There may be multiple case workers assigned to a family services stage.

<sup>3</sup> Parent advocate means a person who has previously been a recipient of child welfare services, has successfully addressed the issues which brought the family to the attention of child welfare, has been reunified with his or her children, if applicable, and has subsequently been trained as a parent advocate to work within the child welfare system. The parent advocate is only authorized to make casework contacts with the child's parent or relative.

are documented why such contacts are not possible. Such monthly casework contacts made after the first 30 days of placement must be made by one of the approved types of individuals listed above. However, no more than two of the monthly casework contacts in any six-month period may be made by a parent advocate.

### **Casework Contact with Child**

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

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

***Frequency:*** (a) During the first 30 days of placement, casework contacts are to be held with the child as often as is necessary to implement the services tasks in the family and children's services plan but must occur at least twice. At least one of the two contacts must be held at the child's placement location. The focus of the initial contacts with the child must include, but need not be limited to, determining the child's reaction to the separation and his/her adjustment to the out-of-home placement and arranging for services necessary to meet his/her needs. After the first 30 days of placement, casework contacts are to be held with the child at a minimum of once a month. At least two of the monthly contacts every 90 days must be at the child's placement location.

Where a foster child is placed in a home or facility located outside of the State of New York, the monthly casework contact requirements set forth above apply to such child. Such contacts must be made either by the authorized agency with case management and/or case planning responsibility for the child, a public agency in the state in which the foster home or facility is located or a private agency under contract with either the authorized agency or the other public agency.

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

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

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

**Frequency:** (a) During the first 30 days of placement, casework contacts are to be held with the child's caretaker as often as is necessary, but at a minimum must occur at least once at the child's placement location. (b) After the first 30 days of placement, casework contacts must be held with the child's caretaker at least monthly, and at least one of the monthly contacts every 90 days must be at the child's placement location.

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

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

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

OCFS is also contracting with six Business Analysts to promote accurate, consistent documentation of caseworker contacts. New York City (NYC) and Spring Valley account for the largest percentage of the statewide foster care population, and, thus, the largest percentage of the state's compliance with the mandatory 95 percent caseworker contact rate. Numerous voluntary authorized agencies, each with its own business processes, are contracted to provide caseworker services for NYC and Spring Valley. Five Business Analysts will work with the NYC OCFS Regional Office (NYCRO) and one Business Analyst will work with the Spring Valley OCFS Regional Office to coordinate and oversee the LDSSs and voluntary authorized agencies' compliance with federal

requirements. Business Analysts focus on providing training, technical assistance, business process analysis/enhancement, etc. in order to achieve standardization in documentation and reporting.

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

OCFS is contracting with an additional Business Analyst to prepare data reports that will assist counties and voluntary agencies as they work to understand the strengths and challenges related to their current performance; assist localities with the assessment phase of their 2018-2022 County Plan process; and assist regional offices, LDSSs, and voluntary agencies with applying CQI concepts to improve outcomes.

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

## 8. Adoption and Legal Guardianship Incentive Payments

In 2016, OCFS aligned adoption targets with the structure of the adoption incentive categories established in the federal Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act (P.L. 113-183). A file identifying every child freed for adoption with a goal of adoption as of the end of 2015 was developed. The subsets of the file are: children under age nine, children nine to 14 years old and children older than age 14. Targets of 90 percent finalizations in each category were established and each LDSS received a county-specific list. Additionally, OCFS established similar target categories based on a file of the children residing with approved/certified relatives for a period of six months or more. These are children who do not have a goal of adoption or return to parent. Targets to move 40 percent of the children toward KinGAP were established to increase focus on KinGAP as a permanency option for relative foster families. OCFS regional office staff support the LDSS work in achieving target goals especially in cases where barriers are identified that require intervention and or collaboration at a higher level. OCFS also revised the timeframe for targets to align with the federal fiscal year time period.

In 2016, OCFS focused efforts on KinGAP as a permanency option through:

- Training  
Increasing the number of LDSS and voluntary authorized agency staff trained in the *Kinship Care Overview: Presenting Options to Kin/Relative Caregivers*. The training curriculum can also be used as an overview to conduct group meetings with kin caregivers to explain their options when deciding how to meet the permanency needs of children to whom they are related.
- Information  
OCFS created, published and distributed a plain language pamphlet, *Know Your Options: Kin Caring for Children*, to introduce relatives/kin to the options under kinship care.
- Collaboration  
A Statewide Implementation Team with representatives from LDSSs and voluntary authorized agencies focused on kinship and KinGAP in 2016. The team put out a newsletter supporting the value of kinship placements and encouraging the use of KinGAP as a permanency option and developed a packet of kinship/kinGAP practice guidance that was shared with LDSSs and voluntary agencies.
- Support  
In December of 2016, OCFS awarded contracts to eight regional Permanency Resource Centers aimed at improving the safety, permanency and well-being of children in adoptive and legal guardianship families. These programs are designed to serve any family with a finalized adoption or legal guardianship without income limitations and with the ability to serve families brought together through any type of adoption (public or authorized

voluntary agency, private placement or international). An additional seven regional Permanency Resource Centers will be awarded contracts in early 2017.

On October 17, 2016, OCFS was notified that NYS had been awarded an Adoption and Legal Guardianship Incentive Payment for FY 2016 in the amount of \$157,896.00 which represents 21 percent of the entire award. These funds will be used to help fund a contract with Wendy's Wonderful Kids, whereby Permanency Recruiters will be hired and placed in various counties in upstate New York. The Permanency Recruiters will work with children in the following categories to locate a permanent resource (either through adoption or kinship) for the child:

- Children age 9 or older, who have been in care two or more years, who are freed, and are not placed with an adoption resource, and
- Youth age 16 or older, who have been in care two or more years, who are freed and have a goal of Another Planned Living Arrangement (APPLA).

**Child Welfare Waiver Demonstration  
Activities**

## 9. Child Welfare Waiver Demonstration Activities

NYS and ACS publically announced, upon approval by ACF on 9/30/2013, the full launch of its IV-E waiver initiative, which it has named Strong Families NYC. Strong Families NYC consists of the four waiver interventions in the NYC's foster care system, including: 1) reductions in caseloads and supervisory ratios; 2) use of New York's Child and Adolescent Strengths and Needs assessment tool (CANS-NY) for all children in family foster care; 3) Partnering for Success (PfS), a framework for the effective use of behavioral health care and evidence-based, trauma-focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy; and 4) Attachment Bio-behavioral Catch-up (ABC) to secure nurturing care and healthy development of infants and toddlers.

ACS continues to work with 22 of its contracted voluntary authorized agencies to maintain targets for caseload and supervisory ratio reductions and continue improving the compliance and quality of the CANS-NY. To date, all agency locations in New York City have begun PfS implementation. Agencies with locations in Queens and Manhattan completed training during 2016. The ABC model offering was expanded to the borough of the Bronx in addition to Brooklyn. Additionally, ABC services are now offered in both an Infant and Toddler version, serving children in both boroughs who are between the ages of six months and 48 months.

During 2016, NYS and ACS have focused on strengthening the implementation of Strong Families NYC by enhancing the quantity and quality of technical assistance provided to agencies and expanding the providers' capacity to implement the two evidence-based models. The Super User Learning Collaborative, robust monthly provider meetings, development of internal model-focused workgroups, and the introduction of Implementation Science Learning Modules were activities strengthened or put in place to support overall implementation of SFNYC.

As during previous reporting periods, the 22 voluntary authorized agencies continued to participate in monthly calls, facilitated by ACS staff, to review their progress with model implementation, highlight bright spots in practice and address challenges as they arise. Using reports from agencies and a data dashboard, the following progress has been made:

- As of January 19, 2017, 68.6 percent of case planner caseloads were in compliance, meaning they did not exceed 12 cases. While this is a drop from the percentage in compliance from the previous reporting period (78.2 percent), the average caseload per case planner across the system is 11 cases, which is still below the system goal. Agencies continue to experience turnover, and these vacancies impact caseloads. Several high-profile child welfare events have impacted the number of children being placed in foster care. Agencies are in the process of hiring staff to keep up with the pace of increased foster care placements. The supervisory ratio average is 3.7 case planners per supervisor, with a 95.1 percent compliance rate. The number of vacancies is far lower among the supervisors as compared to case planners.
- The December 2016 data dashboard reported 80 percent of all children in foster care had at least one CANS-NY completed within the last six months. Of those CANS-NY

completed, 78.4 percent had been reviewed and approved by their supervisor. Both of these data represent a decline from the last reporting period; however, a revised methodology was implemented starting June 30, 2016. This methodology eliminated a data entry grace period and is better aligned with the timeframes for children in family foster care settings.

In October 2016, ACS transitioned to a new CANS-NY tool, in a move to align with the Medicaid CANS-NY, which will be used at part of Medicaid redesign in New York State. The new version of the CANS-NY tool has been revised into two separate tools, one for ages 0-5 and another for ages 6-21. These two tools allow for more age-specific domains and items to be covered in each tool. Both of the two new CANS-NY versions also include an Adverse Childhood Experiences domain with expanded items applicable to children in care. The language has also been refined for clearer understanding of the items and scoring. On October 26, 2016, ACS revealed a new Electronic CANS-NY (eCANS) database. This upgraded eCANS database had several enhanced features which created a more user-friendly experience for the user. Building on feedback from the providers, the new eCANS is able to:

- email case planners' due dates for upcoming CANS based on service plan review dates and child movement; and
- email supervisors when to approve CANS, CBT+ referrals or tracking information.
- It is equipped with enhanced search options to locate a child or a particular CANS-NY; and
- allows case planners to print a summary of needs and strengths.

Several of the glitches identified in the previous system have been corrected. Most helpful is that this version is directly linked to CONNECTIONS, NYS' SACWIS, making it easier to determine when a CANS should be completed. To support this transition, ACS worked cross-divisionally to provide various opportunities to learn more about the new tools and database. In-person and web-based trainings were created to support providers during this transition.

- Partnering for Success completed the training of all staff working from agency office locations in Queens and Manhattan during this reporting period. With the completion of staff trainings in these two boroughs, ACS has now completed the initial training of staff across all Strong Families NYC involved agencies. Monthly training for new staff is ongoing. To date, 720 child welfare staff have been trained in Partnering for Success. A total of 122 mental health clinicians have completed the in-person training.

ACS, in conjunction with our City University of New York (CUNY) partners, worked diligently to refine the PfS data collection and reporting process. Due to challenges in compiling PfS data, it was difficult to share monthly updates with voluntary authorized agencies to measure staff's completion and participation in consultation and practicum activities. Now that PfS data will be shared regularly with providers, strategies to better

track these activities will be developed and reviewed. The PfS developers at the University of Maryland, Baltimore School of Social Work (UMB-SSW) are providing ongoing guidance and consultation on the implementation and NYC adaptation of the model.

As a result of PfS training and improved knowledge of identifying mental health needs, 236 children and youth have been referred to Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Plus (CBT+) (including Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, TF-CBT). Using features in the eCANS database a case planner can screen and refer children to CBT. As of January 17, 2017, 4,240 children and youth had an approved CBT screening. Of those screened, 545 children or youth met the criteria, via the database, to receive CBT services. Of those referred 238 children started services, 46 successfully completed services, and 26 discontinued/dropped out of services. The providers continue to struggle with properly tracking and documenting service provision in the database. Efforts to improve their ability to track this information were discussed during monthly conference calls and borough based meetings. The more user-friendly eCANS database will make the ability to navigate these fields easier.

- As previously mentioned, the ABC intervention, offered by a firm called Power of Two has been expanded geographically and in target population. Starting in October of 2017, children residing in the Bronx became eligible to receive this intervention in addition to the children living in Brooklyn. Furthermore, ABC is now offered to infants and toddlers between the ages of six months and 48 months. Power of Two hired additional parent coaches to service the Bronx and promoted successful parent coaches to deliver the toddler model. With the expansion to children residing in the Bronx and toddlers, an additional twelve foster care agencies joined the ABC service continuum. As of December 31, 2017, a total of 423 case planners, 123 supervisors, and 20 other agency staff were trained in ABC.

As of December 31, 2016, there were 1,098 children eligible to receive the ABC intervention. Of this number, 248 infants/toddlers or 22.6 percent have been referred. Of those referred, 170 children began ABC services, 91 of whom are currently receiving services. Sixty-three children successfully completed the ABC interventions and fifteen discontinued. To increase referrals and support the agencies to engage families in this model, ACS provided each agency with a referral target, or the number children they should refer by October 30, 2017. For several agencies, the referral targets have been used as a guide to gauge referrals appropriately. Even with referral targets, ABC referrals remain lower than expected. In sections below, the steps ACS is taking to address this challenge is further explained.

In addition to working with the partners mentioned above, CUNY, University of Maryland and Power of Two, ACS continues to take a cross-divisional approach to implementing Strong Families NYC. Weekly Governance Team meetings, consisting of top ACS leadership are held to discuss model design and implementation progress. Through these meetings, steps to address challenges and continue forward are made.

In 2017, the PfS Workgroup will continue holding internal discussions on which additional transfer of learning activities should be created to further embed PfS skills within case practice. While not part of the PfS curriculum, ACS, CUNY and agencies alike feel case planners, supervisors and mental health clinicians need more support to strengthen the collaboration between child welfare and mental health professionals.

In 2017, ACS will work with Dr. Allison Metz, associate director and scientist with the National Implementation Research Network, Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute, at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, to continue conducting Implementation Science Learning Modules. The focus of these modules will be on improving communication between the agency staff, agency implementation teams, agency leadership and ACS. The modules will address how to set up an effective coaching service delivery plan.

ACS and the Workforce Institute will assume the responsibilities of the ABC training for agency staff. After the completion of the TOT, ACS trainers will work with an instructional designer to develop participant and facilitator training guides.

As mentioned above, ABC conferences are being held to address cases that have not been referred for the intervention. It is hoped that by reviewing cases individually with the agencies, ACS will be able to better understand referral barriers and provide technical assistance to address the challenges.

# **Quality Assurance System**

## 10. Quality Assurance System

The Quality Assurance (QA)/Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) system is currently functioning within NYS.

In 2013, OCFS participated in a CQI assessment conducted by the federal Children's Bureau. While many areas of strength were noted, several areas for improvement were also identified. OCFS has worked over the last several years to enhance our CQI system to help us better assess our implementation of the Child Welfare Practice Model.

In 2017, OCFS will utilize the Capacity Building Center for States CQI assessment process to assess how the state's system compares to comprehensive CQI best practices. The assessment process will identify the strengths and gaps in the state's continuous quality improvement/quality assessment structure and process.

The following summary details the ways in which New York State's CQI system is currently functioning:

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

#### Foundational Requirement

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

Monitoring of LDSSs and voluntary authorized agencies is done through OCFS Regional Offices with support from OCFS home office. OCFS Regional and Home Office staff review performance data, complaints, and fatalities for the purpose of analyzing trends and identifying areas of strength and areas needing improvement. Additionally, case record reviews are performed to review compliance with statutes and regulations and to promote quality case work practice. A description of each of the reviews is included at the end of this section. In 2016, the following case reviews were conducted:

County LDSS	OMA Reviews	FAR	SPA	PRT
Albany			30	
Bronx				
Broome				
Cattaraugus			20	
Cayuga			20	
Chautauqua				
Chemung	14	6		
Chenango				
Clinton				
Cortland			12	
Columbia				
Delaware	15			
Dutchess				
Erie				
Franklin				
Fulton				
Greene	15			
Jefferson			15	5
Kings				
Livingston				
Madison				
Monroe				
Montgomery	15			
Nassau				
New York				
Niagara	10	5		
NYC (ACS)	138			42
NYC Regional Office				
Office of Special Investigations				
Oneida				
Onondaga	20	10		
Ontario			10	
Orange	10	5		
Oswego	14	6	20	
Putnam				
Queens				

Rensselaer				
Richmond				
Rockland	10	5		
Saratoga	10		20	
Schenectady				
Schoharie	8			
Seneca				
St. Lawrence	10	5	20	
Steuben				
St. Regis	10	5		
Suffolk	50			
Sullivan				
Tompkins	5	5		
Ulster	10	5		
Warren				
Washington			10	
Wayne				
Westchester	20	10		
Wyoming				
Yates	15			

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

Increasing the capacity for OCFS and LDSS staff to utilize data within a CQI context continues to be a priority for OCFS. Onsite Training is provided to state, local and voluntary agency staff related to the use of data.

OCFS continued to provide on-site data training to OCFS regional offices and LDSSs.

2017 training and overview events have been held with representatives from:

- Albany regional office (Approximately 13 districts)
- Family engagement specialists
- Rochester region County (Approximately 9 districts) Directors of Services and Agency Executive Directors
- Onondaga County
- Oneida County
- Washington County
- Franklin County
- Schenectady County
- Sullivan County

- St. Regis/Mohawk Tribe
- OCFS business analysts working with casework contacts projects
- Joint planning with OCFS and NYS Office of Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services

### Quality Data Collection

NYS has a robust data collection system contained in CONNECTIONS. Information from the CONNECTIONS system can be used to monitor compliance with federal and state statutes and regulations. In addition, OCFS collects data through case records reviews, fatality reviews, and complaints. This data is made available to LDSSs and voluntary authorized agencies.

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

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

### Case Review Process

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

### Analysis and Dissemination of Quality Data

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

### **Real Example of a LDSS utilizing evidence to improve outcomes for children in foster care:**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

- Reunification – 7 youth
- Finalizing Adoption - 22 youth
- KinGAP – 1 youth

### Feedback to Stakeholders

NYS has a variety of opportunities to develop feedback, including through the Regional Office (RO) quarterly meetings with each LDSS and voluntary authorized agency, court collaboratives, and through the LDSS plan-development process.

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

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

## **2) Standards to evaluate the quality of services**

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

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

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

- Do any safety issues exist for this child?
- Does the case record document that the child is safe in relationship to the foster care setting?
- In addition, through the use of the onsite review instrument (OSRI), similar questions are asked. Data for these SPA and OSRI related questions can be found under Safety Outcome 2 and Well-Being Outcome 1.

NYS also has standards related to monthly caseworker visits to ensure that children in foster care are visited and monitored monthly. Through the federal Every Child Every Month Program, the expectation is 95 percent compliance with monthly caseworker visits. In FFY 2016, [10/1/15 – 9/30/16 (data as of 12/04/16)], NYS achieved 95.5 percent compliance with this standard.

### **3) Identifies strengths and needs of the service delivery system**

NYS's CQI system identifies both the strengths and needs of the service delivery system through the review of each county's Child and Family Services Plan. All NYS LDSSs are required to submit a single comprehensive five-year county plan, with annual updates. This plan is currently undergoing a transformation to improve both the content of the plan narrative and the quality of the state review process.

Throughout 2017, with the assistance of OCFS and Public Catalyst, counties are working through a yearlong planning process that includes thorough diagnostic work, with a focus on qualitative and quantitative data, development of strategies to address identified needs, and creation of measures to evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies. This plan narrative is built upon the following tenants of CQI:

1. Assessment of Strengths and Needs:
  - a. Identification of strengths/needs and
  - b. Understanding of underlying factors that impact performance;
2. Planning for and Implementation of Strategies:

- a. Selecting and/or designing a solution and
  - b. Implementation of the solution as planned; and
3. Testing and understanding the effectiveness of the solution.

#### **4) Provides Relevant Reports**

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

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

#### **5) Evaluates implemented program improvement measures**

This is an area in which OCFS plans to further develop. While OCFS began implementation of a Practice Model, measuring its effectiveness in improving the outcomes of safety, permanency and well-being is just starting to take root. Throughout 2017, OCFS is working with LDSSs on developing their Child and Family Services Plan. A component of this plan will be developing metrics to evaluate their strategies that are included in their plans. This will be a focus with the on-going County Plan Support webinars; these webinars are scheduled every other month throughout 2017.

OCFS has teamed up with Public Catalyst to assist LDSSs in understanding how to use data to diagnose factors that have the greatest impact on the CFSR Indicators. In addition to a statewide kickoff event held on February 21, 2017, OCFS is sponsoring webinars throughout the year. These webinars, open to all LDSSs and other stakeholders, such as the Court Improvement Program, focus on County Planning steps. For example, the March 2017 and May 2017 webinars focus on diagnosing underlying factors; the July and September webinars focus on identifying (or creating) processes and strategies to positively impact those underlying factors, and the November webinar will provide LDSSs with assistance developing output and early outcome indicators. County plans are due to OCFS on January 31, 2018, and we are supporting LDSSs they develop their next five-year Child and Family Services Plans.

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

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

**New York State CAPTA Coordinator:**

**Melaney Szklenka**  
**52 Washington Street**  
**Rensselaer, NY 12144**  
**(518) 486-7674**  
**Melaney.Szklenka@ocfs.ny.gov**

## **CAPTA Initiatives and Accomplishments**

The federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) (42 USC 5101, et seq.) supports a number of activities designed to develop and strengthen child abuse and neglect prevention programs in NYS. CAPTA funds continue to support the federal Children's Justice Act programs, and management of the Healthy Families New York (HFNY) Program, the William B. Hoyt Memorial Children and Family Trust Fund (Trust Fund) and the federal Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention program. In addition, funds supported scientific research; training and technical assistance, public awareness, and data collection and analysis to support development of best practices and to better serve children and families of NYS.

Through CAPTA project coordination, OCFS verifies that the state's utilization of CAPTA funds is in compliance with federal requirements and guidelines and that CAPTA projects meet stated objectives. The CAPTA Coordinator assumes the role of State Liaison Officer and works with OCFS' policy, legal and regional office staff to fulfill that responsibility. The CAPTA Coordinator oversees the Children's Justice Act Fund and is the coordinator for the Children's Justice Task Force, and the HFNY Program as needed. In this capacity, the CAPTA Coordinator is able to facilitate collaboration and integration with other child welfare and other services for children and families, respond to individual requests for information on programs available in NYS, and respond to complaints from individuals that are brought to the attention of the Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families (ACF). Additionally, as previously indicated OCFS is the state agency responsible for the administration for both the Title IV-B and the CAPTA Grant funds, allowing for improved coordination and collaboration.

### **Accomplishments in 2016-2017:**

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

#### *Child Welfare Data System*

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

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

During 2016, OCFS continued its long-term evaluation of the Healthy Families New York (HFNY) project by collecting data for a 15-year follow-up. Activities focused primarily on conducting interviews with 1,128 of the original study mothers and their approximately 15-year-old target children. Since the follow-up study began in December 2015, interviews have been conducted with 807 study mothers, 680 target children, and 29 caregivers. These interviews are expected to continue through mid-2017 as the remaining target children turn 15 years old. OCFS also anticipates obtaining administrative data from various state agencies, including the juvenile justice system. Preliminary results are expected in 2019.

### **Federal Family Violence**

Federal Family Violence funding continues to provide financial support to residential and non-residential programs experiencing low occupancy or needing health and safety enhancements to their residential program. In 2016-17, OCFS funded a total of 73 DV programs using Federal Family Violence Funds. These programs began providing services in April 2015 and include Child Protective/Domestic Violence Collaboration Projects, serving underserved populations, trauma-informed programs and supervised visitation.

### **Children's Justice Act**

The federal Children's Justice Act (CJA) Program Grant continues to enhance OCFS' ability to develop, establish, and operate programs designed to improve (1) the handling of child abuse and maltreatment cases, particularly cases of child sexual abuse and exploitation, in a manner which limits additional trauma to the child victim; (2) the handling of cases of suspected child abuse and maltreatment-related fatalities; (3) the investigation and prosecution of cases of child abuse and maltreatment, particularly child sexual abuse and exploitation; and (4) the handling of cases involving children with disabilities or serious health-related problems who are victims of abuse or neglect.

Children's Justice Act program funds are primarily used to promote start-up and/or improved functioning of local community coordination of the investigation, prosecution and treatment of child abuse and neglect cases. Through the implementation of local multidisciplinary investigation teams (MDTs), child advocacy centers (CACs) and child fatality review teams (CFRTs), child protective services, law enforcement, prosecution, medical, mental health, and advocacy agencies are better able to coordinate, collaborate and communicate on cases. The goals of all funded programs are to reduce additional trauma to child victims after their disclosure, improve the handling of cases for all agencies involved, and improve the skills and knowledge of all professionals involved.

The federal Children's Justice Act Program has allowed OCFS to expand its efforts to develop and maintain MDTs, CACs and CFRTs across the state. A growing number of MDT/CAC programs are exploring the feasibility of expanding services into surrounding counties. During 2016, CJA funds were used to allow Clinton County to formalize CAC collaborations in the neighboring counties of Essex, Franklin and the creation of the first CAC at St. Regis.

Fulton County expanded to provide services to Montgomery and Hamilton. In the North Country there were additional expansions with Jefferson County moving into St. Lawrence and Lewis counties. In the western region, Genesee County began to formalize services in Orleans and Wyoming counties. Recognizing the collaborations that are naturally occurring among counties, OCFS developed a Request for Proposals (RFP) in 2016 to fund additional CAC's including regional CACs in NYS. This RFP will be issued in 2017 using available CJA funds. Through these efforts, NYS is improving access to the services of CACs statewide.

One of the primary programs funded through CJA is the New York State Child Advocacy Resource and Consultation Center (CARCC), which provides services that include specialized and/or interdisciplinary training, team functioning analysis, technical assistance, resource development, and coordination of a statewide coalition of CACs and MDTs. 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.

In 2016, OCFS issued an Invitation for Bid (IFB) and awarded the CARCC contract to the New York State Children's Alliance, which is the state chapter for CACs. New York State Children's Alliance was instrumental in assisting the CJA staff with providing technical assistance for many innovative programs as well as provision of assessment and consultation services; a mentoring program; marketing and co-sponsorship; the CARCC website; the CARCC listserv; the Case Tracking Database; a toll free telephone number; the Child Abuse and Disabilities website; an enhanced website and training module development. These activities are described in more detail below.

### *Consultation and Collaboration Services*

CJA staff works closely with CARCC staff to provide more individualized consultation services to MDTs and CACs throughout the state since the development of the 2015 – 2019 CFSP. At the request of CJA staff, five on-site consultation sessions/county events/collaboration with New York State Child Advocacy Resource were provided. These events included such activities as distributing mandated reporter cards, attending the NYSCA board meeting conference calls, and attending training workshops on the NYSCA Less is More/First Responder webinar. CARCC gathered information from CACs regarding the databases each CAC uses to collect its data. CARCC also participated in several conference calls with the National Children's Alliance (NCA)

regarding how CACs track data. The goal was to figure out how to come up with solutions, including using uniform definitions, so that each CAC in the state is tracking data the same way. This consistency will improve the accuracy of the data collected. CARCC provides on-going consultation by phone, email, and additional site visits as necessary. In 2016, CARCC collaborated with OCFS on many common issues and goals including:

- Obtaining accreditation/reaccreditation for a CAC
- Recording of forensic interviews
- Functioning and collaboration of members on Multidisciplinary teams; enhancing how teams function
- Updating the current Children's Justice Task Force Interviewing Best Practices Training and Guidelines

It should be noted that CARCC also provides information to professionals, students and concerned citizens throughout the nation, responding to over 300 technical assistance requests in the past 12 months. Technical assistance included, but was not limited to, the request of mandated reporter cards, information on recording forensic interviews in New York State, referrals for legal advice, resources on child-on-child offenses, and statistics on medical exams at CACs. CARCC's resource library has expanded and offers users a wealth of printed, audio and video materials. In addition, CARCC's website, listserv, and resource guides have aided in the availability of these services.

### *Mentoring Program*

Of the several approaches used by CJA staff to improve team building, one of the most effective is team-to-team mentoring. Mentoring sessions between counties has proven to be mutually beneficial. These are essential connections as teams learn from each other and work through useful solutions to shared problems. This concerted effort also encourages ongoing associations between counties. In the past 12 months, CJA staff has partnered with the New York State's Children's Alliance (NYSCA) to provide mentoring through their leadership program. The leadership program provides peer support and mentoring from a seasoned CAC Director to a newly establishing or a new CAC Director. Clinton County has served as a mentor for Essex, Franklin and the St Regis Mohawk. This partnership lead to the creation of a MDTs in all of these counties and the tribal nation. The objective is to create a regional center in Clinton County that will provide satellite services in surrounding counties.

### *Marketing and Co-Sponsorship Program*

CARCC's marketing and co-sponsorship program is utilized by CJA staff in order to assist MDTs and CACs with initiatives to support training, awareness events, and team-related needs. The co-sponsorship program is comprised of initiatives designed for an audience of multiple counties.

The program provides an additional benefit to the MDTs and CACs of NYS by making possible collaborative events where expertise is openly shared.

Support is made available in the form of financial reimbursement for event-related expenses, such as but not limited to promotional materials, meeting rooms, and honorarium fees. In addition, the marketing program provides support to MDTs and CACs via the CARCC website and listserv, which offers the equivalent of free advertisement of events and employment posting services. In 2016, CARCC supported one event for counties throughout the state which was at the Bivona Child Abuse Summit with over 650 people in attendance. The Summit offered a variety of workshops and speakers for an audience of law enforcement, child protective workers, lawyers, medical and mental health professionals, among others.

#### *CARCC Website ([www.nyscarcc.org](http://www.nyscarcc.org))*

A valuable tool for sharing and collecting information, the website has a worldwide audience and offers resources and information. Professionals from academic institutions and nonprofits as well as concerned citizens worldwide often learn of CARCC via the website, which provides technical assistance materials, up-to-date information about training opportunities from across the country, and program outcome data on CACs. The site is linked to numerous relevant private and public websites addressing a wide range of topics of interest to child abuse professionals.

Not only are CJA staff able to reach a wider audience through this website, but this technology also provides a means for dissemination and information sharing for MDTs and CACs.

The directory of MDTs and CACs provides a detailed profile report of all the teams in NYS, highlighting demographic information, case criteria, funding sources, and interagency partners. Teams can also utilize the website to post job announcements and training opportunities.

#### *CARCC Listserv*

*CARCC Listserv* CJA staff often use the CARCC listserv to reach out to professionals in the field. By inviting professionals to join crucial discussions concerning issues such as investigation, prosecution, medical and mental health treatment, the list serve has expanded CARCC's ability to provide information and knowledge to a larger audience.. There are 176 members currently on the listserv. The members participate in a forum for exchange of information and ideas. The listserv provides an opportunity for electronic dialogue and facilitate information sharing. Members have the ability to pose questions, request feedback or join a discussion regarding funding or other pertinent discourse. Information continues to be exchanged at an active rate on the listserv, with over 50 messages posted in the past year.

### *NCA Trak for Child Advocacy Programs*

This year CJA staff in conjunction with New York State Children's Alliance, Inc. (NYSCA), provided general technical support on NCA Trak and gathered and compiled bi-yearly reports. A training session was held at the Annual Meeting for CAC directors and coordinators on September 13, 2016, with Jonathan Picklesimer, Coordinator of Information Services at the National Children's Alliance.

A workgroup was created in order to create guidelines around how to define and track and case and the capabilities of the system that teams are not currently accessing. The workgroup plans to finalize the guidelines in the spring of 2017.

Technical assistance for NCA Trak will be available to all NYS CACs through the NCA. Technical assistance will also continue to be provided by CJA staff, NYSCA staff and Jonathan Picklesimer. As of the end of 2016, all NYS programs are using NCA Trak

### **Accomplishments for 2016-2017**

As of FFY 2016, all CAC programs are meeting or exceeding OCFS standards. There are now 40 OCFS-approved programs serving 43 counties, involving over 18,000 physically and/or sexually abused child victims. In addition, Clinton County formalized CAC collaborations in the neighboring counties of Essex, Franklin and the creation of the first CAC at St. Regis.

Fulton County expanded to provide services to Montgomery and Hamilton. In the North Country we saw additional expansions with Jefferson County moving into St. Lawrence and Lewis. In the western region, Genesee began to formalize services in Orleans and Wyoming counties.

Recognizing the collaborations that are naturally occurring among counties, OCFS developed a Request for Proposals (RFP) in 2016 to fund additional CAC's including regional CACs in New York State. This RFP will be issued in 2017 using available CJA funds. Through these efforts, NYS is improving access to the services of CACs statewide. This formerly underserved area now has access to child-focused environments where joint investigations, specialized evaluations, trauma-informed treatment, and prosecution of child physical and/or sexual abuse cases are provided by a Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT).

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

In 2016, OCFS used available CJA funds to award a single source contract to the New York State Chapter of the Children's Alliance to help support and strengthen the state chapter. CJA staff

work with NYSCA staff to hold MDT/CAC regional meetings across NYS. These regional meetings promote sharing resources, strengthening collaborations and identifying needs in different regions of NYS.

NCA has accredited 34 of the programs through their national standards. CJA staff continues to provide technical assistance to the remaining six programs in their application for NCA accreditation.

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

CJA staff conducted 47 on-site technical assistance and/or monitoring reviews during 2016. Some programs required numerous visits to provide necessary program development services. Staff also provided numerous phone consultations to provide technical assistance to MDT/CAC programs. Many consultations can be very lengthy and/or require considerable follow up.

CJA staff worked to develop of 47 contracts during the year. They include:

- 40 county or regional specific work plans, performance targets and budgets;
- Three statewide initiatives through the Children's Justice Act Program;
- One contract reassignment from a municipality to a not-for-profit entity;
- Assisting contractors in contract development; and
- Assisting contractors in budget revisions and/or amendments.

CJA staff continued to collaborate in intra-agency initiatives with the OCFS Bureau of Training, Regional Operations and Office of Strategic Planning and Policy Development. Activities included participation in a Request for Proposals (RFP) for forensic interview training as a result of feedback from the field on the need for additional training offerings. The contract for forensic interviewing was awarded to *Child First* based on the Gunderson curriculum. CJA staff assisted in the planning for the roll out and transition from Forensic Interviewing Best Practices (FIBP) to the Gunderson model.

CJA staff also continued inter-agency collaborations with staff from the Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS), Office of Victim Services (OVS) and the Division of State Police. CJA staff was actively involved in two training initiatives ("Less is More" and "First Responder") supported by NYSCA and in collaboration with DCJS.

## **Activities addressing Amendments to CAPTA made by P.L. 114-198, the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act of 2016 (CARA)**

*Update on the steps the state has taken since the submission of the Annual CAPTA Report and 2017 APSR related to the passage of CARA.*

NYS' 2017 Annual Progress and Services Report, submitted to the federal government on June 30, 2016, specifies the state laws, regulations, and procedures that place NYS in compliance with CAPTA. The CAPTA State Plan submitted in June 2011 previously specified policies and procedures to address the needs of infants affected by illegal substance abuse or withdrawal symptoms resulting from prenatal exposure, or Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder. These included appropriate referrals to child protective services and other appropriate services, and a requirement that health care providers involved in the delivery or care of such affected infants notify the child protective services system. It also addressed the development of a plan of safe care for the infant born and identified as being affected by illegal substance abuse or withdrawal symptoms or Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder.

As noted in the 2017 APSR submission, the following laws, regulations and policy or procedural documents demonstrate our compliance:

- Family Court Act (FCA) §1012(f) – Neglected Child;
- SSL §412(2) – Maltreated Child;
- SSL §413 – Persons and Officials Required to Report Cases of Suspected Child Abuse or Maltreatment;
- SSL §415 – Reporting Procedure;
- SSL §424(13) – Duties of Child Protective Services Concerning Reports of Child Abuse and Maltreatment (Coordination, Provision or Arrangement and Monitoring of Rehabilitative Services);
- 18 NYCRR 432.2(b)(3) - (5) – Child Protective Service: Responsibilities and Organization – Investigation/Assessment, Providing, Arranging for and/or Coordinating Services and Monitoring;
- 18 NYCRR 432.3(m) and (n) – Child Protective Services: Duties Concerning Reports of Abuse or Maltreatment;  
Child Protective Services Program Manual - Chapter 4, Section D.2.b., Pages 15-16  
– Investigation and Assessment:  
[http://www.ocfs.state.ny.us/main/cps/cps\\_manual.asp](http://www.ocfs.state.ny.us/main/cps/cps_manual.asp)

Since the 2017 APSR submission, OCFS has developed and published a Local Commissioner's Memorandum (LCM), *17-OCFS-LCM-03 Amendments to the Federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act by the Federal Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act of 2016 and Corresponding State Requirements*. The purpose of this LCM is to inform LDSSs of the amendments made to the CAPTA by CARA [Public Law 114-198]. The amendments relate to the

needs of infants born and identified as being affected by prenatal substance and alcohol exposure. The release also addressed the CARA amendment relating to elimination of the reference to “illegal” substance abuse, which had already been part of NYS law. This LCM also serves to remind LDSSs of the procedures already in place that constitute NYS’s compliance with the CAPTA amendments.

*Information on any changes to laws, policies, or procedures relating to the identification and referral to CPS of infants identified as being affected by substance abuse or withdrawal symptoms resulting from prenatal drug exposure, or a Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder.*

New York State did not require changes to law, policy, or procedure.

*Update on the state’s policies and procedures regarding the development of plans of safe care to address the health and substance use disorder treatment needs of substance-exposed infants and their families or caretakers.*

With the release and publication of 17-OCFS-LCM-03, New York State highlighted the requirements and expectations for plans of safe care. Commissioners of local departments of social services were notified that the plan of safe care must address not only the immediate safety needs of the affected infant, but also the health and substance use disorder needs of the affected family or caregiver. A plan of safe care must also include referrals to appropriate services that support the affected infant and family or caregivers.

The plan of safe care should be developed with the input from the parents and caregivers, as well as from other professionals, and agencies involved in serving the affected infant and family.

As for the development of a plan of safe care for the infant and the family or caregiver as being affected by substance abuse or withdrawal symptoms **or** Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (section 106(b)(2)(B)(iii) of CAPTA), the following continues to demonstrate NYS compliance:

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

Addiction to heroin and other opioids continues to be at crisis level for many counties of NYS. As stated in the 2017 APSR, Governor Andrew Cuomo reconvened a special advisory group comprised of representatives from treatment and service provider agencies, former addicts and representatives New York State Department of Health (DOH), Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS), Office of Mental Health (OMH), Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS), the Office of Court Administration (OCA), and Probation and Correctional Alternatives (PCA). The advisory group conducted “town hall” meetings around the state and heard from multiple stakeholders, including health care providers, law enforcement officials, and community members to ascertain the prevalence of the opioid addiction problem in several regions. The advisory group reported back to the governor on June 9, 2016. Its report, *Combatting the Heroin and Opioid Crisis*, outlined a comprehensive plan to combat the state’s heroin and opioid crisis.

In 2016, Governor Cuomo signed into law a comprehensive legislative package that limits opioid prescriptions from thirty to seven days, requires mandatory prescriber education on pain management to help prevent addiction, and eliminated burdensome insurance barriers to treatment and expanded supports for New York residents in recovery. Further information is available here: [Legislation to Combat the Heroin and Opioid Crisis](#).

OCFS continues to collaborate with DOH, OMH, OCA and OASAS to provide training for child welfare caseworkers on working with opioid-involved families. OCFS has also collaborated with the aforementioned agencies to: explore case practice models which incorporate the use of medically-assisted treatment, target expansion of treatment services, encourage local collaboration between family courts and LDSSs, and encourage LDSSs to utilize kinship care and other interventions which promote family involvement, and concurrent planning to achieve permanency if needed. Ongoing hands-on technical assistance is provided to LDSSs regarding the opioid crisis through OCFS’s regional offices.

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

OCFS’s webpage has also publicized the following support made available by OASAS:

The OASAS HOPEline (1-877-846-7369) offers free, confidential help for alcoholism, drug abuse, and problem gambling 24 hours per day, seven days per week. Clinicians offer crisis and motivations interviewing for callers in need, and refer callers to more than 1,500 local prevention and treatment providers.

*Describe the procedures the state has developed to monitor plans of safe care.*

**Monitoring:**

- OCFS will continue to access information from CONNECTIONS on infants with the following designated safety factors:
  - o Child has a positive toxicology for legal or illegal drugs and/or alcohol
  - o Caretaker(s) currently abuses alcohol, to the extent that it seriously affects his/her ability to supervise, protect or care for the child(ren)
  - o Caretaker(s) currently abuses legal or illegal drugs, to the extent that it seriously affects his/her ability to supervise, protect or care for the child(ren)
  
- OCFS will also monitor case documentation on the development and implementation of the plans of safe care through the review of child protective services cases using the Ongoing Monitoring Assessment (OMA) process.

*Describe any multi-agency outreach, consultation or coordination the state has taken to support implementation.*

In addition to information shared above, OCFS has been in communication with OASAS on a regular basis. OCFS, OASAS, and DOH participate in a standing monthly meeting for the Core Team of the New York State In-Depth Technical Assistance for Pregnant and Parenting Women with Substance Use Disorders and their Substance Exposed Infants (IDTA SEI).

This collaborative effort is the result of an OASAS application for an 18-24-month period of in-depth technical assistance (IDTA) from the National Center on Substance Abuse and Child Welfare on behalf of Onondaga County in NYS. The focus of this IDTA is on pregnant and parenting women with substance use disorders and their substance exposed infants.

This population of mothers and babies is particularly vulnerable, and in great need of services. Onondaga County was chosen to participate in this IDTA because they reflect a location that is, with the exception of racial composition, representative NYS. Moreover, Onondaga County has an increasing number of pregnant women admitted to substance use disorder treatment, and an increasing number of babies born substance exposed, with Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome.

Finally, Onondaga already has the basis of a collaboration to bring in additional stakeholders for a more comprehensive cross-systems team. DOH and OCFS are also part of this state team for this project. This team will work together on the following goals: first, increase universal screening of pregnant women, as well as infants, second, increase access to treatment for women and infants, including outreach to women in marginalized populations, third, develop a scope of practice for the use of peer services with this target population of women.

In the out-months of this project, the plan is to explore expansion to other counties across the state.

### **Update on activities to address P.L. 114-22, the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act of 2015**

OCFS has addressed P.L. 114-22 through its provisions and procedures in addressing the requirements of P.L. 113-183, of identifying and assessing all reports involving known or suspected child sex trafficking through policy and OCFS regulation. OCFS released 15-OCFS-ADM-16 *Requirements to Identify, Document, Report, and Provide Services to Child Sex Trafficking Victims* on September 1, 2015 (Revised March 30, 2016) and OCFS regulation 18 NYCRR 431.8(b)(3) and (g) was promulgated to meet the requirements of P.L. 113-183.

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

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

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

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

The addition of a *victim of sex trafficking or severe forms of trafficking* to the definition of child abuse and neglect and to sexual abuse, required an amendment to NYS law in order to meet the federal requirement of May 29, 2017.

An abused child is defined in law at section 412(1) of the Social Services Law. That definition refers to the definition of an abused child in section 1012(e) of the Family Court Act (FCA). On April 10, 2017, section 1012(e) of the FCA was amended to include within the definition of an abused child, a child less than eighteen years of age whose parent or other person legally responsible permits or encourages such child to engage in any act or commits or allows to be committed against such child any offense that would render such child either a victim of sex trafficking or a victim of severe forms of trafficking in person pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 7102 as enacted by PL 106-386 or any successor federal statute.

NYS did not opt to apply the sex trafficking portion of the definition of child abuse and neglect and sexual abuse to a person who has not attained the age of 24.

In January 2016, to inform the field, OCFS created a question and answer Prezi presentation for the January 2016 NYPWA conference to provide a brief overview of the requirements for some of the policies that were released for policy implementation of the federal Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act (P.L.11-183).

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

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

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

While responding to youth who are absent without consent, missing, or abducted is pertinent for securing the safety, permanency, and well-being of children, it is also connected to the other critical components of (P.L. 113-183) – specifically, preventing and responding to children who

are victims of sex trafficking, applying a reasonable and prudent parent standard, and supporting a transition to a successful adulthood. Each of these areas must be addressed when making decisions regarding the response to and support of children who are absent without consent, missing, or abducted.

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

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

To assist LDSSs and voluntary authorized agencies, OCFS released Informational Memorandum (INF) 17-OCFS-INF-03 New York State Processes Related to Notifications of Victims of Human Trafficking on March 17, 2017. The purpose of this INF is to explain differences between certain requirements (detailed in 15-OCFS-ADM-16) to identify, document, and report child victims of trafficking, and the process of confirming human trafficking victimhood; a process managed by the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) and New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA).

As per ACYF-CB-PI-16-03, OCFS submitted NYS' Attachment F – CAPTA Assurance, signed by Governor Andrew M. Cuomo, to the ACF regional office on January 17, 2017.

### *Additional and Ongoing Activities*

#### **New York State Safe Harbour**

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

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

Bureaus. Those counties include: Chautauqua, Herkimer, Madison, Oswego, Schuyler and Tompkins.

Through this coordinated, statewide response, Safe Harbour: NY aims to increase identification of CSEC and trafficking victims and provide services through NYS' child welfare and allied youth service systems.

Key elements of Safe Harbour: NY includes the following:

- Developing a county-based action plan to enhance or create specialized services for child victims of CSEC and trafficking
- Training child welfare professionals and key responders on identifying and providing services to victims of child trafficking
- Providing ongoing technical assistance to professionals and organizations on building a county-based system response to identifying, assessing, and providing services to child and youth CSEC and trafficking victims as well as topic and case-specific technical assistance as needed
- Increasing services across the state responsive to the needs of youth with CSEC/trafficking histories and experiences
- Developing technical assistance documents including the *Blueprint for Building a Child Welfare Response to Commercially Sexually Exploited and Trafficked Youth* (a road map for LDSSs to respond to the needs of trafficked and sexually exploited youth and their non-offending family members in their localities) and the *Responding to Commercially Sexually Exploited and Trafficked Youth: A Handbook for Child Serving Professionals* (a to guide for direct-care professionals working through many of the common issues that arise when working with a youth who is vulnerable, trafficked, or sexually exploited). These and many other resource guides are available on OCFS's recently revised website at: <http://dev.ocfs.ny.gov/main/humantrafficking/resources.asp>
- Developing the *OCFS Initial Trafficking Tool for Youth*, a rapid screening tool to aid providers in quickly and accurately interviewing youth to identify victims of CSEC and child trafficking
- Incorporating relevant elements of OCFS' response to the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act into the Safe Harbour: NY program

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

CJA staff assisted in the development of numerous specialized training initiatives for MDT/CAC investigations, treatment, management and prosecution of child abuse cases, particularly those involving sexual abuse and exploitation. CJA funds were also used to support MDT members'

participation at these various trainings. CJA funds also supported the 2016 Bivona Summit which was attended by over 600 professionals from various disciplines across the state. Two additional state-wide trainings were offered, one in Syracuse and the other in the North Country reaching over 300 professionals including attendees from Vermont. CJA staff continued to establish and maintain linkages with other national, state and local organizations that support inter-agency and multidisciplinary collaboration on child abuse cases, particularly child sexual abuse cases. These collaborations included attending meetings and/or teleconferences with:

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

CJA staff continued to work closely with the New York State Police Special Victims Unit to conduct a five-day comprehensive training seminar for professionals in investigation of sex offenses entitled "Crimes Against Children Training Seminar" Attendees included law enforcement, child protective services, victim advocates, medical personnel, district attorneys and other multidisciplinary team members. The training was held in May, 2016. It included topics such as sex trafficking, forensic interviewing, victimology, and the medical evaluation of child victims, using forensic sciences in child abuse investigations, investigations involving persons with disabilities, crime scene investigations and legal perspectives. The annual training is planned for May 22 – 26, 2017.

### *Sexual Abuse Dynamics and Intervention Training*

Statewide training provided to child welfare staff on the dynamics of sexual abuse as well as on the treatment modalities currently utilized to protect and support victims, and to treat and support the family. **This course will be provided to a combined audience of Child Protective Services and other Child Welfare caseworkers.**

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

## *New York State Citizen Review Panels*

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

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

The panels provide for public outreach and comment in order to assess the impact of current procedures and practices upon children and families in the community. The panels also submitted their 2016 recommendations which included ways to possibly improve the child protective services system at the State and local levels. These recommendations were submitted prior to the required statutory deadline of February 1, 2017. This is attached as Appendix "A". The response from OCFS (Appendix "B") will include a description of whether or how the State will incorporate the recommendations of the panel (where appropriate) to make measurable progress in improving the State and local CPS systems.

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

### **Accomplishments in 2016-2017:**

In December 2012, OCFS released the Trust Fund Request for Proposals (RFP), combining state-allocated funds to the Trust Fund and federal Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) grant funds aimed at improving the safety and wellbeing of children and families who may be at risk of and/or experienced some form of family violence. A new RFP combining Trust Fund and CBCAP funds will be issued in 2017.

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

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

- To strengthen families by building protective factors to reduce the risks of child abuse and maltreatment;
- To improve safety and well-being of children and families affected by domestic violence;
- To improve the safety and well-being of the elderly at risk of abuse by family members.

The federal 2015 Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention funding is in keeping with the mission of the Trust Fund, which administers the federal program to support child abuse prevention and include families affected by domestic violence. Trust Fund initiatives also support some of the strategies of the OCFS CFSR such as increased efforts to support strength-based and family-centered practices that engage parents, evidence-based and evidence-informed programs and practices, and efforts to promote safety, permanency and child wellbeing through enhanced family support services.

The 2016 CBCAP federal grant award of \$1,389,269 allows OCFS to continue funding programs awarded grants under the 2012 Trust Fund RFP, including the Family Resource Center Network and other evidenced-based parenting education programs engaged in efforts to support high risk families and work collaboratively with local departments of social services, where appropriate. Funds will also support the Prevent Child Abuse New York (PCANY) Prevention and Parent Helpline, and NYS' annual child abuse prevention conference, along with providing training and technical assistance.

In 2016, more than 163,000 adults and children accessed crucial support and resources from 25 program providers who received funding from the Trust Fund. Outcomes attained by those individuals include the following:

- Improved factors that protect against child abuse and maltreatment;

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

These outcomes align with efforts at the local, state and federal level to promote the safety, permanency, and well-being of children and families. OCFS applied for and received federal CBCAP grant funds to complement Trust Fund child abuse prevention efforts in 2016-17.

State and federally funded child abuse prevention programs include:

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

The Trust Fund recognizes the multi-generational nature of family violence and emphasizes primary prevention by supporting domestic violence and elder abuse prevention and intervention programs. Domestic violence prevention programs focus on therapeutic visitation and abusive partner intervention services, and child protective services and domestic violence collaboration and joint safety planning. Elder abuse prevention programs focus on educating both seniors and communities regarding the problem/risks of elder abuse, special outreach to the Hispanic community, and coordination, counseling, and advocacy services to victims of elder abuse. Programs funded in 2016-17 include: (1) Orange County Safe Homes Project, Inc., Newburgh, (2) The Children’s Aid Society, New York City, (3) Family Services of Westchester, Inc., Mt. Vernon, (4) Lifespan of Greater Rochester, Inc., Rochester, (5) Victims Information Bureau of Suffolk, Inc. (VIBS), Long Island and (6) My Sister’s Place, Mt. Vernon.

The Trust Fund continues its support of the New York State Shaken Baby Prevention hospital-based education program now known as Safe Babies New York, which targets outreach to all maternity and birthing hospitals in the state. The purpose is to educate all parents of newborns to the dangers of shaking and reduce the incidence of Abusive Head Trauma (AHT), also known as Shaken Baby Syndrome (SBS).

Collaboration with the NYS Department of Health (DOH) continues in an effort to promote child safety and the prevention of SBS. The new shaken baby prevention video was released in April 2014, by DOH. This video meets the requirements of Chapter 219 of the Laws of 2004 signed in July of 2004, which requires every birthing and maternity hospital to show the video to all parents prior to discharge and ask them to sign a consent form that they viewed the video or declined to participate in the educational programs.

Kaleida Health/Women and Children's Hospital of Buffalo, which oversees the program in the Western New York, Finger Lakes and Capital regions, and Maria Fareri Children's Hospital at Westchester Medical Center (WMC – New York, Inc.), which oversees the program in the Hudson Valley, New York City and Long Island regions, remain committed to sustaining this educational program. Similarly, with additional resources through the Trust Fund, the scope of the program expanded in 2013 to educate parents about infant safe sleeping practices, to further strengthen OCFS and DOH efforts to reduce child fatalities where unsafe sleeping environments are a factor.

In approximately half of the fatalities for infants under the age of one, OCFS noted at least one unsafe sleep risk factor (source: New York State Child Fatality Report 2010-2014). "A Guide for Parents" brochure developed for the hospital-based program offers strategies for coping with a crying baby and stresses the importance of safe sleeping practices. The brochure has been translated into the six additional languages in which it is required to be available under the Governor's Executive Order on Statewide Language Access: Spanish, Chinese, Haitian-Creole, Korean, Russian, and Italian. All versions are available for download on the OCFS website. In conjunction with distributing "A Guide for Parents," nurses use educational videos with both the "Safe Sleep" and the "Never Shake a Baby" messages to support these strategies for keeping children safe. In 2016, Safe Sleep and Never Shake a Baby messages were delivered by nurses to parents of 146,494 newborns, 91 percent of hospital births.

In 2014, a "Safe Sleep for Your Baby" video was distributed to child welfare staff and community-based programs to reinforce safe sleeping practices for families engaged through preventive or protective services, as well as family-serving programs. The Missouri Children's Trust Fund agreed to partner with OCFS and the Trust Fund to replicate the video produced in Missouri to appeal to NYS families. The simple message conveys that babies sleep safest ALONE, on their BACKS, in a CRIB.

In an ongoing effort to enhance public education around critical child safety issues, the Trust Fund facilitates the distribution of publications and videos to local departments of social services, health agencies, child care agencies and community programs. These materials include tip sheets, brochures, DVDs, magnets and other items with information about safe sleep environments, coping with crying and additional topics. Helpful Tips to Keep Your Baby Safe are posted on the OCFS website and available in six languages. Other materials developed include Personalized Safety Tips and Emergency Contact Sheet for Caregivers, a Helpful Strategies for Keeping Infants and Young Children Safe video, and a Keeping Sleeping Babies Safer brochure. These are both available in English and Spanish.

In 2016, 67,101 publications and videos were provided, reaching families in 51 counties throughout NYS. Publications can be ordered or downloaded from the OCFS website at: <http://ocfs.ny.gov/prevention>. Efforts to identify and promote child safety issues will continue as resources allow.

OCFS/Trust Fund continued to co-lead the New York State Parenting Education Partnership (NYSPEP) along with the New York State Council on Children and Families, Prevent Child Abuse New York (PCANY), and the New York State Office of Mental Health. NYSPEP, which was created to: increase the availability of high quality parenting education programs; and provide information, support and professional development opportunities to parenting educators, direct service providers from community based organizations, state agencies, and other organizations across the state that serve families and children.

Prevent Child Abuse New York (PCANY) is a long standing partner of the Trust Fund with a shared mission to promote the safety and well-being of all children and families. The agency addresses individual, community, and societal responsibility through four inter-related strategies: the Parent Helpline, the New York State Parenting Education Partnership, prevention education including the Enough Abuse Campaign, and an annual professional training conference.

The Helpline provides direct assistance, in the form of information and referrals, to parents, family members, service providers and other community members and assisted 7,152 individuals in 2016. The most frequent requests for information or assistance received in 2016 included:

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

PCANY’s public education efforts include a variety of outreach strategies, including literature development and distribution, presentations and exhibits, media activities, a parenting education and services database, and website. More than 58,000 people received prevention information through these avenues this past year. PCANY will continue its efforts to identify outcomes for Helpline callers and systemic gaps in services needed, increase the knowledge and skills of those attending the annual training conference, and educate the public to take action to prevent child abuse and strengthen families.

The Trust Fund partnered with PCANY to implement the New York State Enough Abuse Campaign (NYSEAC) to address the epidemic of child sexual abuse. Based on the campaign initiated in Massachusetts, EAC was piloted in three communities in New York - Broome, Suffolk

and Tompkins counties. Strategies include mobilizing communities to establish public awareness efforts and infrastructures to implement prevention response programs, and educating professionals and members of the public about prevention strategies and responses to disclosures of sexual abuse. The campaign focuses on building adult and community responsibility to prevent child sexual abuse, through comprehensive public education and citizen mobilization. Initial work began in 2012, in the pilot counties of Tompkins, Broome, and Suffolk. While Suffolk County is no longer a site, the campaign expanded in 2015 to include Nassau, Cayuga, and Rensselaer counties. In 2016, 116 trainings were held throughout New York State, with 2,257 adults educated in sexual abuse prevention. The number of certified trainers is 179.

2016 included the 21st annual New York State Child Abuse Prevention Conference. The conference brought together 362 participants, including parents, caregivers and professionals from various backgrounds including social services, mental health, and education for three days of training. Forty-six workshops were offered in the areas of: parenting education and support; child abuse prevention skills and strategies; child sexual abuse treatment and prevention; reducing barriers to children's well-being; family engagement and involvement; and personal and organizational resilience. Internationally recognized plenary speakers included Laura van Dernoot Lipssky (Trauma Stewardship Institute), Ira J. Chasnoff, MD (University of Illinois School of Medicine) and Rosalinda Mercado-Garza, Ph.D. (E-Colors in Education).

Family Resource Centers (FRCs) are supported by the Trust Fund and have services available to any family, with an emphasis on those with children five years of age and younger, with stressors that place them at higher risk of child abuse or maltreatment. FRCs are embedded in their communities, working closely with families, LDSSs, and other organizations serving families. The Trust Fund supports the Family Resource Center Network, bringing programs together to share strategies and solutions, coordinate services, and provide peer support. The Network meets quarterly and at regular regional meetings that enable staff to participate in discussions focused on local and county issues. Regional meetings allow for deeper discussions and opportunities to include local partners and LDSS staff to focus on specific issues. Additionally, more FRC staff can participate in regional meetings than statewide meetings because of reduced travel expenses. OCFS regional office staff and other experts in the field are included in these regional discussions.

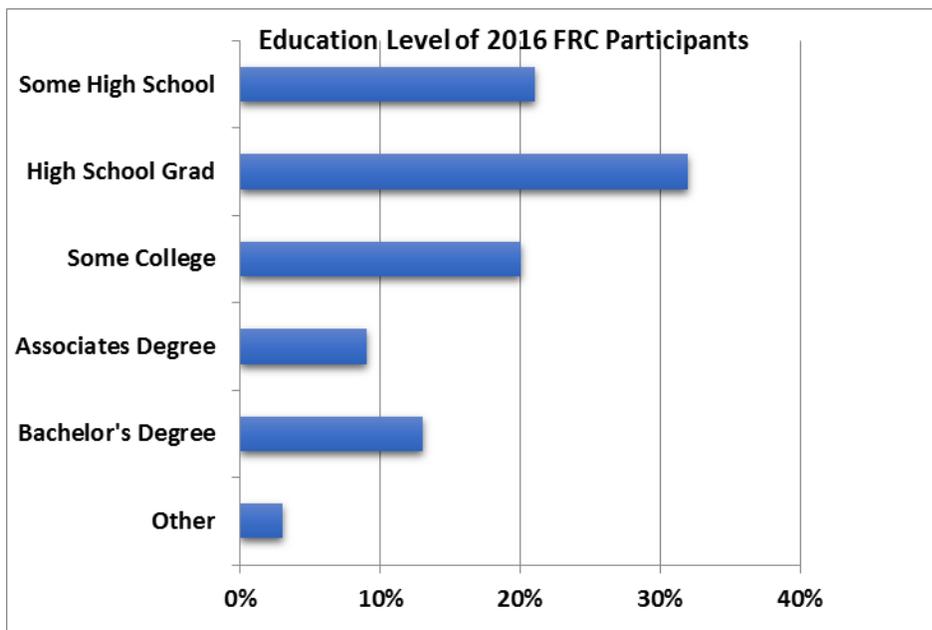
Core services at FRCs include the following:

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

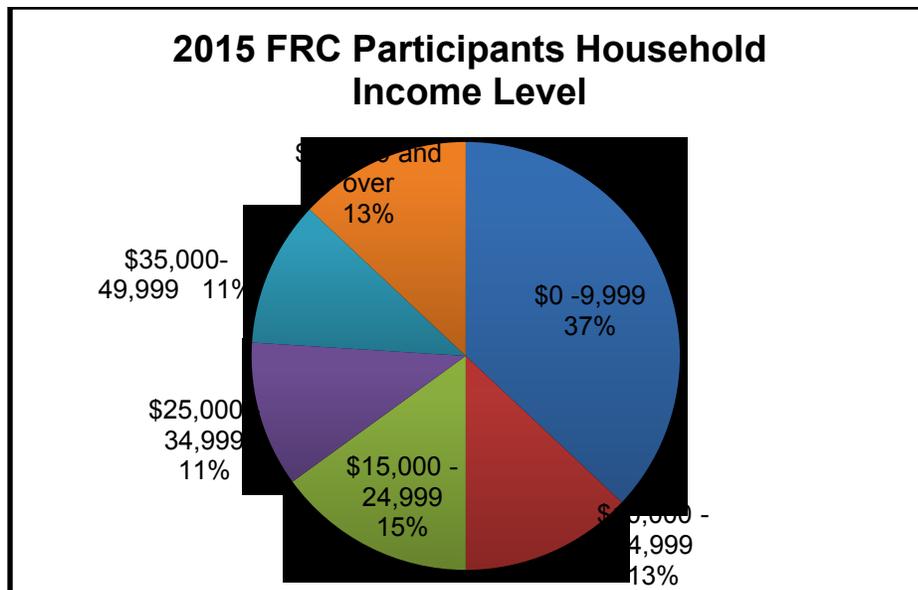
Depending on the needs of the community, FRCs may offer services themselves or link to other supportive services, including home visiting, food pantries, supervised visitation, early intervention, mental health services, clothes closets, and substance abuse services.

In 2016, FRCs continued their efforts to engage families at high risk. Specific populations targeted by FRCs were low income families; teen parents; families with military ties; families with caregivers or children with special needs; and families exiting the child welfare system. A review of utilization data from FRCs indicates that the centers have successfully engaged these targeted populations in 2016. Thirty-six percent of families registered at FRCs presented with at least one risk factor, and twenty-nine percent of families presented with two or more risk factors.

One risk factor is low educational attainment. Thirty-two percent of participants reported not having additional education beyond a high school diploma or GED. Twenty-one percent of participants report not having completed high school.



Another risk factor is low-income. In 2016, 35 percent of FRC participants had household incomes below \$10,000, regardless of family size. The proportion of participants with incomes below \$15,000 was 46 percent, and 58 percent of families had incomes below \$25,000.



The Trust Fund remains committed to using data to support ongoing program improvement efforts and for improving outcomes for families. During 2016, OCFS engaged in several key efforts to expand its capacity to collect and utilize data on program services and outcomes across the wide range of program models it supports. Specifically, OCFS focused on:

- Providing technical assistance and support to program sites as they began entering data into the new Prevention Programs data management system
- Soliciting feedback from system users as to functionality and reporting needs
- Updating and enhancing the data management system based on user feedback
- Developing and programming automated reports to support monitoring of program practices and outcomes
- Examining program activities to better inform the development of performance indicators and targets

OCFS Bureau of Program and Community Development staff partnered with the OCFS Bureau of Research, Evaluation, and Performance Analytics and State University of New York at Albany's Center for Human Services Research (CHSR) to provide support for each of these activities. Together, this work group has developed seven new reports (i.e., Protective Factors Instrument (PFI) Tickler, Adult Participant Demographic Report, Child Demographic Report, Aggregate Family Report, Adult Attendance Report, Adult Services Report, and the PFI Aggregate Report) with documentation for each. OCFS CHSR continues to provide one-on-one telephone and email support to address any data management system issues that may arise.

Over the course of the next year, OCFS will continue to solicit feedback from program sites and provide technical assistance as necessary. OCFS will begin to examine the Protective Factors Instrument and Assessment of Participant Strengths data to better understand their utility as measures of protective factors. OCFS also plans to develop and implement a more structured

performance management system, focusing initially on monitoring key processes and outcomes and then, as program sites become more accustomed to the activities this entails, moving into the development of process or quality improvement strategies and evaluation activities.

In 2016, the Trust Fund supported innovative strategies to meet the needs of individuals served, to build protective factors within families and communities, and to promote well-being for children by:

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

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

- Nurturing and attachment—Building a close bond helps parents better understand, respond to, and communicate with their children.
- Knowledge of parenting and of child and youth development—Parents learn what milestones to look for at each age and how to help their children reach their full potential.
- Parental resilience—Recognizing the signs of stress and enhancing problem-solving skills can help parents build their capacity to cope.
- Social connections—Parents with an extensive network of family, friends, and neighbors have better support in times of need.

- Concrete supports for parents—Caregivers with access to financial, housing, and other concrete resources and services that help them meet their basic needs can better attend to their role as parents.

In 2016, Protective Factors Framework (PFF) training continued to be delivered throughout NYS by certified trainers. One hundred fifty-three participants received training.

In 2016, OCFS has selected the Standards of Quality for Family Strengthening and Support. These standards, which have been adopted by the National Family Support and Strengthening Network (NFSN), provide the framework used to measure funded programs' quality of programming. The standards integrate the Principles Family Support Practice and the researched-based, evidence-informed Five Protective Factors Framework. This provides a structure that will provide consistency across prevention programs and in evaluating performance and outcomes. Participants attend a one-day training and receive a two-year certification. When program staff have completed the training, a "Program Self-Assessment" is completed to ensure minimum quality is being met and determine the level of quality services that are being provided to families. The assessments are submitted to OCFS program managers for review and feedback. When appropriate, the programs will develop an implementation plan based on the findings in the self-assessment to increase the level of quality of services being offered. Once this is accomplished, programs are required to implement the necessary elements to move the quality of services to a higher standard. Programs are expected to complete the training and an annual self-assessment by the fall of 2017. Three trainings were delivered to OCFS funded prevention programs in 2016. Trainings will continue to be delivered in 2017 and 2018. This will be accomplished by twelve trainers, who attend a training of the trainer institute in October 2016 for the Standards of Quality for Family Strengthening and Support. The training was sponsored by the Trust Fund.

# **Chafee Foster Care Independence Program**

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

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

The OCFS is the state agency responsible for administering the John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP), as identified here as the Independent Living Program, including the Federal ETV program carried out under this plan. OCFS has a strong commitment to supporting positive youth development and assisting youth in their transition from foster care to self-sufficiency. OCFS and its predecessor agency have been responsible for administering the federally funded Title IV-E Program for foster care youth in NYS since the program's inception in 1987.

### ***Program Design and Delivery***

The Independent Living Program for foster care youth is directly administered by OCFS for the facilities it operates, each of the 58 LDSSs, and the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe (hereinafter included in the reference to LDSS) in NYS. LDSSs have the option of providing independent living services to foster care youth and former foster care recipients who are between the ages of 18 and 21 years old either directly or through a purchase of services contract. Each LDSS' Independent Living Program must have available the array of services described below. See the Tribal Consultation section beginning on page 92 for other tribal information.

The Independent Living Skills program provides youth in OCFS direct care facilities, which are found in several locations throughout the State, twice-weekly life skills training sessions. In addition, youth returning to the community continue to receive community living skills training.

The ETV program for foster care youth and former foster care youth, including youth currently in or discharged from OCFS direct care facilities, is currently directly administered by Orphan Foundation of America, under contract with OCFS, with the cooperation of **LDSSs**.

### ***Independent Living Program***

NYS has a state-supervised, locally administered child welfare system. NYS' Independent Living Program and ETV Program for foster care and former foster care youth is administered by LDSSs. In addition, OCFS has direct service responsibilities for the Independent Living Program for youth adjudicated as juvenile delinquents receiving care in our direct care residential centers.

NYS' Independent Living Program for foster care youth, which is operational on a statewide basis, is designed to help youth who are under the responsibility of LDSSs or the state to develop skills in areas that promote self-sufficiency.

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

The Independent Living Program consists of the following service components:

- A. Assessment Services and Case Planning activities include the setting of a permanency planning goal and documentation of case planning and service provision in the Uniform Case Record, self-identified goals and activities of the foster child and at a minimum, joint discussion of the plan semi-annually. Assessment services must include educational and vocational assessments as well as documentation of Life Skills competencies as a minimum, with semi-annual assessments and modifications of the plan to reflect continued growth and learning.

Upon discharge, the LDSS, in consultation with the youth, must identify any persons, services or agencies that would help the child maintain and support him/her and must assist the child to establish contact with such agencies, service providers, or persons by making referrals and by counseling the child about these referrals prior to discharge. In addition, each youth who will be discharged to Independent Living must receive a written 90-day notification of discharge, including the established transition plan. The transition plan developed in consultation with the youth also outlines coordination of services otherwise available to the youth.

- B. Educational Services are integral parts of the Independent Living plan in helping youth receive the education, training and services necessary to obtain employment.
  1. Academic Support Services are provided to assist youth in achieving literacy and basic academic skills required for completing a high school degree program or equivalency or, where appropriate, to help youth prepare for and enter post-secondary education institutions. Academic Support Services include, but are not limited to, educational and career assessment and counseling, tutorial and mentoring services, examination preparation and resource and referral services. These services, particularly the mentoring services, should provide personal and emotional support to youth and promote interactions with dedicated adults.
  2. Vocational Training, which should be selected on the basis of assessments of interests and aptitudes, is provided, where appropriate, to those youths in foster care who will not pursue post-secondary education or who may not graduate from high school before their 20th birthday. Remedial education is required prior to the provision of the vocational training for youth with limited academic proficiency. Vocational training includes, but is not limited to, training programs in a marketable skill or trade or formal on the job training. Vocational training may include two-year college programs with specific vocational objectives, occupational training supported by other state or federal funds or provided by organizations, which have

demonstrated effectiveness in providing such training. Agencies will advocate and arrange for youth with special needs to receive specialized assessments in order to qualify them as eligible for Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities (VESID), mental health or other specialized services.

3. Life Skills Training offers, at a minimum, job search, career counseling, locating housing/apartments, budgeting and financial management skills, alcohol and substance abuse prevention, preventive health activities, shopping, cooking and house cleaning.

Youth should be provided with experiential learning or practice opportunities in all areas under the guidance of coaches or mentors.

- C. Independent Living Stipends are provided to foster care youth who are actively participating in the Independent Living programs and serve as an incentive to participate in the program; provide money management experience; and provide the means where savings can accumulate to assist in the transition to independent living.
- D. Aftercare Services are provided to youth between the ages of 18 and 21 years and include financial, housing, counseling, employment, education and other appropriate support and services. Aftercare services are required for any foster care youth over the age of 16 who is discharged to Independent Living through a trial discharge period. Trial discharge is required for every child discharged to independent living. Custody of the youth is retained for at least six months and certain requirements for casework contacts and service provision apply. The trial discharge period may continue until a youth reaches the age of 21. If a youth loses housing during the period of trial discharge, the LDSS must assist the youth to find other appropriate housing or replace the youth in a foster care setting, if necessary. In addition, when custody cases, the LDSS must maintain supervision of the youth until the youth is 21 years of age. Supervision includes casework contacts, referral to needed services, including income and housing services, with sufficient follow-up so that the youth has begun to receive the necessary services.
- E. Room and Board Services, as defined include, but are not necessarily limited to, money for rent, ongoing maintenance (e.g. utilities), furnishings and start-up costs generally associated with renting an apartment, (e.g. money for security deposits on apartments or a utility deposit). For a residence to be considered appropriate under room and board services there needs to be a reasonable expectation that the housing the youth enters will be available to the youth for at least 12 months. Appropriate residence proposed will exclude shelter for adults, shelter for families, or any other congregate living arrangement that houses more than 10 unrelated persons, with the exception of college dormitories or new, innovative models which provide intensive employment or other supportive services in residential settings. In addition, youth receiving room and board services will be required to be supervised. Supervision will include at least monthly contact with the youth if the youth has not sustained adequate housing and income continuously for six months.

Additionally, face-to-face quarterly contacts would be required. Quarterly casework contacts are required to be maintained for youth who have sustained adequate housing and income continuously for the past six months.

NYS's approach to room and board services affords LDSSs the flexibility to determine how much of their Independent Living federal allotment (up to 30 percent) they will spend on room and board services and whether they will provide limited housing assistance (e.g. security deposits on apartments) or a more complete package of housing services. This approach will support the development of creative strategies to assist youth in a successful transition to adulthood. LDSSs that choose to provide room and board services must establish written policies and procedures for room and board services that address:

- The categories of youth that will be provided room and board services; including if room and board will be provided to the optional category of eligible youth who left care before attaining the age of 18; the maximum levels of funding for the provision of room and board assistance to former foster care youth who aged out of foster care at 18, 19 or 20, but who have not attained the age of 21; and the expenses that will be covered under the room and board program; and
- The maximum dollar amount that will be paid to any youth for room and board assistance; the length of time room and board assistance can be provided to eligible youth; and any stipulations related to employment or school for the provision of room and board

In addition, NYS provides preventive housing services, including rent subsidies of up to \$300 per month, and up to three years, to youth in foster care who have a goal of independent living when the acquisition of housing is needed to complete the discharge.

In NYS, LDSSs have the option of providing room and board services for youth who left foster care because they attained 18 years of age, but have not yet attained 21 years of age. These services may be provided for youth upon discharge from foster care or at a later point in time, provided the youth has not yet attained the age of 21. In addition, social services districts have the option to provide room and board services to former foster care youth who were in foster care and eligible for Independent Living Services while in care, but who left foster care before they attained the age of 18.

NYS's Supervised Independent Living (SILP) Program assists older youth in making the transition to self-sufficiency. On February 13, 2008, new OCFS regulations were adopted governing the approval and operation of Supervised Independent Living Programs and Supervised Independent Living units. The regulatory amendments implemented the legislative change enacted by Chapter 160 of the Laws of 2004. The regulations enable authorized agencies that operated supervised independent living programs approved by OCFS to certify homes or apartments as supervised independent living units. The benefit of authorized agencies operating supervised independent living programs and certifying supervised independent living units, is to facilitate expanded use of

supervised independent living programs and increase the number of older youth having access to and placed in these programs. In addition, the regulatory change adds the definition of a Supervised Independent Living Unit. Supervised Independent Living Unit means a home or apartment certified in accordance with OCFS regulations by an authorized agency approved by OCFS to operate a supervised independent living program for the care of up to four youth, including their children. Each unit must be located in the community separate from any of the authorized agency's other congregate care 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 commissioner of the LDSS in a status of trial discharge. Youth must be visited by their case planner, case manager or case worker in their unit at least twice per week. The services must provide youth with opportunities to achieve positive outcomes and make successful transitions to self-sufficiency.

To support the development of these skills by youth, OCFS currently offers its Independent Living Core Curriculum, "Introduction to Self-Sufficiency," to child welfare caseworkers in voluntary authorized agencies and LDSSs, working with adolescents in foster care who will be discharged to independent living. This outcome-based training program is designed to give caseworkers and caregivers the knowledge, values, and skills that they need to prepare youth to lead self-sufficient and productive lives after they leave care. The Independent Living Core Training Program was developed in partnership with the Adolescent Services Resource Network staff (currently known as the Statewide Youth Service Training), a network of four regionally based training centers, which provides training and technical assistance to those preparing youth ages 14 to 21 years for self-sufficiency, and an advisory committee of social services district and voluntary authorized agency caseworkers, administrators and caregivers. The Independent Living Core is interactive and focuses on building the skills needed to achieve positive outcomes for youth through the use of case scenarios, group work and role-plays. The Independent Living Core is comprised of five days of classroom training, pre-training reading, and on-the-job training activities.

In addition to the Independent Living Core Training Program, OCFS provides a series of advanced courses for caseworkers that have completed the Independent Living Core. These programs highlight skill building around issues such as education and employment, and accessing community resources. Regionally requested training and technical assistance are also given through the Statewide Youth Service Training, which offers regional training conferences and an annual "Youth Speakout" that gives foster care youth the opportunity to voice their concerns and feelings about being in placement, to state and local administrators, family court staff, and of course, their peers.

## ***Services to Youth across the State***

NYS has a state-supervised, locally administered child welfare system. NYS' Independent Living Program and ETV Program for foster care and former foster care youth is administered by Orphan Foundation of America, in coordination with LDSSs. In addition, the OCFS has direct service responsibilities for the Independent Living Program for youth adjudicated as juvenile delinquents receiving care in OCFS direct care residential centers.

OCFS, in conjunction with the Professional Development Program (PDP), conducts ongoing needs assessments of LDSS and voluntary authorized agency training needs around working with youth in care. Additionally, OCFS Regional Offices provide periodic technical assistance and monitoring of Independent Living service provisions. This allows programs to be responsive to emerging needs.

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

### ***OCFS Direct Residential Care***

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

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

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

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

DJJOY implemented a new Community Re-Entry Plan that will allow staff to better document and track the services that will be offered to youth as part of their transition back to the community.

The plan is an electronic based record which will allow all staff working with youth to know youths' identified needs and services that will be provided to make the transition as successful as possible.

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

OCFS will continue to provide technical assistance and support to independent living program sites serving youth in its custody and on aftercare status. Youth who are in residential placement in OCFS-operated facilities continue to receive independent living skills (life skills training) as part of an integrated model. This approach will better prepare youth and offer more opportunities to develop life skills. In addition, OCFS will work to enhance Life Skills programming through community partnerships, training, site visits including group observations, and the provision of various materials to support this program.

### *Fatherhood Program*

In OCFS facilities around the state with young fathers, staff meet with these young fathers individually to explain their parental rights while they are placed in the custody of the Commissioner of OCFS. Staff frequently discuss the importance of education, future plans, and ways for identifying community resources with staff and students during site visits. Lastly, the young father may be given responsible parenting brochures/literature; videos; and other materials by staff to better prepare them for fatherhood upon return to the community.

### *Youth Voice*

In 2016, the two Youth in Progress (YIP) contracts were solely awarded to the Professional Development Program. The mission is to support youth in care by providing them with leadership skills and the opportunity to voice their experience will remain the same. In 2017, the youth groups are expected to be youth driven, which promotes independence and leadership skills for the youth involved.

The Ongoing Goals of Youth Voice Meetings and Events are to:

- Raise public awareness of the experiences of youth in care;
- Increase youth involvement in all systems that touch their lives;
- Empower youth through the development of leadership and decision-making skills;
- Improve policies and practices to assist youth transition out of foster care; and
- Increase awareness, availability, and participation in services provided to youth transitioning out of care.

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

## **Accomplishments 2016-2017**

### *Youth Voice*

OCFS assessed the Adolescent Services Resource Network (ASRN) and YIP contracts for their appropriateness and responsiveness to the needs of the youth, staff, and foster parents. The ASRN contract was bid upon through a Request for Proposals (RFP) process and was awarded to the Professional Development Program (PDP). In 2017, the focus will promote a sustained presence in the regions and local districts where youth are being served.

PDP hired youth engagement specialists in each of the six regions. The specialist will work in the OCFS regional offices and provide coordination, training and support services to regionally-based youth services staff by conducting various activities related to the professional development of individuals working with foster care and at-risk youth ages 14-21 years. The youth meetings in 2016 were aimed to be youth driven, and adult supported. The meetings not only provided youth with the tools needed to identify issues with the policies and practices of the system of their care, but also provided youth with the support and skills needed to raise those issues and take an active role in developing solutions. Speak-outs give LDSS commissioners, Family Court judges and state staff an opportunity to hear directly from youth about their experiences in care and ways to improve services and outcomes.

In 2017, OCFS has instructed PDP to conduct a needs assessment on NYS foster care agencies to assess what challenges those agencies face when youth transition out of care. The results will be analyzed to determine what training needs must be met within the regions.

In 2016, in partnership with OCFS, the PDP coordinated five speak-outs. The speak-outs presented an opportunity for youth in care to express their thoughts, feelings, and opinions about their experiences to a panel of state and local administrators. The speak-outs took place on August 22, 2016 at Valley Oak Center, August 10, 2016 at NYU Kimmel Center, August 23, 2016 at Queensbury Hotel; August 29, 2016 at Rockland Community College; and October 1, 2016 at the Java Center. In total, 665 people attended the events across New York State. At the speak-out held at Valley Oak Center, 165 youth and adults attended, including guest panelists and informational tables and summer interns. At the youth event held at NYU Kimmel Center, 187 youth and adults attended. At the Speak Out at Queensbury Hotel, 128 youth and adults attended. At the speak-out held at Rockland Community College, 105 youth and adults attended. At the speak-out held at Java Center, 80 youth and adults attended. The OCFS summer interns played a leadership role at the speak-outs.

### *National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD)*

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

In 2017-2018, OCFS will continue to work with the new NYTD contractor, Center for Human Services Research (CHSR). In 2017, CHSR will continue to maintain a list of NYTD liaisons and work to build relationships with OCFS, LDSS staff, tribes, voluntary authorized agencies, and foster youth to assist in finding youth to be surveyed. Before and during survey administration, outreach activities will occur with the key contacts. CHSR will distribute NYTD-21 survey rosters to NYTD liaisons and inform caseworkers of the upcoming survey. Outreach materials (electronic and/or printed) will also be distributed to NYTD liaisons and caseworkers. CHSR will ask liaisons to speak to caseworkers and youth regarding the best method for survey administration – on-line, by phone, or by mail. In 2017, new incentives and methods are being looked at to increase both the caseworkers and youth involvement rate.

*Describe the state's plan to inform stakeholders and others of the NYTD Review for the state. States with NYTD Reviews scheduled in FY 2017 or 2018 should discuss steps to begin to prepare for their review.*

NYS as a state supervised county administered state will utilize its regional office structure to inform counties and agencies about the NYTD review scheduled for September of 2017. OCFS has regular meetings with the Office of Court Administration and will share information regarding the review at the June meeting. OCFS has had its first preparatory call with ACFY for the review scheduled for September 25-28<sup>th</sup> in NYS. OCFS has identified a coordinator for the review, a technical lead and an initial team for the review. NYS has requested consultation with JBS to help identify young people to take part in the review as well as how to best prepare and utilize them during the process. OCFS anticipates beginning test case review by July of 2017.

*Describe how the state, since the 2015-2019 CFSP and subsequent APSR submissions, has informed partners, tribes, courts and other stakeholders about NYTD data and involved them in the analysis of the results of the NYTD data collection or NYTD Review. Describe how the state has used these data and any other available data in consultation with youth and other stakeholders to improve service delivery in the last year.*

OCFS has contracted with the State University of Albany Center for Human Services Research (CHSR) since 2015 to conduct the NYTD survey—they took over from the previous SUNY-based research group who launched the project. As the initial sample from the NYTD cohort was quite small, the findings were not disseminated, as the state did not feel that they were representative.

However, CHSR and OCFS utilized the initial findings to identify areas for strengthening in data collection and follow up of youth to enhance outcomes for the future cohorts—specifically outreach techniques were enhanced and incentive structure changed. Currently, CHSR provides data to each regional office and to individual county NYTD liaisons so that they can see the outcomes of their outreach and engagement efforts. OCFS is preparing to release the most recent data in preparation for the new 5-year county planning process. These data will help counties and agencies better identify challenges and opportunities for improvement of local practice. Additionally, the NYTD data will be shared with the Youth Engagement Specialists, who will be able to target training and technical assistance needs to specific regions, agencies and counties. Finally, the ETV and Chaffee Coordinator is working closely to identify how to utilize the IL and ETV mechanisms to improve overall outcomes for youth who may age out of care.

*Provide information on how the state has improved NYTD data collection, based on the plan outlined in the 2015-2019 CFSP and subsequent APSR submissions or NYTD Review. States are reminded that information related to NYTD can be viewed in “snap shot” format and can be requested by emailing: [NYTDhelp@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:NYTDhelp@acf.hhs.gov). While the “snap shot” only provides an overview of the NYTD data, it can be a resource to talk with youth, providers, the courts, and other stakeholders about services and outcomes of youth transitioning out of foster care.*

In 2017, OCFS has continued to work with our NYTD contractor Center for Human Services Research to improve outreach education to OCFS Regional Office staff, Local Districts, Residential Program staff, foster parents, and most importantly the youth receiving services. CHSR has added a team member who conducts the initial outreach to stakeholders to educate them regarding the NYTD process and specifically, to prepare for the final wave of Cohort 2 (21). This addition has improved youth participation in the survey as they understand they will be contacted for an interview. Additional efforts have been focused on researching the best methods of locating youth throughout the cohorts of surveys. To increase participation, meetings with OCFS Regional Office staff, LDSS staff, Voluntary agency staff and clinical staff at the agencies are periodically being held to improve understanding of the NYTD process. Data reports have been developed by OCFS and disseminated to the NYTD liaisons, LDSS Commissioners, Directors of Services and Foster Care staff to identify any missing independent living services and tribal affiliation in the youth’s case record.

## **Plans for 2017-2018**

### *ETV*

OCFS currently contracts with Orphan Foundation of America to administer and serve as New York State’s fiscal agent for the ETV Program. In FFY 2017, the Office of Children and Family Services will be responsible for reviewing and approving eligible youth that have applied for an education training voucher. A change in FFY2017, OCFS will use other state match funds,

provided by the New York State Higher Education Services Corporation, to meet the 20 percent required federal match. As a result of the state's contribution, the LDSS is not required to provide a match or an intercept letter. The vendor is also not required to provide a match.

The following priorities will be applied in the initial selection of eligible participants for the ETV program for FFY 2017:

- First priority will be given to youth over the age of 21 who received an ETV award in FFY 2016, who continue to be enrolled in and attend a post-secondary educational or vocational training program, and who are making satisfactory progress toward completion of that program.
- Second priority will be given to any other youth who received an ETV award in FFY 2016.
- Third priority will be given to youth who are 20 years of age and will be 21 by July 1, 2017, who are enrolled in and attending a post-secondary educational or vocational training program and are making satisfactory progress toward completion of that program. Such youth would not have received an ETV award in FFY 2016.
- Fourth priority will be given to youth who are 17, 18, 19 and 20 years of age who are enrolled in and attending a post-secondary educational or vocational training program and making satisfactory progress toward completion of that program.

### *Youth Voice*

The deliverables that must be met in 2017 are as follows: Youth Engagement Specialist will conduct training from a catalog of existing and yet to be developed curricula and special topics to support Adolescent Services providers. It is anticipated that there will be up to 50 one-day offerings for a total of 300 days of training statewide. In addition, training services will be provided to OCFS regional offices, to assist staff in various program initiatives as planned by the OCFS Division of Child Welfare and Community Services. The specialist will also conduct youth progress meetings within the regions. These progress meetings are to provide Adolescent Services providers, mentors and youth with training, skill practice, awareness and practical guidance on how to access and use the resources available to assist youth in the transition to self-sufficiency. It is anticipated that there will be up to 12 one-day offerings with an average of 10 trainees in six regions for a total of 72 days of training statewide. The Professional Development Program will also work closely with OCFS to develop and execute Regional Youth Voice Events that will provide youth in care with an opportunity to present their individual issues and concerns to a panel of regional policy makers who can effect local change. Youth leaders will be supported in conducting workshops and presentations that cover a wide variety of topics and will be assisted in raising their concerns in a productive way aimed at being an active participant in the resolution of the issues. In 2017, the OCFS summer internship program has been added to this contract. The youth engagement specialists will work to recruit and mentor selected interns. Two trainings will be added to the YES roster; one on human trafficking and the other on job readiness skills for youth.

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

OCFS promulgated a policy directive (ADM) 15-OCFS-ADM-21, *Supporting Normative Experiences for Children, Youth, and Young Adults in Foster Care: Applying a Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard* to LDSSs and voluntary authorized agencies informing them of the requirement to implement the standard. OCFS Regional offices provided training and technical assistance to their LDSS and voluntary authorized agencies, and statewide implementation calls were held monthly, much of which focused on the implementation of the standard. OCFS will have an updated interactive online training for foster parents and kinship guardians by the spring of 2017 and a new classroom training for foster and kinship guardians within the same timeframe. Online interactive training for professional staff will be completed by the summer of 2017.

OCFS presented at the Annual Youth Bureau Conference in winter of 2016. Youth bureaus are the primary vehicle within a county to provide positive youth development for youth and young adults 21 years of age and younger. In 2017, OCFS will be connecting regional youth bureau and LDSS meetings to facilitate greater communication and opportunities for youth in care to be provided with free or low-cost opportunities to engage in age and developmentally appropriate activities.

Presentations were held at the winter New York Public Welfare Association (NYPWA) Conference on January 27, 2017, and at the Annual conference of the Adoptive and Foster Family Coalition of New York on May 6, 2016.

On February 17, 2017, OCFS released Administrative Directive (ADM) 17-OCFS-ADM-01, *Immunity from Liability When Applying the Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard*. The purpose of this Administrative Directive (ADM) is to advise LDSSs and voluntary authorized agencies of provisions of Part M of Chapter 54 of the Laws of 2016, which provide immunity from liability to foster parents, designated congregate care staff, LDSSs and voluntary authorized agencies in regard to the application of the reasonable and prudent parent standard (the standard). The introduction of the standard raised concerns over liability for caregivers and agencies who apply the standard, allowing children in foster care to participate in age and developmentally appropriate activities. The concern was that if a child sustained an injury while participating in any of these activities, the decision-maker could be held liable for these injuries. Youth in foster care also voiced a concern that caregivers are too worried about potential liability issues to allow them to participate in these activities. It became apparent from these and other conversations, that in order to effectively implement the standard with children in foster care, statutory changes were warranted in order to address the potential liability of the caregivers and agencies who would be applying the standard. Chapter 54 of the Laws of 2016 addressed these concerns related to the application of the standard.

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

Serving children and youth in foster care regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity and expression (SOGIE) has become a priority for OCFS. On September 9, 2015, OCFS issued *15-OCFS-ADM-18, New York State Bill of Rights for Children and Youth in Foster Care* stating that children and youth who are 14 years of age and older must be provided with and explained the Bill of Rights. The Bill of Rights states that children and youth in foster care in the State of New York have the right “to be treated fairly and with respect and to receive care and services that are free of discrimination based on race, creed, color, national origin, age, religion, sex, gender identity or gender expression, sexual orientation, marital status, physical or mental disability, or the fact that [they are] in foster care.”

On October 16, 2015, OCFS issued *15-OCFS-ADM-23, Non-discrimination on the Basis of Sex, Sexual Orientation, and Gender Identity or Expression in Residential and Non-residential Domestic Violence Programs* to directors of LDSSs, residential and non-residential domestic violence programs directors, among others. The purpose of this Administrative Directive is to reaffirm OCFS’s requirement that residential and non-residential programs for victims of domestic violence provide shelter and appropriate services for all victims of domestic violence, regardless of race, creed, color, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, military status, sex, marital status, or disability. This policy clarifies the requirement for domestic violence programs to provide services to males and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and questioning (LGBTQ) persons, and provides guidance to domestic violence programs for fulfilling federal requirements regarding this commitment necessary for receiving funds through the federal Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA) and the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA).

On February 8, 2016, OCFS issued *16-OCFS-ADM-02, Regulations Prohibiting Discrimination and Harassment in Child Welfare and Youth Programs*. The purpose of this Administrative Directive was to advise LDSSs and voluntary authorized agencies of provisions in 9 NYCRR §§ 180.5(a)(6), 182-1.5(g)(1) and 182-2.5(g)(1), and in 18 NYCRR §§ 421.3(d), 423.4(m)(7), 441.19(d) and 441.24, several of which became effective on November 6, 2013. These regulations prohibit discrimination or harassment by LDSS and voluntary agency staff, volunteers, and certified or approved foster parents against applicants for adoption services, families receiving preventive services, prospective foster parents, foster parents and foster children, youth in runaway and homeless youth (RHY) programs, and youth in detention on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, religion, or disability, in order to promote and maintain a safe environment for children, youth, and families that OCFS serves.

On March 25, 2016, OCFS issued *16-OCFS-INF-04, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration and Family Acceptance Project Release: A Practitioner’s Resource Guide: Helping Families to Support Their LGBT Children* announcing a SOGIE-affirming resource for families.

On November 10, 2016, OCFS issued, 16-OCFS-INF-10, Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, and Gender Expression (SOGIE). The purpose of this Informational Letter is to provide staff of programs under OCFS jurisdiction with guidance and resources related to sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression (SOGIE). The goal of providing education and resources on SOGIE terminology is to promote a safe and respectful environment for all children, youth, and adults.

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

### *Homelessness Prevention*

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

NYS issued a RFP to build 2,000 units of supportive housing through the Empire State Supportive Housing Initiative. Youth aging out of foster care are one of the populations targeted for services through this state-wide initiative. Several awards were made that included young adults and youth aging out of foster care.

### *Pregnancy Prevention*

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

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

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

## **Statistical and Supporting Information**

## Statistical and Supporting Information

### a. CAPTA Annual State Data Report Items

*Information on Child Protective Service Workforce:*

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

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

#### Education and qualifications

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

#### Training

- a) OCFS regulation 18 NYCRR 432.2(e)(5)(ii)(a) requires that “Each child protective worker, including supervisors, must satisfactorily complete a basic training program in child protective services within the first three months of his/her employment in the child protective service. Such program must be approved by the OCFS and must focus on the skills, knowledge, and attitudes essential to working in the child protective service. Such training program must include, but need not be limited to: basic training in the principles and techniques of child protective service investigation, including relationships with other investigative bodies; legal issues in child protective service matters, diagnostic assessment of child abuse and maltreatment cases; methods of remediation, treatment and prevention of child abuse and maltreatment; and case management and planning of child protective service cases, including the relationship of the child protective service issues to permanency planning for children who remain at home or who are in out-of-home care.”
- b) Social Services Law §421(5)(b) requires that all persons employed by a child protective service must complete six hours of annual in service training, beginning in the second year of their employment.

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

New York City (ACS) qualification requirements - A baccalaureate degree from an accredited college including or supplemented by 24 semester credits in one or a combination of the following fields: social work, psychology, sociology, human services, criminal justice, education (including early childhood), nursing or cultural anthropology, at least 12 of which must have been in one of these disciplines. Candidates must pass a test to demonstrate English language proficiency. Education and qualifications – NYC ACS cites NYS Social Services Law and OCFS regulations. Training requirements – cite NYS Social Services Law and OCFS regulations, and all CPS workers are required to participate in Core Phase II within 18 months, and all supervisors must participate in the Supervisory Core. The 11-day program for newly-appointed supervisors and the six-day course for experienced supervisors. (See page 190, Training Plan Update).

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

Education, qualifications, and training of such personnel

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

In regard to training, the number of CPS personnel from counties outside NYC completing CPS trainings each year is tracked in an administrative database managed by OCFS. As shown in Appendix "D1-3", this database can be used to produce annual statistics on the number of CPS workers who attended training (6,188), Appendix "D1", number of classes attended (58,095) and number of class hours (359,039), and Appendix "D2," and average hours of training per worker (58). In addition, OCFS is also able to provide curriculum-specific information for workers outside NYC. Also noted in Appendix "D3", county-by-county data for 2016 include the number of staff trained in (1) Response Training, (2) Common Core, and (3) Supervisory Core.

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

NYC Division of Child Protection's (DCP) CPS Staff demographics (as of 5/10/2017)

ACS DPC CPS STAFF										
	<u>MALE</u>			<u>FEMALE</u>						<u>GRAND</u>
CPS Staff	WHITE	BLACK	HISP	WHITE	BLACK	HISP	ASIAN	AMER IND	UNK	TOTAL
Grand Total	4	35	4	21	138	25	2	2	1	232
	<u>MALE</u>			<u>FEMALE</u>						<u>GRAND</u>
CPS Staff	WHITE	BLACK	HISP	WHITE	BLACK	HISP	ASIAN	AMER IND	UNK	TOTAL
Grand Total	2%	15%	2%	9%	59%	11%	1%	1%	0%	100%

- Black – 74% (173)
- Hispanic – 13% (29)
- White – 11% (25)
- Asian – 1% (2)
- American Indian - 1% (2)
- Unknown - 0% (1)

---

232 = DCP CPS Staff

3,091 = All DCP employees (CPS, Supervisor, Manager, Deputy Directors, Clerical Leadership and any other titles)

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

### Caseload or workload requirements

Child welfare caseload sizes and staffing ratios are determined at the local level. Aside from the requirement in Social Services Law §423(1)(c) that a CPS unit must have sufficient staff of sufficient qualifications, NYS does not have statutory or regulatory caseload requirements for child protective service workers. OCFS does, however, provide LDSSs with a monthly data report detailing the number of open CPS cases assigned to individual case workers on the last day of each month.

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

The average caseload (number of cases per caseworker) at the end of each month statewide for 2016 was 10.3. This is the average of the 12 months in 2016 (see Appendix "I" for county breakdown).

### *Juvenile Justice Transfers:*

The number of youth transferred to juvenile justice facilities in FFY 2015-16 was 130 youth, an increase from FFY 2014-15 which was 101. This population consists of children who:

- were in CONNECTIONS the youth is shown as in the custody of a LDSS as a result of a judicial dispositions of Person in Need of Supervision (PINS), Juvenile Delinquent (JD) (if placed, and placement not exceeding 12 months), JD (initial placement exceeds 12 months), and do not have a disposition of OCFS custody within the same hearing, or
- have a judicial disposition of transfer custody and guardianship (Surrender or Terminated Parental Rights only) or care and custody to a LDSS, or
- have a voluntary or emergency removal, and

- have a subsequent hearing with a disposition of OCFS custody during FFY 15-16 (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 15-16, and
- do not have an open admission in the juvenile justice system between the last movement and discharge in CONNECTIONS.

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

### Child Maltreatment Deaths Reporting

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

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

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

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

### Education and Training Voucher (ETV) Program

NYS' ETV program is designed to help youth aging out of foster care to make the transition to self-sufficiency and receive the education, training and services necessary to obtain employment. Under this program, eligible youth may receive the lesser of \$5,000 per year or the total cost of attendance at an institution of higher education, as defined in section 1002 of Title 20. The following categories of youth may be eligible to receive vouchers under the ETV program: (1) youth otherwise eligible for services under the CFCIP; (2) youth adopted from, or entered into a kinship guardianship assistance (KinGap) from, foster care after attaining age 16 years of age; and (3) youth who were participating in the ETV program on their 21<sup>st</sup> birthday, until the youth turns 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.

Youth otherwise eligible for services under the CFCIP include youth in foster care (i.e., youth in the care and custody, or custody and guardianship, of an LDSS commissioner) who are 14 years of age or older, or who are placed in a foster home with an approved relative regardless of age, and who are likely to remain in foster care until 18 years of age. This includes all categories of foster care, including but not limited to, persons in need of supervision (PINS) and juvenile delinquents placed in the custody of an LDSS commissioner; juvenile delinquents in the custody of the OCFS who are placed in non-secure facilities of 25 beds or less, and those who are on aftercare status; and former foster care youth who are between 18 and 21 years of age.

OCFS currently contracts with Orphan Foundation of America to administer and serve as New York State's fiscal agent for the ETV Program in accordance with applicable federal law, rules and regulations. OCFS will be responsible for reviewing and approving eligible youth that have applied for an education training voucher. In FFY 2017, first priority will be given to youth over the age of 21 who received an ETV award in FFY 2016, who continue to be enrolled in and attend a post-secondary educational or vocational training program, and who are making satisfactory progress toward completion of that program.

Requirements addressed Prior to funding students include:

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

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

- The number of applications received annually – July 1- June 30<sup>th</sup>
  - Each applicant is assigned a unique Program ID Number the first time they apply
- The Program ID filters applicant data to confirm
  - New/1<sup>st</sup> time applicant
  - Previous applicant

- Previously funded student
  - Continuous enrollment
  - Returning after leaving school for one semester or more
- Amount of funding students receive, for what purpose, and when funding is disbursed
- Names of schools and institution type including two- or four- year, public or private
- Academic progression as documented in submitted official transcripts
  - the number of credits students successfully achieve
  - the number of remedial classes taken and passed
- Retention and graduation (students are tracked in cohorts to determine outcomes)
  - the number of students who reapply annually because they are continuing their studies and making progress toward graduation.
  - the number of students who return to the program after leaving school for one semester or more

NYS ETV and Orphan Foundation of America's joint mission is to support foster youth in postsecondary programs and address their unique educational challenges. OCFS works in partnership with Orphan Foundation of America to develop performance outcomes. NYS students and caseworkers, along with Orphan Foundation of America, provide input/feedback to the OCFS ETV Program Manager to strengthen and improve the current NYS ETV program.

### **Accomplishments**

788 youth received ETV awards during FFY 2015-2016

319 (40%) were New 2014-2015 Students and 469 (60%) were Returning 2014-15 Students

Male: 264 (34%)

Female: 524 (66%)

#### Age and Number of students:

18	238	30%
19	199	25%
20	170	22%
21	115	16%
22	66	8%

#### Ethnicity:

African-American	385	49%
Asian-American	34	4%
Caucasian	116	15%
Latino	142	18%
Mixed Race	100	13%
Native-American	3	<1%
Pacific Islander	7	<1%

\*in some cases this might be an estimated number since the APSR is due June 30, 2017.

Funding available for the New York State ETV program: \$2,301,357

All eligible NYS youth who completed the ETV application and attended school were funded. Students who applied, but were ineligible to receive funding include those who were never in foster care, did not attend school, were first time applicants over the age of 21, or were previous recipients who are older than 23.

\* Data is derived from the Orphan Foundation of America ETV report (Appendix C)

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

Under the Universal Accreditation Act of 2012, adoption service providers working with prospective adoptive parents in non-Hague Convention adoption cases need to comply with the same accreditation requirement and standards that apply in Hague Convention adoption cases. Only those adoption service providers who have been accredited or approved by the Council on Accreditation may provide any of the defined adoption services for Convention adoption cases (unless an organization or individual is operating as an exempt provider or under the supervision of an accredited or approved adoption service provider).

Currently thirteen (13) NYS voluntary authorized agencies and one NYS private attorney have been accredited or approved by the Council on Accreditation (COA). Two of the accredited agencies have the authority to provide services for incoming and outgoing adoption cases, the other eleven accredited agencies are approved for incoming adoption cases.

As residents of NYS, children adopted from other countries have access, if they otherwise satisfy the eligibility standards, to mandated preventive services. In addition, all NYS voluntary authorized agencies providing inter-country adoption programs are regulated and supervised by OCFS. To provide greater support to families in need of post adoption services, OCFS awarded eight contracts to Regional Permanency Resource Centers (PRCs) in 2016. These programs are designed to provide post adoption and post legal guardianship services to any family regardless of income and regardless of the type of adoption (agency, private placement or international). An additional seven contracts will be awarded to Regional PRCs in early 2017.

In 2015, the Family Services Intake (FSI) module in CONNECTIONS was modernized to include a new tab which allows for collection of information on adopted children and the services the family is seeking and the services provided. In 2016, there were no children reported placed into foster care who had been adopted from other countries.

### e. Monthly Caseworker Visit Data:

In Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2016, OCFS continued its year-over-year improvement in contacting foster children. OCFS achieved a FFY 2016 Contact percentage of 95.5 percent. This maintains the percentage in FFY 2015 and continues to reach beyond the 95 percent Foster Children Contact mandate for FFY 2015 established by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF).

In FFY 2015, the primary metric used to measure Foster Children Contacts is known as '*In Care Contact %*'.<sup>4</sup> OCFS has done well with this metric; OCFS tracked this metric for FFY 2011 and achieved an '*In Care Contact %*' = 81.5 percent. Interim data for FFY 2017 (October 2016 - February 2017) Foster Children contacts showed an '*In Care Contact %*' = 93.1 percent. There is usually a data entry lag of up to two months and this is expected to be higher once caseworkers enter all data. For FFY 2012-2014, the ACF mandate for Foster Children contacts was at 90 percent.

Target percentages: 10/1/10 75%, reported actual 67.5%  
10/1/11 90%, reported actual 81.5%  
10/1/12 90%, reported actual 94.6%  
10/1/13 90%, reported actual 94.2%  
10/1/14 90%, reported actual 94.3%  
10/1/15 95%, reported actual 95.5%  
10/1/16 95%, reported actual 95.5%

OCFS implemented a Foster Children data mart and created production reports that provide Foster Children Contact summary and detail information. These reports measure monthly performance and access has been expanded to LDSS and voluntary authorized agency staff. This data mart is updated weekly; timely updates enable LDSSs, voluntary authorized agencies, and OCFS staff to monitor progress and to take action to improve child contacts. Data relating to Case Manager and Case Planner, including associated organizational codes (i.e., site-unit), has enabled agencies to monitor and improve accountability by work units.

The OCFS New York City regional office has five contractors and an administrator to work with agencies that provide child and family services to NYC (in NYC all services for foster children are subcontracted to voluntary authorized agencies). These contractors have worked collaboratively with voluntary authorized agencies resulting in measurable improvements to agency foster children contacts.

In Albany, one contractor works with the OCFS Data Warehouse Information Technology team and OCFS Bureau of Research, Evaluation and Performance Analytics (BREPA) to develop

---

<sup>4</sup> The denominator is, for the applicable period, the total number of in care months for children in the custody of (LDSSs. This includes children that are on trial discharge or absent, but in the LDSS custody. Numerator is the number of children that had at least one casework contact per each contact month identified in the denominator.

requirements, perform data analysis, testing, and provide assistance to OCFS, LDSS, and voluntary authorized agency staff. This contractor works on refining existing reports and developing reports to assist in monitoring casework contacts.

Monthly workgroup meetings are held to discuss performance and strategies for improving casework contacts. Workgroups are comprised of OCFS staff from legal, budget, child welfare and community services, strategic planning and policy development, information technology, and the Division of Juvenile Justice and Opportunities for Youth. These workgroup meetings are utilized to explore ways to maintain and improve the 95 percent target that was achieved in FFY 2015 and to improve quality associated with casework contacts. Consequently, the BREPA has made a number of improvements/ refinements to existing reports and a number of new reports have been developed. Improved reports include those to accommodate program changes such as those related to the Close to Home Initiative as well as to monitor the higher statewide thresholds or two contacts per month. Additionally, the group has focused discussion on the quality of the casework contacts.

These activities have enabled New York State to maintain in residence contact percentage at above 90 percent (it was about 93% in both FFY 2015 and 2016) which is well above the requisite 50 percent threshold.

## **Targeted Plans within the CFSP**

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

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

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

To support the diligent recruitment of foster and adoptive families who reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of children needing out of home care, OCFS actively guides recruitment and retention across the state in several ways. OCFS requires LDSSs and voluntary authorized agencies to create a multiyear Foster and Adoptive Parent Recruitment and Retention Plan. Voluntary authorized agencies may serve multiple counties and their retention plan is a reflection of the children entrusted to their care. LDSSs and voluntary authorized agencies submit these plans to OCFS every three years, and in 2017 a new multiyear plan was required. A template was provided to LDSSs and voluntary authorized agencies for their use.

The plans detail the racial and ethnic diversity of available homes and project the number of homes needed to fill any gaps. The plans must be in compliance with MEPA and its subsequent amendments.

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

As a result of these comprehensive plans, every LDSS and voluntary authorized agency in NYS sets specific targets for recruiting a diverse pool of foster and adoptive parents and works toward measurable outcomes in this area. When developing the plans, LDSSs and voluntary authorized agencies assess their current opportunities and challenges in recruitment and retention, considering what worked and what did not work in past efforts, and then decide how to build on past successes. The plans are to include targeted and child-specific recruitment strategies to support the recruitment of foster and adoptive homes which reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of children needing care. OCFS recommends using targeted recruitment strategies to address

gaps, including community partnerships and the involvement of current foster and adoptive families. As part of the recruitment planning process, LDSSs and voluntary authorized agencies are directed to evaluate the extent to which their objectives were met, document results, and identify opportunities for improvement.

OCFS regional offices review each submission and may ask LDSSs to clarify and strengthen their recruitment strategies prior to plan approval. Permanency specialists from OCFS regional offices periodically meet with LDSSs and voluntary authorized agencies to review progress in recruitment.

#### Additional Activities Held in 2016:

OCFS continued to contract with Welfare Research Inc. to implement the Diligent Recruitment and Retention award OCFS received from the Children's Bureau in 2013. The major accomplishments as part of that award during 2016 included the launch of the Recruitment Blueprint (*Taking Action*); ongoing implementation of recruitment and retention action plans in the counties; the revision to the template used for the multiyear plan, and expansion of diligent recruitment work with WRI to Region III.

OCFS and its subcontractor, WRI, hold monthly calls to share updates and plan next steps towards completion of grant deliverables. WRI Project Staff meet on a frequent and ongoing basis, both internally and with the implementation counties, Albany, Schenectady, Nassau and Ulster. Ongoing, regular communication is sustained between WRI Project Staff and each county with monthly face-to-face meetings (with the exception of Nassau which has transitioned to quarterly meetings as part of the planned, gradual transition to local sustainability), and regular phone and email contacts.

#### Recruitment Blueprint Launched:

The Recruitment Blueprint (*Taking Action*) was launched in September 2016. This resource can be found at [www.recruit4fostercare.org](http://www.recruit4fostercare.org). A companion piece to the best practices guide (*Revitalizing Recruitment*), the Blueprint offers LDSSs and voluntary authorized agencies a step-by-step roadmap for data-driven recruitment and retention, and practical methods that they can use to drive their recruitment of foster and adoptive homes with data they already have. The Blueprint shares lessons learned from the project team's work in the field, and highlights helpful tools, such as recruitment data tracking systems and foster parent surveys. Designed as a web-based resource, the Blueprint offers tips for implementation, evaluating impact, continuous quality improvement, and sustaining successes. Users may access the website from their desktop, or on the go, via tablet or smartphone.

Ongoing dissemination took place via regional forums throughout the entire state.

Statewide meeting of directors of services, September 7, 2016

Foster care supervisors from LDSSs and voluntary authorized agencies (Region III), June 24, 2016

Foster home finders from LDSSs and voluntary authorized agencies (Region III), September 12, 2016

Foster parents and staff (Region V), May 11, 2016

### Implementation Sites

Supported by WRI project staff, the four implementation sites (Albany, Schenectady, Nassau, and Ulster) developed strategic action plans for recruitment and retention, and are actively implementing those plans. Project staff are in regular contact with the implementation sites, both through regular in-person meetings, and by phone and email, to guide and support them in carrying out their strategic action plans.

As directed by the work plan, the WRI project staff are transitioning each implementation county to sustain their own diligent recruitment team. Nassau County already began this transition, moving from monthly meetings with project staff to quarterly meetings, and sustaining progress on their action plan with greater independence. Beginning in 2017, Albany and Schenectady counties will also make this transition, moving from monthly meetings to quarterly meetings with WRI project staff, identifying their own facilitator and carrying out their own monthly meetings. This transition promotes each county's ownership of and responsibility for their diligent recruitment work beyond the life of the grant. WRI project staff will remain accessible and responsive to each county for any emerging needs in between the quarterly meetings.

Key priorities of all action plans include targeted recruitment of needed homes (e.g. homes for sibling groups, teens, etc.), recruitment data tracking, and improving customer service during the certification process. For example:

--Targeted recruitment: All implementation counties are establishing community partnerships to find needed foster homes. For example, counties are focusing on recruiting homes in specific neighborhoods to support school continuity for children in foster care, and/or on finding African-American homes, and/or Muslim homes. One county held a successful orientation session for prospective Muslim foster parents at a Muslim community center, aligning the presentation with the Muslim practice which included visually separating men and women during the training with a room divider. The orientation was so successful that the county hopes to build enrollment of a MAPP class (pre-service training) especially for Muslim families in the next calendar year.

Homes for sibling groups and teens are also a priority for most counties. Strategies include re-recruiting from their current pool of homes, as well as engaging current foster parents already caring for these groups to recruit new families during the certification process.

--Tracking recruitment data: All counties are tracking recruitment data using a system like AdoptUSKids' Family Intake Tracking Tool (FITT) or their own stand-alone database they have created (Nassau County). FITT has continued to present reporting challenges, which

are not able to be addressed by AdoptUSKids, so that creates barriers to sustainability of this data system in New York State. (See Data section for more on these challenges.)

As part of their strategic action plans, Albany and Schenectady County have been awarded grants from the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption (DTFA) to hire Wendy's Wonderful Kids (WWK) recruiters. WWK recruiters are working with active caseloads in both counties. Implementation of the WWK program is expected to significantly advance these counties' child-specific recruitment strategies, and help bring permanency for youth otherwise likely to age out of foster care without a family.

### Expansion to Region III

WRI Project Staff expanded the reach of the project into Region III. This region includes 14 counties in Central New York, including Syracuse. An assessment of the region's counties was conducted, taking into account both the counties' level of need and readiness for support with their recruitment and retention efforts.

Based on this needs assessment, Onondaga County was selected for participation in the diligent recruitment project. Onondaga County, which includes the City of Syracuse, is one of the largest counties in Region III, so the potential reach is significant. Currently, diligent recruitment work is commencing with Onondaga County's team. In addition, the OCFS regional office reached out to the other two largest counties in Region III for possible participation, and those communications are ongoing. As well, WRI project staff have responded to requests for technical assistance from Madison and Tioga, two smaller counties in Region III. Madison and Tioga counties reached out to the project following our Project Team's presentation at the New York Public Welfare Association last year, and have demonstrated great willingness to engage in data-driven recruitment planning and try innovative strategies. WRI project staff hope to continue to support both Tioga and Madison counties in their diligent recruitment work, as resources allow.

### Other Regional/Statewide Work

WRI project staff are working to strengthen and support cross-county and regional recruitment strategies in Regions IV (greater Albany area) and V (Hudson Valley/Long Island area), as well as in other regions of the state as resources allow. A solid structure exists in NYS for bringing together staff who are likely to be involved in diligent recruitment efforts, such as directors, foster care supervisors and home finders. OCFS has learned that utilizing this existing structure is an effective way to promote cross-county and regional work. Quarterly meetings are facilitated in every region of the state by the OCFS regional offices, and the Center for Development of Human Services (CDHS, a training and staff development organization in NYS). Both the regional offices and CDHS have been very helpful in regularly inviting WRI Project Staff to present and lead discussions on data-driven recruitment. The meetings involve both LDSSs and voluntary authorized agencies. The focus of these ongoing presentations is the Blueprint process.

### *Recruitment and Retention Planning Template:*

A significant accomplishment during 2016 was the revision of the Recruitment and Retention template that NYS LDSSs and voluntary authorized agencies complete and submit to OCFS every three years. The WRI project team collaborated with OCFS to revise the template to align with current best practice. The updated format supports LDSSs in using easily available data whenever possible (i.e. pre-defined reports), and developing specific, measurable targeted recruitment goals. The updated template was distributed to LDSSs and voluntary authorized agencies on October 18, 2016.

### 2017 Activities:

OCFS will be hosting a home finders summit as a means of exchanging information on several topic areas with a focus on improving recruitment and retention, and promoting consistency across the state on the certification or approval and oversight of foster boarding homes. A summer conference is being planned with input from foster care home finders, foster parents, and a former foster youth.

OCFS is also exploring new training for foster parents, and a new home study model for home finders. The goal is to promote the identification of qualified and well trained foster families who are prepared to care for the traumatized and often times abused children being placed into foster care.

## **Health Care Services Plan Update**

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

Health care services: The Federal Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 (P.L. 110-351) amended the section 422(b)(15) of the Social Security Act which previously required an update regarding ongoing efforts by the state agency to actively involve and consult physicians or other appropriate medical professionals in assessing the health and well-being of foster children and determining appropriate medical treatment. The law now requires states and Tribes, in coordination with the State Title XIX (Medicaid) agency, and in consultation with pediatricians and other experts in health care, and experts in and recipients of child welfare services, to develop a plan for ongoing oversight and coordination of health care services for children in foster care. States are required to submit a copy of the Health Care Services Plan with their CFSP.

NYS 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 LDSSs, that are the legal custodians and case managers, and the voluntary authorized agencies with which these LDSSs contract to provide foster care services. Over 80 percent of NYS children in foster care are cared for by non-public voluntary authorized agencies rather than LDSS operated facilities or LDSS certified or approved foster homes. OCFS routinely conducts site visits and provides technical assistance to LDSSs and voluntary authorized agencies to monitor the quality of services provided.

The models of delivery for health care services to children in foster care vary significantly across NYS. Some voluntary authorized agencies deliver primary health care directly through on-site clinics. Some agencies have contractual agreements with health care providers; for example, an agency may contract with one psychologist in the community to conduct mental health evaluations on all new admissions. Most agencies have medical staff that provide some tracking and oversight of routine and specialty health services. Children residing in foster homes generally use community health providers.

While OCFS does not provide direct clinical services to children in foster care, OCFS promulgated regulations regarding appropriate medical care [18 NYCRR 441.22]. OCFS regulation 18 NYCRR 441.22 sets forth the schedule for initial and follow-up health screenings for children in foster care. . New York State Social Services Law provides the statutory authority for OCFS to supervise LDSSs and promulgate regulations. OCFS regulations require that licensed medical professionals assess the health and well-being of children in foster care and determine appropriate medical treatment. OCFS has also provided practice guidance on necessary and optimal health services for children in foster care with our comprehensive manual, "Working Together: Health Services for Children in Foster Care". This manual was developed in close collaboration with the OCFS medical director (a pediatrician), and a representative group of foster care agency and social services staff that included medical professionals and was revised in 2009.

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

representatives from social services, mental health, developmental disabilities, substance abuse services, schools, and community providers. The goal is to implement a comprehensive, coordinated, individualized service plan for each child. In 2002, the Center for Governmental Research, Inc. (CGR) concluded that CCSI is a viable model that should be continued and strengthened, and presented a number of recommendations designed to strengthen the state-local partnership. Many of the recommendations in the report were subsequently implemented. In addition, a coordinated children's services statute that amended NYS Executive Law went into effect subsequent to the report and incorporated a number of issues raised in the report.

At the state level, the OCFS medical director or a contracted vendor in his or her absence is involved in any regulatory or guidance documents disseminated on health issues. OCFS employs a chief treatment officer, is contracted with two supervising psychiatrists and employs psychologists. OCFS routinely engages local and national experts, including psychiatrists, physicians, pharmacists, and psychologists to assist in health-related initiatives. Activities in 2008 included a series of three teleconferences on trauma, the development and distribution of a guidance document on the use of psychiatric medication for children in out-of-home care, and an interagency collaboration to address Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD).

OCFS has utilized the evidence based Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) assessment tool for the since the origin three Bridges to Health (B2H) Home and Community Based Waivers for children in foster care and who remain B2H eligible upon discharge from foster care. Bridges to Health (B2H) (*Working Together Manual* B-21, B-175) care managers utilize the CANS to plan for B2H services and provide direction to address needs and strengths.

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

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

### **Medicaid Managed Care Transition**

The NYS Medicaid Redesign Team (MRT) was created to further the vision of restructuring NYS' Medicaid program. The MRT has developed a multi-year action plan to, improve patient experience of care, improve health of the population, and control costs. This includes the foster care population, whose medical needs, and therefore Medicaid expenditures, are *exponentially higher than the general pediatric Medicaid population*. Evidence suggests that children who have

been placed in foster care have significantly higher rates of unmet health needs compared to children in the general population, and use of inpatient and outpatient mental health services at a rate of 15-20 times higher than the general pediatric Medicaid population – therefore this is a small, discrete population of children with high needs.

Children placed in foster homes licensed by the LDSS (referred to as “direct care foster care”), which includes approximately 3,500 children, moved into Managed Care between April 1, 2013 – September 2013. OCFS and DOH created a Policy Paper that outlines the following guidance: Enrollment and Dis-enrollments, Access to Care, Complaints and Appeals, as well as a Summary of Critical Policy Changes. OCFS held a series of conference calls with LDSS and Managed Care Organizations (MCOs) and reviewed the contents of the Policy Paper.

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

1. **Health Homes Care Coordination beginning in October 2016:** Health Homes for children will begin enrollment as part of NYS’ “care management for all” strategy. Health home networks will always include community based organizations because they are uniquely positioned to meet the social needs of patients that often transcend health care needs. DOH and OCFS agree that voluntary authorized agencies will be the Health Home Care Management Agencies for the foster care population.
2. **State Plan Amendment (SPA) Services beginning October 2017:** OCFS and its NYS partners have been developing six new Medicaid SPA services that will be based on Medical Necessity, including Crisis Intervention, Community Psychiatric Supports and Treatment, Other Licensed Practitioner, Psychosocial Rehabilitation Services, Family Peer Support Services, and Youth Peer Advocacy and Training.
3. **Children placed with Voluntary Authorized Agencies are intended to move into Managed Care in January 2019:** The Children’s Health Subcommittee of the MRT Behavioral Health Workgroup includes representatives from DOH, OCFS, OMH and OASAS whose charge is to transform to care for children and redesign services for children. This includes approximately 16,500 children who are served by 93 Voluntary Authorized Agencies. This group of children represents a significantly more complex set of health and behavioral health care needs. Voluntary Authorized Agencies have a long standing proven track record of being responsive to the multi-faceted needs of children, their families and the regulatory mandates of local and state governments. The NYS Child Welfare system is a highly complex set of relationships that includes LDSS, Voluntary Authorized Agencies and the health care system. This set of relationships requires a highly coordinated approach to achieve desired outcomes. NYS recognizes that the movement of children in foster care into Managed Care represents an opportunity to improve the current system and outcomes for children and this must be done in a highly orchestrated fashion.
  - This includes the access of information regarding psychotropic medication utilization for the foster care population, as this will be made available through the

Managed Care Plans. OCFS is developing draft revisions to the NYS Model Contract with the Managed Care Organizations (MCOs), whereas the MCOs must implement oversight and monitoring the use of psychotropic medications for children in foster care, including the oversight of any child: (1) under the age of 6 taking any psychotropic medications (2) on more than one medication from the same class (antidepressants, antipsychotics, ADHD medications, anxiolytics/hypnotics, mood stabilizers) OR (3) on three or more psychotropic medications; in the event that any of these prescribing methods occur, MCOs must provide quality standards and oversight through its physician network through alerts, consultation, and education.

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

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

- Voluntary Authorized Agencies will continue to receive and operate a “Residual Medicaid Per Diem” to include services that are health care related and vital to the Voluntary Authorized Agency’s operations. This includes Nursing and Social Work, which are non-encounter based services.
- Licensing Voluntary Authorized Agencies as Health Facilities: Voluntary Authorized Agencies are required to provide or arrange for health care services based on Federal and NYS Health Care standards. As NYS continues to move services and populations into managed care, as well as recognizing that the Voluntary Authorized Agencies provide trauma-informed services, NYS is moving forward with obtaining necessary statutory and regulatory authority and to license voluntary authorized agencies as health care facilities for a very limited set of services.
- Managed Care Organizations contract for clinical services, such as: behavioral health, primary care, specialty health care, pharmacy & lab care and dental services. OCFS and DOH are working to define the MCO per Member per Month premium to account for the high needs, high costs of children in foster care. In addition, OCFS and DOH are updating the Model contract between DOH and the MCOs to take into account the unique needs of children in foster care.

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

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

OCFS has collaborated with NYS Department of Health (DOH) and the Office of Temporary Disability Assistance (OTDA) in creating processes and comprehensive system support whereby youth can enroll per ACA. This involved outreach to youth that are eligible but may have been discharged. OCFS collaborated with the Schuyler Center for Advocacy in creating website announcements of the developed process for enrollment, video vignettes of FFC speaking to the advantage of ACA and how to enroll, and a list of potential eligible youth was provided to DOH to cross reference any youth that may emerge and request enrollment in any LDSS. In addition, OCFS, DOH and Schuyler presented on the issue at the NYPWA conference in 2014.

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

## **Child Passport**

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

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

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

the quality of initial assessments, the development of more complete individual treatment plans and the overall quality of care.

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

### **Healthy Families**

NYS Healthy Families New York (HFNY) is an evidence-based home visiting program offering services to expecting parents and new families, beginning weekly and decreasing over time, until the child starts school or Head Start. This home visiting program offers services to support expectant families and new parents with the changes that come with the birth of a new child. Services are voluntary and provided at no cost. More information on Healthy Families is provided in other sections of this plan.

## ***Disaster Planning Update***

## ***Disaster Planning Update***

### Emergency Preparedness/ Disaster Plans:

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

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

- Identify, locate and continue availability of services for children under state care or supervision who are displaced or adversely affected by a disaster;
- Respond to new child welfare cases in areas adversely affected by a disaster, and provide services in those cases;
- Remain in communication with caseworkers and other essential child welfare personnel who are displaced because of a disaster; and
- Reserve essential program records and coordinate services and share information with other states (Section 422(b)(16) of the SSA).

OCFS' paramount priority has been to protect the health and safety of our employees, stakeholders and the children and families we serve. As part of this commitment, OCFS has developed plans to strengthen the agency's ability to prevent, respond and recover from any type of emergency disruption. The following agency plans are available:

- An updated copy of the OCFS Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP). This plan formalizes the policies and procedures developed by the agency and serves as a foundation for all OCFS staff to continue to provide essential services during emergencies. There are four divisional program COOP plans which focus on directing resources to support the essential services required to maintain the health and safety of OCFS stakeholders. There are two support units' plans which identify critical functions to support program divisions in the reestablishment of services.
- An updated copy of the OCFS Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) Light. This plan is an action document used to reestablish essential services during emergencies. It includes listing of agency critical functions, organizational structure, notification chart, 24-hour contact information, relocation sites, and stakeholder contact information.
- An updated copy of the OCFS Division of Child Welfare and Community Services (CWCS) Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP). This Division has the primary responsibility for the oversight of child welfare services delivered by LDSSs
- A copy of the template used by OCFS juvenile facilities to develop a "Ready Emergency Data Book," which details each DJJOY facility's continuity of operations plan in the event of an emergency.

- Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP) in an internal agency management tool which sets forth basic information necessary to prevent, mitigate, respond to and recover from emergencies.
- Emergency Response Plans (ERP) which are individual office plans needed to effectively react to building emergencies.
- OCFS Pandemic Influenza Plan: Established in response to the outbreak of the H1N1 virus in NYS.

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

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

In relation to OCFS' role in oversight, OCFS issued 07-OCFS-ADM-10: "New York State Disaster Plan – Local Department of Social Services Requirements," on July 30, 2007. This ADM outlines the requirements for local departments of social services pursuant the federal Child and Family Services Improvement Act of 2006, P.L. 109-288. The submitted local plans will be incorporated into state planning.

Every year OCFS staff members are sent to a State Emergency Operations Center course sponsored by the NYS Office of Emergency Management (SOEM). These same volunteers participate in exercises to hone these skills. This training and exercises ensure that personnel are prepared when assigned to work at the OCFS desk at the Emergency Operations Center.

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

OCFS remains compliant with the National Incident Management System (NIMS) required by the federal government which establishes standardized incident management processes, protocols, and procedures that all responders -- federal, state, tribal, and local -- will use to coordinate and conduct response actions.

OCFS replaced the agency's geographic informational center (GIC) mapping computer application with new desktop geographical information systems (GIS) software in multiple offices beginning in March 2016 and the web-based Critical Infrastructure Response Information System (CIRIS), in December 2015 when the first CIRIS training was offered. These systems are widely used to identify facilities and providers in impacted areas for improved disaster response.

OCFS is a member of the NYS Disaster Preparedness Commission (DPC).

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

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

### **Accomplishments 2016-2017:**

#### **OCFS Emergency Responses and Preparedness Coordination**

OCFS participated in Multi-Agency Coordination (MAC) calls for several events throughout the year, such as Hurricane Hermine, September 2- 5, 2016; NYC IED Event, September 19, 2016, Hurricane Matthew, October 4 -5, 2016.

#### **Social Services Block Grant**

OCFS continues to administer a special \$235.4 million Social Services Block Grant to address losses caused by Hurricane Sandy. OCFS is the lead state agency on the project with DOH, OMH, OPWDD, SOFA, OTDA, and OASAS. Funding supports the delivery of social, health, and mental health services, and the upgrade of damaged public and private facilities that provide these services. To date, over \$200 million of the funds have been spent, including more than 450 awards to those providers, who provided over 5,000,000 individual Social Service Block Grant-type services and completed building repairs and/or renovations. The funds were mostly distributed in NYC and Long Island. Funding was originally scheduled to end on September 30, 2015, however, a two-year extension was granted until September 30, 2017. Unspent funds are being repurposed to provide services and meet the ongoing needs of individuals and families impacted by the storm through June 30, 2017, providing a three-month window to close those contracts.

## **OCFS NY-Alert**

OCFS uses OCFS NY-Alert, a private-use implementation of NY-Alert, to contact employees efficiently and simultaneously when emergency notification is necessary.

## **Disaster Mental Health Training and Conference on Preparing for the Health and Mental Health Consequences of Climate Change**

OCFS staff attended the annual Institute for Disaster Mental Health Training and Conference on Effective Response to Mass Transportation Disasters on April 15, 2016.

## **New York State Citizen Preparedness Corps Training**

OCFS hosted a personal disaster preparedness program, Citizen Preparedness Corps for Home Office staff on September 30, 2016.

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

- OCFS Agency Emergency Management Coordinator participated in a human services branch table-top exercise hosted by NYSOEM August 10, 2016.
- Mohawk River Cresting Exercise sponsored by NYSOEM. July 12, 13 and 14, 2016.

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

- Indian Point federal post-plume ingestion pathway exercise and table-top. The practice dates were April 19 and 21, 2016. The federally evaluated exercise took place June 28 and 30, 2016.
- Nine Mile Point/James Fitzpatrick federal off-year practice plume exercise. December 6, 2016.

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

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

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

- NYS Human Services Branch Executive Steering Committee
- DHSES Homeland Security Senior Advisory Committee (HSSAC)
- Radiological Emergency Preparedness Working Group (REPWG)
- NYS Nuclear Safety Sub Committee Power Pool bi-annual Meeting
- State Reunification Planning Workgroup
- NYS Human Services Committee
- Multi-Agency Coordination (MAC) Group

### **E-FINDS**

OCFS's juvenile justice facilities participate in the New York State Evacuation of Facilities in Disasters System (NYS e-FINDS), the emergency location tracking system to track facility residents in the event of an evacuation.

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

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

Listed below is a summary of the four training projects. The first three trainings are in the final approval stages. The fourth training is in final stages of development and is planned

to be released this year. OCFS is looking to have approval and roll out to facilitate recruitment and retention of trained staff to assist with disaster recovery in 2016.

- **DRC Training for Local Jurisdictions** - This training provides an overview of Disaster Recovery Center (DRC) considerations that local jurisdictions should be aware of in advance of these centers opening.
- **DRC Training Overview (Volunteer Recruitment)** - This training provides an overview of the DRC environment. This training is geared towards OTDA and OCFS audiences planning, or considering volunteering to deploy to a DRC to support operations, specifically in the intended capacity as site managers.
- **DRC Training Provider Agencies** - This training will be geared towards partner agencies from other state, federal, local and non-governmental partners that will be supporting DRC operations. This training will focus on what providers should expect at the DRC and will provide an overview of the services commonly offered at the DRCs.
- **DRC Training for Site Management (OTDA/ OCFS specific)** - This training provides detailed information about DRC Operations and Management to the OTDA/OCFS Site Management audience. This training will serve as a “How-To” Guide to help Site Managers understand the expectations of them from preparing the site for opening, supporting daily operations, and through the demobilization process and center closures.

## **Plans for 2017-2018**

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

OCFS is participating in rewriting the State Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan in transitioning from a branch response structure to an Emergency Services Function structure to better align with the federal response.

OCFS will participate in the response emergency operation center exercise and the recovery table top exercise during the federal exercise Gotham Shield.

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

# **Training Plan Update**

## ***Training Plan Update***

OCFS collaborates with a number of expert vendors to develop and deliver training to LDSSs and voluntary authorized agency child welfare workers, supervisors, and administrators.

### State University of New York at Albany, Professional Development Program (SUNY Albany – PDP)

The Professional Development Program of Rockefeller College, University at Albany, State University of New York (PDP) was founded in 1975. The University is chartered by the Board of Regents of NYS and is fully accredited by the Middle States Commission of Higher Education. In addition, Rockefeller College is accredited by the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration. Since inception, PDP has worked with NYS' public sector, including OCFS, to develop and deliver a variety of education and training programs. PDP employs over 200 staff: professional, technical, and support.

### State University of New York at Albany, School of Social Welfare (SUNY Albany – SSW)

The University is chartered by the Board of Regents of NYS and is fully accredited by the Middle States Commission of Higher Education. The School of Social Welfare's partnerships in child welfare span decades. Since 2001, SSW has supported workforce research and development through its NYS Social Work Education Consortium (SWEC). SWEC includes 42 schools of social work, 57 counties, NYC, and OCFS.

### State University of New York at Stony Brook

The State University School of Social Welfare (SSW) is a CSWE accredited School of Social Work. It has been developing and delivering training curricula for more than 35 years. The SSW has operated the Child Welfare Training Program (CWTP) since 1979. One of CWTP's main purposes has been to provide training to child protective services staff, as well as to child welfare staff, in local districts and voluntary agencies. They have provided training on sexual abuse, health and medical issues, trauma-sensitive programs, and advanced casework practice.

### The Council of Family and Child Caring Agencies

The Council of Family and Child Caring Agencies (COFCCA) is the main representative for the majority of not-for-profit organizations that provide foster care, adoption, family preservation, juvenile justice, and special education services in NYS. It has been a leader and supporter of not-for-profit child welfare agencies in NYS for more than 40 years. For 25 years, COFCCA, under contract with OCFS, has used its Training Consortium to provide training to NYC area agencies

### New York State Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence

OPDV is a small NYS agency of approximately 28 staff. For almost 30 years, the agency has provided training on domestic violence to professionals from many areas: criminal justice, the courts, legal services, social services, health care, mental health, and chemical dependency.

For more than 20 years, OPDV and OCFS have been partners in delivering training; nine of those years have been dedicated to developing curricula and delivering training to child protective services workers. They have delivered domestic violence training to child welfare workers for over 20 years.

State University College Buffalo State, the Institute for Community Health Promotion and the Center for Development of Human Services (SUC Buffalo – CDHS/ICHP)

SUNY Buffalo State is an accredited institution of higher continuing education by the Board of Regents, University of the State of New York and the Commission on Higher Education of the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools.

The Institute for Community Health Promotion (ICHP) was established in 2014 to integrate the Center for the Development of Human Services (CDHS) and the Center for Health and Social Research (CHSR).

ICHP and CDHS are entities of SUNY Buffalo State, and have the accreditations of the university. Since it began over 30 years ago, CDHS has been a provider of training, technical support and program development to social services and child welfare agencies across NYS. In that time, it has developed numerous training programs and delivered training to about 850,000 people in the public assistance and child welfare systems.

Cornell University

The Bronfenbrenner Center for Translational Research (BCTR) that administers the Residential Child Care Project (RCCP) allows Cornell University's College of Human Ecology to link the long-standing twin missions of research and outreach to address complex human problems in communities.

The College of Human Ecology at Cornell University is one of NYS' contract colleges. Its faculty has relevant expertise in child development, family studies, nutrition, policy analysis and management, economics, as well as health and human services planning, evaluation, and health care administration.

The RCCP's Therapeutic Crisis Intervention System (TCI) is used throughout NYS, in other states and Canada and abroad. TCI is used in hundreds of residential childcare agencies, and has been adapted for other residential care settings as well. The TCI program is listed with other national organizational crisis prevention and management systems with the California Evidence-Based Clearinghouse for Child Welfare.

Training provided by OCFS can be categorized as **Initial Training** or **Ongoing Training**. Initial Training includes introductory or foundation training for new caseworkers, supervisors, and administrators. Ongoing Training includes specialty, and advanced and refresher training for experienced caseworkers, supervisors, and administrators.

Training is considered long-term or short-term. The training provided by OCFS is all short-term, with one exception: Under the contract with State University at Albany – School of Social Welfare, the Social Work Education Consortium (SWEC) works with participating schools of social work to provide tuition funding for identified LDSS child welfare workers for course work leading to a BSW or MSW.

## **Training Planned for Federal Fiscal Years 2015-2019**

### **Training Conducted in Federal Fiscal Year 2016-2017 and Proposed in 2017-2018**

In late 2015, OCFS began the process of redesigning its caseworker development training to be a competency-based model. Throughout 2016, OCFS worked with training vendors to develop the framework and structure of the new program. Curriculum development began in early 2017. The new program is expected to be piloted in July 2017, completely replacing the current model by January 1, 2018.

It is expected that many of the training programs provided in 2016, as described in the “Program Support” section of the APSR, will be offered again during the 2017, based upon OCFS’s Practice Model and subject to the availability of funding and vendor contracts. The following trainings are planned for 2017:

#### **Initial Training**

##### **CPS Foundation Part 1**

This program is the foundation training for new LDSS and voluntary authorized agency caseworkers, especially those who have a role in Child Protective Services Responses, including FAR and on-call. It is also available to preventive, foster, and adoption workers. It is a blended learning program that includes eight (8) days of classroom training, as well as approximately 3.5 days of web-based instructional activities.

This training provides workers with the knowledge and skills necessary to effectively begin working with children and families to achieve the child welfare outcomes of safety, permanency, and well-being. This course provides foundational learning necessary to proceed to Child Protective Services Response Training (CPSRT).

*The allowable Title IV-E administrative functions this training activity addresses are: referral to services, case management and supervision, placement of the child, development of the case plan.*

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

Estimated cost per delivery is \$138,045.

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2016-2017 (actual)	548	20	230
2017-2018 (proposed)	725	25	88

## **CPS Foundation Part 2**

The program is designed to build upon the knowledge and skill new LDSS CPS workers gained during Part 1 of Foundation and CPSRT, as well as during on the job training and their initial casework. CPS Foundation Part 2 is required for CPS Foundation Part 1 and CPSRT participants to complete their “new caseworker” training. CPS Foundation Part 2 is a blended learning program consisting of eight (8) days of classroom training and approximately 1.5 days of web-based instructional activities

*The allowable Title IV-E administrative functions this training activity addresses are: referral to services, case management and supervision, placement of the child, development of the case plan.*

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

Estimated cost per delivery is \$113,800.

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2016-2017 actual)	366	18	180
2017-2018 (proposed)	725	25	288

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

**This program was discontinued at the end of 2016.**

This program provided foundation training for experienced Child Welfare (preventive, foster, and adoption) and Child Protective Services caseworkers from local districts and voluntary agencies. This training focused on building skills most likely to result in positive outcomes for clients and the achievement of child welfare outcomes, including an emphasis on the impact of trauma, basic child welfare legal practice, child development,

and interviewing children. This program consisted of eight days of classroom training and 1.5 days of web-based training.

*The allowable Title IV-E administrative functions this training activity addresses are: referral to services, case management and supervision, placement of the child, development of the case plan.*

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

Estimated cost per delivery was \$54,600.

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2016-2017 (actual)	154	11	100

### **Child Protective Services Response Training**

Supplemented by pre and mid-classroom web-based modules, this initial eight-day course, consisting of seven (7) days of classroom training and one day of training in CONNECTIONS, fulfills the mandated core training for Investigative/ FAR and On-Call child protective staff by building upon a set of interpersonal engagement, assessment, and decision making skills and values learned in the Common Core or CPS Foundation training and applying them to the CPS role and responsibilities in the context of the CPS Response. This course is directed by policy as a foundation course for all CPS caseworkers. *Child Protective Services Response Training (CPSRT)* 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.

This training is for LDSS CPS and child welfare caseworkers, supervisors and managers; and NYS OCFS staff involved in FAR. However, participants must first have taken a foundation training program, such as CPS Foundation Part 1 or Core Training.

*The allowable Title IV-E administrative functions this training activity addresses are: case management and supervision, development of the case plan, referral to services.*

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

Estimated cost per delivery is \$70,665.

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2016-2017 (actual)	528	22	213
2017-2018 (proposed)	725	25	175

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

The Voluntary Agency Core curriculum is designed for caseworkers and supervisors who work in NYC voluntary agencies. The program provides caseworkers, child care workers, administrators, and other agency staff with the skills and knowledge they need to maintain safe and stable placements, to assess safety and risk, and to promote permanency and well-being. The program provides an overview of the child welfare system in NYC as well as the policy and regulatory framework that guides practice in NYS. Through 2015, the Core Training consisted of four 3-day modules of classroom training. Each module was treated as a separate course for the purpose of tracking the number of offerings, trainees, and training days. It was recommended that all trainees attend all four modules. Beginning in 2016-2017, the Core Training Program was reduced to three modules. It is a single multipart course, and all three modules are required for completion.

*The allowable Title IV-E administrative functions this training activity addresses are: case management and supervision and development of the case plan.*

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

Estimated cost per delivery for Core training is \$7,574.

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2016-2017 (actual)	84	5	45
2017-2018 (proposed)	100	5	45

### **CHILD WELFARE SUPERVISORY TRAINING PROGRAMS**

Sections 421(5)(c) of the Social Services Law sets forth specific types of required training for LDSS CPS supervisory staff. OCFS has developed courses that fulfill the requirements of the law to prepare supervisors to fulfill their roles and responsibilities in Child Protective work. As part of the requirement, all LDSS CPS supervisors must complete a training course on the fundamentals of Child Protection. These fundamentals are provided through the *CPS Foundation Part 1 and 2* and the *Child Protective Services Response Training*. These courses must be completed prior to

completion of the supervisory core program. All CPS Supervisors must complete either *KEYS Core* or *KEYS Essentials*, foundation modules for all Child Welfare supervisors, and *Supervising CPS*, for Child Protective Services supervisors.

### **KEYS Core Training**

This training consists of pre-classroom web-based training, three two-day modules of classroom training, and coaching. KEYS Core topics include Transitioning from Worker to Supervisor, The Process of Supervision, and Case Consultation.

KEYS Core Training focuses on the development of leadership and supervisory effectiveness skills and the competencies that new supervisors most need within the first six months of assuming a supervisory position.

*The allowable Title IV-E administrative function this training activity addresses is case management and supervision.*

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

Estimated cost per delivery is \$39,600.

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2016-2017 (actual)	89	6	36
2017-2018 (proposed)	100	5	30

### **KEYS Supervision Essentials Training**

KEYS Supervision Essentials Trainings, (three two-day classroom modules) will be offered to experienced supervisors to support their implementation of the KEYS Model of Supervision. Training topics will include: Supervision Structure and Process (module one); Communication, Monitoring and Providing Feedback (module two); Case Consultation (module three). It is recommended that this series be taken in sequence, as skills from module one are built upon in the subsequent modules.

*The allowable Title IV-E administrative function this training activity addresses is case management and supervision.*

Training is provided by University Partner SUC Buffalo – CDHS.

Estimated cost per delivery is \$ 12,430

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2016-2017 (actual)	79	7	14
2017-2018 (proposed)	45	3	18

### Keys Coaching Meetings

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

*The allowable Title IV-E administrative function this training activity addresses is case management and supervision.*

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

Estimated cost per delivery is \$5,780.

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2016-2017 (actual)	430	87	43.5
2017-2018 (proposed)	600	30	15

### Supervising CPS

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

*The allowable Title IV-E administrative functions this training activity addresses are: case management and supervision, development of the case plan, case reviews.*

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

Estimated cost per delivery is \$39,872.

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2016-2017 (actual)	31	2	8
2017-2018 (proposed)	60	4	16

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

This two-day training, offered statewide, provides child welfare staff an abstract 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. This course builds staff competences to intervene effectively in cases where sexual abuse is a factor and serves as a foundation to other components in this course focus. There are no prerequisites for this course.

This training is for LDSS including ACS and provider agencies and caseworkers and supervisors working in the program areas of preventative services, adoption services, foster care services and child protective services.

*The allowable Title IV-E administrative function this training activity addresses are: case management and supervision, development of the case plan.*

Training is provided by University Partners SUNY Stony Brook/Fordham University.

Estimated cost per delivery is \$19,125.

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2016-2017 (actual)	443	16	48
2017-2018 (proposed)	400	16	48

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

The Teaming model of practice is designed to support LDSSs to provide effective and efficient protective, preventive or foster care services by assigning casework teams instead of individuals. Training and technical assistance include team building, the process of group supervision and case conference facilitation, family engagement skills, and other strategies as identified by the individual participating LDSSs. This model includes four

one-day offerings of onsite facilitated training for new teams, and follow up technical assistance during the first year.

Training and consultation will also be provided to assist established teams to develop and serve as models/mentors for new teams within their LDSS and to promote the development and growth of the caseworkers and supervisors on the teams, reducing isolation and stress; which allows for greater job satisfaction, worker retention, and improved outcomes for children and families.

*The allowable Title IV-E administrative function this training activity addresses are: case management and supervision, development of the case plan.*

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

Estimated cost per delivery is \$3,500.

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2016-2017 (actual)	677	104	92
2017-2018 (proposed)	475	95	95

## **Family Assessment Response Training**

FAR became a permanent child protective service in New York State in June of 2011. There are 23 counties implementing FAR, they are: Allegany, Cayuga, Chemung, Columbia, Jefferson, Kings, Madison, Monroe, Nassau, Niagara, Onondaga, Orange, Oswego, Queens, Rockland, Suffolk, St. Lawrence, St. Regis, Tioga, Tompkins, Ulster, Washington and Westchester. The FAR training series consists of three foundational courses, two supervision courses and a supplemental course. The two-day FAR *Process and Practice* course, comprised of classroom work and web-based CBTs, provides trainees with a thorough overview of the philosophical and practice framework for FAR within NYS. The one-day classroom based *Solution-Focused FAR Practice* orients trainees in the core principles, values, and practices of solution-focused casework practice as well as in how this practice aligns with FAR. *Assessing Safety and Risk in FAR*, also a one-day classroom based offering, enhances workers' ability to integrate the critical thinking processes and protocols for safety and risk assessment into the core principles and values of family engagement and partnership required for effective FAR Practice. *Supervising to a Practice Shift in FAR* and *Advanced Supervision in FAR* trainings, each a one-day classroom course, prepare supervisors to engage themselves and their workers in a solution focused approach to supervision and consultation within a FAR response. The training *Increasing the Voice of Children and Youth in FAR*, a one-day classroom based course, facilitates leadership through family-led processes that encourage the involvement and participation of children and youth in the process so that they are safe

and families are supported. Coaching continues to be provided to all FAR counties to augment and foster their level of skill in delivering FAR.

The pre-requisites for the series are as follows: Common Core or Core Essential Skills or Foundation Part 1, CPSRT and Foundation Part 2.

*FAR Process and Practice* – This training is for FAR-approved LDSS CPS caseworkers and supervisors and appropriate administrators and provider agencies; identified OCFS regional and home office staff and identified University and LDSS trainers.

*Solution Focused FAR Practice* – This training is for FAR-approved LDSS CPS caseworkers and supervisors and appropriate administrators and provider agencies; identified OCFS regional and home office staff and identified University and LDSS trainers.

*Assessing Safety and Risk in FAR* – This training is for FAR-approved LDSS CPS caseworkers and supervisors and appropriate administrators and provider agencies, identified OCFS regional and home office staff and identified University and LDSS trainers.

*Supervising to a Practice Shift in FAR* – This training is for FAR-approved LDSS CPS caseworkers and supervisors and appropriate administrators and provider agencies; identified OCFS regional and home office staff and identified University and LDSS trainers.

*Advanced Supervision in FAR* – This training is for FAR-approved LDSS CPS caseworkers and supervisors and appropriate administrators and provider agencies; identified OCFS regional and home office staff and identified University and LDSS trainers.

*Increasing the Voice of Children and Youth in FAR* – This training is for FAR-approved LDSS CPS caseworkers and supervisors and appropriate administrators and provider agencies; identified OCFS regional and home office staff and identified University and LDSS trainers.

*The allowable Title IV-E administrative functions these training activities address are: case management and supervision, development of the case plan, case reviews, referral to services.*

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

Estimated cost per training day is \$6,768.

Estimated cost per coaching day is \$4,862.

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training/Coaching Days
2016-2017 (actual)	400	31	47.5

2017-2018 (proposed)	1492	95	95

### **Domestic Violence Training for Child Protective Services Caseworkers**

The mandated two-day classroom training for LDSS CPS staff and supervisors is designed to provide a comprehensive skill base to identify families who are affected by domestic violence, to conduct comprehensive safety and risk assessments, and to develop effective intervention strategies that promote child safety, permanency, and well-being. The course topics include, but are not limited to, identifying domestic violence, interviewing each member of the family affected by domestic violence, assessing safety and making the determination decision and prepare participants to engage each family member safely, including the offending parent. Section 17(g) of the Social Services Law requires this training for all CPS workers and reflects current research-based domestic violence/ child welfare best practice.

This training is for LDSS child welfare staff, Provider Agency staff, LDSS administrators and managers, and OCFS regional office staff. Participants must first have completed Common Core or Core Essential Skills OR CPS Foundation Part 1, Child Protective Services Response Training (CPSRT), and CPS Foundation Part 2.

*The allowable Title IV-E administrative functions this training activity addresses are: referral to services, case management and supervision, development of the case plan.*

The training is provided jointly by the NYS Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and SUC Buffalo – CDHS/ICHP.

Estimated cost per delivery is \$5,194.

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2016-2017 (actual)	353	21	42
2017-2018 (proposed)	440	22	44

### **Adolescent Services**

The Statewide Youth Services Training provides adults who work with youth in care in NYS with training, knowledge, support and job aids. The courses that are considered foundation courses are “Promoting Positive Youth Development and Well-Being” (PPYD) and the “Life Skills Toolbox.” PPYD provides strategies to encourage service providers to communicate with youth and use strategies in assessing their needs and creating realistic youth-led plans. The “Life Skills Toolbox” provides a competency-based structure for staff to assess identify, and work with youth in care to impart life skills needed to transition to adulthood. These two-day classroom trainings are available statewide for LDSS and

voluntary authorized agency caseworkers, supervisors, foster parents, child care workers, and OCFS Division of Juvenile Justice and Opportunities for Youth staff and youth and youth bureau staff. Training is recommended, but not required.

*The allowable Title IV-E administrative functions this training activity addresses are: Development of the case plan and Case management and supervision.*

Training is provided by SUNY Albany - PDP.

Estimated cost per delivery is \$16,900.

#### Topic Specific Classroom Training

This training is offered as full or half day training and is delivered statewide. For 2017, topic specific training will focus on promoting youth well-being, including what workers can do to help youth feel safe, provide youth with the skills they need to transition into adulthood or the workforce, and special topic training to providers on identifying and Supporting Survivors of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) and Youth Trafficking.

OCFS also continues to support the regional and statewide Youth Advisory Leadership Team, Youth in Progress (YIP) which consists of teams of youth in care throughout the six regions in NYS. YIP adolescents will continue to meet on a regular basis to receive training, skill practice, awareness and practical guidance on how to assess and use the resources available to them to help transition to self-sufficiency.

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

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2016-2017 (actual)	2441	224	129.5
2017-2018 (proposed)	3700	370	335

### **Principles of Partnership Training**

OCFS's practice model is built on the belief that the most effective way to protect children and promote permanency and well-being is to strengthen their families, and the most effective way to strengthen families is through strengths-based, solution-focused partnerships. The Principles of Partnership training grounds and supports this belief. Trainings will provide a knowledge base

and develop skills to strengthen families through use of strengths-based, solution-focused partnership strategies and tools. Trainees will learn about each principle of practice and will have the opportunity to use each principle in class situations and practice exercises. Trainees will learn to use specific tools and apply them to their areas of practice (e.g., CPS, foster care, prevention, adoption).

### **Platinum Rule Training**

This is a two-day training on the Principles of Partnership that is targeted toward leadership staff at OCFS, in LDSSs, and voluntary authorized agencies.

*The allowable Title IV-E administrative functions this training activity addresses: communication skills required to work with children and families.*

Training is provided by University Partner SUNY Albany – PDP.

Estimated cost per delivery is \$5,085.

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2016-2017 (actual)	308	22	44
2017-2018 (proposed)	360	24	48

### **Partners in Change Training**

This is a one-day training on the Principles of Partnership that is targeted toward OCFS Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment (SCR) staff, as well as caseworkers in the LDSSs and voluntary authorized agencies.

*The allowable Title IV-E administrative functions this training activity addresses: communication skills required to work with children and families.*

Training is provided by University Partner SUNY Albany – PDP.

Estimated cost per delivery is \$2,370.

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2016-2017 (actual)	292	20	20
2017-2018 (proposed)	720	48	48

## Race Equity and Cultural Competency

Services for children, families, and adults must be individualized and culturally competent, recognizing and mooring differences in tradition, heritage, values, and beliefs. OCFS has offered training and support on race equity in hopes to be better able to address the ongoing disparities in out of home placement for Black/African-American and Native American, and in some case Latino/Hispanic, children in our child welfare system. In the past, this support has come from outside OCFS. In 2017, OCFS will develop the internal capacity to provide this support, through the delivery of two new activities.

## Race Equity and Cultural Competency Learning

The purpose of this two-day classroom training is to provide training that develops knowledge and skills of LDSS, voluntary authorized agency, and select OCFS staff to build and strengthen cultural competency in New York State's child welfare system.

*The allowable Title IV-E administrative functions this training activity addresses are: referral to services, case management and supervision, placement of the child, development of the case plan, cultural competency related to children and families.*

Training is provided by University Partner SUNY Albany – PDP.

Estimated cost per delivery is \$4,100.

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2017-2018 (proposed)	360	20	40

## CPS In-service Compliance

All CPS Investigative/FAR workers are required to attend six hours of annual in-service training. Overall, 81 percent of CPS caseworkers in areas *excluding NYC* were compliant with their annual training requirements in 2014 (2,864 CPS workers in learning management system, 2,313 given credit for CPS in-service). If the three largest counties with the lowest compliance rates are removed, the overall rate increases to 89 percent. OCFS will improve on this requirement by targeting those counties: Erie (51 percent compliance), Onondaga (42 percent compliance), and Westchester (64 percent compliance). Sixty percent of counties had more than 90 percent of staff meeting the annual training requirement (35/58 counties).

# of Counties Compliant with Annual In-service Training Requirement	
100%	10
90-99%	25
80-89%	7
70-79%	6
60-69%	4
50-59%	4
42-49%	2

County	CPS Active	CPS Compliant	CPS Not Compliant
Albany County Department for CYF	91	88	3
Allegany County DSS	18	14	4
Broome County DSS	69	46	23
Cattaraugus County DSS	20	16	4
Cayuga County HHS	16	16	0
Chautauqua County DHHS	30	29	1
Chemung County DSS	46	40	6
Chenango County DSS	15	14	1
Clinton County DSS	21	20	1
Columbia County DSS	17	16	1
Cortland County DSS	41	41	0
Delaware County DSS	31	25	6
Dutchess County Community & Family Services	50	48	2
Erie County DSS	196	100	96
Essex County DSS	15	14	1
Franklin County DSS	11	7	4
Fulton County DSS	35	32	3
Genesee County DSS	9	9	0
Greene County DSS	13	12	1
Hamilton County DSS	3	2	1
Herkimer County DSS	19	19	0
Jefferson County DSS	39	30	9

Lewis County DSS	18	18	0
Livingston County DSS	26	20	6
Madison County DSS	37	35	2
Monroe County DHS	225	206	19
Montgomery County DSS	14	14	0
Nassau County DSS	167	161	6
Niagara County DSS	35	32	3
Oneida County DSS	66	61	5
Onondaga County DSS	213	89	124
Ontario County DSS	20	20	0
Orange County DSS	65	64	1
Orleans County DSS	11	10	1
Oswego County DSS	90	74	16
Otsego County DSS	39	38	1
Putnam County DSS	13	10	3
Rensselaer County DSS	38	35	3
Rockland County DSS	40	40	0
Saratoga County DSS	43	42	1
Schenectady County DSS	71	42	29
Schoharie County DSS	11	11	0
Schuyler County DSS	9	8	1
Seneca County DHS	12	6	6
St. Lawrence County DSS	41	19	22
St. Regis Mohawk DSS	13	7	6
Steuben County DSS	32	24	8
Suffolk County DSS	321	291	30
Sullivan County DFS	24	18	6
Tioga County DSS	24	22	2
Tompkins County DSS	16	14	2
Ulster County DSS	29	26	3
Warren County DSS	21	20	1
Washington County DSS	33	32	1
Wayne County DSS	20	17	3
Westchester County DSS	202	130	72
Wyoming County DSS	6	6	0
Yates County DSS	14	13	1
	<b>2864</b>	<b>2313</b>	<b>551</b>

## Foster and Adoptive Parent Training

*The allowable Title-IV-E administrative functions this activity addresses are: Recruitment and Licensing of Foster Homes and Institutions.*

Training Population: Foster and adoptive parents, foster care and adoption caseworkers, supervisors, home finders, trainers and agency administrators in LDSSs and voluntary authorized and provider agencies

### ***New York City Training Requirements***

<b>PROGRAM</b>	<b>Pre-Service</b>	<b>Pre Service Completion Date</b>	<b>Mandatory annual In-Service training hours</b>	<b>Recommended additional In-Service training hours</b>
RFBH	MAPP	Before certification and placement	6 (delivered by agency)	6 (delivered by agency or community)
Emergency RFBH	Caring for Our Own or mini-MAPP	Within 150 days of placement	6 (delivered by agency)	6 (delivered by agency or community)
<b>PROGRAM</b>	<b>Pre-Service</b>	<b>Pre Service Completion Date</b>	<b>Mandatory annual In Service training hours</b>	<b>Child Specific training hours WITHIN, not in addition to, total training hours</b>
TFFC (Converted from RFBH)	MAPP or mini-MAPP + PST	Before TFFC certification and placement	Minimum of 12 (delivered by agency or community, including professionals treating the child)	Minimum of 6 (delivered by agency or community, including professionals treating the child)
TFFC (Recruited directly to TFFC program)	mini-MAPP* + PST	Before TFFC certification and placement	Minimum of 12 (delivered by agency or community, including professionals treating the child)	Minimum of 6 (delivered by agency or community, including professionals treating the child)
<b>Adjustable Rate Category*</b>				
Special	MAPP or mini-MAPP + PST (if TFFC) + Child Specific Training (6hrs)	Within 6 months of special needs determination	12 (delivered by agency or community, including professionals treating the child)	Minimum of 6 (delivered by agency or community, including professionals treating the child)

Exceptional	MAPP or mini-MAPP + PST (if TFFC) + Child Specific Training (9hrs)	Within 6 months of exceptional needs determination	15 (delivered by agency or community, including professionals treating the child)	Minimum of 9 (delivered by agency or community, including professionals treating the child)
-------------	--	--	---	---

### ***Upstate Training Requirements***

Authorized agencies must provide training to each certified or approved foster parent in a training program approved by OCFS which will prepare foster parents to meet the needs of children in their care so that the best interests of the children placed by the certifying or approving agency will be met. [18 NYCRR 443.2 (e)]

This training program consists of several foster/adoptive parent leader certification preparation components, including Group Preparation and Selection II/Model Approaches to Partnerships in Parenting (GPSII/MAPP), Caring for Our Own/MAPP, Shared Parenting/MAPP, and Deciding Together/MAPP. These classroom training programs prepare local district and voluntary agency staff and foster/adoptive parents to lead training for potential foster parents in their area to assist with the foster parent selection process. This program assists with the licensing and certification process. A description of components follows:

- GPSII/MAPP: This nine-day classroom training is a preparation and selection program for prospective foster and adoptive parents to assess, develop, and strengthen the attitudes, skills, and knowledge needed by parents intending to foster or adopt children.
- Caring for Our Own/MAPP: This four-day classroom training is a preparation program specifically for relative caregivers given over a period of nine weeks.
- Shared Parenting/MAPP: This two-day classroom training focuses on relationship building between foster parents and birth parents for best outcome of children in care.
- Mini-MAPP: this two-day classroom training provides an overview of the basic concepts in the GPSII/MAPP training program to child welfare staff and foster and adoptive care staff within the agencies.
- Deciding Together/MAPP: This 2.5-day classroom training assists staff to work with individual families to prepare them to foster or adopt.

### **Foster and Adoptive Parent Training Specialty Topics:**

- Special Topics are offered either in classroom or through distance learning on such topics as loss and separation, preparing children for adoption, managing difficult behaviors, sexual abuse, child development and discipline, among others.

- “Caring for Children Who Have Experienced Trauma” is a two-day classroom training that focuses on trauma, understanding trauma’s effects, building a safe place, dealing with feelings and behaviors, connections and healing and becoming an advocate.
- “Kinship Care Overview: Promoting Options for Kin/Relative Caregivers” is a half-day classroom training to assist LDSSs and voluntary authorized agency staff to be able to assist relative foster parents in determining the placement and permanency needs of their kin, including determining the level of support to meet to meet their needs and understand placement options and their implications.
- “Reasonable and Prudent Parenting Standard Training for Foster Parents and Caregivers” is a one-half-day classroom training that focuses on applying the Reasonable and Prudent Parenting Standard including immunity from liability.
- “GPS/MAPP Seminar” is a 2.5-day training program that provides “Train the Trainer” sessions for MAPP leaders and training on current regulations, legislation and trends.
- “Foster Parent Seminars” are two one-day seminars to provide training to assist foster parents to obtain in-service training to maintain their certification.

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

Estimated Cost per delivery is \$6,203.

Year	Trainees	Training Days
2016-2017 (actual)	3537	356.5
2017-2018 (proposed)	3222	307

- In 2016-2017, an additional 212 days were spent on curriculum development.

## **CONNECTIONS Training**

Training population: LDSS and Provider Agency Casework, Management and Implementation Staff, and other OCFS Staff.

*For the following courses, the allowable Title IV-E administrative functions these training activities address are: placement of the child, development of the case plan, and case management and supervision.*

**Child Protective Services Response CONN Training:** This one-day classroom training continues instruction for new LDSS CPS casework staff on how to record and maintain

information obtained during a CPS investigation in CONNECTIONS. Participants learn how to record a Safety Assessment; describe the stages and reports associated with a CPS Investigation; record a Risk Assessment; substantiate/unsubstantiated allegations; conclude an investigation; generate a Notice of Indication and Mandated Reporter Letter; and manage their caseload using the Open Caseload Inquiry report.

**CONNECTIONS Case Management for Child Welfare Workers:** This two-day classroom training trains caseworkers how to create and maintain Family Services Intakes and Family Services Stages in CONNECTIONS. Participants will create and stage progress Family Services Intakes; maintain demographic information on the Person List Window of a Family Services Stage; create and maintain progress notes; edit Tracked Children Detail; launch and edit Family Assessment Service Plans (FASPs); discuss submitting and approving the FASP; and record Service Plan Review information.

**CPS Foundation Part 2 Completing the Family Assessment and Service Plan (FASP):** This one-day classroom training provides CPS workers with information specific to their role, focusing on the navigational path they most commonly use. Participants begin with the Family Services Intake (FSI); stage progress to a Family Services Stage (FSS); add and modify Program Choices and Permanency Planning Goals (PPGs) prior to launching the Initial Family Assessment and Service Plan (FASP); and review the protective components that prefill the FASP from the CPS Investigation (INV) stage.

**Documenting Casework Contacts with Foster Children in CONNX (HSLC web):** This 45-minute web-based asynchronous training (HSLC web) provides detailed instruction on the proper completion of progress notes that document casework contacts with foster children. Learners discover the proper coding for this type of progress note, the appropriate content of narratives, and supports available to help maintain compliance with the contact requirements.

**ECS Safety Assessments in CONNECTIONS: Training for Emergency Children's Services:** This half-day classroom training introduces documenting and approving safety assessments in CONNECTIONS along with additional documentation requirements which apply to fatality investigations in NYC.

**LL: CPSRT Starting the Investigation:** This three-hour LearnLinc training instructs casework staff responsible for documenting CPS Investigations in how to accurately record, view, and maintain case information in the CONNECTIONS application. Participants will understand security considerations related to working in CONNECTIONS; describe the stages and reports associated with a CPS Investigation; explain the responsibilities of Primary and Secondary workers in an INV stage; generate the Intake/IRI and Prior Case Summary reports and the Notice of Existence; review historical information online; record a progress note; change person information in a CPS Investigation stage; describe when a person should be related to a CPS Investigation stage; and identify available CONNECTIONS resources and when to use them. (This course builds on the skills learned in CPS Foundation/Common Core and is followed by the full-day "Completing the Investigation" classroom training.)

**LL: Documenting the Family Assessment Response in CONNECTIONS:** This three hour LearnLinc training familiarizes LDSS and voluntary authorized agency workers with how to navigate to and record information in the FAR stage in CONNECTIONS. Participants learn about the components of the FAR stage and the windows that comprise it, including the Family Led Assessment Guide (FLAG), Action Plan, Safety Assessment, and Risk Assessment Profile (RAP) windows. The process of track-switching a FAR stage to an Investigation (INV) stage is also discussed.

**LL: Exploring the Person List Window CPS Foundation Pilot or LL: Exploring the Person List Window in the CONNECTIONS Family Services Stage:** This 90-minute LearnLinc training familiarizes caseworkers with the Person List window in the Family Services Stage in CONNECTIONS. Participants learn how to review the Person List window; end date persons; add and relate persons; maintain addresses and phone numbers; edit the Family Relationship Matrix; and maintain caretaker information. (This course is part of the CPS Foundation/Common Core training.)

**LL: Working with Permanency Hearing Reports in CONNECTIONS:** This three hour LearnLinc training familiarizes new LDSS and voluntary authorized agency foster care workers with the process of completing Permanency Hearing Reports in CONNECTIONS. Participants learn about the Permanency Law, the types and features of Permanency Hearing Reports, and the CONNECTIONS roles that can maintain them.

**LL: Working with Progress Notes in CONNECTIONS:** This 90-minute LearnLinc training familiarizes caseworkers with the tasks most commonly completed on the Progress Notes windows in Family Services Stages. This includes discussion on the importance of and security related to progress notes and how to create, modify, sort search, and print progress notes. (This course is part of the CPS Foundation/Common Core training.)

**NYC Integrated Core CONNECTIONS Training (Satterwhite) part 1 and NYC Integrated Core CONNECTIONS Training (Satterwhite) part 2:** This is a four-day classroom training (each part consists of two consecutive days) that trains caseworkers on the processes of reviewing and editing a CPS investigation, creating a Family Services Intake from a CPS investigation, recording information in a Family Service Stage, and reviewing education and health information in a Family Services Stage. Participants learn to review the intake information of a CPS report; maintain person demographic records in the CPS investigation; generate Notices of Existence; create and maintain progress notes; record safety and risk assessments; record allegations; answer Investigation Action Questions; submit investigations for approval; discuss consolidating investigations; create and stage progress a Family Services Intake; maintain demographic information in the Stage Composition tab; edit Tracked Children Detail; launch, edit, and submit a Family Assessment and Service Plan (FASP); record Service Plan Reviews; and review how to locate education and health information for children in CONNECTIONS. (This course is part of the CPS practice core training.)

**Preventive Case Management in CONNECTIONS for NYC:** This two-day classroom training offers ACS and provider agency staff detailed instruction on recording preventive casework activities in the CONNECTIONS Family Services Stage (FSS). It also covers the Health Services

and Education tabs of the FSS. Participants will learn to explain the purpose of the Family Services Intake (FSI); maintain person demographic information in the FSS; create and maintain progress notes; edit Tracked Children Detail information; record required educational and health information in the FSS; launch and edit Family Assessment and Service Plans (FASPs); launch, edit, and submit a completed FASP; and describe the FASP approval process.

*For the following courses, the allowable Title IV-E administrative functions this training activity addresses are: placement of the child, development of the case plan, case management and supervision, and recruitment and licensing of foster homes and institutions.*

**Foster and Adoptive Home Development:** This two-day classroom training trains caseworkers how to create and maintain foster and adoptive (FAD) homes in CONNECTIONS, focusing on the licensing of foster and adoptive homes. Participants learn how to record inquiries for a FAD home; add and relate persons to the home; maintain demographic information for those persons; record a home study; submit homes for approval; generate certificates and other outputs; update information for authorized homes; reauthorize homes; close homes; reopen closed homes; and edit and create emergency homes.

**Foster Care One-Day Training:** The one-day classroom training focuses on case recording requirements in CONNECTIONS for foster care workers. It includes discussion on the programmatic and policy aspects of foster care issues in the Family Assessment and Service Plan, Health Services, Education, and Permanency Hearing Reports.

The CONN01 training is provided by SUNY Albany – PDP.

Estimated cost per delivery is \$2,857.

Year	Trainees	Training Days
2016-2017 (actual)	3,554	418.5
2017-2018 (proposed)	5,449	423

## ONGOING TRAINING

Foster and Adoptive Parent Training Specialty Topics

**The following applies to *training requirements for foster parents who take foster children who have been assessed to have special/exceptional needs*:** foster parents must have demonstrated their ability to care for foster children with special or exceptional conditions through past training and experience in nursing, special education, child care or the completion of or participation in special training provided by an authorized agency or other relevant training and experience; and actively participate in agency training for foster parents of not less than four hours

per year in the case of providers of special foster care services and not less than five hours per year in the case of providers of exceptional foster care services [18 NYCRR 427.6(e)(3)].

Training required by 18 NYCRR 446.5(a) applies to “**designated emergency foster boarding homes.**” These homes are not the same as certified emergency homes and approved emergency homes defined in Part 443. The training requirements for designated emergency foster boarding homes is that for foster parents providing this type of care they must complete 15 hours of specialized training and a minimum of six hours of follow-up training each year [18 NYCRR 446.5(b)].

### **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.

*The allowable Title-IV-E administrative functions this activity addresses are: Recruitment and Licensing of Foster Homes and Institutions*

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

Estimated cost per delivery is \$5,988.

Year	Trainees	Training Days
2016-2017 (actual)	262	89
2017-2018 (proposed)	275	90

### **Behavior Support, Crisis Prevention and Intervention in Residential Settings**

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

*The allowable Title IV-E administrative functions this training activity addresses are:*

Training is provided by Cornell University.

Estimated cost per training day is \$9,579.

Year	Trainees	Training Days
2016-2017 (actual)	66	97
2017-2018 (proposed)	810	98

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

The former Module Four is now a stand-alone advanced course called “Attachment and Separation Issues in Child Welfare.” This training explores how bonding, attachment, and separation interfere with positive child development and adjustment while children are in care. The training examines the emotional and psychological relationships children form with the significant people in their lives and the impact that these relationships have on their ability to achieve permanency.

Supplemental training is also provided for experienced caseworkers and supervisors. These one- to two-day classroom trainings include topics such as adolescent issues, domestic violence, supervisory skills, and working with young fathers.

*The allowable Title IV-E administrative functions this training activity addresses are: case management and supervision and development of the case plan.*

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

Estimated cost per training day for one and two-day supplemental training courses is \$700.

Estimated cost per training day for the three-day “Attachment and Separation Issues” course is \$840.

#### **Attachment and Separation Issues**

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2016-2017 (actual)	50	4	12
2017-2018 (proposed)	100	5	15

### **Supplemental Training**

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2016-2017 (actual)	511	24	32
2017-2018 (proposed)	700	35	35

### **Achieving Permanency through Surrender and Termination of Parental Rights**

This six-day classroom program provides participants with the basic knowledge and skills to assess the effectiveness of diligent efforts, determine the appropriateness of setting a goal of adoption, prepare children for adoption, use the legal process to free children for adoption and to comply with Title IV-E and state statutes. This training also includes training delivered by an attorney on diligent efforts, how to obtain a TPR and how to take a voluntary surrender. This training is for experienced LDSS and voluntary agency preventive, foster care, and adoption caseworkers and supervisors. However, participants must have first taken a foundation training program, such as CPS Foundation Part 1 and Part 2, or Core Training for Voluntary Agencies.

*The allowable Title IV-E administrative functions this training activity addresses are: referral to services, case management and supervision, placement of the child, development of the case plan.*

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

Estimated cost per delivery is \$71,200.

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2016-2017 (actual)	0	0	0
2017-2018 (proposed)	30	2	12

### **Special Topics Days**

Special Topics days are one to two-day classroom trainings designed to meet emerging needs in the LDSSs and voluntary agencies, and to supplement training on CPS Foundation Training, Core Essential Skills, CPS Investigations, Child Protective Response Training, and Achieving Permanency Through Surrender and TPR. Trainees are caseworkers and supervisors in child welfare (preventive, foster, and adoption) and CPS.

*The allowable Title IV-E administrative functions this training activity addresses are: referral to services, case management and supervision, placement of the child, development of the case plan.*

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

Estimated cost per delivery is \$10,025.

Year	Training Days
2016-2017 (actual)	17
2017-2018 (proposed)	26

## **CHILD WELFARE SUPERVISORY TRAINING PROGRAMS**

### **Keys Skills Clinics**

**This training was discontinued at the end of 2016.**

In order to build internal capacity for sustainability of the KEYS Model of Supervision, it is necessary to provide OCFS CWCS regional office staff with skill sets and competencies to assist LDSS staff in standardizing the supervisors’ knowledge and skills necessary for effective child welfare supervision.

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

*The allowable Title IV-E administrative function this training activity addresses is case management and supervision.*

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

Estimated cost per delivery was \$9,200.

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
------	----------	-----------	---------------

2016-2017 (actual)	241	17	9

## Supervisory Symposium

This one-day forum will provide supervisors with best practices to improve their work efficiencies and social services practice, as well as give them an opportunity to share new and fresh ideas, success stories and lessons learned that they can apply in their LDSS/agency to achieve positive outcomes for locally served families and children. Workshops and other activities will focus on strengthening leadership using group supervision to support critical thinking and strategic planning.

*The allowable Title IV-E administrative function this training activity addresses is case management and supervision.*

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

Estimated cost per delivery is \$19,204.

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2016-2017 (actual)	118	1	1
2017-2018 (proposed)	125	1	1

Note: This event will be referred to as “Leadership Forum” in 2017-2018.

## Directors of Services Leadership Training Forum

This component is a two-day event (delivered in half-day/full-day/half-day format) intended to provide LDSS directors of social 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).

In 2017, possible topics may include, but not be limited to, measuring outcomes; practices to support and indicators to measure child well-being; assessing and providing services through a race equity lens; use of service plan reviews; visitation; coaching; strengths-based child-centered, family-focused practice; how the case management model supports good practice; the Data Warehouse.

*The allowable Title IV-E administrative functions this training activity addresses are: case management and supervision, cultural competency related to children and families.*

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

Estimated cost per delivery is \$79,600.

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2016-2017 (actual)	78	1	2
2017-2018 (proposed)	75	1	2

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

This training program builds the knowledge and skills necessary to identify, assess, and plan with families affected by alcohol and substance abuse. LDSS and voluntary agency child welfare (preventive, foster, adoption) caseworkers and supervisors develop competencies in recognizing the natural resilience of families, in utilizing strengths to motivate and facilitate change, and in supporting families throughout a member’s treatment and recovery. This program includes Working with Alcohol and Substance Affected Families (WASAF) as well as Special Topics all one-day classroom deliveries. Special Topics training includes “Helping People Change,” “Brief Solution-oriented Interventions,” and “Opiates and Child Welfare.”

This program also provides online synchronous training. The 2-3 hour LearnLink courses include LL: Opiates and Child Welfare, and LL: Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder.

*The allowable Title IV-E administrative functions this training activity addresses are: referral to services, case management and supervision.*

Training is provided by University Partner SUNY Albany – PDP.

Estimated cost per delivery is \$2,185 (Special Topics) to \$2,735 (WASAF).

#### WASAF Classroom

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2016-2017 (actual)	461	31	31
2017-2018 (proposed)	705	39	39

#### WASAF Online Synchronous

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2016-2017 (actual)	295	26	13
2017-2018 (proposed)	180	12	6

## Family Engagement Specialist Training

This program is designed to provide training and consultation to LDSS and provider agency preventive, foster, adoption and CPS caseworkers and supervisor, as well as leadership staff, to support their ability to initiate and maintain ongoing engagement with families. The focus of the project is to support the transfer of learning, enabling LDSSs and agencies to fully integrate family engagement processes and practices learned in foundation level training. This is done through the use of the family engagement toolkits:

### Locating and Engaging Fathers

### Family Meetings

### Coaching Family Visits

### Child-Centered Family-Focused Practice

There are two activities that are required for the implementation of each toolkit:

- 1) Through the Implementation Meetings, LDSSs and agencies are prepared to initiate and sustain the philosophies and practices of the toolkit
- 2) The toolkit training has three parts: a classroom day of orientation, 8-10 hours of online activities, and a day of skills practice, where trainees apply what they have learned.

*The allowable Title IV-E administrative functions this training activity addresses are: referral to services, case management and supervision, placement of the child, development of the case plan.*

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

Estimated cost per toolkit delivery is \$6,975.

### **Implementation**

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2016-2017 (actual)	1070	178	95
2017-2018 (proposed)	1400	200	100

### **Toolkit Training**

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2016-2017 (actual)	802	75	146
2017-2018 (proposed)	834	57	143

## Training for Experienced Child Welfare and CPS Caseworkers

A variety of advanced level training programs are offered to child welfare and CPS caseworkers who have completed foundation training. These training programs enable experienced caseworkers to strategically apply the skills they acquired in foundation training in a variety of critical areas of practice. In 2016-2017, the programs included “Advanced Medical and Legal Issues,” and “Interviewing Children: A Skills Clinic.”

### Child Forensic Interviewing

In 2017-2018, SUNY PDP became the new training vendor for the forensic interviewing contract. This contract contains the following classroom and distance learning deliverables: Child Forensic Interviewing, Special Topics Training, and Special Topics Webinars. This training is for LDSS child protective services caseworkers and supervisors, Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) members, Joint Response Team members and Child Advocacy Center staff.

Child Forensic Interviewing Training- this five-day classroom training course gives child abuse professionals a comprehensive introduction to the forensic interviewing process and teaches students to apply the latest research to real-life situations.

Special Topics Training- one day offerings of classroom training with a focus on advanced issues and challenges arising from the forensic interviewing process. Presentations are based on best practice and from new, emerging research. This training is designed for forensic interviewers who have successfully completed a basic forensic interview training and are actively conducting forensic interviews.

Special Topics Webinars-To be delivered utilizing a web-based format, these are approximately one to two hours in length. Webinar topics may include, but not be limited to interviewing children with disabilities, ethics, medical issues in child abuse cases, trafficking victims, self-care, and emerging issues in the field of forensic interviewing.

*The allowable Title IV-E administrative functions this training activity addresses are: case management and supervision, referral to services, development of the case plan.*

Training is provided by SUNY Stony Brook and SUNY Albany – PDP.

Estimated cost for Interviewing Children Skills Clinic per delivery is \$11,200.

Estimated cost for Advanced Medical and Legal Issues per delivery is \$13,215.

Estimated cost for Forensic Interviewing Best Practices per delivery is \$32,600.

Estimated cost for Child Forensic Interviewing per delivery is \$16,502.

Estimated cost for Special Topics Training per delivery is \$2,711.

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days	
2016-2017 (actual)	805	12	36	
2017-2018 (proposed)	2040	44	121	

### **Interviewing Children: A Skills Clinic**

*Interviewing Children: A Skills Clinic*, an ongoing one-day classroom delivery or ‘skills clinic’, affords participants the skills to collect accurate information to make assessments and planning decisions regarding safety and risk as it pertains to abuse and neglect, family functioning, and strengths and needs. This focused knowledge base and set of skills are imperative for caseworkers to conduct comprehensive developmentally appropriate interviews that elicit accurate information, demonstrate empathy, respect and sincerity, and, in the case of interviews with children, preserve the child’s emotional security, thus reducing the risk of re-traumatizing the child.

While *Interviewing Children: A Skills Clinic* open to LDSSs, including ACS and provider agencies caseworkers and supervisors, the course is offered in two particularized deliverables. One offering, Child Welfare (CW), is offered to preventive, foster care and adoption caseworkers and supervisors; the other (CPS) is for child protective services caseworkers and supervisors. “Sexual Abuse Dynamics” and “Intervention Training” is a prerequisite for these courses.

*The allowable Title IV-E administrative function training activity addresses are: case management and supervision, case review, development of the case plan, preparation for participation in judicial determinations.*

Training is provided by SUNY Stony Brook, Fordham University and SUNY Albany - PDP.

Estimated cost for Interviewing Children Skills Clinic per delivery is \$11,200.

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days	
2016-2017 (actual)	106	10	10	
2017-2018 (proposed)	120	10	10	

## Child Welfare Eligibility Training

The purpose of this training is to provide LDSSs with the knowledge and skill needed to accurately, effectively, and efficiently determine eligibility for federal funding of child welfare and Medicaid programs. This training is delivered via iLinc modality. Topics include the history and rationale of federal funding streams, how to define and understand the distinct use of each category of funding eligibility: Title IV-E; TANF-EAF; Title XX below 200 percent, Kinship/Guardianship Assistance (KinGAP), Non-Reimbursable Payments; and Candidacy in Foster Care. Trainees learn how to determine and document each category of eligibility, the use of the Welfare Management System (WMS) and to identify and access the resources available to support their ability to accurately determine and document eligibility. Courses range from a half day to a full day of training.

*The allowable Title IV-E administrative function this training activity addresses is eligibility determinations and redetermination.*

Training is provided by SUC Buffalo – CDHS/ICHP.

Estimated cost per delivery is \$2,300.

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2016-2017 (actual)	450	45	27
2017-2018 (proposed)	450	45	27.5

## Training for OCFS Bureau of Special Hearings Staff

This two-day classroom training provides specialized Continued Legal Education training in a variety of topics for Bureau of Special Hearings staff, including hearing officers and administrative law judges, to respond to the challenges made to the decisions of LDSS and state officials. Previous training modules include

- Ensuring Due Process: Review of Relevant Legal Issues that Arise During Fair Hearings
- Tips and Strategies for Legal Research on Westlaw to Assist Administrative Law Judges
- Adoption Subsidy Hearing Basics
- Public Officers Law Ethics Training for OCFS Administrative Law Judges
- Child Abuse and Maltreatment Case Law Update

*The allowable Title IV-E administrative functions this training activity addresses are: fair hearings and appeals, preparation for and participation in judicial determinations, and case reviews.*

Training is provided by OCFS legal staff and consultant legal trainers.

Estimated cost per delivery is \$14,000.

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2016-2017 (actual)	28	1	2
2017-2018 (proposed)	35	1	2

### **Domestic Violence Training for Child Welfare Staff**

A two-day classroom training for foster care, preventative and adoption child welfare case workers and supervisors provides participants a reference and standards to address Domestic Violence issues, the dynamic of family abuse and safety planning intervention when working with families experiencing domestic violence.

This training is for Child Welfare (CW) workers in LDSSs, provider agencies, OCFS regional and home office staff. There are no pre-requisites to attend this course.

*The allowable Title IV-E administrative functions this training activity addresses are: referral to services, development of the case plan, case management and supervision.*

Training is provided by New York State Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence.

Estimated cost per delivery is \$10,388.

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2016-2017 (actual)	323	21	42
2017-2018 (proposed)	400	20	40

### **Principles of Partnership Training**

OCFS's practice model is built on the belief that the most effective way to protect children and promote permanency and well-being is to strengthen their families, and the most effective way to strengthen families is through strengths-based, solution-focused partnerships. The Principles of

Partnership training grounds and supports this belief. Trainings will provide a knowledge base and develop skills to strengthen families through use of strengths-based, solution-focused partnership strategies and tools. Trainees will learn about each principle of practice and will have the opportunity to use each principle in class situations and practice exercises. Trainees will learn to use specific tools and apply them to their areas of practice (e.g., CPS, foster care, prevention, adoption).

### **Principles of Partnership Facilitated Workshop**

This half-day classroom activity is to provide follow-up training that continues to develop knowledge and skills of the trainees to build effective partnerships with families.

*The allowable Title IV-E administrative functions this training activity addresses: communication skills required to work with children and families.*

Training is provided by University Partner SUNY Albany – PDP.

Estimated cost per delivery is \$1,125.

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2016-2017 (actual)	130	8	4
2017-2018 (proposed)	480	48	24

### **Race Equity and Cultural Competency**

Services for children, families, and adults must be individualized and culturally competent, recognizing and mooring differences in tradition, heritage, values, and beliefs. OCFS has offered training and support on race equity in hopes to be better able to address the ongoing disparities in out of home placement for Black/African-American and Native American, and in some case Latino/Hispanic, children in our child welfare system. In the past, this support has come from outside OCFS. In 2017, OCFS will develop the internal capacity to provide this support, through the delivery of two new activities.

## Coaching Race Equity and Cultural Competency Learning

Data analysis indicates varying degrees of racial disparity across the state. Based on the data, trainers will be able to prioritize which LDSSs, voluntary agencies, and divisions of OCFS to offer half-day coaching sessions on race equity and cultural competency.

*The allowable Title IV-E administrative functions this training activity addresses are: referral to services, case management and supervision, placement of the child, development of the case plan, cultural competency related to children and families.*

Training is provided by University Partner SUNY Albany – PDP.

Estimated cost per delivery is \$1,400.

Year	Trainees	Offerings	Training Days
2017-2018 (proposed)	140	20	20

## Child Welfare Casework Documentation Training

Training Population: LDSSs child welfare caseworkers, supervisors and voluntary agency staff.

This classroom training program prepares child welfare 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, evaluation, and documentation. There are three components to this program:

- Progress Notes is a one-day training on ongoing Progress Notes, according to CONNECTIONS requirements. The Progress Notes curriculum was updated in 2015.
- Family Assessment and Service Planning (FASP) is a one and one-half day training for caseworkers to document and support casework practice in CONNECTIONS electronic case file entries. The FASP Guide was revised in 2017.
- FASP for Foster Care is a two-day course to provide in depth training specifically on the additional screens required to be completed in CONNECTIONS for foster care cases.

*The allowable Title-IV-E administrative functions this activity addresses are: placement of a child; development of the case plan, case management and supervision.*

Training is provided by University Partner SUNY Albany – PDP.

Estimated cost per delivery is \$4,258.

Year	Trainees	Training Days
2016-2017 (actual)	1807	204
2017-2018 (proposed)	1185	190

### **Other Training Improvement Anticipated in 2017**

OCFS will look to provide training on trauma and its effect on children and families, as well as secondary trauma and its impact on the workforce. OCFS is currently working with experts in the field to develop appropriate training.

OCFS has developed a Consortium of Schools of Social Work to work in partnership with the agency to elevate public child welfare practice. The Consortium activities include a full range of training and education activities including degree programs for LDSS staff, field instruction, curriculum development as well as short term training and workforce development.

OCFS is developing a comprehensive training assessment by improving the monitoring of training outputs, objectives and evaluations. The next section establishes one of these efforts in regards to evaluation.

### **Cost Allocation for Training**

The OCFS Bureau of Training is responsible for the provision and oversight of training and professional development programs that support the staff of the public human services system to effect the program and efficient administration of the program by the OCFS. Where applicable, federal regulations provide for reimbursement of the costs of training for programs established by Congress. The federal government also requires that these costs are distributed to benefitting federal, state, or combined federal/state programs on a quarterly basis to be eligible for reimbursement. As such, training activities are examined in projects and assigned to training allocation accounts that capture the allowable federal and state reimbursement rates for particular programs. On a quarterly basis, these expenditures are reported and claimed through the state's Central Office Cost Allocation Claim.

OCFS Bureau of Training and Development will work with their training technology staff to develop a process where the training data for courses reported in the Title IV-B plan is broken down by type of trainee. This report will break down LDSS staff into their functional area: CPS, Preventive, Foster Care, Adoption. For OCFS staff, it will break it down by agency Division. For voluntary authorized agency staff, it will break it down by title. Experience has shown that for the voluntary authorized agencies, the field is often left blank and thus, will be reported out as

“undefined.” OCFS anticipates having the programming for this report completed by mid to late summer 2017.

OCFS also will have a second report developed that averages the most recent past three-year period of trainees to assist in the projections, by functional area for LDSS, by Division for OCFS and by title for the voluntary authorized agencies. It is estimated that this report will be available late summer/early fall 2017.

See Appendix “J” regarding NYS’ approved cost allocation plan for training.