New York State’s
FY 2022 Annual Progress and Services Report (APSR)
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Application for Funding:

- Stephanie Tubbs Jones, Child Welfare Services (CWS) Title IV-B of the Social Security Act, Subpart 1

- Mary Lee Allen, Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) Title IV-B of the Social Security Act, Subpart 2

- John H. Chafee Foster Care Program for Successful Transition to Adulthood (the Chafee Program) and Education and Training Vouchers (ETV) Programs
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1. Overview
New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) Overview

In New York State, services are locally administered through county youth bureaus and 57 local departments of social services (LDSSs), including the five boroughs of New York City (NYC) and 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 New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) and operationalized by 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 New York State’s LDSSs are considered rural. OCFS works with these LDSSs to fund and provide services and programs to address the special needs that have been identified of these rural populations.

Planning in New York State continues to be a joint activity, with the focus of activity occurring in the LDSSs and youth bureaus. OCFS’s role is to provide guidance to assist LDSSs’ planning efforts, including youth bureau involvement, to reflect the goals and performance targets established. In partnership with LDSSs, New York State continues in the direction of achieving the various outcomes established within the Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP). This partnership between the LDSSs, youth bureaus, stakeholders, OCFS and other state agencies 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 John H. Chafee Foster Care Program for Successful Transition to Adulthood (the Chafee Program); Runaway Homeless Youth Act; Child Care Development Fund; and other state and federal sources. Title IV-B, subpart 2 funds, The Mary Lee Allen Promoting Safe and Stable Families, for providing service delivery of family preservation, community-based family support, family reunification and adoption promotion and support, as well as planning and service coordination, were requested and received by New York State. 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 fall under these categories. This CFSP is further evidence that New York State will take every opportunity to explore whether the state is eligible to receive such funds.

The CFSP and subsequent Annual Progress and Services Reports (APSR) are made available to LDSSs, state agencies involved in major joint projects with OCFS, and New York State Indian tribes. OCFS will provide specific notification to related providers on the availability of the APSR. The public will have access to these documents through LDSSs.
Highlights in New York State’s 2022 APSR

New York State’s Pandemic Response

- Established a moratorium on youth aging out of foster care and permitted reentry into foster care for youth who previously aged out and wanted to return to foster care during the COVID-19 health emergency period (21-OCFS-ADM-07, Supporting Foster Youth and Families through the Pandemic Act).
- Utilized Family First Prevention Services Act Transition Grant funds to cover costs of care and maintenance for youth remaining in care beyond age 21 during the Pandemic.
- Distributed federal funding through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act to child care resource and referral (CCR&R) agencies to pay for child care assistance for income eligible essential workers during the COVID-19 pandemic (20-OCFS-ADM-07, CARES Child Care Scholarships for Essential Workers).

New York State’s Focus on Family First Readiness

- Developed a workbook, Implementing the Family First Prevention Services Workbook, which incorporated input from local partners on the Statewide Implementation Team to guide Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) compliance at the local level to emphasize family-based placements and reduction in the use of congregate care.
- Implemented a blind removal process to maintain unbiased decision-making in the removal process while maintaining the safety of the child, and to reduce racial disparity and disproportionality in child welfare (20-OCFS-ADM-19, Blind Removal Process).
- Established policy-based standards of care to promote and maintain the health, safety and well-being of youth placed in congregate care settings licensed by OCFS, including those operated by voluntary foster care agencies and LDSSs (21-OCFS-ADM-05, Regulatory Changes and Standards of Care for Youth in Congregate Care Settings).
- Laid groundwork for Family First implementation by detailing New York State requirements and procedures for certifying Qualified Residential Treatment Programs (QRTPs) under Title IV-E (21-OCFS-ADM-04, Qualified Residential Treatment Programs (QRTPs) and QRTP Exceptions in New York State).

New York State’s Emphasis on Expanded Supports for Kinship

- Directed LDSSs and voluntary agencies (VAs) to develop a kin-first firewall practice to increase safe and appropriate kinship placements for children. Kin-first firewalls are intended to make kinship placements the presumptive placement for children, thereby expanding family-based care (20-OCFS-ADM-18, Kin-First Firewall Practice).
• Released standardized forms and instructions to approve kin as emergency foster boarding homes (FBHs) to provide care to specific children who need immediate placement in an FBH; informed LDSSs and VAs about amendments to state regulations that expand the definition of “relative” for the purpose of approval of an FBH and expand regulatory non-safety, non-statutory waiver authority to include individuals who meet the requirements to become an approved FBH (20-OCFS-ADM-08, Approval of Emergency Foster Boarding Homes and Expanded Waiver Authority).

• Issued a joint policy with the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) reminding LDSSs that they must make information available to relative caregivers caring for children outside of the foster care system on financial assistance and services programs as well as information on how to apply for those programs (20-OCFS-ADM-05, Requirement to Make Information Available to Nonparent Caregivers Relating to Available Services and Assistance Programs)
  o Know Your Options: Kin Caring for Children (Pub. 5175)
  o Make an Informed Choice: Kin Caring for Children (Pub. 5120)
  o Know Your Resources: Nonparent Caregiver Benefits (Pub. 5194)

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

This is the second submission of the APSR since the submission of the FFY 2020-2024 CFSP.

**Child and Family Services Plans (CFSP) – (State)**

This 2020-2024 NYS CFSP Title IV-B plan, was submitted to the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) on July 1, 2019 and was approved by ACF on October 24, 2019.

**Child and Family Services Plans – Counties (County Plans) and Annual Plan Update (APU)**

Each LDSS in the state is required to submit a single county strategic plan that includes input from the LDSS and county youth bureau. Year one of the new five-year planning cycle began on April 1, 2018. APUs will be submitted annually through March 31, 2023. OCFS reviews and approves each plan. Additionally, the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS)/Office of Probation and Correctional Alternatives (OPCA) jointly reviews and approves the Person in Need of Supervision (PINS) Diversion Services section of the Plan.

The outcome-based Child and Family Services Plans/Annual Plan Update (APU) include information related to the following areas:

- Child Safety and Adult Protective Services
- Prevention of Abuse/Maltreatment and/or Foster Care Placements
- Permanency for Children in Foster Care
- Foster and Adoptive Parent Recruitment and Retention
- Well-Being of Adults
• Safety and Well-Being of Youth and Young Adults
• Runaway and Homeless Youth
• PINS Diversion (co-approved by OCFS, DCJS/OPCA)

County plans provide technical information related to the following program areas:
• Child Care
• Prevention of Domestic Violence
• PINS Pre-dispositional Placement Services

County plans/annual updates are reviewed and approved by each program area’s subject matter expert. The safety, permanency and prevention components are reviewed to confirm that the county plan is complete, signatures are included, appropriate interagency consultations have been held, and that the strategies listed are aimed at addressing the identified underlying factors affecting the outcomes of safety, permanency and well-being. An OCFS Policy titled *Guidelines and Instructions for Preparing the Child and Family Services Plan*, is released by OCFS to LDSSs each year, and is imbedded in each appropriate section of this web-based system.

**Accomplishments for 2020-2021**

During the 2020-2021 Annual Plan Update Planning Year for the 2021 annual Plan Update, OCFS invested considerable resources on the following additions:
• Bringing the Foster and Adoptive Parent Recruitment and Retention Plan and 18-month updates into the county plan.
• Developing Foster Home Data packets, 6-month updates to the data packets and development of Foster Home level data files to support the development and monitoring of strategic plans for Foster Home Recruitment and Retention.
• Updating and publishing Key Performance Indicators reports for Safety and Permanency Indicators biannually to support planning

The initial investment of resources at the start the five-year planning cycle has led to a sustainable and institutionalized strategic planning process. In 2020, OCFS implemented a Program Quality Improvement (PQI) process. The framework of the PQI process is grounded in continuous quality improvement that is data driven and collaborative in nature. The PQI process is used by OCFS to identify LDSS’ areas of strengths and areas needing improvement, and to collaboratively develop a program improvement plan (PIP). An LDSS PIP and the county plan, are intended to work together to map improvement strategies and track improved outcomes.

**Plans for 2021-2022**

OCFS will continue to implement and evaluate the county plan process, which reinforces the principles of CQI. The 2021 County Plan cycle, which begins July 1, 2021, will continue through June 30, 2022. As part of the 2022 county planning process (7/1/22-6/30/23), OCFS will add a Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) focused prevention component. Additionally, OCFS will take inventory on the progress counties have made in meeting child welfare outcomes.
through the entire 5-year plan and begin preparing the next 5-year planning cycle. Through an in-depth analysis of outcomes in 2020, OCFS determined that a planning skill that needs improvement is the ability of the LDSS to identify and track short-term improvements/outcomes. This continues to be an area in need of OCFS support. OCFS continues to implement various strategies, including providing guidance, the inclusion of probing questions within the county plan and TA, to further support the regional offices and encourage each LDSS to explore outcomes. Regional offices, in turn, provide Temporary Assistance (TA) to the LDSSs within their region.

Youth with lived experience will be hired as trainers under one of our training contracts, with a focus on transition age youth, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and youth engagement.

**Title IV-E Plan**

As a result of the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act of 2014 (Public Law (P.L.) 113-183), and as required by ACYF-CB-PI-14-06, New York State submitted a Title IV-E State Plan Amendment (Submittal 15-01) on January 20, 2015. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) approved New York State’s plan amendment with an effective date of January 1, 2015.

On September 29, 2015, New York State 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 (the Act). This revised plan addressed 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.

On December 11, 2017, OCFS submitted a Title IV-E State Plan amendment for sections 473(d)(3)(A), (B) & (C) of the Act relating to the kinship guardianship assistance program to the Children’s Bureau for review and approval. New York State amended State Social Services Law §458-a, as enacted by Chapter 384 of the Laws of 2017, to expand its definition of prospective relative guardian. DHHS approved the plan amendment January 11, 2018.

The enactment of the FFPSA included in the Bipartisan Budget Bill of 2018 (P.L. 115-123) was signed into law on February 9, 2018. Subsequently, federal guidance was released to states and tribes on July 9, 2018, with ACYF-CB-PI-18-07. The program instruction to states provided instructions and highlighted requirements for Title IV-E due to the FFPSA and provided a new Title IV-E Plan Pre-Print to meet certain provisions as a result of changes to Titles IV-B and IV-E, respectively, beginning January 1, 2018 and later. States were offered the opportunity to submit either comprehensive plan submissions or subsequent plan amendments to meet these new requirements.

On August 8, 2018, New York State submitted the first of these amendments with the New York State Title IV-E Plan Amendment Pre-Print (Submittal 18-05), along with a Certification of Required Legislation (Attachment B) to DHHS’s Children’s Bureau. This plan amendment
addresses, the delay of adoption assistance phase-in of applicable child requirements and the proof of foster care.

On September 28, 2018, New York State submitted a second amendment of the State Title IV-E Plan Amendment (Submittal 18-06), which addresses Foster Care Maintenance Payments for a child placed with a parent in a licensed residential family-based treatment facility and requirements for Criminal Record and Registry Checks for adults working in child care institutions. New York State is not planning to claim Title IV-E funding for residential family-based treatment facilities for substance abuse. New York State submitted a certification due to legislative need via Attachment B on August 8, 2018, as it relates to criminal record checks for adults working in childcare institutions.

On February 1, 2019, ACF approved New York State’s Title IV-E Plan Amendments. The plan amendments submitted on August 8, 2018, have an effective date of July 1, 2018. The amendment submitted on September 28, 2018, has an effective date of October 1, 2018.

**Delays Approved by ACF:**

New York State submitted Attachment B to ACYF-CB-PI-18-07 on August 8, 2018, requesting a legislative delay to implement the following provisions of law:

- 471(a)(20)(D) of the Act, addressing criminal record and child abuse and neglect registry checks for adults working in child-care institutions
- 471(a)(36) of the Act, relating to model licensing standards for foster family homes

New York State submitted its Title IV-E plan amendment (Submittal 20-01) on April 1, 2020, addressing these provisions. On May 11, 2020, ACF approved this amendment. *The delayed effective date for these provisions is April 1, 2020.*

New York State submitted Attachment C to ACYF-CB-PI-18-07 on November 7, 2018, requesting a delay in implementing the following provisions:

- Section 471(a)(37) of the Act providing a certification on preventing increases to the juvenile justice population;
- Section 472(k) of the Act addressing limitations on Title IV-E Foster Care maintenance payments for placements that are not foster family homes
- Section 472(c) of the Act addressing the definition of foster family homes
- Section 475A(c) of the Act addressing qualified residential treatment program (QRTP) placements.

*The delayed effective date for these provisions is September 29, 2021.*

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

In January 2018, New York State was found to be in substantial compliance with federal Title IV-E child and provider eligibility requirements by the federal ACF. This determination was based on
the subsequent primary Title IV-E Foster Care Eligibility Review (FCER), completed by OCFS in Rensselaer during the week of September 17 – September 21, 2018.

New York State passed this FCER with ACF findings of two (2) error cases and seven (7) cases with improper payments. ACF commended New York State for its continued efforts on improvements to court orders that contain detailed child-specific information and for ensuring that judicial expectations are timely 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 (3) years.

The review results demonstrate how important it is for New York State 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 scheduled for September 2021.

In March 2020, ACF provided technical assistance in reviewing 30 cases from New York City’s Administration for Children’s Services (ACS). There were no issues identified related to eligibility.

**Adoption and Foster Care Analysis Reporting System (AFCARS)**

**Accomplishments for 2020-2021**

In accordance with the OCFS’s AFCARS 1.0 Performance Improvement Plan (PIP), the Bureau of Research, Evaluation and Performance Analytics (BREPA) continues to make improvements to the system extraction and coding rules that serve as the foundation for the AFCARS data submissions. A major change was that existing programming based on a flat file to identify the population was replaced with programming that directly extracts data from CONNECTIONS. Moreover, the entire programming for data extractions, recoding, processing, merging, and output has been streamlined to improve efficiency and reduce errors by avoiding manual manipulations.

System changes and the corresponding programing changes completed during the current period include the following items:

- Caretaker family structure
- A drop-down to capture children in care for less than 24 hours and capturing children in respite care
- Mother/father’s termination of parental rights
- Discharge reason
- IV-E foster care payments
- IV-E adoption assistance payments
- Adoption subsidies
- ACF requirements associated with children 18 and over in foster care receiving IV-E
Agency efforts have also shifted toward preparing for AFCARS 2.1 which is scheduled to take effect on 10/1/22. OCFS BREPA has formed and is facilitating regular meetings of an AFCARS 2.1 work group. Membership includes child welfare, research, policy, legal, fiscal and ITS staff. The group is tasked with assessing the gaps between current reporting capacity and data quality and AFCARS 2.1 requirements. Anticipated work products include system change requests, mapping and development of coding protocols where needed, policy and training communications, and data quality initiatives.

See the Evaluation and Research Section later in the document for the full update.

COVID – 19 Related Activities


See the Disaster Planning Update for additional information related to COVID-19.

Activities Related to Changes in Federal or State Laws or Regulations

Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) Overview

- Reconvening of the Statewide Implementation Team (SIT) utilizing a systems-of-care framework for monthly meetings to help drive practice improvement with an eye toward recommendations for additional guidance to the field, technical assistance needs, and other potential challenges and recommendations
- Statewide webinars and presentations to provide an overview of FFPSA provisions and guidance for implementation
- Webinar topics have included:
  - Diving into Family First: Where Is New York; What’s Next?
  - Family First Implementation Teams
  - Tapping into the Power of Data: FFPSA Planning for Congregate Care
  - New York State’s Progress in Family First Readiness
  - Focusing on Foster Homes through a Data, CQI, and Family First Lens.
  - Developing an Administrative Review Teams
  - FFPSA Prevention Service Provisions
  - Kinship Foster Care in New York State: Performance Updates
  - Family First: Prevention Services
- Centralized Family First Mailbox
- State changes to policies and procedures to comply with FFPSA provisions.
- On-site statewide technical assistance, including county/agency specific data packets
- Hosted the 3rd Annual New York State Voluntary Agency Summit: Family First: The Future of Residential Care, which provided a forum for agencies to learn and discuss innovative programming, youth and family engagement, and cross-systems collaboration.
- New York Public Welfare Association (NYPWA) presentations:
OCFS Family First Prevention Services Act Implementation Update

OCFS Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA): Status of New York State Implementation

OCFS Blind Removals and Kin-First Firewalls

- Most recent regional and county data posted on the New York State Family First webpage
- Developed a workbook, *Implementing the Family First Prevention Services Workbook*, based on the guidance of the SIT, to guide FFPSA compliance at the local level regarding family-based placements and congregate care

In order to meet various provisions of FFPSA, OCFS has published several policy directives, including:

- 21-OCFS-ADM-05 - Regulatory Changes and Standards of Care for Youth in Congregate Care Settings
- 21-OCFS-ADM-04 - Qualified Residential Treatment Programs (QRTPs) and QRTP Exceptions in New York State
- 20-OCFS-ADM-21 - New Purchase of Service (POS) Types for Authorizing Special Payments
- 20-OCFS-ADM-19 - Blind Removal Process
- 20-OCFS-ADM-18 - Kin-First Firewall Practice
- 19-OCFS-ADM-21, Expansion of Background Checks for Congregate Care Staff Under the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA)
- 19-OCFS-ADM-08, Required Forms for Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) Placement Referrals
- 19-OCFS-ADM-07, FFPSA Model Licensing Standards and Updated Forms for the Certification or Approval of Foster/Adoptive Homes
- 19-OCFS-ADM-04, Expansion of Background Checks for Congregate Care Staff
- 18-OCFS-ADM-16, Preparing Youth Aging Out of Foster Care for Adulthood

OCFS is providing real time updates on New York State’s progress on Family First via OCFS’s Family First webpage (ocfs.ny.gov/FamilyFirst). The webpage includes the most recent information on Family First Readiness, Family First Transition Funds, and FFPSA Data and Resources.

**Family First Transition Fund Year Three**

The enacted FY 2021-22 State Budget maintains a $3 million state-supported Family First Transition Fund to help LDSSs support, recruit, and retain current and prospective foster families, including kinship caregivers.

**Criminal History Background Checks**

FFPSA mandates that states conduct background checks on any individual working in a group care setting, regardless of their contact with children. Under Governor Andrew M. Cuomo’s leadership, the FY 2019-2020 enacted state budget legislation addressed these federal
requirements by expanding background checks to comply with FFPSA. Guidance to counties and agencies was issued in 19-OCFS-ADM-21.

**Keeping Kids Out of Foster Care with a Kin-First Firewall**

To further promote kinship foster care, Governor Cuomo announced in his 2020 State of the State address that New York State would mandate each LDSS to establish a Kin-First Firewall policy. The implementation of the Kin-First Firewall policy, 20-OCFS-ADM-18 - *Kin-First Firewall Practice*, supports children being placed with kin in the first instance after a removal.

**Persons in Need of Supervision (PINS) Reform**

On April 10, 2017, New York Governor Andrew M. Cuomo signed legislation raising the age of criminal responsibility to age 18 to provide young people in New York State who commit non-violent crimes with the intervention and evidence-based treatment they need. The Raise the Age (RTA) legislation included provisions to eliminate state funding for PINS placement and detention, as of January 1, 2020, but did not alter the ability of the family courts of New York State to order such placements, which led to the enactment of the 2019 PINS reform legislation. The highlights of the legislation, which took effect on January 1, 2020:

- Continues elimination of state funding for PINS placements
- Prohibits PINS detention in non-secure detention facilities
- Creates a new PINS pre-dispositional placement (PDP) option for the court, in place of detention
- Allows for limited foster care placements for PINS youth at disposition
- Limits the time frames for which placement can be ordered and the number of extensions of placement
- Prohibits any out of home PINS placement (pre-or post-disposition) in instances where the only allegation or finding against the youth is truancy
- Creates Family Support Services Programs and authorizes the use of Supervision and Treatment Services for Juveniles Program funding for such services
- Requires the lead PINS Diversion Services agency to complete an assessment for whether a youth may be sexually exploited.

In light of this legislation, OCFS convened an inter-agency workgroup which included members from OCA, DCJS, OCFS, and New York State Education Department (SED) to plan for and support the local implementation of the PINS reform legislation in 2020. The activities to support local jurisdictions of LDSS, Probation Department and Courts have included: Training sessions for the judiciary in collaboration with OCA and DCJS.

Other related activities included:

- New York Public Welfare Association (NYPWA) presentations: *PINS Legislative Changes and PINS Reform is Here, Now What?*
- New York State Association of Counties (NYSAC) presentation: *PINS Reform Changes*
- Joint statewide webinars by OCFS and DCJS
• Statewide webinar specific to LDSS and Voluntary Agencies
• On-site technical assistance at Regional Meetings in New York State
• Issuance of policy directive—19-OCFS-ADM-22, Person in Need of Supervision Reform Changes
• Centralized PINS mailbox
• Published state-level and county-level data on PINS Pre-Disposition Placement
2. General Information
General Information

OCFS serves as the Title IV-B Agency for New York State. OCFS is dedicated to improving the integration of services for New York State’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.

Mission Statement

The OCFS serves New York State by promoting the safety, permanency and well-being of our children, families and communities. OCFS achieves results by setting and enforcing policies, building partnerships, and providing funding and quality services.

Programs and Services

OCFS is responsible for the regulation of preventive services for children and families, as well as the regulation and supervision of programs and services involving foster care, adoption and adoption assistance, child protective services (including operation of the Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment) and protective programs for vulnerable adults. OCFS is 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 (e.g., 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, Empire State and the Advantage After-School Programs, and provides services and programs for infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and school-age children and their families.

Agency Organization

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 responsibilities are divided into two (2) 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 Youth Development and Partnerships for Success (YDAPS), 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 for male and female adolescents that are adjudicated as juvenile delinquents by Family Courts.

OCFS operates 11 juvenile justice facilities, for youth placed in the custody of the OCFS commissioner. There are 10 Community Multi-Services Offices (CMSO) and four (4) 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 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, Westchester, and NYC to support LDSSs, agency programs, and partnerships with stakeholders and providers.

**Collaboration**

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

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

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

For 2020-2024, the OCFS Native American Services (NAS) unit plans to actively interact with the tribes/nations to offer general forums for discussions of issues, as well as to address specific child/family circumstances and consult with the tribal communities. Quarterly meetings with tribal representatives will provide the opportunity for ongoing dialogue. As with regional office staff, the
NAS unit will continue to provide feedback to OCFS home office. In addition, regional office staff and LDSS welfare attorneys continue to be involved and provide another conduit for feedback. The NAS unit will continue supporting and sharing feedback from the tribes/nations and facilitating meetings for direct feedback to home office.

OCFS is also committed to hearing the voice of youth impacted by service systems. To that end, OCFS supported the development and growth of Youth in Progress (YIP), a statewide foster care youth voice initiative. This group of young people, accompanied by adult mentors, works within their regions to address a wide range of topics that impact their experience in foster care and beyond.

OCFS is also committed to hearing the voice of youth impacted by service systems and will continue to involve the members of the statewide Youth Advisory Board (YAB), developed in 2017, through 2020-2024.

OCFS collaborates and gains input from LDSSs, youth bureaus and VAs using a variety of methods as OCFS works to address safety, permanency, and well-being for the children, youth, and families of New York State. Communication occurs through state level associations - the New York Public Welfare Association (NYPWA), the Council of Family and Child Caring Agencies (COFCCA), the Empire State Coalition of Youth and Family Services (Empire State Coalition), the New York State Juvenile Police Officers Association (NYSJPOA), foster and adoptive parent organizations and the Association of New York State Youth Bureaus (NYSAYB). OCFS staff participate in association meetings and conferences, and frequently communicate with individual members of subgroups as needed and appropriate.

OCFS developed a Parent Advisory Board (PAB), which includes parents, foster and adoptive parents, and kinship caregivers. The goal of the 17-member board is to provide feedback on their experiences with the child welfare system and make recommendations to OCFS for improving the system, and implementing state and federal initiatives to improve safety, permanency and well-being for New York State’s children and families. The PAB will be co-chaired by a board member as well as a state liaison. Three virtual meetings were held in 2020, with support from Casey Family Programs.

**Examples of Other Ongoing Collaborations**

OCFS continues 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, local, public, and private entities.
Accomplishments for 2020-2021

Since December 2007, a meeting of state agency commissioners (or their designee(s)) serving children and youth is held to discuss the need for cross-system collaborations for children and youth with service needs that involve more than one (1) service delivery system. Commissioners from the following agencies attend: 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 Addiction Services and Supports (OASAS), the Department of Health (DOH), Office of Probation and Correctional Alternatives (OPCA), and the State Education Department (SED). The commissioners meet quarterly to develop and implement joint solutions to improve the lives of children, youth, and families. One accomplishment of this process is the Regional Interagency Technical Assistance Teams (RTATs). RTATs are teams that are comprised of representatives from many different systems and are crucial to New York State’s cross-systems work. 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 State Agencies and/or LDSSs

Office of Court Administration (OCA)

In 2020-2021, the leadership team met on July 10, 2020, October 19, 2020, and February 1, 2021. Topics for discussion included quality legal representation, Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) implementation, Raise the Age implementation, PINS reform implementation, data, the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children, racial injustice/equity, Host Family Homes, the impact of COVID-19 on family court, the Putative Father Registry and re-entry to foster care for older youth.

Additionally, frequent meetings are held with Court Improvement Project (CIP) staff and the associate commissioner for the OCFS Office of Prevention, Permanency and Program Support, and the associate counsel for legal services to discuss issues identified by the local collaboratives, plan and implement trainings at the local level for both LDSSs and court personnel (judges, attorneys for the parent and children), and set the agenda for the OCA/OCFS leadership team meetings.

Plans for 2021-2022

It is anticipated that the leadership meetings will continue in 2021-2022, and OCA and OCFS will collaborate and partner on the implementation of FFPSA and other child welfare-related topics. Joint trainings are being planned to educate LDSSs, VAs and court personnel on FFPSA and its impact on the child welfare system. Additionally, juvenile justice topics will be discussed as we continue to implement the Raise the Age and PINS reform.
**New York State Partnership for Youth Justice**

OCFS collaborates with OCA and the Division of Criminal Justice Services, as the tri-chairs of the New York State Partnership for Youth Justice (PYJ), which includes the New York State OMH, the SED, the New York State Developmental Disabilities Planning Council, the OASAS, and the Youth Justice Institute at the School of Criminal Justice at the University at Albany – State University of New York, as well as regional representatives from localities and local law enforcement agencies. The PYJ focuses on overall continued reform and improvement of outcomes for youth and families involved in the juvenile or criminal justice systems. The partnership meets at least quarterly to identify areas for further reform.

**New York State Department of Health (DOH)**

Collaboration with the New York State DOH continues to promote child safety and well-being. In 2019, OCFS continued its efforts to improve infant safe sleep practices and reduce the number of child fatalities due to unsafe sleep practices by providing free cribs to low-income families in need. A total of 1,366 cribs were distributed. LDSSs and VAs requested these cribs on behalf of families who needed them to keep their babies safe. In an ongoing effort to enhance public education about critical child safety issues, OCFS continues to distribute publications to LDSSs, health agencies, VAs and community programs. 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 (6) 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*, which are available in English and Spanish. Publications can be ordered or downloaded from the OCFS website.

OCFS continues to collaborate with DOH on the Children’s Medicaid Health and Behavioral Health System Transition. The consolidated Children’s 1915(c) Home and Community-Based Services Waiver offer the following services to children and youth who meet hospital level of care and include:

- Caregiver/Family Supports and Services
- Prevocational Services
- Supported Employment
- Community, Self-Advocacy Training and Supports
- Respite
- Adaptive and Assistive Equipment
- Vehicle Modifications
- Environmental Modifications

OCFS staff collaborate with Maternal and Child Health staff at DOH on the federal Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting program. OCFS receives a sub-allocation from DOH to implement this program using the Healthy Families America model. Together with DOH, OCFS
participates in shared work groups on quality assurance, technical assistance, and benchmark improvement. OCFS participates along with the Healthy Families New York programs on continuous quality improvement projects. DOH and OCFS meet monthly to share information for reporting, funding, policy development, and increasing referrals to the program.

OCFS also collaborated with DOH in creating Title XIX State Plan Amendment services that are rehabilitative services under the Early and Periodic EPSDT benefit and available to children/youth under the age of 21 who are Medicaid eligible and meet medical necessity. These services became available starting in January 2019, and OCFS has done extensive work with the Voluntary Foster Care agencies (VFCAs) to have them properly designated by the New York State CFTSS/HCBS Designation Team. As of February 2021, 65 of the 80 VFCAs are designated and offer a combination of these services to children and youth in foster care and are able to continue services post discharge. These services include:

- Community Psychiatric Support and Treatment (CPST)
- Psychosocial Rehabilitation Services (PSR)
- Other Licensed Practitioner (OLP)
- Family Peer Support Services (FPSS)
- Youth Peer Support and Training (YPST)
- Crisis Intervention

**Article 29-I Health Facilities License**

On July 1, 2021, nearly 16,500 children who are cared for by 80 VFCAs will move into Medicaid Managed Care. As part of that transition, OCFS and DOH developed the Article 29-I VFCA Health Services License for the provision of Core Health-Related Services for children in the care of VFCAs in 2019. Regulations were completed by DOH and OCFS, and the regulation was officially adopted on February 20, 2019, by the addition of Parts 769 and 770 to Title 10 NYCRR under statutory authority of Public Health Law, section 2999-g. A Memorandum of Agreement was developed by DOH and OCFS that outlines the responsibilities for oversight of the Article 29-I Health Facilities Licensure. OCFS issued guidelines to the VFCAs for the Article 29-I Health Facilities Licensure that outlines the components of the Article 29-I Licensure of VFCAs to provide limited health-related services, which enables VFCAs to contract and bill Medicaid Managed Care Plans and to comply with the Corporate Practice of Medicine. In 2020, OCFS and DOH issued the Article 29-I VFCA Health Facilities Billing Guidance and the policy guidance Transition of Children Placed in Foster Care and New York State Public Health Law Article 29-I Health Facility Services into Medicaid Managed Care. With these two documents, VFCAs and Medicaid Managed Care Plans are fully equipped to finalize contracting and credentialing and children placed with the VFCAs will being the mandatory enrollment into Managed Care starting in April 2021, with an effective date of July 1, 2021. As part of the significant transition, OCFS expects that VFCAs and Medicaid Managed Care Plans will partner to promote expediated access to the full array of trauma-informed health care services.
Child Fatalities

In 2020 the following activities were completed:

OCFS funded 14 local Child Fatality Review Teams (CFRT) and provided technical assistance and guidance to four unfunded OCFS-approved CFRTs that covered 24 counties throughout New York State.

The CFRTs are authorized to review the death of a child with an open protective or preventive services case at the time of death, when a child dies in foster care (with the exception of vulnerable persons whose deaths are investigated by the Justice Center for the Protection of People with Special Needs) or the death of a child reported to the New York Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment (SCR). Teams are encouraged to review all child deaths and complete data entry for the purpose of identifying risk factors and prevention strategies.

OCFS increased collaborations with The National Center for Fatality Review and Prevention (NCFRP). NCFRP provided technical support, shared data, research, and prevention initiatives from across the country to OCFS. OCFS also coordinated a training delivered by NCFRP to New York State’s local CFRT coordinators on best practices when conducting child death reviews. Many members from the Statewide Child Fatality Review Team (SCFRT) also participated with the local CFRT coordinators in the training. The teams found the training to be very helpful, informative and useful for their work.

OCFS continued to collaborate with the DOH to develop and disseminate standard safe sleep messages through outreach and education. In 2020, OCFS continued its initiative of distributing safe sleep kits for caregivers and various stakeholders throughout the state. The kits include a “Follow the ABCs of Safe Sleep” tote bag, doorhanger, magnet, brochure, window cling, and a “Sleep Baby: Safe and Snug” board book. The kit also includes a Halo Sleep Sack for baby. OCFS distributed 3,526 safe sleep kits across the state in 2020.

OCFS and DOH disseminated infant safe sleep messages through social media sites. These public service announcements (PSAs) were posted on OCFS’s Facebook and Twitter sites, including a Spanish version for the latter.

Further, OCFS continued its support with DOH participating in the National Action Partnership to Promote Safe Sleep Improvement and Innovation Network (NAPPSS-IIN) project focused on making safe infant sleep and breastfeeding a national norm. As a result of these collaborations, it was determined that there continued to be a need to provide a consistent message across the state to educate new parents and other caregivers about how to keep an infant safe while they sleep.

In 2020, OCFS implemented a SCFRT and held four quarterly meetings, three of which were virtual due to the pandemic. This team serves in an advisory capacity and is comprised of a broad
range of system-level leaders from various New York State agencies, including DOH, OMH, OASAS, the Office of Court Administration, the State Police, and the Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence (OPDV), as well as other state and local agency stakeholders and private partners whose goals align with this team’s mission. The SCFRT reviewed cases at the individual level, but primarily examined broader systemic issues in an effort to prevent future child deaths through increased awareness, prevention, and strengthened coordination among agencies. The SCFRT worked collaboratively with regional and local CFRTs to understand existing service gaps and barriers and develop innovative and comprehensive ways of meeting the needs of underserved populations. In 2020, OCFS, as the lead agency of the SCFRT, introduced its partnership with Casey Family Programs, specifically informing the SCFRT of the work that is happening between OCFS’s child fatality review unit and collaborative safety around adopting a “safety science” approach when reviewing child fatalities.

**Plans for 2021-2022**

Once the “safety science” approach is implemented in 2021, any identified systemic issues and recommendations for change gleaned from the “safety science” approach of child fatality reviews will be provided to the SCFRT.

In 2021, the SCFRT will continue to meet, at a minimum, quarterly to review cases, discuss findings, review data and any identified patterns, trends or systemic issues/barriers. The SCFRT members from child welfare will also begin working closely with the New York State Police (NYSP) around the infant safe sleep messaging. The NYSP are eager to assist child welfare and DOH with delivering the infant safe sleep messaging when the law enforcement encounters families with infants, whether it be at car seat safety checkpoints or when responding to a residence. The SCFRT will also be working on the development of a PSA regarding infant safe sleep practices. Additionally, the SCFRT members from child welfare, addiction services, DOH and mental health will continue to work together to find ways to better serve families dealing with substance use disorders and/or mental illnesses.

In 2021, OCFS will continue its collaboration with state agency partners to disseminate infant safe sleep messages on its social medial platforms and will continue to provide infant safe sleep kits to its stakeholders throughout the state.

**Kinship**

OCFS funded Kinship Caregiver local programs, promoting permanency by providing critical services to children and caregivers in kinship families, including those programs with both informal and formal arrangements. These programs provide services that may include home visits, comprehensive and on-going family assessment, crisis intervention, information, referral and linkage to community resources, parenting training and support groups for caregivers and children. Additionally, OCFS funds the New York State Kinship Navigator (KN). The KN is a statewide program operated by the Catholic Family Center and is specifically designed to provide an information and referral network for kinship caregivers across all of New York State. Since
2006, the KN has provided leadership for a broad-based, coordinated effort to provide comprehensive services that address the needs of kinship caregivers and their families. The KN and local kinship programs are part of OCFS’s efforts to support grandparents and other relatives who are caring for children not in foster care.

OCFS received an award for KN funding pursuant to the Consolidated Omnibus Appropriation Act (COAA) of 2018, under the Promoting Safe and Stable Families program, Title IV-B Subpart 2 of the Social Security Act. This grant supports the development, enhancement or evaluation of kinship navigator programs. The term for this award is October 1, 2017 to September 30, 2021, with anticipation of a fourth-year appropriation. The funding will be used to: implement and align OCFS’s statewide KN program and the practices of the New York State Kinship Caregiver Programs in order to qualify New York State’s unified kinship navigator continuum of care as an evidence-based model pursuant to the FFPSA requirements.

LDSSs are required to make information available to relative caregivers caring for children outside of the foster care system about financial assistance and services as well as information on how to apply for them. In 2019, Chapter 399 of the Laws of 2019 expanded the requirement to include nonrelative caregivers and other suitable persons and additional information that must be provided. In 2020, OCFS and OTDA issued a joint policy to inform LDSSs of the provisions of Chapter 399, and to remind LDSSs of the existing requirements of SSL §392. This policy provides LDSSs with the information that is needed to meet these requirements which includes three separate publications. These publications are Know Your Options: Kin Caring for Children (Pub. 5175), Make an Informed Choice: Kin Caring for Children (Pub. 5120), and Know Your Resources: Nonparent Caregiver Benefits (Pub. 5194) and are all linked to the policy.

**Human Trafficking**

OCFS’s anti-trafficking team consists of two (2) full-time positions: the director of the OCFS Bureau of Health and Well-Being (.5 FTE), the anti-trafficking and runaway and homeless youth services coordinator (.5 FTE) and a children and family services specialist (1 FTE). Under the supervision of the director, the coordinator and the specialist implement the OCFS Safe Harbour: NY program, provide training and technical assistance related to state and federal legislation and best practices, and lead other anti-trafficking efforts on behalf of OCFS. These positions are in the OCFS Bureau of Health and Well-Being in the Division of Youth Development and Partnerships for Success.

OCFS continued to implement and monitor state and federal requirements, including those outlined in the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act throughout 2019-2020. OCFS continued to provide guidance to child welfare and allied stakeholders to maintain compliance with legislation and to implement best and promising practices. Guidance documents developed and promulgated for this purpose are available to all child-serving professionals via the regularly updated 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 LDSSs 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 other topics. The *Initial Trafficking Interview Tool for Youth* was released alongside a computer-based training to support implementation of the tool locally. The 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. OCFS provides ongoing technical assistance to partners in the field through regularly held regional meetings and the maintenance of a general mailbox (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 2018, OCFS began focusing on the intersection between trafficking victimization and placement in congregate care settings. In 2018-2019, OCFS held listening sessions with counties and providers to learn more about their experiences, observations, and suggestions to improve practice and reduce youth’s vulnerabilities. In 2019, OCFS convened two learning collaboratives with VA partners that serve a high number of youths with trafficking risk and victimization. In 2020, information gathered from these efforts was used to develop a residential service model for youth with trafficking risk or experience. This model will serve as a QRTP exemption under the Family First Prevention Services Act.

Since 2013, OCFS has delivered presentations/trainings on human trafficking to various audiences throughout the state, including child protection and foster care supervisors, VA staff, Native American communities, and many others. In 2017, OCFS began offering training on trafficking awareness and skills for engaging trafficked youth in a train-the-trainer format to enhance the sustainability of these resources. The Train-the-Trainer program was delivered five (5) times in 2017, four (4) times in 2018, and five (5) times in 2019. Trainings in 2020 were delayed as a result of COVID-19, but additional offerings are planned. An online training on human trafficking continues to be mandatory for all LDSS and county child welfare employees; the training is accessible via the Human Services Learning Center and is titled “Human Trafficking/Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC); An Overview.”

Since 2013, OCFS has provided funding to municipalities to participate in the Safe Harbour: NY program. The number of participating counties has grown each year, and in 2020, OCFS achieved its goal of funding each of New York’s 58 LDSS achieving full-scale program implementation. 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, direct youth outreach efforts, and the provision of social services to trafficking victims and at-risk youth. Each year program data is published on the human trafficking page of the OCFS website; 2017, and 2018 data are available, and 2019 data is being prepared for publication. OCFS continues to convene quarterly regional meetings for Safe Harbour: NY partners to encourage partnership within regions.
OCFS began hosting annual statewide summits focused on child trafficking systems and service responses. In October 2017, Katherine Chon, director of the federal Office on Trafficking in Persons, was a keynote speaker at this two-day event. The fifth annual summit was held virtually in the fall of 2020 and highlighted ways to support young people’s safe use of technology and social media and featured presentations from both our regional Safe Harbour partners and national organizations such as NCMEC, Thorne and Shared Hope. This event was held virtually due to COVID-19 considerations, which allowed for over 150 participants in each of the 9 sessions offered throughout the week.

OCFS continues to participate in many interagency partnerships, workgroups, and task forces. At the national level, OCFS has presented at multiple trafficking roundtables hosted by the McCain Institute and participates in trainings and stakeholder meetings hosted by DHHS’s Health and Human Services (HHS) Region II. OCFS is also a founding member of the National Child Welfare Anti-Trafficking Collaborative. At the state level, OCFS is an active member of the New York State Interagency Task Force Against Human Trafficking, a group that is charged with meeting New York State statutes to address human trafficking. In 2016, OCFS co-founded and began co-facilitating a subcommittee focused on youth trafficking with the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance. This subcommittee continues to work collaboratively on youth-focused initiatives. Regionally, OCFS participates in several anti-trafficking task forces, including the Capital District Anti-Trafficking Task Force, the North County Anti-Trafficking Task Force, and the Southern Tier Anti-Trafficking Task Force. In these meetings OCFS speaks to the needs of vulnerable youth and the work being done to support this population.

Each January, OCFS marks Human Trafficking Awareness Month with several awareness activities, including promoting awareness information through our Facebook and Twitter accounts. OCFS also uses these platforms to highlight the awareness raising efforts of our county partners. In 2019, OCFS distributed nearly 700 copies of the video I Am Little Red to child-serving programs and providers statewide to continue raising awareness and enhance prevention efforts. In 2020, OCFS sent a letter to each recipient encouraging them to revisit this resource during awareness month. In 2021, a series of webinars was hosted for child-serving professionals on a variety of subjects.

Please see the update to the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act of 2015 for additional information related to these collaborative activities.

**Close to Home Initiative**

A juvenile justice reform that was initiated in SFY 2012-13, has fundamentally restructured the delivery of residential rehabilitative services and aftercare for NYC youth adjudicated delinquent and placed in a 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 the New York City Administration for Children’s Services (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 December 2015. OCFS continues to operate secure levels of care
facilities for all youth statewide. OCFS continues to work with NYC to reduce the number of youth placed in care, and to strengthen services and supports serving LGBTQ youth who do enter foster care or limited secure placements, particularly those serving girls and gender non-conforming/non-binary youth.

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

The Commission’s executive director is Kristen Anne Conklin. Other members of the Commission include the OCFS commissioner, judges, lawyers, advocates, physicians, legislators, and state and local officials. The Commission's work focuses on the importance of engaging youth in their permanency hearings, promoting the use of data to improve outcomes for children, youth and families, addressing issues related to children and youth of incarcerated parents and the educational outcomes for children and youth involved with the courts, and reducing the use of confinement for girls in the juvenile justice system. OCFS works with the Commission to reduce the use of detention and placement for girls who are arrested, and to seek supportive community-based responses that improve public safety. A meeting was held of the Commission on November 10, 2020, where updates on Commission activities was provided, along with the following topics: partnership for youth justice, Children’s Centers/CASA, Child Welfare Court Improvement Project and legislative updates.

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. There are 26 LDSS and NYC local collaboratives. OCFS continues to partner with OCA CIP in providing technical assistance to the local collaboratives. OCFS will be providing a training to Family Court judges on the Interstate Compact for Placement of Children as well as Family First.

The Seneca Nation Peacemaker Courts Collaboration

This collaboration began in 2005 and includes judges and court personnel from the 8th Judicial District, the Seneca Nation of Indians and the Peacemaker Court judges. This collaboration provides a forum to discuss practices and procedures and provides a welcome point of contact for issues. This collaboration was instrumental in 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 September 16, 2020.

On September 17, 2020, St. Regis Mohawk Tribe hosted the second Indian Child Welfare Act Conference. The conference was sponsored by The Tribal Court Improvement Project, St. Regis
Mohawk Tribe, New York State Child Welfare Court Improvement Project, New York State Unified Courts, OCFS, NY Federal-State-Tribal Courts and Indian Nations Justice Forum. Tribal nations, attorneys, judges and caseworkers attended from across New York State. The 3rd ICWA conference will be hosted virtually and is scheduled for September 24, 2021.

New York State Citizen Review Panels (CRP)

Welfare Research, Inc. (WRI) staff manage the contract for the New York State Citizen Review Panels. New York State has three Citizen Review Panels (CRP), meeting Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) requirements. The New York State Citizen Review Panels are authorized to examine the policies, procedures and practices of state and local departments of social services and, where appropriate, specific cases. CRP evaluate the extent to which the agencies are effectively discharging their child protection responsibilities.

There are three panels in New York State, each with up to 13 members. The Western panel covers the 17 counties in the western region of the state. The New York City Panel covers the five boroughs of New York City. The Eastern Panel covers the remaining 40 counties.

The CRP 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. (SSL §371-b).

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 2020 recommendations. This year, the CRPs have focused their advocacy voice on recommendations to reduce child poverty. The recommendations were submitted by the required statutory deadline of February 1, 2021. This is attached as Appendix A. The response from OCFS, Appendix B, describes how the state will address the recommendation of the panel (where appropriate) to make measurable progress in improving the state and local CPS systems.
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 (5) regions continue to be funded: four (4) in the Albany region; three (3) in the Buffalo region; one (1) in the Rochester region; three (3) in the Spring Valley region; and five (5) in the Syracuse region.

As a result of the CPS/DV collaborations, in 2019-2020, over 863 joint home visits were completed and 2,054 families received domestic violence services.

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 (3) 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.

In June 2015, OCFS began to receive education data for the more than 14,000 school aged children in foster care. OCFS is working with LDSSs to make the data more user friendly.

OCFS has created reports in the OCFS Data Warehouse using education data on children in foster care obtained from SED through routine matching. There are two reports that can be run by LDSSs on demand for children in foster care:

1. Statewide Education Data: Placement Information (LDSS): This provides information on the number of children in care for each LDSS and the number for whom education data is available. It specifically provides this for children age 6 and over (the school aged population).
2. Enrolled Grade Level (End of Academic Year) by Age and School Year: This provides age of children and the grade enrolled at the end of the school year.

Both of these reports provide drill through capacity for LDSSs to obtain child level data. These reports can only be run by those with appropriate access.
OCFS is working on a report to count the number of different institutions where children are enrolled during a school year to address education stability.

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 2018-19, this collaboration allowed for 1,243 students to receive an average award increase of $2,140, resulting in an additional $2,660,020 in TAP awards provided to current and former foster care youth.

In 2020, HESC and OCFS continued 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, LDSSs and VAs about ways to improve college outcomes;
- created a foster youth and adult caregiver guidebook for higher education resources with stakeholders; and
- supported youth on college campuses during the COVID-19 pandemic with housing resources, outreach and connection to supports.

**Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)**

In December 2015, the 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; higher 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 to provide transportation to maintain children who are in foster care in their school of origin, when maintaining that location is in the child’s best interest. LEAs must include in their local plans assurances that they have developed and implemented clear written procedures around transportation to ensure school stability. The school of attendance is responsible to cover the standard aidable costs of transporting children in foster care to their school of origin for the duration of their time in foster care and/or the end of the academic school year.
**Funding “Excess Costs” of Transportation**

If maintaining children in their school of origin results in “excess transportation costs,” Education Law 3244(4)(c) requires both the designated school district of attendance and the LDSS to split all excess transportation costs. “Excess 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.” Guidance to LEA’s and LDSS on excess transportation costs will be released in 2021.

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

**School Stability**

Children in foster care often experience a high number of schools 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 schools 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 and LDSSs must identify local points of contact. Each system shares and posts this information on their respective state agency websites. The points of contact help to streamline communication between the systems and help students connect and enroll in their school.

**Data Collection and Reporting**

SEAs are required to report annually on student achievement and graduation rates for youth in foster care.

**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 interest 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 April 2018, Governor Cuomo signed into law legislation providing that if a child will need transportation back to the school of origin, then it is the responsibility of the school of origin to provide the transportation from the child’s new foster care placement to the school of origin. Additionally, New York State has expanded state aid transportation costs to the school districts – up to 50 miles each way - for any youth in foster care who requires transportation to attend a school of origin from the child’s foster care placement location.

The school district of origin and the LDSS with legal custody of the foster child are encouraged to reach an agreement on distribution of transportation costs in excess of the reimbursable amount, should such costs occur. In the absence of such an agreement, the costs of transportation resulting from a youth in foster care attending their school of origin will be shared equally between the LDSS and the school district.

To promote collaboration among points of contact between SED and OCFS jointly.

SED and OCFS continue to work together to address data sharing and reporting.

In October 2018, SED, OCFS, and the American Bar Association held a statewide training for Local Education Agencies (LEAs) and LDSSs Points of Contact (POC). The training was conducted at Albany BOCES and broadcast throughout New York State at 36 other BOCES locations.

For the training, OCFS BREPA created data sheets for each county listing each school district located in the county and the number of students in foster care placed in the school district.

The “Students in Foster Care Tool Kit for Local Education Agencies and Local Social Services Agencies” (tool kit) was created by SED and OCFS and disseminated to the field. It was posted on the OCFS website, along with an accompanying Administrative Directive (ADM), 18-OCFS-ADM-18 Educational Stability and
Transportation Requirements for Children in Foster Care.

- The Administrative Directive 18-OCFS-ADM-18, *Educational Stability and Transportation Requirements for Children in Foster Care*’s purpose is to release and outline the tool kit developed by OCFS and SED. This toolkit must be used to meet requirements under federal and state law pertaining to the school enrollment and transportation of children in foster care. The tool kit is designed to create a standard process by which LDSSs, VAs, and LEAs must coordinate efforts to promote educational stability for students in foster care.

OCFS and SED created an education toolkit for foster and kinship families, available here.

- OCFS and SED are developing a FAQ and making revisions to the ESSA Toolkit to be released in 2021.

**Regional Youth Justice Teams**

OCFS is an active member of the Capital Region Regional Youth Justice Team (CRYJT). Regional Youth Justice Teams are regional teams of juvenile justice stakeholders including representatives from local government agencies, service providers, the judiciary, community organizations and youth and families who have been justice involved. The teams were created to further implement New York State’s strategic plan for juvenile justice. Each team meets on a quarterly basis to share best practices, identify areas for practice improvement and provide input to state policymakers. OCFS is a non-endorsing member of the Capital Region Children with Incarcerated Parents Workgroup; a sub-committee of the CRYJT. CRYJT consists of representatives from family courts, county attorneys’ offices, probation departments, school districts, law enforcement, service providers and local government from nine (9) upstate counties in New York.

**New York State Office of Probation and Correctional Alternatives (OPCA)**

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 New York State. OCFS continues to work with OPCA on reforms on status offender practice, which is shared across LDSSs and probation at the local level. This partnership has expanded further during collaborative work related to the PINS reform legislation of 2019. OCFS has shared data and implementation information to OPCA on decision making using a blind identification process to promote racial equity during diversion and violation of probation decision points.
Osborne Association Collaboration

The Osborne Association (Osborne) works in partnership with individuals, families, and communities to create opportunities for people affected by the criminal justice system.

Since 2011, OCFS has been a non-endorsing member of the Osborne Association’s New York Initiative for Children with Incarcerated Parents (Initiative) whose membership includes diverse organizations and government agencies to raise awareness, promote policy and practice change, and build partnerships to see that children’s rights are upheld, important relationships supported, and their potential nurtured during their parent’s involvement in the criminal justice system. OCFS has partnered with Osborne and the initiative on developing presentations in NYC and Albany featuring film screenings and Sesame Street workshops; “Little People Big Challenges.” OCFS and Osborne, via the New York State Division of Criminal Justice’s Capital Region Youth Justice Team (CRYJT), developed the upstate Initiative for Children with Incarcerated Parents.

OCFS released 11-OCFS-ADM-07, Incarcerated Parents and Parents in Residential Substance Abuse Treatment with Children in Foster Care: Termination of Parental Rights and Other Issues, in 2011 to inform LDSSs and VAs of Chapter 113 of the Laws of 2010 (Chapter 113). Chapter 113 amended Social Services Law 384-b by adding additional considerations to the decision by LDSSs whether to file petitions to terminate parental rights involving incarcerated parents.

OCFS collaborated with Osborne to provide training to New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (DOCCS) case managers and OCFS case managers pertaining to the law. OCFS created posters and handouts titled You Don’t Have to Stop Being a Parent to be provided to county and state correctional facilities to post conspicuously, and to be distributed to parents/caregivers to meet the requirements of Chapter 113. OCFS also released 16-OCFS-INF-03 Ashley’s Law Relating to Notification of Rules and Regulations of Correctional Facilities Concerning Visitors to inform LDSSs and VAs of the enactment of Chapter 286 of the Laws of 2014. The law directs the DOCCS commissioner to establish and maintain a public website that provides information concerning specific visitation rules, regulations, policies, schedules, and procedures for all DOCCS facilities.

Additionally, October has become the month for the “See Us Support Us” campaign to support children who have a parent who is incarcerated. Governor Cuomo each year has provided a proclamation regarding the population of children with incarcerated parents. The campaign includes a point-in-time data collection to identify the number of children in foster care who have an incarcerated parent. Every year, specific issues are highlighted. OCFS continues to support the initiative and the campaign by providing youth a voice and sponsoring a training for its Child Welfare and Community Services workers titled “Seeing and Supporting Children with Incarcerated Parents in Child Welfare.” The objectives of the training are to understand the impact of parental incarceration on children, learn about stigma and tips for creating affirming spaces and strategies for supporting children’s relationships with their incarcerated parents when it is in their best interests, locating and engaging incarcerated parents, coordinating services with the corrections systems and understanding the additional considerations when filing for the termination of parental rights when a parent is incarcerated.
In 2020, after many years of noting the obvious benefit, the Proximity Bill was passed and signed by Governor Cuomo. The Proximity Bill added section 72-c of the Corrections Law to require the Department of Corrections and Community Supervision to place incarcerated parents at correctional institutions and facilities closest to their children’s home. Distance and the burdensome cost of visiting remote prisons make it difficult for children to consistently visit their incarcerated parents, if at all. Visiting is associated with improved well-being for children and incarcerated parents, lower recidivism rates, and successful reentry and family reunification. Yet, most incarcerated individuals in New York prisons are over 100 miles away from their families in facilities that are inaccessible by public transportation. Keeping parents closer also means that foster care agencies will be able to ensure that visits happen more often, so that children in foster care may stay connected to their parents when it is in their best interests. The bill requires the New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision to place persons in correctional facilities located in closest proximity to the primary place of residence of such person's minor child or children. The SEE US SUPPORT US Campaign was the driving force in making the bill a reality.

**Racial Equity and Cultural Competence Initiative**

In 2020, Governor Andrew Cuomo confirmed his commitment to equal treatment of all families who experience the child welfare system, regardless of their race and ethnicity. The Governor supported the implementation of the Blind Removal Process as a strategy for reducing overrepresentation of minority children in the foster care system. OCFS issued an Administrative Directive (20-OCFS-ADM-19) that required the LDSS/Child Protective Services (CPS) to develop a decision-making process that is consistent with the principles and practices of the Blind Removal Process.

In November of 2020, OCFS facilitated a Statewide Blind Removal Kick-Off Webinar to support the LDSS in their implementation of the Blind Removal Process. In addition, in partnership with Casey Family Programs, OCFS facilitated regional town hall meetings.

In March of 2019, OCFS partnered with Nassau County Department of Social Services (NCDSS) to present a two-day Blind Removal Summit held at Nassau County DSS. Participants included representation from ten (10) counties (Suffolk, Westchester, Rockland, Dutchess, Ulster, Putnam, Orange, ACS, Oneida, and Broome). OCFS and NCDSS facilitated the Summit to provide counties with a new strategy to assist in reducing their rate of representation and disproportionality of children of color in the welfare system. NCDSS performed two mock demonstrations to illustrate the process of a blind removal. OCFS presented county specific data to each county represented as an opportunity to provide a demonstration of how to use Pivot tables and Excel spreadsheets to uncover important facets to identify the number of youths admitted in foster care by race and other factors. LDSSs completed the "OCFS Race Equity Cultural Competency Assessment," which guided them in developing action plans to reduce disparity rates within their system. The Summit was extremely informative, and participants left equipped with next steps to improve their outcomes for children and families of color. Due to the pandemic, the second Blind Removal Summit was converted to virtual Town Hall Meetings that were held regionally in the fall of 2020. Additionally:
• OCFS has developed a cohort of fifteen (15) Race Equity Learning Exchange (RELE) facilitators, who work with OCFS regional office staff to provide race equity and cultural competency training to LDSSs, VAs, and other stakeholders.

• In partnership with NCDSS, the University at Albany - State University of New York developed a Blind Removal Toolkit to address the high rates of disparity. OCFS is working with counties across the state with high rates of disparity to implement this promising strategy.

• At the end 2020, 14 days of training on Supporting and Promoting Race Equity and Cultural Competence in the Child Welfare System was attended by 156 staff. This training was targeted to areas of the state with higher disproportionate minority representation (DMR). During the pandemic, OCFS worked to develop a virtual course which was completed on March 20, 2021, and it will be rolled out beginning in the second quarter of 2021.

• OCFS began to provide technical assistance to LDSSs in implementing the Blind Removal process to assist them in coming into compliance with the released administrative directive, 20-OCFS-ADM-19 that was sent out on October 14, 2020.

• In 2020, the Partnership for Youth Justice continued to focus on identifying and implementing strategies to reduce disparities for Black and Latinx youth in the juvenile justice system and to incorporate an intersectional approach for Black girls.

**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 “Dads Take Your Child to School Day” program. OCFS continues efforts to expand the program, which is now active throughout the state, and includes more than 800 schools and childcare 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.

In 2017, OCFS, and other stakeholders sponsored and provided leadership for the “Dads Take Your Child to School Day” initiative, which was the 10th anniversary of the program. OCFS has continued efforts to support and expand the program, which now includes more than 800 schools and childcare centers, as well as participation from other states.

The OCFS fatherhood workgroup continues to meet regularly and to develop plans for a strategic approach to addressing a full fatherhood engagement program across the state.
In 2019, two full-day training courses were launched: “Involving Fathers for Children: Fundamentals” and “Involving Fathers for Children: Preventive and Foster Care.” Staff from the OCFS Bureau of Training and Development and regional offices were trained as trainers to deliver this course. Another course, “Involving Fathers for Children: Child Protective Services” was developed and launched in June 2020. In 2019, 324 staff were trained in the fundamentals course and 63 were trained with the preventive and foster care course. In 2020, despite the pandemic, 69 days of training were delivered to nearly 900 staff.

**Advantage After School Program**

New York State continues to fund the AASP, that was created 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. OCFS’s commitment to targeting services for disconnected/high needs youth and its effort to address racial equity and cultural competence are addressed through this program. The target population includes serving disconnected youth, including those re-entering the community from out-of-home placements, and children of incarcerated parents. AASP offers a broad range of educational, recreational and culturally diverse, age appropriate activities that integrate what happens in the school day. Programming and activities include bullying prevention and age-appropriate pregnancy prevention strategies. Strategies address improving self-esteem, increasing decision making skills, expanding awareness of opportunities with a sense of future aspirations, preparing for the world of work and increasing the ability of youth to assess how present actions impact on future responsibility. Youth and family involvement in program planning and implementation are a key component. Programs may also extend their hours into the evening hours, particularly when serving older adolescents. AASPs are a representation of community partnering for children and their families.

In 2019, OCFS released a new Request for Proposals (RFP) for approximately $33 million for the 2019-2020 school year. As a result of the RFP, 146 contracts were awarded to not-for-profit community-based organizations to serve over 16,500 children at 202 locations across New York State. Contingent upon continuation of funding, the contracts will provide services for a 5-year funding period at a cost of $2,000 per student each year.

**Empire State After-School Program**

This program was first announced in January 2017 as part of Governor Cuomo’s State of the State address. The intention of this funding is to further level the playing field for children in underserved areas across New York State by expanding their access to programs and community resources that will help these children get ahead and help create a stronger, fairer New York State for all. As with the AASPs, the target population for this program also includes disconnected youth, including those re-entering the community from out-of-home placements, and children of incarcerated parents. Services are to be culturally competent and staff are to be reflective of the population and communities served.
Eligible school districts may partner with non-profit agencies to provide after-school programs. Funding was awarded through a competitive bid process. Districts must adopt quality indicators assessing environment, staff-to-student interaction and student outcomes. The program provides districts five-year grants of $1,600 per student.

The first round of Empire awards provided $35 million to fund 27 contracts. In 2018, a second round of Empire awards resulted in 20 additional contracts funded with $10 million. In 2019, a third round of awards resulted in 33 more contracts funded with an additional $10 million. This increased funding to a total of $55 million. In total, the ESAP funds 80 contracts and has the potential to serve over 34,300 children.

**Raise the Age (RTA)**

In 2017, Governor Cuomo signed into law legislation to raise the age of criminal responsibility from 16 to 18, starting in October of 2018. The law was phased in over two (2) years starting on October 1, 2018, with 16-year-olds while phasing in 17-year-olds starting on October 1, 2019. OCFS played a pivotal role in implementing this landmark legislation. During the planning and implementation of RTA, OCFS had worked closely with sister executive agencies including the Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS), Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (DOCCS), the State Education Department (SED) and the Office of Court Administration (OCA). The state partners have worked with all localities to identify the needs and opportunities for prevention of delinquency, detention and placement into foster care or the juvenile justice facilities of older youth. Raise the Age provided an opportunity for a realignment of both the criminal and family courts to address the needs of young offenders who are 16 and 17 years of age at the time they committed their offenses. OCFS created a congregate care program model that is evidence-informed and based on best practices, to work with older youth coming into care on a delinquency due to RTA. As part of this, OCFS has convened a monthly learning collaborative with the thirteen (13) VAs that responded to a request for applications and were approved to enhance programming for RTA youth. These monthly convenings have created a strong partnership between OCFS and the VAs, and some counties.

Goals of “Raise the Age” (RTA) includes providing more targeted rehabilitative services for young offenders, reducing recidivism and protecting teens from potentially traumatic or violent encounters in adult prisons.

- In January 2018, a “Request for Program Applications for Raise the Age Residential Programs and Aftercare Services” was sent to the executive directors of over 100 voluntary foster care agencies.

- Thirteen (13) agencies submitted applications and were subsequently selected to operate RTA residential programs on their campuses.

- In April 2018, the first RTA Learning Collaborative was held. Monthly collaboratives have been held while implementing the RTA legislation and the subsequent enhanced
programs. Topics of collaboratives have included: family engagement; after care; education and vocation; measures and monitoring; risk, needs, and responsivity; working collaboratively with cross-system youth; and many other salient topics.

Participants of monthly learning collaboratives have included representatives from the New York State Education Department, principals and administrators from Special Act and from 853 schools, staff from OCFS fiscal and program divisions, retired Albany police chief Brendan Cox, local law enforcement officials from the communities where RTA programs are located, Dr. Edward J. Latessa, Jr., counties, and representatives from The Dormitory Authority of the State of New York.

Since its inception, RTA has changed the landscape of youth arrests in New York State. Arrest rates, and subsequently the rate of youth being placed in residential settings due to delinquency charges, dropped and the system saw fewer youth than initially expected. In July 2020, OCFS was able to reduce the number of agencies, and beds required for the RTA population.

- Eleven (11) agencies now provide residential RTA programming
  - 90 beds are available statewide (74 male and 16 female)
- OCFS continues to work closely with all providers while regularly assessing the needs of the system.
3. Update on Assessment of Performance
Assessment of Performance

Monitoring Outcome Performance

Since the release of the initial Children and Family Services Review (CFSR) 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. New York State LDSSs are provided county-level data packets summarizing both statewide and county-specific performance on a wide array of permanency and safety-related measures, providing both recent snapshots and multi-year trends. LDSSs use these packets to monitor performance and formulate plans for targeted system improvement.

Between 2014 and 2019, six waves of county specific data (FFY-2014 - FFY2018) were prepared by OCFS using a modified version of the syntax provided by the Administration for Children and Family Children’s Bureau (ACF). Included within each packet were charts displaying state and county level numerators, denominators, and performance level for each metric, as well as a series of “bright spots graphs.” These graphs ranked counties by performance, allowing readers to quickly identify how a particular county compared to its peers on a given indicator. Each LDSS’s packet included a series of tables displaying the LDSS’s performance on a given indicator broken out by 1) demographics, including: child age at admission, current age, sex, race/ethnicity, and other relevant variables (e.g., allegation type, perpetrator), 2) Drill-down files, including: the identifiable and child level data. In 2020, OCFS discontinued production of the CFSR county data packets, as ACF now includes county level outcome data in its data releases. Rather than duplicate this work, OCFS now provides LDSSs with the outcomes generated directly by ACF.

In turn, OCFS has shifted its focus toward the production of prospective permanency dashboards aimed at helping LDSSs monitor and improve their exits to permanency in real-time. A series of three dashboard prototypes is under development within the OCFS Data Warehouse. The new admissions dashboard will track monthly admissions into foster care for 12 months and displays the number of children exiting to permanency within the year for each cohort. The remaining two dashboards will track children in care for 12-23 months or 24 or more months on January 1st of each year. The cumulative number and percentage of children exiting to permanency each month will be displayed. Drill down capacity in all three dashboards will allow users to quickly identify children remaining in care. It is anticipated that dashboards will be available for piloting in late 2021.

OCFS also continues to produce a number of data products intended to assist LDSSs in improving outcomes associated with disproportionate minority representation (DMR), including 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 that are shared with LDSSs. LDSSs can utilize the OCFS Data Warehouse to obtain individual child level information on race/ethnicity and several other factors that would assist LDSSs in effective case management to achieve DMR reduction.
Process Used to Develop the Current CFSR Program Improvement Plan (PIP)

In developing New York State’s PIP, OCFS used a Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) model. OCFS began by reviewing the Child and Family Services Data Profile received in November 2015, which detailed New York State’s performance on the seven (7) national standards. The profile revealed New York State was not meeting six (6) of the seven (7) national standards, resulting in a “call to action” to the child welfare field to aggressively focus on these outcomes. OCFS’s first step was contracting with Public Catalyst (Molly Armstrong) to do a root cause analysis of the state’s performance indicators. Ms. Armstrong’s work has demonstrably improved OCFS’s understanding of data and its value in developing strategies to improve outcomes. This, coupled with the findings from case reviews (the 2016 federal case review, and foster care and child protective case reviews conducted by OCFS) and in consultation with Performance Improvement Consultant, Sherri Levesque, from the Capacity Building Center for States, has helped OCFS identify several overarching themes:

- Need for improved data accuracy and timely entry;
- Need for improved caseworker and supervisor competencies related to key practice areas in both preventive and foster care cases:
  - Casework contacts that support engagement of parents, particularly fathers and youth
  - Ongoing assessments of risk and safety to all children in the home
  - Assessment of service needs and the individualizing of the services to meet the parent/child’s needs;
- Need to focus on an urgency to expedite permanency and utilizing relatives as a placement resource; and
- Need for increased oversight of foster boarding homes to promote consistency in licensing of foster homes and enhance stability of placement.

In development of our Performance Improvement Plan following the CFSR, OCFS reached out to our LDSSs, VAs, the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe, Office of Court Administration (OCA), and other key state stakeholders to assist in developing our Statewide Assessment and the PIP. This collaboration focused on the assessment of the review findings; identification of the factors contributing to our performance or report findings; identification of current initiatives upon which to build; and identification of data by which improved performance is measured.

The new Child and Family Services Plan, implemented in 2017, adheres to a CQI process of Plan, Do, Study, Act. Through planning activities, the county seeks to improve their safety and permanency outcomes, as measured by the round 3 CFSR indicators. In 2018, each LDSS submitted their five-year county plan; annual updates are required. These compressive plans focus on an analysis of various quantitative and qualitative data metrics to explore and understand key factors that contribute to their performance on safety and permanency outcomes. As a county administered system, each LDSS identifies their unique strengths and needs as well as improvement strategies. OCFS regularly prepares and disseminates the key safety and permanency metrics to each LDSS, using a methodology similar to the syntax used by the federal Children’s Bureau. Recently, however, the Children’s Bureau began providing New York State
with county-level metrics; therefore, beginning in 2021, OCFS will disseminate CFSR metrics that have been prepared by the federal Children’s Bureau.

In May 2020, OCFS submitted the last quarterly and final PIP progress report, and received confirmation from the Children’s Bureau that OCFS had successfully completed the PIP. However, OCFS continues to focus on the same goals as outlined in the PIP.

In 2020, OCFS implemented a new performance review and improvement process called Program Quality Improvement (PQI). This PQI process, which is detailed in the Quality Assurance section of this plan, provides comprehensive assessment of child welfare practice as well as a practice improvement process that is aligned with a CQI approach. Below is an illustration of OCFS’s CQI cycle.

In 2020, OCFS conducted 658 comprehensive PQI reviews with sixteen LDSSs. Two hundred thirty-five (235) of the 658 (36 percent) of the cases were reviewed using the federal Onsite Review Instrument (OSRI) through the federal Online Monitoring System (OMS).

Please see below for highlights of the New York State CFSR, CFSR State Response, and PIP.

Assessment of Child and Family Outcomes and Performance on National Standards

A. Safety

Safety Outcomes 1 and 2

Safety outcomes include: (1) children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect; and (2) children are safely maintained in their own homes whenever possible and appropriate.

- The most recent data demonstrating the state’s performance is from the CFSR; Round 3, Wave 6.
Based on this data and input from stakeholders and the courts below is the analysis of the state’s performance on the national standards for the safety indicators and the state's strategy to improve.

**State Performance**

**Safety Outcome 1: Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect**

The findings from the 2019 CFSR on-site review conducted exceeded the New York State target. The following item was measured:

- **Item 1. Timeliness of Initiating Investigations and Reports of Child Maltreatment**
  - In 2016, 100 percent of investigations reviewed were rated as a Strength.
  - In 2019, this item met or exceeded the federal target.
  - In 2020, 85 percent of the investigations were rated as a Strength.

**Wave 7 Metric:** (per federal CFSR 3 Data Profile Supplemental Context Data file, August 2020)

- **Safety Indicator 1 (S1): Rate of Indicated Maltreatment Reports while in Foster Care:** This indicator has improved in federal fiscal year 2018.
  - FY17: 25.94
  - FY18: 23.52

- **Safety Indicator 2 (S2): Percentage of Children with One or More Substantiated Allegations within 12 months of the Initial Report:** This indicator has improved in federal fiscal years 18-19.
  - FY18: 19.1
  - FY19: 18.1

**Safety Outcome 2: Children are safely maintained in their own homes whenever possible and appropriate**

The findings from the 2019 CFSR on-site review met the New York State target and conformity with Safety Outcome 2. The following items were measured:

- **Item 2. Services to Family to Protect Child(ren) in the Home and Prevent Removal or Reentry into Foster Care.**
  - In 2019, this item met or exceeded the federal target.
  - In 2020, this item was rated as a Strength in 95 percent of the cases reviewed.

- **Item 3. Risk and Safety Assessment and Management**
  - In 2019, this item met or exceeded the federal target.
  - In 2020, this item was rated as a Strength in 81 percent of the cases reviewed.
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 and connections is preserved for children.

State Performance

Permanency Outcome 1: Children have permanency and stability in their living situations

The findings from the CFSR on-site review conducted in June 2016, indicated that New York State was not in substantial conformity with Permanency Outcome 1. However, results from the 2019 review exceeded the New York State target using the state’s performance on the following items:

- **Item 4. Stability of Foster Care Placement**
  - In 2016, New York State received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 4 because 75 percent of the 40 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
  - In 2019, this item met or exceeded the federal target.
  - In 2020, this item was rated as a Strength in 94 percent of the cases reviewed.

- **Item 5. Permanency Goal for Child**
  - In 2016, New York State received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 5 because 28 percent of the 39 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
  - In 2019, this item met or exceeded the federal target.
  - In 2020, this item was rated as a Strength in 62 percent of the cases reviewed.

- **Item 6. Achieving Reunification, Guardianship, Adoption, or Other Planned Permanent Living Arrangement**
  - In 2016, New York State received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 6 because 33 percent of the 40 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
  - In 2019, this item met or exceeded the federal target.
  - In 2020, this item was rated as a Strength in 75 percent of the cases reviewed.

CFSR Permanency Indicators: (per federal “Child and Family Service Review (CFSR 3) Data Profile Supplemental Context Data file, August 2020)

P1 - Early Permanency:
- Wave 6 (16B17A): 34.1 percent
- Wave 7 (17B18A): 34.4 percent

P2 - Intermediate Permanency:
- Wave 6 (18B19A): 30.0 percent
- Wave 7 (19B20A): 29.1 percent

P3 - Permanency After Two Years: 3.8 percent
- Wave 6 (18B19A): 31.8 percent
Wave 7 (19B20A): 31.2 percent
- Reentry into Foster Care: 7.9 percent
- Wave 6 (16B17A): 9.7 percent
- Wave 7 (17B18A): 10.2 percent

Permanency Outcome 2: The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children

The findings from the CFSR on-site review conducted in June 2016, indicated that New York State was not in substantial conformity with Permanency Outcome 2. However, results from the 2019 review exceeded the New York State target using the state’s performance on the following items:

- **Item 7. Placement with Siblings**
  - In 2016, New York State received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 7 because 83 percent of the 23 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
  - In 2019, this item met or exceeded the federal target.
  - In 2020, this item was rated as a Strength in 98 percent of the cases reviewed.

- **Item 8. Visiting with Parents and Siblings in Foster Care**
  - In 2016, New York State received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 8 because 73 percent of the 30 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
  - In 2019, this item met or exceeded the federal target.
  - In 2020, this item was rated as a Strength in 86 percent of the cases reviewed.

- **Item 9. Preserving Connections**
  - In 2016, New York State received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 9 because 59 percent of the 39 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
  - In 2019, this item met or exceeded the federal target.
  - In 2020, this item was rated as a Strength in 89 percent of the cases reviewed.

- **Item 10. Relative Placement**
  - In 2016, New York State received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 10 because 50 percent of the 36 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
  - In 2019, this item met or exceeded the federal target.
  - In 2020, this item was rated as a Strength in 91 percent of the cases reviewed.

- **Item 11. Relationship of Child in Care with Parents**
  - In 2016, New York received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 11 because 62 percent of the 26 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
  - In 2019, this item met or exceeded the federal target.
  - In 2020, this item was rated as a Strength in 82 percent of the cases reviewed.

**C. Well-Being**

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

Well-being outcomes include: (1) families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children’s needs; (2) children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs; and (3) children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs.
The most recent data demonstrating the state’s performance is from 2020 case review data from cases reviewed using the OSRI tool which measures performance on the Federal Well-Being Outcomes.

State Performance

Well-Being Outcome 1: Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children’s needs

The findings from the CFSR on-site review conducted in June 2016, indicated that New York State was not in substantial conformity with Well-Being Outcome 1. However, results from the 2019 review exceeded the New York State target using the state’s performance on the following items:

- **Item 12. Needs and Services of Child, Parents, and Foster Parents**
  - In 2016, New York State received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 12 because 39 percent of the 64 cases were rated as a Strength.
  - In 2019, this item met or exceeded the federal target.
  - In 2020, this item was rated as a strength in 59 percent of the cases reviewed. This item assesses practice in several areas. Needs assessment and services to children are rated as a Strength in 83 percent of the cases. A key area needing improvement within Item 12 is involving fathers throughout the case.

- **Item 13. Child and Family Involvement in Case Planning**
  - In 2016, New York State received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 13 because 63 percent of the 64 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
  - In 2019, this item met or exceeded the federal target.
  - In 2020, this item was rated as a Strength in 60 percent of the cases reviewed.

- **Item 14. Caseworker Visits with Child**
  - In 2016, New York State received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 14 because 77 percent of the 64 cases were rated as a Strength.
  - In 2019, this item met or exceeded the federal target.
  - In 2020, this item was rated as a Strength in 76 percent of the cases reviewed.

- **Item 15. Caseworker Visits with Parents**
  - In 2016, New York State received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 15 because 56 percent of the 52 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
  - In 2019, this item met or exceeded the federal target.
  - In 2020, this item was rated as a Strength in 49 percent of the cases reviewed. The area needing improvement mentioned in Item 12, continues to be predominately focused on involving casework visits with fathers.

Well-Being Outcome 2: Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs

The findings from the CFSR on-site review conducted in June 2016, indicated that New York State was not in substantial conformity with Well-Being Outcome 2. However, results from the 2019 review exceeded the New York State target using the state’s performance on the following items:
• Item 16. Educational Needs of the Child
  o In 2016, New York State received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 16 because 87 percent of the 52 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
  o In 2019, this item met or exceeded the federal target.
  o In 2020, this item was rated as a Strength in 93 percent of the cases reviewed.

Well-Being Outcome 3: Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs

The findings from the CFSR on-site review conducted in June 2016, indicated that New York State was not in substantial conformity with Well-Being Outcome 3. However, results from the 2019 review exceeded the New York State target using the state’s performance on the following items:

• Item 17. Physical Health of the Child
  o In 2016, New York State received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 17 because 79 percent of the 48 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
  o In 2019, this item met or exceeded the federal target.
  o In 2020, this item was rated as a Strength in 78 percent of the cases reviewed.

• Item 18. Mental/Behavioral Health of the Child
  o In 2016, New York State an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 18 because 68 percent of the 50 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
  o In 2019, this item met or exceeded the federal target.
  o In 2020, this item was rated as a Strength in 85 percent of the cases reviewed.

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

Users of the New York State child welfare system of record, CONNECTIONS, can readily identify the status, demographic characteristics, and location and placement goals for every child in foster care. As with any automated system, the completeness, timeliness, and accuracy of data collection is an ongoing data quality improvement effort.
In 2019, OCFS developed a Data Governance Council that is responsible for establishing, maintaining, and monitoring strategies, policies, and procedures that govern data management across OCFS child welfare programs.

In addition to the Data Governance Council, the CONNECTIONS Data Quality Workgroup was developed to analyze and address data quality issues that exist within the CONNECTIONS system. This workgroup will continue to do an analysis of why data quality issues exist and how to appropriately respond. The workgroup has developed reports to measure data quality and has shared them with LDSSs and VAs. These reports, available in the OCFS Data Warehouse, include missing diagnosis data, manner of removal from home for the current removal episode, missing TPR date, missing sex and ethnicity, and a child ever adopted indicator. These reports are utilized by OCFS regional CONNECTIONS lead team members during discussions with LDSS managers and staff. These efforts will continue during the next year. OCFS will continue to run internal reports periodically to measure and evaluate whether the data quality is improving.

OCFS will also continue to utilize the Statewide Information System Tool for Accuracy as part of each case record review to assess the accuracy of the data in CONNECTIONS as recorded in the case record.

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*

OCFS will continue to utilize the OSRI Item 13 in all case record reviews to assess the inclusion of parents in case planning activities. Findings are shared with the LDSS in the completed report, and when the item needs improvement, a program improvement plan is detailed by the LDSS and monitored by OCFS.

*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*

OCFS will continue to assess service plan review activities by utilizing the service plan review grid in the Safety and Permanency Assessment tool for the most recent service planning period during the period under review for each case record review. The findings will be aggregated and shared with the county in the completed report.
Item 22: Permanency Hearings

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

State Response

New York State requires an initial permanency hearing within eight months of placement and every six months thereafter for all foster care children placed for abuse or neglect, voluntarily placed or destitute children. In order to meet this requirement, the Office of Court Administration (OCA) establishes a “data certain” and the upcoming Permanency Hearing is scheduled. New York State’s required frequency of Permanency Hearings exceeds federal expectations.

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

OCFS will continue to assess the timely filing of a TPR during each case record review using the OSRI Item 5, sections 5E, F and G, which asks whether a TPR has been filed, and if not, was an exception documented in the case record. Findings will be shared with the LDSSs in the completed report.

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

All placement court orders and permanency hearing orders in New York State contain a Date Certain - the date the next permanency hearing is scheduled to occur. Foster parents, pre-adoptive parents and relative caregivers are entitled to notice of each permanency hearing and receive a copy of the permanency hearing order with the date on the front page. In addition, each permanency hearing requires a permanency hearing report be completed and shared with all relevant parties, including foster parents, pre-adoptive parents, and relative caregivers at least 14 days prior to the hearing. The permanency hearing report contains the date of the permanency hearing. Compliance with this systemic factor is assessed during case reviews.

OCFS is also implementing a document upload system called My Uploads. My Uploads will afford an LDSS the ability to upload case documents that are not available in CONNECTIONS. My Uploads will help OCFS to assess the timeliness and compliance with LDSSs’ responsibility to notify key case individuals of their rights to attend and be heard at reviews and hearings.
New York PIP Addressing Systemic Factor – Case Review System – Notice of Hearings and Reviews to Caregivers

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

A formal CQI Plan/Process has been developed and is referred to as the PQI Process. For an in-depth overview of the PQI process, please see the Quality Assurance System section of this report.

On-going data reports, shared with LDSSs within six weeks of the completion of the case review, support the LDSS’s development of targeted program improvement activities. Beginning in 2021, as part of the new PQI process, OCFS intends to develop quarterly permanency outcome data reports for LDSSs to better understand their performance on permanency outcomes. These permanency outcomes will be modeled after the CFSR permanency outcomes; however, instead of utilizing the state’s AFCARS files, data directly from the CONNECTIONS system will be used. These reports will allow a LDSS to determine the permanency rate for a current cohort of children (based on time in foster care) and will also provide a list of children in the cohort who have discharged to permanency and those who have not yet discharged. The purpose of this report is to assist the LDSSs in improving permanency outcomes.

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

Please refer to the Training Plan Update section.
**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 regarding 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**

Please refer to the *Training Plan Update* section.

**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**

OCFS provides ample training offerings to prospective foster and adoptive parents and to staff of state-licensed and approved facilities. New York State is dedicated to continually improving this systemic area by monitoring electronic case records, current LDSS and VA training records and incident reports. New York State has made a strong commitment to explore virtual training options for foster and adoptive parents. New York State offers ongoing training to the trainers of the foster and adoptive parents. Each LDSS and VA have certified trainers who manage and provide the trainings to the foster and adoptive parents. New York State conducts monthly monitoring of the foster/adoptive records by randomly selecting cases for review, which includes assessing that the foster/adoptive parents have met all the training requirements. While this assessment does not analyze the skills and knowledge of the foster/adoptive parents, OCFS has dedicated a workgroup to assess how OCFS can better monitor the foster/adoptive parent’s skills and knowledge. OCFS also facilitates a home-finders annual conference to support the development of the trainers. The workgroup is also reviewing the current training curricula and deciding on ways to improve the content to focus more on trauma-responsive care.

**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**

OCFS continues to assess service needs through the use of county plans and through a survey that was recently conducted to get a better understanding of what services are available and implemented related to FFPSA. This information will be used over the next year to help frame the state’s prevention plan.

OCFS has also used information from case reviews that are conducted each year and will continue to use case reviews as a means of monitoring service needs across the state. The case reviews also provide information on determining if the services are individualized and meeting the needs of the children and families.

OCFS will also continue to work with its partners, OASAS, OMH, and OPDV to promote the delivery of services to families who are experiencing substance abuse, mental health, and domestic violence.

OCFS will also continue its investment in primary prevention services, such as Healthy Families New York (HFNY). This primary prevention program has been evaluated and shown to have positive impacts on children and parents as they learn about and implement protective factors.

**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**

This item is assessed in individualized services to children and families. New York State will continue to support preventive services and is preparing for implementation of the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) in September 2021. OCFS will continue to monitor the provision of services over the next year through case reviews. While across the state, not all services are available, LDSSs and VAs continue to support families with the services that are available. It is hoped that through the implementation of FFPSA, those services that are most in need, such as substance abuse, mental health, and parenting will be more readily available and accessible, and more families will be helped.
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

OCFS will continue our many collaborations over the next year. Those will include working closely with the Office of Court Administration, advocacy groups, Citizen Review Panels, the OCFS Advisory Board, the Youth Advisory Board, LDSSs, VAs, its sister state agencies, and the tribal nations. Through these partnerships, OCFS will continue to consult on the issues that face many children and families, not only in the child welfare system, but also in the juvenile justice system, and look for common goals to enhance their safety, permanency and well-being.

OCFS developed a Parent Advisory Board (PAB), which includes birth, foster and adoptive parents, and kinship caregivers. The goal of the 17-member board is to provide feedback on their experiences with the child welfare system and make recommendations to OCFS for improving the system, and implementing state and federal initiatives to improve safety, permanency and well-being for New York State’s children and families. The PAB will be co-chaired by a parent member as well as a state liaison. Three virtual meetings were held in 2020, with support from Casey Family Programs.

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

OCFS will continue its partnerships with our sister state agencies, (OPWDD, OMH, DOH, OASAS, DCJS), the Office of Court Administration, the State Education Department, and the Council on Children and Families. Working together, OCFS will continue to assess the needs of the children and families we all serve. The entities continue to meet monthly through the Cross-Systems Meeting of Senior Staff with Family and Youth Partners.

Additionally, OCFS, the Office of Court Administration and OASAS continue to work to educate family courts and LDSSs around the impact of family drug treatment courts on assisting families experiencing substance abuse issues. Learning exchanges are planned for this upcoming year.
OCFS will continue to collaborate with LDSSs, VAs, the New York Public Welfare Association and the Council of Family and Child Caring Agencies on improving services provided at the local level.

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 childcare institutions receiving Title IV-B or IV-E funds?

State Response

As reported in the New York State CFSR PIP, semi-annual reports under Goal 7: Improve statewide consistency of foster and adoptive parent licensing, recruitment and retention through oversight, monitoring and technical assistance to LDSSs/VAs, OCFS has been conducting desk audits every two months using an automated report that includes all active foster/adoptive homes across the state. The audit includes a review of randomly selected foster/adoptive homes for consistent completion of the required licensing standards (State Central Register (SCR), criminal history checks, safety assessments when necessitated, and Staff Exclusion List (SEL) checks) as well as for the consistent use of the Final Assessment and Determination template for accepted active foster/adoptive homes, which was required in certifications occurring after July 2018. Any deficiencies noted in active foster/adoptive homes are tracked and shared with the respective regional office, which is responsible for working with the LDSS/VA to address the deficiency. Those homes remain in the tracking system and are monitored until the deficiencies have been mitigated or the home has closed. OCFS will continue to conduct these desk audits and provide findings, via regional office staff, to LDSSs/VAs for mitigation and correction. OCFS will modify the criteria of the audit to align with any future changes to policy requirements.

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

As noted in Item 33, OCFS has been conducting desk audits every two months using an automated report that includes all active foster/adoptive homes across the state. The audit includes a review of randomly selected foster/adoptive homes for consistent completion of the required licensing standards (SCR, criminal history checks, safety assessments when necessitated, and Staff Exclusion List (SEL) checks). These activities will continue throughout the next federal fiscal year.
**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**

LDSSs and VAs will continue to recruit foster and adoptive homes. An emphasis has been placed on recruiting kinship homes. OCFS worked with Welfare Research and Redlich Horwitz and Heidi Epstein from the ABA on the development of "kinship champion" training that assisted LDSSs and VAs in recruiting and supporting more kinship homes. Training was piloted in 2021 and included several counties, with staff from OCFS, and the Kinship Navigator participating.

LDSSs and VAs will be required to provide an update to their current recruitment and retention plans in June 2021. OCFS will continue to provide data to the LDSSs and VAs that will help them identify which types of homes are needed to support the characteristics of the children coming into care. Permanency specialists, located in the OCFS regional offices, as well as data leaders, will continue to work with LDSSs and VAs in analyzing their data and assessing the effectiveness of the recruitment and retention strategies they have noted in the plans.

Additionally, OCFS prepared Foster Home Data Packets for each LDSS and Voluntary Agency with ten or more foster homes. These data packets contain information about foster home demographics, characteristics, and experiences fostering children. These packets are intended to support the field as they look to target recruitment and retention strategies.

**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**

OCFS will continue to support the cross-jurisdictional recruitment of resources through the use of the National Electronic Interstate Compact Enterprise (NEICE) for requests received through the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC). NEICE has afforded New York State to respond to requests from LDSSs and VAs sometimes within hours.

OCFS will also continue to employ the Adoption Album to promote the adoption of children who have been freed for adoption, but not in an adoptive placement. Additionally, OCFS will support the Heart Gallery New York, which showcases children who have agreed to be featured. Both the Adoption Album and Heart Gallery New York strengthen cross jurisdictional placements of children in permanent homes throughout the state.
OCFS will continue to support the Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance (ICMA) to provide for children both coming into and leaving New York.

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

OCFS submitted its PIP to ACF on March 27, 2018, which was approved on May 3, 2018, detailing the goals, strategies and key activities that will be implemented to address the state’s performance on Safety Outcome 2, Permanency Outcomes 1 and 2, and Well-Being Outcome 1 and the systemic factors.

OCFS submitted its PIP update to ACF in November 2018, and the final report was submitted May 2019. The PIP has been satisfactorily closed.

**Plans for 2021-2022**

- **OCFS will continue to monitor performance using the following strategies:**
  - Each LDSS Child and Family Services Plan (County Plan) is developed within a CQI process. Each LDSS’ county plan includes an assessment of performance, an analysis of factors that contribute to performance, and improvement strategies. Progress is tracked by OCFS through quarterly visits with LDSS administrators.
  - A component of OCFS’s annual PQI process is to assess each county’s performance, and support and track improvement. Each LDSS that has an active PIP that is monitored continuously by OCFS regional office staff.
  - OCFS now receives county-level CFSR metrics. These data will be shared with each LDSS on a schedule that corresponds with receipt of these data. OCFS will continue to produce these outcome metrics for each LDSS on an annual basis and will require LDSSs to engage in improvement planning.
4. Plan for Improvement
Plan for Improvement

Plan for Enacting the State’s Vision (State Plan for Improvement)

New York State implemented a Program Improvement Plan (PIP) based on the findings from the 2017 Child and Family Services Review (CFSR). The plan for improvement took into consideration the State’s performance on key outcome indicators as noted in the Assessment of Performance section of this report. The PIP has been satisfactorily closed, however OCFS continues to focus our efforts to reach the goals listed below.

**Goal 1: Improve New York State’s Continuous Quality improvement (CQI) system and process at the State level (Systemic Factor – Item 25 Quality Assurance)**

OCFS developed a CQI system with a multi-tiered assessment process that will involve significant staff and stakeholder engagement, communication, and a strong foundational administrative structure. The Program Quality Improvement (PQI) process is grounded in continuous quality improvement (CQI), which is data driven and collaborative, and includes key steps: identifying current performance, understanding of underlying factors, planning and implementing improvement strategies, and ongoing monitoring of improvement/adjust strategies accordingly (Plan, Do, Study, Act). In addition to the development of the PQI process and team, OCFS continued the efforts to improve the overall CQI competence statewide by providing data to LDSSs to support outcomes for performance improvement.

Refer to Quality Assurance System section of this report for more information.

**Goal 2: County plans that include cross-county themes, if applicable, will be developed and implemented using a CQI model aimed at improving child welfare outcomes, to safety and permanency indicators. (Safety Outcome 2, Permanency Outcome 1 and 2; Systemic Factor – Item 25 Quality Assurance)**

OCFS continues to provide support and technical assistance to LDSSs on implementation and measuring the strategies identified in their county plans and annual updates through discussions at quarterly site visits. During late 2020 and early 2021, OCFS reviewed each LDSS’s county plan to identify strategies that they had put in place. These strategies will be shared with LDSSs prior to the due date of the 2021 Annual County Plan Update. This information sharing supports cross-district learning and the potential exploration of new strategies for a LDSS to explore. OCFS regional offices will review each LDSS’s submission and provide feedback and guidance as needed.

**Goal 3: The following casework practices in child protective services (CPS), foster care and preventive services will be improved through the implementation of competency-based training:**

- Risk and safety assessments;
• Caseworker visits with the parents (including locating and engaging fathers) and child(ren);
• Service need assessments; and
• Engagement of youth and parents in case and permanency planning.

(Safety Outcome 2 – Item 3; Permanency Outcome 1- Item 4, 5, and 6; Well-being 1 – Items 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17 and 18; Systemic Factor – Case Review System – Item 20 Written Case Plan; Item 24 Notice of Hearings and Reviews to Caregivers; Item 26 Staff and Provider Training; and Item 27 Ongoing Staff Training).

OCFS continues to deliver ongoing trainings, which include specialty and advanced training, as well as refresher training for experienced CPS, preventive and foster care caseworkers, supervisors, and administrators. The Child Welfare Foundations Program (CWFP) is required for child protective workers and is open to foster and preventive caseworkers. It should also be noted that many LDSSs cross train their caseworkers, so caseworkers with other functional roles, such as preventive, foster care and adoption services who fulfill child protective duties are participating in the CWFP level training as well.

Trainings for supervisors include competencies on basic supervision skills, as well as supervising, coaching, and supporting the casework practice competencies taught to caseworkers through the CWFP training. OCFS provides supervisory professional development through the Keys to Excellence in Your Supervision (KEYS) training. KEYS is available to all child welfare supervisors and is required for child protective supervisors. KEYS thoroughly reviews the components of training introduced in CWFP and emphasizes the importance of each component.

OCFS developed a Level 3 Behavior Checklists (Checklists) to elicit feedback from both trainees and their direct supervisors on how the skills and knowledge learned in CWFP and KEYS is applied in the field. The Checklists are automatically generated at specified post-training intervals. The completion rate of the Checklists across the state has been minimal and has not provided OCFS with a sufficient sample to measure the application of the knowledge and skills obtained during training.

To that end, OCFS will run reports listing all preventive and foster care workers who have taken CWFP and KEYS training. The list, which will include participants’ supervisors, will be shared with regional office staff who are responsible for monitoring completion of the Checklists from each LDSS/VA. When applicable, trainees and their supervisors who have not completed the Checklists will be requested to do so immediately.

In addition to the classroom, OCFS has provided several supervisory webinars on using data and supervising best practices in domestic violence cases. OCFS will continue the supervisory webinar series in 2021. Topics will include supervising foster/adoptive homes (FAD) in CONNECTIONS; foster home development and working with kin as well as content requested by LDSSs/VAs.
Signs of Safety Training

OCFS is committed to continuously seeking new ways to strengthen child welfare practice and incorporating new tools for the state’s child welfare workforce. OCFS has begun to embark on an enhanced system that promotes strong relationships, skillful use of authority, transparency, shared vision, skillful use of questions and compassion. This approach is based on the Signs of Safety model.

Signs of Safety is an internationally recognized child welfare practice framework that uses a focused set of tools and heightened critical thinking skills for the child protective, preventive, foster care and supervisory workforce to actively engage families and community resources in designing and implementing safety plans that can improve child safety, reduce subsequent reports and reduce time to permanency.

At the core of the enhancements is a refined assessment and planning approach that partners with families and their children’s “safety network.” This network of friends and family holds each other accountable to a detailed, child-centered safety plan. Together, they demonstrate their capacity to create a safe, healthy environment for the children, even during times of stress and crisis within the family.

These practices have the potential to drive significant improvements in child welfare including: a safe reduction in foster care placements, reduction in recurrence rates, reduced repeat maltreatment, increased community involvement – all with a positive impact on staff morale and turnover.

In August 2020, OCFS launched a Signs of Safety learning lab and implemented learning labs in Tompkins and Seneca counties, and Glove House. Casey Family Programs sponsored training and implementation coaching in the fall and winter of 2020.

Building on the strengths being implemented in our training, these learning labs, along with selected state staff have been exploring adoption of the Signs of Safety approach. OCFS will be assessing the practice in these learning labs and will be recommending statewide changes that align with Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA).

Like any systemwide change, these enhancements will take time to fully implement across the state. OCFS will support LDSS and VA leadership with these changes over the next few years with an approach which includes:

- Reflective Supervision: Methodology for supervisors to further develop the critical thinking skills and safety planning rigor of frontline practitioners across the continuum of service.

- Mapping, Questioning, and Safety Plan development: Interviewing, questioning and assessment tools using Signs of Safety mapping structure, safety plans and techniques. Many of these are familiar to workers and supervisors now.
• ‘New Worker Curriculum’: Practice enhancements integrated into the training curriculum given to all new workers, including clarity in language, risk assessment tools, and safety planning disciplines, along with renewed family engagement strategies and skills.

OCFS also continues to assess how to enhance casework practice and supervision through the initiatives listed below.

**Administrative Case Conferences (ACC)**

ACC are designed to model effective casework supervision in a group setting that targets challenging practice areas for the LDSS. The approach is modeled by OCFS regional office staff and employs the county program administrators to actively participate in these conferences and use their expertise, experience, and skills to model effective casework supervision. In this group setting, the caseworker presents the status of the case and the casework challenges in closing the case. The team, including supervisors and administrator staff, participate in the case discussion. Initially this process is modeled by OCFS regional office staff for the LDSS. This type of group conferencing ensures sustainability as the group is made up of staff at all levels of the LDSS and they all participate in the decision-making points in a case. It can be used in CPS, preventive or foster care and permanency cases. OCFS regional office staff will continue to offer LDSSs the opportunity to participate in ACC throughout 2021.

**Domestic Violence (DV) Learning Exchanges and Safe & Together™**

In 2020, OCFS began a statewide implementation plan of the Safe & Together™ Model. This model supports child and adult victim centered practice for child protective workers investigating child abuse and neglect cases in households experiencing domestic violence (DV). Cases involving families experiencing DV can be very complex and difficult for workers to navigate. Safe and Together training provides strategies and tools to use with a focus on DV informed case assessment, interviewing, documentation, and case planning. Safe and Together is a proven and effective model with a demonstrated a decrease in out of home placements and reoccurrence in states that have fully integrated this practice model.

Due to the pandemic, the first four-day CORE training scheduled in March 2020 was postponed. Instead, a virtual version of the training was offered. In November of 2020, the first five LDSSs and DV Programs completed the first 4-day virtual CORE training, which included weekly remote learning transfer sessions for CPS supervisors, senior staff and DV Advocates. The participating LDSSs have completed self-assessments of their DV informed practice. The DV staff have begun an assessment process with each LDSS and incorporate a DV learning exchange case review as a part of the initial assessment of practice. Quarterly meetings will be held to provide ongoing planning and coaching and skills practice. Assessments will be completed yearly to measure progress in practice and identify coaching needs.
In 2021, OCFS will provide a one-day overview of the Safe & Together™ Model for casework staff and DV agency advocates from the participating LDSSs. This delivery will also be provided to OCFS Home and Regional Office staff. From there, ongoing coaching will be provided to local districts to integrate knowledge, skills, and tools into practice. A second four-day CORE training will be held in May 2021, which will reach up to an additional 5 LDSSs and will be followed by the one-day trainings, coaching and support accordingly.

Roll-out of the training across the state will continue with a goal of implementation in all LDSSs in the next several years. OCFS is building its internal capacity with certified trainers to deliver the trainings and provide ongoing coaching and technical assistance. OCFS has had two staff complete Train the Trainer and are in the provisional stages of trainer certification. In October 2021, 3 trainers from New York State Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence (OPDV) will be also begin certification process and provide deliveries during their provisional period as a part of their existing training contract.

OCFS plans to continue conducting Domestic Violence Learning Exchanges (DVLE) with LDSSs through 2020-2024. The DVLEs will be incorporated into the Safe & Together™ Model implementation with DV specific case reviews and consultations.

**Statewide Child Fatality Review Team**

The Statewide Child Fatality Review Team (SCFRT) had its inaugural meeting March 5, 2020. Despite the pandemic, the SCFRT stayed on course and met virtually on a quarterly basis in 2020. SCFRT members worked with their regional and local counterparts to better understand why child fatalities occur and how to prevent them. When a child fatality occurs, local CFRTs examine the events leading up to the death, closely examine any case files to review child welfare practices and any preventive services that were in place or should have been employed. The SCFRT’s goal is to identify trends, patterns and systemic issues that demonstrate a need for intervention. Membership includes multi-state agency representation from education, universities, housing, health, law enforcement, mental health, victim and addiction services, the courts, and advocates as well as local representatives from child welfare, district attorneys, and hospitals. The statewide team will meet quarterly and expects to orient all members to a fatality case review and report at the next convening. As a result of the newly formed SCFRT, team members from other state and local agencies have been collaborating on ways to work together to prevent child fatalities. In the 2021, SCFRT members from child welfare will be working closely with the New York State Police (NYSP) around the infant safe sleep messaging. The NYSP is eager to assist child welfare and the New York State Department of Health (DOH) with reinforcing the safe sleep messaging when the law enforcement encounters families with infants, whether it be at car seat safety checkpoints or when responding to a residence. The SCFRT is also working to put a public service announcement out on safe sleep. Additionally, SCFRT members from child welfare, addiction services, DOH and the New York State Office of Mental Health (OMH) are continuing to work together to find ways to better serve families with substance use disorders, as so many families are in need of support and services.
Goal 4: Improve timeliness of permanency for children placed in out of home care.
(Permanency Outcome 1 – Items 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11; Case Review Item – 23 Termination of Parental Rights; Item 35 – Diligent Recruitment of Foster and Adoptive Homes; and Item 36 – State Use of Cross-Jurisdictional Resources for Permanent Placements)

Improvement in Timeliness of Permanency Hearings

New York City has implemented several strategies to improve timeliness and permanency outcomes: return the administration of permanency hearings to judges (from court attorney referees), especially those of freed children with a goal of adoption for stricter oversight; review untimely initial permanency planning hearings to determine if data entry error plays any part, and to provide training for new clerks as well as to identify circumstances where it is more likely that initial permanency planning hearings will be held late, to reduce the number of these hearings commenced and completed late. The focus on timely initial permanency hearings has also resulted in a five percent increase in timeliness and a four percent increase in timely freed child permanency hearings. After adding a new jurist and returning most permanency hearings from referees to judges, New York County (Manhattan) had an additional seven percent increase in timely freed child permanency hearings, leading to 100 percent timeliness in those hearings.

Permanency hearings were disrupted during the physical closure of the court on March 17, 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all proceedings eventually moved to virtual spaces. It was determined that the New York City Administration for Children’s Services (ACS) and attorneys would need file Orders to Show Cause, to have a permanency hearing placed on a judge’s calendar. The transition to virtual court hearings resulted in an initial delay of proceedings including permanency hearings. However, at this point, all eligible cases have had at least one permanency hearings since March 17, 2021, so the mechanism for scheduling future hearings has for the most part, returned to “normal” with the next date begin selected at the previous court hearing.

Prior to the pandemic, the court had continued to evolve in the ways it monitored and sought to improve the timeliness of permanency hearings. In some cases, permanency hearings were again being heard by another jurist, due to the unsustainable stress that was placed on some judge’s caseloads by taking back those hearings. However, regular caseload reviews were instituted across the city, and a higher focus on jurists’ awareness of their timeliness data was facilitated through meetings and trainings as part of the New York City Foster Care (NYCFC) Strategic Plan.

The Strong Starts Court Initiative (SSCI) proved to be invaluable during the court transition to online proceedings, with SSCI staff providing extra support to vulnerable families. There were several reunifications and case closures among SSCI-involved families in 2020. Additionally, the program continues to expand and has recently started in Kings County Family Court, overseen by two judges there. The clinical coordinator has been hired and she is beginning to receive case referrals.

Child Permanency Mediation (CPM) in New York City was slated to begin as a pilot in Queens County Family Court on March of 2020. Implementation of the pilot was delayed due to the
transition to online court proceedings as a result of COVID-19 and the subsequent scale back of in person court operations. The scale back however provided Child Welfare Court Improvement Project (CWCIP) with the opportunity to re-work the state’s entire CPM protocol and devise a virtual component to it, which was officially rolled out in July of 2020. In New York City the move to Virtual CPM allowed for the pilot program to be expanded to all five family courts that make up the New York City Family Court system as opposed to solely focusing on Queens County. Adopting virtual protocols also allowed for the utilization of mediators from a statewide roster, as mediations for the CPM program are occurring virtual across New York State; in essence doubling the number of available mediators. State and Citywide virtual trainings geared towards educating court and partner agency staff on the new virtual protocols as well as the referral process have been ongoing since October of 2020. The purpose of these trainings is to help everyone get acquainted with our procedures and acclimated as to how mediation may assist in expediting permanency in child abuse and neglect cases pending before family court. New York City’s Virtual CPM program began accepting referrals on January 4, 2021.

OCFS continued supporting LDSSs with Rapid Permanency Review (RPR) implementation. For RPRs conducted in 2019, OCFS provided on-site facilitation and coaching, and tracked children (376) from the four LDSSs that participated. The second quarter report, (February 2020) demonstrates that 132 children either achieved permanency or a permanency milestone in the first six months post-review. OCFS in partnership with Casey Family Programs has developed a sustainability plan at the regional office level to train and support LDSSs interested in implementing RPRs in 2020 and beyond.

OCFS continues to enhance processes for effective use of cross-jurisdictional resources to improve permanency outcomes. Quarterly reports are sent to LDSSs regarding children who are freed for adoption who do not appear on the statewide photo listing. OCFS directs the agency to either photo list the child or update the system to reflect the child’s status. OCFS will continue to review the reports on a quarterly basis to assist LDSSs with current listings. LDSS staff have been trained in accessing these reports directly.

NEICE continues to facilitate completion of home studies in a timely manner through notifications to staff when home studies are coming due or overdue. This results in proactive follow up by the OCFS ICPC staff with LDSS or VA staff. In 2021, there is a planned roll out of enhancements to the database, known as NEICE 2.0. NEICE 2.0 will contain features designed to improve the user dashboard experience and functionality of reports which will allow NY ICPC to glean state specific data more efficiently. Notifications will continue to play a key function in NEICE 2.0, reminding the New York State locals, New York State ICPC & the other states that home study completion dates are approaching and when home studies are overdue. In addition to the work on NEICE 2.0 enhancements, TETRUS has built a Secure Document Portal into NEICE which allows OCFS to exchange documents securely and in real time with states who are not yet been on-boarded in NEICE. The SDP has increased the speed for information exchange with those states. In 2021, OCFS, ACS, and the New Jersey Department of Children and Families (DCF) executed a bi-state interstate agreement. This agreement will expedite placement of children in foster care with family or close friends living in New Jersey and New York border areas. Specifically, the agreement will maintain home safety and assessment protocols, while reducing
processing times and potential emotional trauma to the children and families involved. For OCFS, goals in 2021 include a seamless roll out of NEICE 2.0 statewide and implementation of the border agreement pilot.

OCFS continues to work with LDSSs and VAs to implement strategies to promote placement of children on the least restrictive setting. These efforts include the implementation of Administrative Review Teams that assess the need for the child’s out of home placement, placement with kin as the first choice, and if there is a need for a higher level of care, such as congregate care to meet the child’s needs. LDSSs and VAs are encouraged to use this same administrative review structure when deciding if a child needs to be transferred from a foster boarding home placement, to a congregate care setting. Additionally, the teams should be reviewing the child’s need for a congregate placement on a frequent basis.

OCFS is also working with OCA and ACS on a review of children of approximately 300 children who are freed for adoption or are eligible for KinGAP whose permanency has been delayed due to COVID-19. The workgroup will be looking to identify if there are any deficiencies in the court paperwork, and other challenges that may be impacting the finalizations. The workgroup will also look to identify any other efficiencies that can be implemented to enhance timely finalizations.

OCFS is participating with OCA, DOH and the New York State Office of Addiction Services and Supports (OASAS) on a project aimed at enhancing court practices and services to families who are experiencing substance use disorders. OCFS previously partnered with OCA and OASAS on a similar project to embed key family treatment court principles into family courts. The new grant is looking to continue this work with a focus on rural counties.

Refer to Family First Prevention Services Act Overview section of this report for more information.

**Goal 5: Provide services to families who are at risk of entering the child welfare system that increase knowledge and protective factors that can help keep children in their home that may otherwise be at risk of maltreatment or neglect and placed in foster care. (Case Review Items 6, 17 and 18; Systemic Factor -Service Array and Resource Development: Item 29 Array of Services and Item 30 – Individualized Services)**

OCFS will continue to monitor and assess Healthy Families New York (HFNY) program outcomes through site visits and the required programmatic reporting structure and provide technical assistance to all programs. Through reviews and technical support, improvement strategies have been identified to increase program enrollment, such as expand community outreach activities to better engage families, evaluate the enrollment process for efficiency improvements, and address staff retention through statewide initiatives and strategies.

Healthy Families has engaged in a pilot to enroll families into services earlier in families initial contacts with the program. This pilot has been rolled out in three program sites. OCFS along with Central Administration is collecting data and looking to see if there are improvements in both earlier enrollment in home visiting services and retention of families after initial engagement. Engagement strategies to improve involvement into the programs has been reimagined in the
time of the pandemic. While programs are unable to hold stakeholder forums, community events, and in-person discussion with families and referral providers, the programs have been very creative reaching families, inviting them to participate, while at the same time be respectful to the stress and additional things families are involved in while supporting their children through a pandemic. Programs have involved families in virtual home visits, virtual assessments, virtual support, and parenting groups, drop offs of food and needed diapers, as well as continued to make referrals to needed services in the community.

Refer to the CAPTA section of this report for more information on HFNY.

**Goal 6: Increase the accuracy and timeliness of the data entered the CONNECTIONS system. (Systemic Factor – Item 19 - Statewide Information System)**

OCFS created and implemented the use of the Statewide Information System Tool for Accuracy (tool) to be used as part of each case record review. The tool tracks the accuracy of the data entered in CONNECTIONS against the case file specific to demographic characteristics, location, and permanency goals for each child in foster care whose record is reviewed. Findings from the use of the tool support that relevant information entered in CONNECTIONS has been accurately recorded from the case file. The OCFS Bureau of CQI and Oversight and Monitoring will continue to utilize the tool for foster care case reviews and provide the findings to regional office staff. It is felt that improved accuracy is the result of reports developed and made available to LDSSs and VAs through the OCFS Data Warehouse. This strategy will also be included in OCFS’ Biennial Data Quality Plan.

OCFS has adds missing AFCARS data to the reports that are available through the OCFS Data Warehouse each month. This enables users to generate reports with drill-through down to the child level capacity on demand. The number of users of the management reports is approximately 4,000 and tend to be supervisors and managers. The expectation is for supervisors to share the information with caseworkers who are responsible for entering the information in CONNECTIONS; the number of users is over 28,000. A letter was sent out to all LDSS Commissioners and VA Executive Directors in December 2020 to encourage them to utilize these reports and ask them to take steps to make improvements where data is missing.

In the coming year, OCFS plans to focus additional OCFS Data Warehouse reporting on measuring timeliness of admission, discharge, and movement data into CONNECTIONS. Reports will be developed for LDSSs and VAs to understand their current data entry practices and measure improvement over time, as well as compare themselves to statewide numbers. There will be an expansion of FFPSA reporting as well. The goal is to provide reports that with positively impact provision of services.

To enable caseworkers to have direct access to these reports, the OCFS Data Warehouse is working with the CONNECTIONS team to display these reports directly via CONNECTIONS. These reports will be linked according to stage by caseworkers who are responsible for and will have the appropriate security clearances. In 2020, OCFS began testing
the push of several OCFS Data Warehouse reports into CONNECTIONS before expanding beyond the missing AFCARS data reports. Efforts to make data warehouse reports visible within CONNECTIONS continue. The timeliness and accuracy of data entry into CONNECTIONS remains a top area of focus within the OCFS Data Quality Plan. Strategies for addressing these issues and recent performance indicators on timeliness and accuracy can be found in the 2020-2021 Biennial Data Quality Plan.

Goal 7: Improve the statewide consistency of foster and adoptive parent licensing, recruitment, and retention through oversight, monitoring and technical assistance to LDSSs and VAs. (Systemic Factor - Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment and Retention Item 33 - Standards Applied Equally, Item 34 - Requirements for Criminal Background Checks)

OCFS conducts ongoing routine desk audits of certified/approved foster/adoptive homes (every two months) to assess statewide consistency of licensing standards. The oversight includes a review of SCR, Staff Exclusion List (SEL) and criminal history checks, safety assessments, and use of the required foster/adoptive home certification/approval template. Findings from these reviews are sent directly to the corresponding OCFS Regional Office staff who work directly with the LDSSs/VAs to address and correct any issues noted.

In November 2019, an automated report was developed that increased the sample to include foster/adoptive homes that transferred among agencies or had closed and were reopened.

OCFS continues to perform desk audits that determines if background checks and corresponding safety documentation are appropriate and completed in a timely manner. Since the onset of these audits, the percentage of homes with the appropriate safety documents in place has averaged 86 percent. Additionally, the desk audit also includes a review for consistent use and completion of the foster/adoptive templates. Since last year’s report, there has been a slight improvement to 87 percent of appropriate safety documents being completed. Findings indicate that the majority of LDSSs/VAs across the state are utilizing the template; however, areas requiring continued technical assistance have been noted. Also, during quarterly site visits to VAs and LDSSs Regional Office staff provide technical assistance related to FAD. OCFS has also provided resources to LDSSs that includes the Home Finders Guide and other resources that can be found on the OCFS website.

OCFS staff will continue to monitor the completion of the required background checks and templates and provide local/statewide instruction and technical assistance throughout the year via local meetings, webinars, and statewide conferences.

As New York State prepares for the implementation of FFPSA, OCFS has shared with LDSSs and VAs the need to recruit more foster homes, including therapeutic foster homes as New York State looks to reduce its reliance on the use of congregate care. During 2019 and into 2020, OCFS provided to LDSSs and VAs metrics related to the number of foster homes. The metrics included length of service, experience in fostering teens, and the number of active and inactive
homes. Technical assistance sessions were held to help LDSSs and VAs interpret and analyze the data, and to use the data in the development of their three-year recruitment and retention plans that were due by December 31, 2019.

A review of the county recruitment and retention plans identified the strategies that the LDSSs and VAs will be implementing over the next three years to recruit for various populations such as teens, LGBTQ+ youth, and African American/Latino children and youth. Additionally, the plans included strategies for retaining current foster homes, engaging more families to foster sibling groups, and overall recruitment of kinship homes.

OCFS has also reinforced the importance of placing children with kinship (relative and fictive kin) homes versus stranger foster care homes. Several targets were set to motivate LDSSs and VAs to reduce their use of congregate care and to increase the number of children placed in kinship foster homes. As part of their recruitment and retention plans, LDSSs were asked to set individual targets to come into alignment with the state’s goal of no more than 12 percent of children placed in congregate care and 50 percent or more children being placed with kin.

Data is shared with LDSSs and VAs that include the number of children placed as well as the various placement types.

Foster home data shows that there has been an increase in the number of foster homes that have been recruited. In 2018, a total number of 4,134 foster homes were certified or approved, and in 2019, that number was 4,271, an increase of three percent. It also should be noted that the overall number of children in foster care decreased from 17,860 in 2018 to 17,446 in 2019, a decrease of two percent.

The OCFS regional offices continue to monitor the SharePoint site created to track details of foster homes that have received three or more reports of abuse or maltreatment through the Statewide Central Register (SCR), complete templates as required, and address). The review includes the addressing of any safety and health concerns regarding identified foster homes with the LDSSs and VAs as necessary. In addition, OCFS has devoted resources when available to review the investigations of foster homes that have re-repeated on the three or more list for safety concerns and referred them to regional offices as need.
5. Update on Service Description
**Service Description**

For each program (Title IV-B subparts 1 & 2, CFCIP and ETV), describe the services to be provided in FY 2020-2024, highlighting plans for services or program design and how the services will assist in achieving program goals.

Each service report includes: 1) the estimated number of individuals and families to be served; 2) the population(s) to be served; and 3) the geographic areas where the services will be available.

- **Medicaid Transitions for the New York Foster Care Population** - The New York State Medicaid Redesign Team (MRT) was created to further the vision of restructuring New York State’s Medicaid program. The MRT has developed a multi-year action plan to, improve patient experience of care, improve health of the population, and control costs. The Children’s Health Subcommittee of the MRT Behavioral Health Workgroup includes representatives from New York State Department of Health (DOH), OCFS, the New York State Office of Mental Health (OMH) and New York State Office of Addictions Services and Supports (OASAS) whose charge is to transform to care for children and redesign services for children. The New York State Medicaid Redesign impacts children in foster care in significant ways with the following projected timelines:

- **Article 29-I Health Facilities Licensure** - OCFS and DOH developed the New York State Public Health Law Article 29-I Voluntary Foster Care Agency (VFCA) Health Services License for the provision of core health related services for children in the care of VFCA in 2019. Regulations were completed by DOH and OCFS, and the regulation was officially adopted on 2-20-2019 by the addition of Parts 769 and 770 to Title 10 NYCRR under statutory authority of Public Health Law, section 2999-g. A Memorandum of Agreement was developed by DOH and OCFS that outlines the responsibilities of oversight of the Article 29-I Health Facilities Licensure. OCFS issued guidelines to the VFCA that outlines the components of the Article 29-I Licensure of VFCA to provide limited health-related services, which enables VFCA to contract and bill Medicaid Managed Care Plans and to comply with the Corporate Practice of Medicine. OCFS and DOH issued the Article 29-I VFCA Health Facilities Billing Manual as well as policy guidance entitled Transition of Children Placed in Foster Care and New York State Public Health Law Article 29-I Health Facility Services into Medicaid Managed Care in 2020. With these documents, Medicaid Managed Care Plans have the necessary information to move forward with contracting with VFCA. Due to COVID, the implementation of the Article 29-I Health Facilities License was delayed to July 1, 2021. However, 9 VFCA were offered the option of implementing the 29-I Licenses on February 1, 2021 with services being billed to eMedNY.

- **Medicaid State Plan Services** - Children and Family Treatment Support Services: OCFS and its New York State partners developed six new Medicaid State Plan Amendment
(SPA) services that will be based on Medical Necessity, including: Community Psychiatric Supports and Treatment, Other Licensed Practitioner, and Psychosocial Rehabilitation Services which all began January 1, 2019; and the service of Family Peer Support Services that began July 1, 2019. These unique services are intended to be provided in children’s homes and community settings. OCFS is working in close collaboration with each of the 65 VFCAs that are designated to provide these services. Due to COVID-19, New York State issued an Executive Order to permit the use of Telehealth for these services. OCFS continues to provide extensive technical support to the VFCAs throughout the pandemic to support needed behavioral health care services to children and youth in foster care.

- Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Services beginning April 2019 - OCFS and its New York State partners developed an expanded array of HCBS services, Respite (Crisis and Planned), Community Habilitation, Day Habilitation, Caregiver Family Supports and Services, Prevocational Services, Supported Employment, Community Advocacy and Support, Palliative Care - Expressive Therapy, Palliative Care - Massage Therapy, Palliative Care – Bereavement, Palliative Care - Pain and Symptom Management, Environmental Modifications, Vehicle Modification, Adaptive and Assistive Equipment and Non-Medical Transportation.

- Children placed with VFCAs moving to Medicaid Managed Care Enrollment July 2021 - Nearly 16,500 children who are cared from by 80 VFCAs will move into Managed Care. This group of children represents a significantly more complex set of health and behavioral health care needs. VFCAs have a longstanding proven track record of being responsive to the multi-faceted needs of children, their families, and the regulatory mandates of local and state governments.

- Adoption Support Services - Assistance is provided in securing an adoptive home and the provision of legal services, recruitment and training of adoptive parents, preplacement planning, counseling, information and referral, respite, and crisis services.

- Post-Adoption Services - Services are provided directly by local departments of social services (LDSSs) 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 - Assists 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 New York State Children and Family Trust Fund dollars and the federal Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention grant, OCFS supports six Family Resource Center (FRC) programs, with a total of 16 FRC sites across the state including one mobile site. 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 New York Home Visiting Program (HFNY) – HFNY is an evidence-based prevention program which offers systematic assessments for pregnant women and new parents. Trained home visitors from the community provide home visiting services prenatally and weekly for the first six months after birth, then less frequently until the child enters kindergarten or Head Start. Services include parenting and child development education, family support and linkages to community resources and supports. HFNY programs are in place in 36 counties and all five boroughs of NYC.

- Domestic Violence Services – emergency shelter and supportive services, including shelter, crisis counseling, hotline assistance, information and referral, advocacy, counseling, community education/outreach, children’s services, support groups, medical support, transportation, and translation. OCFS licenses 92 domestic violence shelters, programs and sponsoring agencies, and 82 approved non-residential domestic violence programs. Federal Family Violence Prevention and Services Act funds support 90 residential and non-residential programs to provide emergency shelter and related supportive services. Additionally, TANF funds are used to support the provision of non-residential domestic violence services provided through LDSSs.

- Kinship Services – OCFS directly funds 14 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 one New York City based program which provides services to post-adoptive families to support finalized adoptions and reduce disruptions. OCFS funds 16 regional Permanency Resource Centers (PRCs) that provide a myriad of services to post-adoptive and post-guardianship families. The services provided by the PRCs are available to all families who have adopted a child both from child welfare, privately or through international adoption.
• Parenting Programs – Fourteen parenting programs are funded by the Children and Family Trust fund. The programs use the Protective Factors framework to increase parent resilience, social connections, knowledge of parenting and child development, social and emotional competence of children, and concrete support in times of need. Programs use a variety of service delivery methods such as home visiting, individual and group sessions. 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. Evidence-based curriculum and strategies are used to promote bonding and attachment, promote positive parenting and parent-child interaction, and school readiness. At risk families served include parents with prior child welfare system involvement; families with children with behavioral concerns; refugees/immigrants and other parents with limited English proficiency; teen parents; families with children ages 0-3; homeless parents; and families with an incarcerated parent.

Additionally, the Children and Family Trust Fund will continue to work collaboratively with the New York State Parenting Education Partnership to improve the quality and access to parenting education and to promote skill development for parenting educators.

• Multidisciplinary Investigation Team (MDT) and Child Advocacy Center (CAC) – A CAC brings a multidisciplinary team approach by providing a non-threatening, child-focused environment where investigations, evaluations, treatment, and prosecution of child sexual and/or physical abuse cases can be conducted by team members and where appropriate supportive services to victims and their non-offending family members can be provided. Members of the MDT’s include but are not limited to partners from child protective services, law enforcement, district attorney’s office, mental health, victim advocacy, medical, and CAC staff. This model not only results in more complete and informed investigations and prosecutions, but also emphasizes a less traumatic response to child victims and their non-offending family members. CACs are available in all but one county in upstate New York.

• Public Private Partnerships – OCFS funded 14 collaboration projects through November 2020 throughout the state. The projects were required to include partnerships between private, non-profit entities, working alongside and investing in publicly funded programs 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 home visiting services for at risk families with children ages 0-3; evidence informed approaches to engage youth in their school community that are risk of dropping out to complete their degree; services for runaway and homeless youth to maintain their safety in the community; and piloting the use of evidence-based intervention with families with children ages 0-18.

• Safe Harbour: NY – OCFS funds anti-trafficking collaboratives in every county and municipality in New York State, including the St. Regis-Mohawk Tribe and all
boroughs within NYC. Since 2018, 29 counties reported that over 2,200 youth were identified as either victims of trafficking or being at a high risk of being trafficked. The counties receive 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 a commercially sexually exploited child (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: NY supports municipalities to build a system to raise awareness, identify youth, train professionals and youth on human trafficking and provide services and supports to youth and their non-offending families.

**Child and Family Services Continuum**

OCFS, 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: https://ocfs.ny.gov/main/default.asp

**Services available in all LDSSs**

- Prevention Services – mandated and non-mandated 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 up to 21 years of age 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.

OCFS will continue its commitment to using preventive programs to reduce risk factors and develop protective factors, thus reducing the likelihood of child abuse and maltreatment. OCFS will continue to fund Healthy Families New York programs as preventive services to pregnant and
parenting mothers and fathers. OCFS plans to 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 LDSS priorities and strategies as funds allow.

Services for Children Adopted from Other Countries

For 2020-2024, OCFS plans to maintain the Parent Connection Helpline, 1-800-345-(KIDS). For all adoptive families, including international adoptive families, the Helpline will be available during normal business hours providing information and referral services to foster, adoptive and kinship families. OCFS will continue to maintain the OCFS Post-adoption Help for Families website (http://ocfs.ny.gov/adopt/post_adoption). This website has several webpages providing information on support services for families. A statewide network of post-adoption services is provided through OCFS-funded regional Resource Permanency Resource Centers that provide support to all adoptive families, including families who have adopted children from other counties.

Populations at Greatest Risk of Maltreatment

In the 2020-2024 CFSP, New York State will continue to identify and describe which populations are at the greatest risk of maltreatment, how the state identifies these populations and how services will be targeted to these populations.

New York State will continue to utilize performance and outcome measures to identify children at greatest risk of maltreatment. Child welfare data will be made available to LDSSs and VAs for their use in monitoring their own progress towards improving practice.

As noted in the 2015-2019 Final Report, many factors are likely to impact maltreatment risk, age, geographic area, cultural risk factors, availability of services, capacity are known to be impactful.

In review of the data for the past five years, indications are that children less than one year of age are most likely to be involved in a report to the Statewide Central Register (SCR), and the allegations within those reports are most likely to be substantiated.

For 2020-2024, New York State will continue to compile data on the frequency of risk factors identified during the preliminary risk assessment profile for indicated reports. New York State has observed that the top five most frequently noted factors that place a child at risk of abuse/maltreatment are:

- Domestic violence or other dysfunctional adult relationship
- Unreasonable expectations of children by the caregiver
- Primary caregiver’s mental health problems
- Drug problem by caregiver
• Caregiver does not attend/prioritize all children’s needs

In 2020, OCFS began a statewide implementation plan of the Safe & Together™ Model. This model supports child and adult victim centered practice for child protective workers investigating child abuse and neglect cases in households experiencing domestic violence while providing strategies and tools that caseworkers can use during these investigations. Safe and Together is a proven and effective model with a demonstrated a decrease in out of home placements and reoccurrence in states that have fully integrated this practice model.

Due to the pandemic, the first four-day CORE training scheduled in March 2020 was postponed. Instead, a virtual version of the training was offered. In November of 2020, the first five LDSSs and DV programs completed the first 4-day virtual CORE training, which included weekly remote learning transfer sessions for CPS supervisors, senior staff and DV Advocates. The participating local districts have completed self-assessments of their DV-informed practice. The DV staff have begun an assessment process with each LDSS and incorporate a DV learning exchange case review as a part of the initial assessment of practice. Quarterly meetings will be held to provide ongoing planning and coaching and skills practice. Assessments will be completed yearly to measure progress in practice and identify coaching needs.

In 2021, OCFS will provide a one-day overview of the Safe & Together™ Model for casework staff and DV agency advocates from the participating LDSSs. This delivery will also be provided to OCFS and Regional Office staff. From there, ongoing coaching will be provided to local districts to integrate knowledge, skills and tools into practice. A second four-day CORE training will be held in May 2021, which will reach up to an additional five LDSSs and will be followed by the one-day trainings, coaching and support accordingly.

Roll-out of the training across the state will continue with a goal of implementation in all LDSSs in the next several years. OCFS is building its internal capacity with certified trainers to deliver the trainings and provide ongoing coaching and technical assistance. OCFS has had two staff complete Train the Trainer who are in the provisional stages of trainer certification. In October 2021, three trainers from OPDV will be also begin certification process and can provide deliveries during their provisional period as a part of their existing training contract.

OCFS plans to continue conducting Domestic Violence Learning Exchanges (DVLE) with LDSSs through 2020-2024. The DVLE will be incorporated into the Safe & Together™ Model implementation with DV-specific case reviews and consultations. The exchanges will supplement and support the Safe & Together™ Model trainings with real life case sceneries. Through the exchanges, the counties will develop the ability to identify red flags related to families experiencing domestic violence (DV) and to identify practices and interventions to improve safety outcomes and reduce recurrence. OCFS plans to continue inviting a variety of staff to participate – including DV advocates, caseworkers and supervisors from CPS, foster care and administrative staff to attend learning exchanges. OCFS will continue to assist and guide LDSSs to utilize learning exchanges internally moving forward.

Services for Children Under the Age of Five
LDSSs continue to work implement the Plan of Safe care for those children born prenatally exposed to substances. The Plan of Safe Care, which is developed with the parent/caregiver informs what services are needed in order to safely maintain the child in their home.

OCFS is committed to using preventive programs to reduce risk factors and develop protective factors, thus reducing the likelihood of child abuse and maltreatment. OCFS will continue to fund Healthy Families New York programs as preventive services to pregnant and parenting mothers and fathers. OCFS funds 56 programs, serving 5,170 children under the age of five in 36 counties and the five boroughs of New York City.

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 LDSS priorities and strategies as funds allow.

OCFS also supports Regional Permanency Resource Centers (PRCs) that provide a statewide network of programs providing post adoption and post guardianship services. The PRCs will continue to increase the state’s capacity to strengthen families by providing critical services to children, parents, caregivers and siblings, and programs are designed based on the unique needs of adoptive and guardianship families. This funding is based on a provision of the federal 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.

The OCFS webpage also includes crisis links, hotline phone numbers, resource information and a link to the websites of LDSSs. The webpage provides the name, contact information and core services provided by post-adoption programs funded by New York State. Post-adoption services include counseling, parent education and training, support groups, referrals, mental health services, educational and legal advocacy, respite and recreational activities. OCFS has identified that the most requested services by post-adoption program participants are crisis intervention, support groups and parent training. These services prevent adoption dissolution and disruption.
6. Populations at Greatest Risk of Maltreatment
**Populations at Greatest Risk of Maltreatment**

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New York State will continue to utilize performance and outcome measures to identify children at greatest risk of maltreatment. Child welfare data will be made available to LDSSs and VAs for their use in monitoring their own progress toward improving practice.

As noted in the 2015-2019 *Final Report and 2020-2024 CFSP*, many factors are likely to impact maltreatment risk, age, geographic area, cultural risk factors, and availability of services, or capacity are known to be impactful.

Many factors are likely to impact maltreatment risk, such as age, geographic area, cultural risk factors, and availability of services, to name a few. Statewide, approximately 3.2 percent of New York State children are involved in a report to the Statewide Central Register of Abuse and Maltreatment (SCR). The percentage of children under 18 years of age with an SCR report in calendar year 2020 from the 11 largest counties is between 1.5 percent and 5.5 percent of the county's child population. The statewide median was 5.7 percent.

In review of the data for the past five years, indications are that children less than 1 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.
For 2020-2024, New York State will continue to compile data on the frequency of risk factors identified during the preliminary risk assessment profile for indicated reports. New York State observed that the top five most frequently noted factors that place a child at risk of abuse/maltreatment are:

- Domestic violence or other dysfunctional adult relationship
- Unreasonable expectations of children by the caregiver
- Primary caregiver’s mental health problems
- Drug problem by caregiver
- Caregiver does not attend/prioritize all children’s needs

Risk Assessment Profile: March 31, 2020 to April 1, 2021 Data
Indicated Reports Statewide

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<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caregiver Drug problem</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 2020, OCFS began a statewide implementation plan of the Safe & Together™ Model. The first four-day training for CPS supervisors and senior caseworkers was planned for March 2020, where up to six LDSSs were to receive training. The initial training will be followed by one-day overviews for additional LDSS staff and coaching and support from OCFS as the model is rolled out at each LDSS. Due to the pandemic, the first four-day CORE training scheduled in March 2020 was postponed. Instead, a virtual version of the training was offered. In November of 2020, the first five LDSSs and DV Programs completed the first 4-day virtual CORE training, which included weekly remote learning transfer sessions for CPS supervisors, senior staff and DV Advocates. This model supports a child and adult victim-centered practice for child protective workers investigating child abuse and neglect cases in households experiencing domestic violence while providing strategies and tools that caseworkers can use during these investigations. A second four-day training was originally planned for the fall of 2020, which was going to reach up to an additional 15-20 LDSSs and followed by one-day trainings, coaching and support. Due to COVID-19 adjustments had to be made to this training. The second four-day CORE training will now be held virtually in May 2021, which will reach up to an additional 5 LDSSs and will be followed by the one-day trainings, coaching and support accordingly. Once staff are able to provide the training a new plan will be implemented. Roll-out of the training across the state will continue with a goal of implementation in all LDSSs in the next five years. OCFS will additionally participate in a train-the-trainer model to build internal capacity.

OCFS plans to continue conducting learning exchanges with LDSSs through 2024. The exchanges will supplement and support the Safe & Together™ Model trainings with real life case
scenarios. Through the exchanges, the counties will develop the ability to identify red flags related to families experiencing domestic violence (DV) and to identify practices and interventions to improve safety outcomes and reduce recurrence. OCFS plans to continue inviting a variety of staff to participate – including DV advocates, caseworkers and supervisors from CPS, foster care and administrative staff to attend learning exchanges. OCFS will continue assist and guide districts to utilize learning exchanges internally moving forward.
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Additionally, OCFS will continue funding Family Resource Centers (FRCs). 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 5 and under. OCFS will continue to work closely with the FRCs to focus on high risk families and to make valuable connections with the LDSS priorities and strategies as funds allow.

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8. Program Support
Program Support

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

OCFS Bureau of Training and Development/OCFS Division of Child Welfare and Community Services

The OCFS Bureau of Training and Development (BTD) and OCFS CWCS maintain ongoing contact with LDSSs and contract agencies through a variety of venues including: meetings with LDSS Directors of Services; Staff Development Coordinators; Child Protective Services (CPS), Preventive, and Foster Care Supervisors; training contractors and contract agency training directors. Through these contacts, as well as OCFS oversight and monitoring activities, OCFS is able to keep abreast of emerging training needs.

OCFS also has a liaison in each OCFS Regional Office and in the OCFS Home Office. The liaisons are responsible for providing training supports and services to assist OCFS Regional Office, LDSSs and VA staff in the design and implementation of statewide and LDSS-specific training and training support activities. OCFS staff will continue to assist LDSSs to identify areas of practice and performance in need of improvement and to develop and implement change strategies and performance supports.

Establishment of State-of-the-Art Human Services Training Center (HSTC)

OCFS opened a 100,000-square foot state-of-the-art training center near Albany, NY in January 2019. The HSTC is the primary location for all child welfare, child care and juvenile justice training for OCFS, LDSS and VA staff. The establishment of the HSTC

- Allowed for the creation and use of simulation-based training for all program areas in “sim rooms” built specifically for each program’s needs. The child welfare sim room will be set up as an apartment and will be used for every facet of child welfare training, from foundational to highly specialized. The sim rooms have a glass panel on one wall where participants can watch trainers or colleagues demonstrate their skills. The sim rooms will also have cameras to record the simulations. These recordings may be used as training aids and for direct feedback to the participants so they can see their progress and continue to build their skills;
- Capitalized on economies of scale by being able to offer more child welfare trainings as all trainers are in one location and able to support each other during staff-intensive skill (sim) days; and
- Allowed the inclusion of a larger audience of potential trainees (such as LDSS staff who are foster care and preventive workers) to attend child welfare training due to an increased number of offerings.

As noted in last year’s plan, the HSTC includes: 20 training rooms, nine conference rooms that are also used as breakout spaces, work space for 125 trainers, four training labs equipped with 130 PCs, an auditorium that seats 165 and full-scale simulation training spaces for participants to practice their newly-learned skills in life-like environments. The simulation areas include: a child welfare apartment, a court room, a child care center, a family-type -child care apartment (which is also used for child welfare training), a residential facility for training Juvenile Justice staff, and
a “flex” space that allows us to rearrange the environment based on the training needs of the moment.

In 2021, OCFS will continue to look for ways to find savings to reinvest in its training system and to use technology to enhance our training efforts. In 2020, OCFS began discussions regarding the value of the use of tablets in the classroom. The use of tablets would reduce its printing/copying costs and enable OCFS to maximize skill building by training staff how to find the information they may need after they leave the classroom (as opposed to having outdated printed materials they take with them). This new approach also has some drawbacks, such as how to balance these benefits against our “no electronics during training” policy. The policy was implemented to prevent trainees from being interrupted during class time by supervisors, etc. with work-related calls and emails.

The training efforts provided by OCFS are a vital component to support and implement its core mission. The focus of these efforts is to:

- Support the delivery of state and OCFS agency mandates;
- Provide core skills, technical and managerial training for all OCFS staff as a foundation for an improved workforce;
- Enhance core skills training and best practice models for case workers, child protective services workers and supervisors;
- Provide foundational supervisory training to OCFS and the child/family welfare workforce to develop and enhance leadership and managerial skills;
- Provide training for the prevention of domestic violence;
- Continue enhancements to adult protective services training;
- Provide continuous improvement in foster and adoptive caregivers training;
- Assist LDSS in preparing their workforce and enhance their proficiency and performance.

Establishment of a Quality Assurance Function for Child Welfare Training

OCFS is in the process of establishing a small group of trainers and program staff whose function will be to monitor child welfare training for fidelity to the training and child welfare policy and program outcomes.

Family Engagement

OCFS Regional staff and training liaisons are supporting individual county requests. Many of the engagement practices have been built into the new Foundations program and New York State is seeing evidence of this work in case records.

OCFS continues to support Family Assessment Response (FAR) through training and technical assistance to the LDSSs. FAR training is being provided by Youth Research Inc and coaching and technical assistance through a contract with the Professional Development Program (PDP).

Youth Engagement and Normative Experiences

Through the PDP RC01 contract in 2020, OCFS worked with Columbia University, Young Adult Work Opportunities for Rewarding Careers (YA WORC) program to improve work readiness skills for youth in care. In 2021, at the request of program, work with Columbia University ended. Agencies that implemented YA WORC will continue to be supported. The YA WORC program is
implemented in various VAs to improve the youths’ preparedness for the workforce. In addition, there is a Youth Engagement Specialist in every region to focus on ensuring that youth in each region are linked to positive youth development activities. Furthermore, OCFS continues to develop its relationship with the SED to improve data sharing. In place of the YA WORK contract, young people with a lived experience in foster care will be brought on as subject matter experts to review and develop training curriculum and to assist with delivering training to professionals in the field. Young adults are being recruited and supported to provide the training beginning in 2021 and will continue in 2022.

One of the activities New York State has engaged in to enhance youth engagement and promote normative experiences was to form a Youth Advisory Board (YAB). The YAB launched in 2017 with a powerful experience involving energetic conversations focused on sibling reunification, normalcy, transitional housing, and education within the foster care system. In 2020, the YAB continued to meet virtually to discuss a range of policy issues that have the potential to create a positive impact on the foster care system. The YAB also developed case worker guidance documents that were shared across the state. In addition, the YAB assisted with the development of a Peer Specialist position within OCFS, participated in LGBTQ+ work within YDAPS and attended the Youth Engagement Summit, just to name a few activities. The YAB consists of up to 15 YAB members who are over 18 and represent regions throughout New York State and the diversity of youth in care in New York State. They were selected from numerous applicants because of their expertise and willingness to make a change in the foster care system.

Normative experiences for youth in foster care are supported by OCFS via policy 15-OCFS-ADM-21 Supporting Normative Experiences for Children, Youth, and Young Adults in Foster Care: Applying a Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard and through the agency’s trainings. OCFS developed computer-based trainings to support professionals apply the reasonable and prudent parenting standard and has embedded these concepts into other trainings, including those related to human trafficking. The trainings support implementing the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act and reducing youth risk.

**Strengthen Caregiver Capacity to Protect and Provide for Children**

OCFS staff continues to provide various trainings and strategies to caseworkers to assist them in strengthening caregivers’ capacity to protect and provide for children. OCFS worked with statewide foster parent trainers to address consistency in parenting messages. Two foster parent conferences 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.

*See the Training Plan Update for additional information on training of caregivers.*

**Facilitate Safe Out-of-Home Placements and Rapid Permanency**
OCFS staff are also very involved in implementing Rapid Permanency Reviews (RPR). Using RPRs, LDSSs and VAs are able to review the permanency status of children and create an action plan that will enhance the child’s prospect of obtaining permanency. LDSSs and VAs provide progress updates to the OCFS regional office as they use this process.

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

Since 2017, OCFS staff have worked with numerous LDSSs to employ the Foster Parent as Recruiter program. Funds were used to have current foster parents recruit 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 continues to be 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 Harbour: NY Program achieved full-scale implementation for the first time in 2020 and continues to support capacity building for systems to best respond to trafficked and exploited youth each year. OCFS continues to improve the forensic interview training to increase capacity of trainings and to increase competency of the interviewers. OCFS is working towards building a more trauma-responsive system.

**Support a Racially Equitable and Culturally 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 SCR in 2016, offering Race Equity and Culturally Competent customer service. OCFS staff have developed Cross-System Race Equity Learning Communities. OCFS staff have conducted training needs assessments with leadership in different LDSSs and have secured consultants to assist the LDSS to decrease racial/ethnic disparities within their child welfare system. OCFS staff have worked with VAs on how they support individuality – specifically, youth who identify as LGBTQ+. OCFS also began creating an infrastructure of coaches and facilitators who can competently have crucial conversations about race, culture, and equity.

Since February 2019, OCFS has had an Empire State Fellow focused solely on policy and practice with members of the LGBTQ+ community. This has dovetailed with the ongoing work of the OCFS sexual orientation, gender identity and expression (SOGIE) committee. Through this work, OCFS has updated their LGBTQ+ webpage content with current research and resources for LGBTQ+ youth and their caregivers, created and updated trainings on SOGIE across several program areas, developed an LGBTQ+ Community Practice Model to promote practice with LGBTQ+ people of any age that is affirming and supportive, and have begun evaluating the
SOGIE data collection process across multiple data systems and program areas to improve data reliability and support staff in navigating SOGIE disclosure.

**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 considering strategies that will change practice.

OCFS has also brought in consultants to assist with new promising practices. The Raise the Age work has allowed OCFS to develop a strategy and structure to forecast barriers and build solutions into the Implementation strategy. OCFS has also been working on building administrative case consultation in districts struggling with supervision and organizational culture. This work has improved consistency in practice, casework critical thinking and uniformed decision making.

**New Competency-Based Training System and Continuation of Enhancement of Child Welfare Training to Improve Safety and Permanency Outcomes**

OCFS’ ability to move work ahead in this area was severely impacted by the global pandemic. OCFS will look to refocus our attention to this area in 2021.

**Supervision Training and Foundations Training**

OCFS continues to support effective supervision through KEYS training to new and experienced supervisors.

**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.

**Training and Technical Assistance that will be Provided by the State in the Upcoming Fiscal Year**

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

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 OCFS Bureau of Research, Evaluation and Performance Analytics (BREPA) provides analytical and data support for OCFS’s programmatic divisions, including OCFS CWCS. Specifically, OCFS BREPA designs and conducts research studies in order to: (1) evaluate the effectiveness of policies, programs, and practices in achieving desired agency 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.

In addition, OCFS BREPA is responsible for all federal data submissions related to child welfare, including AFCARS, NCANDS, NYTD, and casework contacts, and produces annual and quarterly reports documenting child welfare-related performance for public dissemination. OCFS BREPA works closely with both OCFS CWCS and New York State Office of Information and Technology Services (OITS) to verify that administrative systems incorporate current reporting requirements and promote accurate and comprehensive data entry. OCFS BREPA maintains the OCFS Data Warehouse that enables LDSSs and VAs to access predefined monitoring, data quality, and descriptive reports on the children and families they serve. Reports are continuously refined and expanded to promote data-informed practice, and OCFS BREPA staff are available to provide technical assistance to systems users.

OCFS BREPA also supports the effective translation of research to practice and policy decision-making. OCFS BREPA staff coordinate with OCFS CWCS staff and other partners to discuss performance data and share the results of research, evaluation, and continuous quality improvement studies. This collaboration provides the opportunity to understand the contextual factors within which the results occur, explore practice and policy implications, identify specific strategies or practices that can be implemented to address needs or challenges, and build internal agency capacity to understand and use data to inform future practice and policy decisions.

Finally, BREPA 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.

Additional information related to BREPA can be found in the Evaluation and Research section.

Technical Assistance Provided by ACF

During 2018 and early 2019, the federal ACF provided technical to OCFS on Candidacy for Foster Care Eligibility and Title IV-E Foster Care Eligibility. The technical assistance related to Candidacy for Foster Care Eligibility included two case record reviews, whereby cases of children determined to be eligible as a candidate for foster care were reviewed. The first review was of 80 children and the second review was of 50 children. In both reviews, ACF provided the findings of the
reviews and provided specific guidance on what is required in the form of documentation. ACF also provided support by reviewing OCFS materials that were shared with the field. Additional guidance via phone calls has also been provided and has been helpful as OCFS continues to work with LDSSs to improve their performance.

The Title IV-E Foster Care Eligibility technical assistance consisted of a review of 20 New York City Administration for Children's Services cases to review the accuracy of their eligibility determinations. The review was conducted with staff from ACS and OCFS. The findings were positive, and the process supported the work that ACS has been doing throughout the period that they have been participating in the Title IV- E Demonstration Project.
9. Evaluation and Research
OCFS Evaluation and Research

Healthy Families New York (HFNY)

Accomplishments for 2020-2021:

During 2020-2021, 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.

OCFS designed and/or supervised a variety of evaluation and continuous quality improvement activities to support ongoing HFNY services during 2020-2021. These activities included: 1) developing and implementing a plan to evaluate visits conducted outside of the home, 2) analysis of use of curriculum in home visits, 3) understanding effective service delivery and outcomes: focus groups with supervisors, 4) understanding effective service delivery and outcomes: survey of home visitors on child maltreatment reporting, 5) piloting a new family enrollment strategy, 6) evaluating the effectiveness of HFNY core training using the Kirkpatrick Model of Training Evaluation, 7) identifying home visitor competencies to support professional development, 8) exploring strengths and challenges in obtaining referrals from WIC, 9) evaluating implementation, developing scoring norms and thresholds, and reliability and validity of the CHEERS Check-in Instrument, 10) monitoring the impact of COVID-19 on program performance, 11) developing a survey of home visiting program quality (MIECHV), 12) analyzing community partnerships using PARTNER Tool data (MIECHV), 13) developing a survey for New York State WIC programs to solicit feedback on referral needs (MIECHV), 14) analyzing MIECHV benchmark data (MIECHV), 15) evaluating staff retention and reasons for leaving, 16) evaluating HFNY quality assurance and technical assistance, 17) developing a survey to evaluate HFNY Central Administration effectiveness; 18) conducting HFNY Cultural Analysis, 19) exploring implementation of HFA Child Welfare protocol as part of FFPSA, and 20) piloting a project to integrate financial literacy and financial capability into home visiting services.

The HFNY Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT) continued during 2020-2021, focusing on collecting state administrative data and school records and understanding active elements of the HFNY model to support precision in evaluating HFNY outcomes. During this period, we were able to obtain foster care services data. School records requests were on hold due to COVID-19. Analyses were conducted to assess the relationship of the HFA Best Practice Standards to family outcomes.

Notable accomplishments for this period include:

2. Research Brief: Combined Enrollment Year 1 Findings
3. Research Brief: Community-based Prevention Programs Status Reports (9 monthly reports from April to December)
Plans for 2021-2022

The Healthy Families New York (HFNY) evaluation will continue as an active research project in 2021-2022. Ongoing research projects include: 1) evaluating visits conducted outside of the home, 2) piloting a new family enrollment strategy, 3) evaluating the effectiveness of HFNY core training using the Kirkpatrick Model of Training Evaluation, 4) identifying home visitor competencies to support professional development, 5) exploring strengths and challenges in obtaining referrals from WIC, 6) evaluating implementation, developing scoring norms and thresholds, and reliability and validity of the CHEERS Check-in Instrument, 7) monitoring the impact of COVID-19 on program performance, 8) analyzing data from a survey of New York State WIC programs on referral needs (MIECHV), 9) analyzing MIECHV benchmark data (MIECHV), 10) evaluating staff retention and reasons for leaving, 11) evaluating HFNY quality assurance and technical assistance, 12) evaluating HFNY Central Administration effectiveness in supporting programs; 13) conducting HFNY Cultural Analysis and developing a plan for improvement, 14) planning for the implementation of HFA Child Welfare protocol under FFPSA, and 15) piloting a project to integrate financial literacy and financial capability into home visiting services. Additional evaluation and continuous quality improvement studies will be developed and implemented as necessary to support system needs that are identified through regular performance management activities.

The HFNY RCT will continue during 2021-2022, focusing on collecting additional state administrative data and school records. The implementation of a new HFNY RCT (e.g., HFNY RCT 2.0) continues to be on hold due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, work during this period will continue to focus on identifying the active elements of HFNY program practice that specifically relate to program outcomes. In addition, OCFS will be exploring ways to better understand the nature and quality of families’ relationships with their home visitors and what it was about the relationship that helped them to achieve their goals. Together, the results of these studies will inform any changes to the HFNY logic model and facilitate the selection of appropriate measures for a new HFNY RCT.

Evaluation of Community-Based Prevention Programs (Trust Fund and Public Private Partnerships)

Accomplishments for 2020-2021

During 2020-2021, OCFS engaged in several key efforts to collect and utilize data on program services and outcomes to increase protective factors for participants across the range of community-based child abuse prevention program models it supports. Specifically, OCFS focused on

- providing technical assistance and support to new and existing program sites using the Community-based Prevention Programs data management system (DMS);
- soliciting feedback from system users as to DMS functionality and reporting needs;
- updating and enhancing the DMS based on user feedback;
developing and evaluating performance indicators for programs funded under Trust Fund/CBCAP (i.e., participant engagement, participant retention, service provision, and participant outcomes);

developing and programming automated reports for the DMS to support monitoring of program practices and outcomes;

assessing participant needs, service delivery, and program outcomes; and

examining DMS reports/data and facilitating conversations about program practices and activities to support continuous quality improvement efforts. OCFS’s Bureau of Program and Community Development staff partnered with BREPA and SUNY Albany’s CHSR to provide support for each of these activities.

Notable accomplishments for this period included the following:

• Providing technical assistance and support in reviewing program data and reports
• Analyzing PFI data to determine improvement at each follow-up PFI assessment and making recommendations for required number of PFI follow-ups
• Participating on quarterly calls with programs to support DMS utilization and quality assurance
• Surveying programs regarding DMS utility and technical assistance needs
• Developing and programming a module in the DMS to collect Standards of Quality Self-Assessment information
• Completing Annual Services and Outcome Infographic
• Research Brief: Community-based Prevention Programs Status Reports (9 monthly reports from April to December)
• Research Brief: Effectiveness of New York State Family Resource Centers in improving families’ protective factors

Plans for 2020-2021

The evaluation of community-based prevention programs will continue in 2021-2022. Activities will include: 1) providing technical assistance and support to new and existing program sites using the Community-based Prevention Programs data management system (DMS); 2) soliciting feedback from system users as to DMS functionality and reporting needs; 3) updating and enhancing DMS based on user feedback; 4) revising performance indicators for programs funded under Trust Fund/CBCAP (i.e., participant engagement, participant retention, service provision, and participant outcomes); 5) developing and programming automated reports for DMS to support monitoring of program practices and outcomes; 6) assessing participant needs, service delivery, and program outcomes; 7) examining DMS reports/data and facilitating conversations about program practices and activities to support continuous quality improvement efforts; 8) programming a Standards of Quality for Family Strengthening and Support Self-Assessment module in DMS, 9) summarizing the evidence-based practice for child abuse prevention programs and practices servicing families prenatally through the teen years; and 10) conducting telephone/video interviews with programs to identify program strategies, challenges, and the extent to which evidence-based practices are being utilized by funded programs.

Signs of Safety
Accomplishments for 2020-2021

For several years, OCFS has been exploring how to implement the Signs of Safety (SoS) approach to safety and risk statewide. BREPA is on the planning committee.

BREPA designed a formative evaluation plan for the local implementation of SoS in the first three learning sites, which include two counties and a VA. Training was to begin in March 2020 but was postponed due to the state of emergency invoked in response to COVID-19. The training program was adapted to an online format with eight weekly modules for the three local sites and six modules for OCFS home office and regional office staff. The online course was taught by different consultant pairs to eight separate classes during the last quarter of 2020. The formative evaluation plan includes a local SharePoint site with SoS activity records to assess adoption tools, collaborative case reviews to assess quality and depth of SoS practice, caseworker and family surveys, and monthly calls with supervisors to get additional feedback on implementation that will be useful in planning for additional sites to adopt. While one local site was able to get started with integrating the SoS approach in January 2021, the other two sites delayed their kick-off due to problems in staffing due to the COVID-19 pandemic and a need for more coaching from the SoS consultants whose contract had ended. Implementation of the evaluation plan is delayed until the three local sites have established minimum expectations for their casework and supervisory staff to use the SoS approach and tools.

Plans for 2021-2022

Previously, OCFS expected to revise the formative evaluation plan and acquire resources to effectively evaluate model fidelity as OCFS considers the viability of rolling out SoS statewide to local districts and VAs in 2020-2021. However, at this point, we are not aware of any OCFS plans to roll out SoS in other jurisdictions. Thus, evaluation plans for 2021-2022 will be revised to support the information needs of the three local sites or canceled completely by the start of the federal fiscal year in October 2021.

Maltreatment in Foster Care

Accomplishments for 2020-2021

BREPA formed an internal workgroup to conduct a multi-faceted analysis of the types of cases that contribute to the state’s high maltreatment in-care rates. In prior years, efforts to meaningfully analyze the circumstances behind these rates were hindered by gaps in administrative data. Specifically, New York State did not require that CPS reports include the date of the alleged incident within an extractable data field. As a result, OCFS was not able to determine whether the incident was truly an instance of maltreatment in-care or an instance where a prior behavior came to light and was reported after a child had entered care. Initial analyses of the state’s safety data for FFY15-FFY17 indicated that around three-quarters of the reports flagged by CFSR as maltreatment in-care included allegations where a parent or other family member was identified as a perpetrator. Consequently, understanding how many of these cases occurred while the child was under the care and supervision of the LDSS was identified as a priority. The incident date
was added to CONNECTIONS to address this gap, and counties were directed to record incident data via an ADM (17-OCFS-ADM-03 Entry of Incident Date for Substantiated Allegations) issued in May 2017.

Inclusion of the incident date has increased since issuance of the above referenced ADM and has now reached a level of comprehensiveness conducive to deeper analysis. In FFY17, 40 percent of CPS reports flagged as maltreatment in-care did not include an incident date. By FFY18, that percentage had dropped to 13 percent. To better understand the circumstances that give rise to maltreatment while in foster care, BREPA analyzed the FFY18 CFSR maltreatment in-care reports from an agency, setting, and perpetrator type perspective. Reports showed maltreatment in-care rates by agency across setting types (foster boarding home, approved relative home, group/institutional care) were generated to identify agencies/settings that had lower or higher rates than others. Descriptive profiles of cases involving familial perpetrators were also generated to learn more about the types of allegations, setting types, and child/family characteristics associated with this type of incident. To complement the aggregate analysis, BREPA selected a subset of 24 cases with familial perpetrators for exploratory case file reads. Findings from this mini analysis suggests both data entry and practice challenges. In approximately 20 percent of the cases reviewed, progress notes indicated that the incident in question had occurred pre-foster care and the incident date entered was inaccurate. An additional 8 percent of cases involved post-foster care incidents but were flagged by the CFSR as maltreatment in-care due to delayed entry of the child’s discharge information. In another 20 percent of cases, reviewers questioned the indication decision, noting lack of evidence in the case notes.

Plans for 2021-2022

BREPA continues to work with program to identify the best mechanisms for generating and sharing information on maltreatment in-care rates to local districts and agencies. Findings from the exploratory case reads have been shared with OCFS CWCS to help inform planning for the upcoming SCR reforms and associated trainings.

Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA)

Accomplishments for 2020-2021

Significant data accomplishments for the current year include expanding the data reports available to LDSS and VA users intended to support FFPSA planning and implementation efforts. These improvements include:

- **Child Level Data Warehouse reports:** In addition to the aggregate level reporting released last year, authorized users can now generate child level drill down reports for the in-care summary reports. These child level lists can be used by LDSSs to quickly identify cases that may merit closer monitoring, such as young children in congregate care settings or youth with long congregate stays.

- **Congregate Bubble Chart Package:** A second round of Congregate Care Bubble Charts was released in 2020. These packets provide counties with the ability to track
how many children move into a new congregate care program in a year and the doorway through which they enter (e.g., new admission, step-up, lateral transfer, return from trial discharge). Children are then tracked for 12 months post program admission to document lengths of stay. Packets also include descriptive profiles of children by admission door and 12-month outcome (e.g., stepped down, discharged, or still in care). Counties report that these packets have been extremely useful for reflecting on their congregate care practices. At the state level, analyses have been used to identify samples of children for exploratory case reviews. For example, a subset of children stepping-up into congregate care was selected to explore factors leading to children needing to be moved to a higher level of care.

- **Prevention needs assessment:** To understand the potential volume of candidates for foster care and their associated service needs, OCFS BREPA conducted a comprehensive needs assessment analysis. All children meeting the agency’s proposed candidacy definition were identified and the strengths, needs and risks associated with each case were then extracted from available case records. A child and their caregiver were identified as having a potential parenting, mental health, and/or substance abuse service need based on ratings assigned to specific FASP items. For example, if a caregiver was identified as having unrealistic and developmentally inappropriate expectations for a child, a parenting need was flagged. Similarly, a child mental health need was noted when a child was rated as having moderate or serious mental health problems. A needs assessment resource was then created for each LDSS. The resource listed the estimated prevalence of child and family needs and child age groups alongside reported EBP capacity—allowing the user to identify alignment and service gaps within each LDSS. Data packets were introduced through a statewide webinar, and regional follow-up meetings were held to help counties interpret their data. As discussed below, this resource was shared with LDSS leadership and used to facilitate local and state/local planning discussions around where to focus early implementation efforts.

On the state level, BREPA staff are working closely with OCFS CWCS leadership to prepare for the implementation of QRTP requirements. New York State has selected the CANS-NY as one of the tools a Qualified Individual (QI) can use to complete the 30-day QRTP assessment. BREPA staff are examining the utility of the tool for informing level of care decisions using both historical and prospective samples of foster care youth. For the historical sample, OCFS has partnered with VAs to gather CANS assessments completed on children admitted to both congregate and foster home settings in the past two years. Completed assessments will be coded using algorithms adopted by other jurisdictions to determine how well these algorithms map to current New York State level of care decisions. A new consensus-derived algorithm will also be tested. Results of this analysis will be used to choose algorithm for New York State, which will then be prospectively piloted and revised in summer 2021.
Plans for 2021-2022

Analytical work to support the development of both QRTP and prevention services is expected to continue into 2021-2022, with BREPA updating analyses, providing technical assistance, and informing the development of system reporting infrastructure, monitoring reports and evaluation plans.

Raise the Age (RTA)

Accomplishments for 2020-2021

In 2017, legislation raising the age of criminal responsibility in New York State was passed. Implementation was set to take place in two phases, with the age of criminal responsibility rising to 17 on October 1, 2018, and to 18 on October 1, 2019. OCFS BREPA has worked closely with OCFS program and policy partners to estimate the number of foster care beds needed to accommodate the influx of 16- and 17-year-old delinquency placements. Projections were generated at the state, regional, and individual county level, and used to inform the recruitment of agencies interested in starting up new, residential care programs specifically for the treatment of 16- and 17-year-old offenders.

Following each implementation phase, BREPA has monitored the monthly placement and admission of RTA youth into care and adjusted projections as needed. At the end of year one, to facilitate year two planning, counties were provided with individualized data packets describing placement utilization for juvenile delinquents in foster care settings pre- and post-implementation. BREPA staff have also been monitoring the timeliness and accuracy of data entry for these youth and work closely with state and local staff to improve data entry quality.

In 2020-2021, BREPA has continued to support programming in the RTA VA settings by maintaining a weekly census for each funded program. A new data warehouse report was also created to allow county users to create a list of all children in their custody identified as RTA-eligible.

Plans for 2021-2022

Now that RTA has been successfully implemented and is entering is second full year of full implementation, monitoring efforts will be absorbed into existing reporting for all JDs in LDSS custody.

Performance Monitoring/CFSR Administrative Metrics

Accomplishments for 2020-2021

Now that ACF is regularly producing and sharing both state and county level outcomes on all CFSR metrics, OCFS has made the decision to discontinue the production of its annual CFSR outcome packets. Going forward counties will be provided with the data produced by ACF.
This shift away from reporting on historical CFSR outcomes has allowed OCFS to redirect its reporting resources to prospective measures of child permanency. Three new permanency-related reports, with aggregate and child level views, are being developed as a proof of concept. The first metric mirrors Permanency Indicator 1 from the CFSR and monitors the number of children newly admitted to foster care who exit within 12 months of entry. On the landing page for this metric, counties will be provided with the 12-month rolling average of the percentage of children released to permanency (reunification, relative, or adoption) within 12 months of admission. Information on monthly new admission cohorts will also be displayed, with the cumulative number and percentage of children discharged to permanency at one, two, three, four, etc., months displayed up until the one-year mark. Drill down lists will allow users to identify children who have been in care for 11, 10, and nine (9) months and are therefore approaching the 12-month threshold.

The second set of dashboards focuses on CFSR Permanency Indicators 2 & 3. Using January 1 as a starting point, the in-care population is divided into two groups: 1) children in care for 12-23 months (P2), and 2) children in care for 24 or more months (P3). Each cohort is then tracked for a full year, with dashboards displaying the cumulative number and percentage of children achieving permanency each month. Again, drill down lists will enable users to quickly identify which children remain in care and are approaching the 12-month threshold. The goal of these new dashboards is to provide counties and individual caseworkers with “real time” data on their permanency performance.

**Plans for 2021-2022**

Moving the proof of concept to production will likely extend into the upcoming plan year. BREPA will then partner with OCFS CWCS’ Bureau of Continuous Quality Improvement to introduce the new tools to the field.

**Performance Monitoring/Bright Spots**

**Accomplishments for 2020-2021**

The “Bright Spots” data package contains practice and performance outcomes across six content areas: CPS reports, preventive services, safety, foster care, permanency, and adoption. Examples of metrics include rate of children named in a CPS report, rate of preventive service openings, percentage of children with preventive service openings entering foster care, rate of foster care admissions, relative placements, and time until? adoption. For each metric, outcomes are displayed as a bar chart showing performance at the state, regional, and individual county level; when appropriate, outcomes are ordered from low to high performance to facilitate cross-district comparisons. In addition, for counties looking to develop and/or test a hypothesis regarding the factors associated with their performance on any given measure, BREPA provides county-specific, child-level data files behind each analysis.

**Plans for 2021-2022**

BREPA is reviewing the contents of the Bright Spots package and discussing with CWCS leadership how the package should be revised to better capture new indicators related to FFPSA and other initiatives. It is anticipated that a revised package will be released in late 2021.
Kinship Care

Accomplishments for 2020-2021

At the end of 2020, BREPA staff began working with the Bureau of Permanency Services (BPS) to create a data collection tool for their Kinship Caregiver Program. Work on the tool (an Excel file) was completed in 2021. Providers can use the tool to track support groups, outreach efforts, and case-level service information for kin children and their caregivers. The tool has a built-in reporting feature that summarizes the data and displays the output across five reports that coincide with the years of the contract (September 1, 2020, to August 21, 2025).

Plans for 2021-2022

BREPA will continue to provide technical support on this project and remains available to BPS for consultation regarding measurement and design for future projects. In keeping with FFPSA requirements, OCFS is exploring how to build the evidence base for its kinship programming. BREPA is a member of this group.

Information Management Systems/Quality Assurance Activities

Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS)

Accomplishments for 2020-2021

In accordance with the OCFS’s AFCARS 1.0 Performance Improvement Plan (PIP), OCFS BREPA continues to make improvements to the system extraction and coding rules that serve as the foundation for the AFCARS data submissions. A major change was that existing programming based on a flat file to identify the population was replaced with programming that directly extracts data from CONNECTIONS. Moreover, the entire programming to perform data extractions, recoding, processing, merging, and output has been streamlined to improve efficiency and reduce errors by avoiding manual manipulations.

System changes and the corresponding programming changes completed during the current period include the following items:

- Caretaker family structure
- A drop-down to capture children in care for less than 24 hours and to capture children in respite care
- Mother’s/father’s termination of parental rights
- Discharge reason
- IV-E foster care payments
- IV-E adoption assistance payments
- Adoption subsidies
  - ACF requirements associated with children 18 and over in foster care receiving IV-E
Agency efforts have also shifted toward preparing for AFCARS 2.1, which is scheduled to take effect on 10/1/22. OCFS BREPA has formed and is facilitating regular meetings of an AFCARS 2.1 work group. Membership includes child welfare, research, policy, legal, fiscal and ITS staff. The group is tasked with assessing the gaps between current reporting capacity and data quality and AFCARS 2.1 requirements. Anticipated work products include system change requests, mapping and development of coding protocols where needed, policy and training communications, and data quality initiatives.

**Plans for 2021-2022**

The AFCARS 2.1 work group will continue to meet on a regular basis until plans to collect and/or improve the quality and comprehensiveness of all AFCARS 2.1 data elements have been developed and implemented.

**National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD), On-Site Review and Changes**

**Accomplishments for 2020-2021**

The most notable achievement for this period was continued high performance on the quality of the data submitted. Initially, OCFS received the maximum 2.5 percent penalty on Chafee Program funds. The last seven NYTD submissions (FFY 2017 B, 2018 A & B, 2019 A & B, 2020 A & B) were penalty-free due to improvements made in both data collection and survey efforts. OCFS continues to use the strengthened set of quality checks developed last year and is in close communication with the contractor administering the survey to further improve accuracy.

**Plans for 2021-2022**

Efforts in the upcoming year will focus on data dissemination. A series of outcome reports are planned to include research briefs focusing on the longitudinal data collected from cohort 2, which recently completed all three survey phases (17, 19, and 21-year surveys).

**National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS)**

**Accomplishments for 2020-2021**

In response to the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act of 2015 (JVTA) and the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act (CARA) of 2016, changes have been made to CONNECTIONS to meet the reporting requirements. Reporting of sex trafficking was provided for the entire FFY 2020. Plans of safe care, service referrals, child’s alcohol/drug risk factors, and caregiver’s alcohol/drug risk factors were reported for the first time in FFY 2020.

In addition to the introduction of six new elements, BREPA revisited the fatality reporting requirements and consulted with NCANDS technical assistance. Modifications were incorporated in FFY 2020 submission. Fatality reporting not only excluded duplicate fatality reports but also retained fatality reports where incidents occurred outside the reporting period. BREPA also held
discussions with SCR and CONNECTIONS staff regarding reporting on a child’s living arrangement at the time of alleged incident. Further investigation is needed to improve the reporting of this item.

**Plans for 2021-2022**

Plans for next year include: (a) reviewing and improving the mapping on “other maltreatment type,” “other perpetrator relationship,” “perpetrator as caregiver,” and “other report source,” (b) recoding risk factors to blank instead of unknown if not collected, (c) outreach to the Justice Center to address their reporting issues, (d) continued monitoring of multiple PIDs, and (e) further exploration of the issues associated with a living arrangement.

**OCFS Data Warehouse and Quality Assurance Activities**

**Accomplishments for 2020-2021**

The following list represents a subset of the data warehouse reports that were created, enhanced, or initiated over the past year to address major agency initiatives not highlighted in earlier sections:

1. **Children Needing Candidacy Determinations and Redeterminations**: Four reports (2 aggregate level, 2 child level) were developed during the past year and are in the testing phase. These reports are a result of the federal on-site review of candidacy counts used as part of claiming. The objective of these reports is to provide a tool for OCFS and LDSSs to monitor due and overdue determinations. Reports track the number of children with and without candidacy determinations and allow users to drill down to see children’s identifiers, demographics, and program choice indicators.

2. **Sex Trafficking Legislation Reports**: Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act of 2015 (JVTA) had several monitoring requirements. Work is underway on nine reports (five aggregate, four child level) that focus on total number of missing children, reason for child’s absence, factors associated with absence, experiences while missing, and responses to contributing factors. Reports can be filtered by program choice, role, and district or agency, and are intended to help districts identify potential trafficking victims.

3. **Essential Documents**: This is a new aggregate report with drill down capacity that provides information on whether children have been provided with vital documents, such as birth certificate, state ID, driver licenses, etc. This report is in the final stages of testing and will be moved to production.

4. **AFCARS Reporting**: Six reports were developed this year (three aggregate, three drill down) to identify children in foster care with missing records for permanency hearing review dates, caretaker family structure, and termination of parental rights. All three of these elements have failed prior AFCARS data submission standards.
5. **NCANDS Reporting:** Six new reports are under development to assist with improving the data quality of NCANDS reporting. The reports enable users to select CPS cases closed during a user selected timeframe and provide aggregate and drill down information on those cases with missing or out-of-acceptable-range elements, such as race, ethnicity, victim age, and county of residence.

6. **Multiple Person Identification (PID) Reports:** Aggregate county level multiple PID reports with drill-through capacity are in development. These reports will allow OCFS to evaluate progress on its multiple PID reduction project and provide LDSSs with a means to monitor possible multiple PID situations. Reports show the number of multiple PIDS divided by the total number of open CONNECTIONS stages for each county each month.

7. **Financial Reporting:** Work continues to incorporate the Benefits Issuance and Control System (BICS) vendor data into the foster care and adoption payment reports used by the OCFS Bureau of Financial Services.

8. **Care Days Report:** A report that will provide care days at the VA and LDSS level for any time frames will be created for LDSSs and VAs with care day information by facility type. Information within the care days data mart will also be used to support the creation of outcome monitoring reports related to restraints, Family First QRTPs, and CFSR maltreatment in care metrics.

9. **Placement Module Reports:** The recently built Placement Module within CONNECTIONS is designed to assist LDSS and VAs in matching children to the best available foster care placement setting. This new set of data warehouse reports will enable LDSS and VA users to get aggregate level data on resource home characteristics, as well as information on the child characteristics entered by caseworkers when looking for potential matches.

10. **Casework Contact Reports:** During the pandemic, ACF modified guidance to video conferences to be recognized as casework contacts. Several data marts and reporting functions were modified to accommodate this change and allow for accurate outcome monitoring.

11. **Raise the Age:** This report provides LDSSs with child level lists of all foster care youth identified within CONNECTIONS as Raise the Age eligible. LDSSs are encouraged to use this report to check the accuracy of their data.

12. **Juvenile Delinquent and Persons in Need of Supervision (JD/PINS) Report:** A report to identify children in care by adjudication status was created to primarily monitor the number of PINS youth still in foster care settings given recent state legislation.

**Plans for 2021-2022**
The data warehouse will continue to enhance existing reporting capacity. Anticipated projects for the upcoming plan year include:

1. **Update data marts and existing system reports to reflect anticipated Activities module enhancements:** The data warehouse refreshes data related to the CONNECTIONS Activities module, which includes key elements such as movement records and legal activities, on a weekly basis. To improve monitoring and reporting capacity, OCFS and ITS partners are exploring what the resource and timeframe lift would be to change to a daily refresh schedule during the upcoming plan year. Doing so will likely be a tremendous effort and require the rewriting of over 100 existing reports.

2. **Family First Prevention Service Act:** New York State is scheduled to implement the congregate care provisions of Family First on 9/29/21. To assist OCFS in monitoring this new system infrastructure, the OCFS data warehouse team will be developing new data marts and predefined reporting capacity. Initial efforts are anticipated to focus on QRTP and Other Specified Settings admissions and in-care populations by case characteristics and counties, aggregate monitoring and drill down reports describing the timeliness and outcome of 30-day QI assessments, 60-day court reviews, and long-stay, agency level reviews.

3. **Federal Reporting:** With AFCARS 2.1 rapidly approaching, OCFS is in the process of assessing what system changes and/or monitoring supports will be needed to promote comprehensive and accurate data collection. As new data elements are evaluated for data quality and prioritized by the AFCARS 2.1 work group, additional reports will be added. Anticipated areas of focus for NCANDS include remapping allegation types and perpetrator relationships to match revisions suggested by ACF and developing reports to monitor children identified as prenatally exposed to drugs/alcohol, safety plan creation, and case referrals.

4. **Fiscal Reporting:** Information from the Benefits Issuance and Control System (BICS) is consumed by the data warehouse. BREPA staff meets regularly with financial staff and is working to create predefined reports that support several areas of IVE reporting. This work will continue throughout 2021-2022.

5. **Restraint Reporting:** In 2020, OCFS BREPA staff developed a Monthly VA Restraint Report for CWCS. This report is produced for each agency in the state operating one or more congregate care facilities (i.e., institution, group home, group residence, or agency-operated boarding home). The report provides restraint counts, care day counts, and restraint rates (per 100 care days) for the agency as a whole and each of its congregate care facilities, along with systemwide counts and rates for comparison. This report is produced without the assistance of a Data Mart. In the upcoming year, the plan is to build the capacity within the data warehouse to produce this report.
A systematic look at the documentation of reports available in the data warehouse was initiated in the current reporting year and will be carried forward into 2021-2022. The goal is to have documentation for all reports available in production verified and revised if needed. In addition, development of a more user-friendly search tool for matching user interests to available reports and where to locate them within the data warehouse infrastructure has been drafted as a proof of concept and will be piloted in the upcoming year.

**Data Governance Activities**

**Accomplishments for 2020-2021**

Data governance activities during the current reporting year focused on improving data quality. OCFS completed its first Biannual Data Quality Review in compliance with CCWIS reporting requirements. Areas of focus included multiple person IDs, timeliness of movement entries, and comprehensiveness of federal reporting elements.
10. Family First Prevention Services Act Transition Grants
Family First Prevention Services Act Transition Grant

OCFS, through the OCFS Division of Youth Development and Partnerships for Success, focuses on older youth and young adults who are involved with or at risk of being involved with the child welfare and youth justice systems. This division oversees youth development and has utilized the Family First Transition Act Grant funds for youth aging out of foster care as a pilot to assess the impact of increasing support to youth age 23 through the John H. Chafee grant.

Summary of FFTA for youth aging out of foster care from March 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021

To date, claims have been submitted for $1,826,849.

There are 33 LDSSs, including NYC, which received FFTA funds to assist in transitioning youth out of foster care during the pandemic. These funds were made available prior to the Consolidated Appropriations Act that was signed on December 27, 2020. There were over 600 individuals eligible who would have aged out of foster care at age 21 during the timeframe listed above. The remaining counties did not have any youth aging out at 21 during the March 2020 to March 2021 timeframe.

Counties reported the following items, services and resources needed for this population:

- Rent and utilities
- Continue youth in placement setting beyond age 21
- Technology: laptops/tablets, cell phones, headsets
- Internet access
- Nutrition services
- Money management
- Transportation
  - Vehicle maintenance
  - Insurance expenses
  - Driver’s education, permits, license
  - Metro cards
- Furniture and household items
- Tutoring services
- Childcare
- Storage

There are no plans to utilize this funding in the future for this purpose as additional Chafee funding is available now.

Family First Prevention Services Act Funding Certainty Grant

Children and families served using Certainty Grant funding were children in New York City foster care, primarily family foster care. (Please see appendix H.)
11. Consultation and Coordination Between States and Tribes
Consultation and Coordination Between States and Tribes

OCFS plans to use several means to consult and coordinate with, as well as gather input from, New York State’s federally recognized tribes. These tribes are identified in the CFSP as well as the outcomes and activities accomplished. Additionally, the Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) provides a description of the child welfare services provisions for Indian children.

For 2020-2024, the OCFS Bureau of Native American Services (NAS) will continue to host quarterly stakeholder meetings with tribal nations and local LDSS caseworkers in both urban and reservation settings. The primary purpose of these meetings will be to support and improve compliance with the federal Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA). These meetings will also serve in the development of training initiatives; provide input into the CFSP Title IV-B plan and subsequent APSRs to strengthen service delivery to Indian children and their families. Quarterly meetings provide an excellent forum to introduce other OCFS-supported initiatives such as Court Collaboration, Protective Services for Adults, and Chafee.

OCFS plans to continue making site visits to the individual Indian reservations in New York State by the NAS specialist and agency representatives. The primary purpose of these site visits is to assess the needs of the Indian tribes/nations and to address concerns related to the delivery of child welfare services.

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

OCFS will look to continue to improve its data collection within CONNECTIONS 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
- Tribal right to intervene in state child custody proceedings or transfer proceedings to the jurisdiction of the tribe/nation
- Chafee, ETV, services for tribal youth in foster care or formerly in foster care
- Permanency planning and reunification of children placed in foster care
- Sharing of New York State CFSP and/or county plans

Assessment of Need and Current Status Highlights

Based on a review of data collected on Native American children in out-of-home placement as of December 31, 2020, 19 children were subject to the provisions of ICWA. These children lived in various parts of New York State, both on and off reservation territories. The geographic
breakdown of these placements is as follows: 36 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 36 percent of placements were in the Syracuse region. With the knowledge that our largest Native American population resides in the five boroughs of New York City and Long Island, OCFS found 25 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 2020, OCFS reviewed 19 Indian child placements of the 93 possible Indian child placements. Of the 19 Indian children remaining in out-of-home placement, no child required a higher level of care including therapeutic foster care or a group home setting. The remainder of the foster care placements of Indian children is as follows: 16 are in kinship placements and 3 are in non-native foster care placement that were consistent with ICWA placement preferences.

OCFS is supporting this goal by involving tribal representatives in collaborative meetings with our administration, court personnel, and regional initiatives for Family Assessment Response and Disproportionality Minority Representation 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 LDSSs 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 2017.

**Data Analysis:**

- 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)
- 2017: 22 Indian children of the 52 in placement (42 percent)
- 2018: 7 Indian children of the 17 in placement (41 percent)
- 2019: 53 Indian children of the 63 in placement (81 percent)
- 2020: 10 Indian children of the 19 in placement (52 percent)

**Projected Targets:**

- 2020: not below 50 percent *
It is anticipated that the identification of Indian children will continue to increase based on ICWA trainings in 2020-2021. 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 New York State. As demonstrated by the data, OCFS has been successful in its 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 19 Indian children in placement, 8 were matched with placements to support their tribal/nation heritage. An additional 12 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 at 63 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. 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: 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 2015-
2019 Final Report and 2020-2024 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. Seneca Nation of Indians continues to recruit tribally approved foster homes to service their 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. 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. 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. In 2018, Onondaga Nation Family Services ceased operations for a period of time. It is back up and operating on a part-time basis. The new staff have asked the NAS unit for assistance on various child welfare issues. Onondaga Nation continues to work with Onondaga County LDSS to strengthen its working relationship.

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 NAS 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 LDSSs, OCFS and those agencies that provide services to Native Americans.

To support compliance with ICWA, a revised ICWA desk aid was issued in 2016 by OCFS and is still in use by LDSSs and VAs. Copies were distributed to the Indian Tribes/Nations and OCFS regional offices. An update to include information on the 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.

In February 2017, OCFS also promulgated an amendment to 18 NYCRR 431.18 to reflect the amended ICWA standards. OCFS issued 17-OCFS-ADM-08, implementing federal and corresponding state ICWA regulations, to address the revised federal standards including a revised notice letter and ICWA FAQs on July 31, 2017.

On February 18, 2021, OCFS issued the 21-OCFS-ADM-02 a revision of the 17-OCFS-ADM-08 to include the ICWA Case Process checklist. The checklist was developed to assist caseworkers in meeting the essential elements of ICWA and ensuring proper documentation.

**Description of Native American Population in New York State**

Native Americans reside 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 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 near their own tribe/nation.

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indian Nation/Tribe</th>
<th>Reservation</th>
<th>Enrollment</th>
<th>Resident Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>IROQUOIS:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cayuga Nation of Indians</td>
<td>Seneca Falls Territory</td>
<td>525</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oneida Indian Nation</td>
<td>Oneida Nation Territory</td>
<td>1,000 *</td>
<td>500 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onondaga Nation</td>
<td>Onondaga Reservation</td>
<td>1,959 *</td>
<td>900 *</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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 address the needs of children and residents who are developmentally disabled, and families 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 ICWA 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 several 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.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indian Nation/ Tribe</th>
<th>Governing Structure</th>
<th>Administrative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cayuga Nation of Indians</td>
<td>Hereditary Chiefs</td>
<td>Council of Chiefs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oneida Indian Nation</td>
<td>Tribal Appointment</td>
<td>Men's Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onondaga Nation</td>
<td>Hereditary Chiefs</td>
<td>Council of Chiefs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Regis Mohawk Tribe</td>
<td>Tribal Elections/Chiefs</td>
<td>Chiefs Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seneca Nation of Indians</td>
<td>Elections/ Tribal Council</td>
<td>Tribal Council with President</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tonawanda Band of Senecas</td>
<td>Hereditary Chiefs</td>
<td>Council of Chiefs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuscarora Nation</td>
<td>Hereditary Chiefs</td>
<td>Council of Chiefs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shinnecock Tribe</td>
<td>Elections/ Tribal Council</td>
<td>Tribal Council with Chairperson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unkechaug Nation</td>
<td>Tribal Elections/Trustee</td>
<td>Trustees Elected to 1, 2, 3-year terms</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indian Tribe/Nation/Reservation</th>
<th>County Service Area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>St. Regis Mohawk Tribe</td>
<td>Franklin, St. Lawrence counties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Regis Mohawk Reservation</td>
<td>primarily, but also statewide for Mohawk children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seneca Nation of Indians</td>
<td>Erie, Cattaraugus and Chautauqua counties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allegany Reservation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cattaraugus Reservation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cayuga Nation</td>
<td>Cayuga members only, statewide</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Seneca Falls Territory are served through administrative staff; designated tribal territory Seneca Falls

**Urban Native American 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 program provides health and social services. The Buffalo/Niagara Falls Urban Centers provide ICWA services, including preventive counseling, foster care recruitment and certification, intervention, a program for seniors, youth and cultural programs.

Since 1997, the urban 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 2020**

Throughout 2020, 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 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, formal Tribal Consultation meetings were held on August 18, 2020 and May 3, 2021.

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 State 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.

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 Buffalo in March. However, due to lack of registration, quarterly meetings for May, September, and December were cancelled. An OCFS NAS specialist is working to strategize a different format for the quarterly meetings for better attendance and participation. During this process, a new format has been developed in conjunction with the Court Improvement Project and the WNY ICWA Roundtable. The roundtable will allow local tribal nation and family court personnel to meet and work on ICWA issues locally.

**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 2020-21, 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.

- 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’s 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.

• OCFS 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 New York State CFSP and APSRs available to tribes/nations, as it will continue to support and aid the St. Regis Mohawks Tribe in its CFSP-County Plan submissions.

• 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

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 they were to return home and the potential for future risk of abuse, maltreatment or neglect if they were 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 their 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 their 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 planner¹; (c) a caseworker assigned to the case, as directed by the case planner; or (d) a parent advocate when the contacts are directed, arranged, or otherwise coordinated by the case planner.

**Frequency:** (a) During the first 30 days of placement, casework contacts are to be held with the child's parents or relatives as often as is necessary but at a minimum, must occur at least twice unless compelling reasons are documented why such contacts are not possible. Such initial casework contacts within 30 days of placement must be made by the case manager, the case planner or a caseworker assigned to the case, as directed by the case planner; (b) After the first 30 days of placement, casework contacts are to be held with the child's parents or relatives at least once every month unless compelling reasons are documented why such contacts are not possible. Such monthly casework contacts made after the first 30 days of placement must be made by one of the approved types of individuals listed above. However, no more than two of the monthly casework contacts in any six-month period may be made by a parent advocate.

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

**Accomplishments from the use of the Monthly Caseworker Visit Grant FY 2020-2021**

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

OCFS contracts with six business analyst vendors to promote accurate, consistent documentation of caseworker contacts. LDSSs covered by the OCFS New York City (NYC) and Westchester Regional Offices 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 VAs, each with its own business processes, are contracted to provide caseworker services for counties within the NYC and Westchester regions. Five business analysts work with the NYC OCFS Regional Office (NYCRO) and one business analyst will work with OCFS’s Westchester Regional Office to coordinate and oversee the LDSSs and VAs’ compliance with federal requirements. Business analysts focus on providing training, technical assistance, and business process analysis/enhancement to achieve standardization in documentation and reporting.

OCFS contracts with two business analyst vendors assigned to OCFS Home Office. One business analyst works 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. The other business analyst prepares data reports that will assist LDSSs and VAs as they work to understand the strengths and challenges related to their current performance; assist localities with the assessment phase of their 2020-2022 county plan process; and assist regional offices, LDSSs, and VAs with applying Continuous Quality Improvement concepts to improve outcomes.

**Plans for 2021-2022**

OCFS plans to continue utilizing the above-mentioned business analysts as resources to support the LDSSs and VAs with meeting the requirements of monthly caseworker visits.
13. Adoption and Legal Guardianship Incentive Payments
Adoption and Legal Guardianship Incentive Payments

Beginning in 2017, OCFS has annually 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 2016 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. OCFS regional office staff support LDSSs with achieving target goals especially in cases where identified barriers 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.

Accomplishments in 2020 and ongoing work:

- **LDSS Kinship Plans**
  - To further promote kin placements, OCFS now mandates that each LDSS review its current kinship policy, and if needed, amend the policy to include a Kin-First Firewall practice. In 2020, LDSSs were reminded to review these plans and confirm the plan included an administrative review process before a child is placed with non-kin.

- **Kinship Care Overview Training**
  - OCFS permanency specialists provide the Kinship Care Overview train-the-trainer to LDSSs and VAs as needed.

- **Maintaining Connections Between LDSSs and Programs**
  - LDSS staff are invited to site visits with the OCFS-funded kinship and regional Permanency Resource Centers.
  - These programs provide support services to kinship and guardianship families.

- **Wendy’s Wonderful Kids**
  - OCFS’ partnership with the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption, through the Wendy’s Wonderful Kids (WWK) program, brought 24 family recruiters to New York State and expanded recruitment efforts in 2020 to work with 39 LDSSs. LDSSs are referring children who have been in care two or more years, who are 9 years of age and are freed, and youth 16 years of age who are freed with a goal of Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA). OCFS is working with WWK on contract development for a new multi-year contract. Through this collaboration, a total of 64 children have been adopted and 12 children attained permanency through legal guardianship since July 2017. As of December 2020, the total number of children served by the WWK program was 505.
• **Funding and Collaboration with the Kinship Navigator (KN)**
  
  o In 2020-2021, OCFS and the New York State KN continued the federal grant for the third year. KN is working with an evaluator to provide these services via an evaluation structure with a goal of meeting a model of promising practice. The project employs two separate interventions to serve kinship caregivers:
    1. The County Based Kinship intervention carried out by LDSS that provides in-person, or more recently due to COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, by-phone case management and peer-to-peer support groups; and
    2. The Virtual Case Management intervention carried out by the New York State Kinship Navigator provides virtual case management services by email, phone or video call. The remote nature of this intervention was unique at its conception due to being implemented 12 months prior to the first New York State COVID-19 pandemic restrictions requiring the movement of many case management services from in-person to virtual provision.

• **Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago**
  
  o Chapin Hall will assist OCFS with evidence-based practice expansion and change management, planning, alignment, and implementation support to maximize the impact of system transformation as New York State builds on efforts to prepare for the implementation of the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA). Leveraging their extensive working knowledge and experience with other jurisdictions’ FFPSA efforts, Chapin Hall will engage New York State in activities designed to guide the full scope of the system transformation efforts.

• **Family Supports**
  
  o As a result of the pandemic, families notified providers that they were unable to get necessities to keep their infants healthy and safe. Families lacked child car seats to safely transport their infants. OCFS used available adoption incentive funds to support the purchase of 436 child car safety seats. These safety seats were sent to the LDSSs and Native American tribal entities for distribution to families. To conserve costs, families were prolonging the use of single use diapers (resulting in diaper rash to children) and diluting formula to make supplies last longer. OCFS purchased 2,164 large cans of infant formula, 630 cases of baby wipes, and 1,250 cases of diapers for families. Items were distributed through not-for-profit and community-based organizations that are working with young and vulnerable families. These supplies were distributed September through November 2020. OCFS also provided Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to each of the 16 Permanency Resource Centers (PRCs) that serve post adoptive and guardianship families. The PPE included thermometers, masks, gloves, wipes, and disinfectant cleaners.
  
  o PRCs also received funding to support families impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic for the purchase of:
    o gift cards to support educational stability,
    o grocery store gift cards,
    o baby supplies, linens, winter coats, clothes, and shoes,
    o cribs (OCFS also distributed 1,366 Pack ‘N Play cribs to 100 LDSSs and VAs),
    o job interview clothing when unavailable from donations and school events, and
    o expenses such as support for rent, mortgage or utility payments for families at risk of housing instability due to loss of employment during the COVID-19 pandemic.
• **Support for Youth in Foster Care**
  
  o My Bag Initiative - OCFS began a new initiative, My Bag, for foster children. My Bag is a pilot program that distributed 4,291 duffel bags to 54 LDSSs. When children are removed from their home, or moved from their foster home, they have a duffle bag to gather their possessions to bring to their new placement.
14. Quality Assurance System
Quality Assurance System

New York State’s Quality Assurance (QA)/Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) system is a collaborative process that is grounded in a CQI structure.

In 2020, OCFS launched a comprehensive QA System called Program Quality Improvement (PQI). The framework of the PQI process is grounded in CQI that is data-driven and collaborative, and includes the following key steps: identifying current performance, diagnosing underlying factors, planning and implementing improvement strategies, and ongoing monitoring of improvement/adjusting strategies accordingly (Plan, Do, Study, Act). Through case reviews, administrative data, and other sources, the PQI process identifies an LDSS’s areas of strengths and areas needing improvement. A program improvement plan (PIP), if needed, is developed collaboratively with LDSSs after a comprehensive exploration and determination of the factors identified as primary drivers for performance. The development of a PIP is LDSS-led with support from OCFS, as requested. Implementation and effectiveness of the PIP strategies are monitored quarterly by OCFS and technical assistance is provided as needed.

Refer to the PQI Process Overview in Appendix K of this report.

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

The CQI system is operating in the jurisdictions where the services included in the Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) are provided.

Foundational Requirement

The New York State Social Services Law gives OCFS the authority to oversee and monitor the performance of LDSSs and VAs. In part, OCFS does this through the distribution and analysis of consistent administrative performance data and the review of case records. 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.

The infrastructure required to implement a robust PQI process has been built, and, as OCFS adheres to CQI principles, it continues to be improved. In 2019, five OCFS staff received training in New York State policies/regulations and were trained and coached to ensure competence in their ability to review child protective services (CPS), preventive, and foster care cases.

PQI policies and processes, including sample stratification, and development of electronic case review instruments and a PQI report format, are among the areas OCFS developed and implemented in 2020. Work continues in the areas of developing formalized PIP development processes and PIP monitoring procedures.

Quality Data Collection
Gathering and Disseminating Quantitative Data: New York State has a robust data collection system contained in CONNECTIONS. Information from the CONNECTIONS system is used to monitor compliance with many federal and state statutes and regulations.

OCFS provides a wide array of data reports. Reports are available in data warehouse, distributed via email and/or published on the OCFS website. These reports are used by OCFS, LDSSs, and VAs to manage day-to-day functions, to track outcomes for core child welfare operations and for planning new initiatives such as FFPSA. A few examples of available reports include monthly CPS performance and foster care casework contact reports, annual reports that provide disparity rates by race and ethnicity, foster home/foster parent data packets, process and outcome reports for congregate care utilization, and preventive services utilization and outcome reports. Through data warehouse, there are more than 1,000 pre-defined available reports that are used in individualized, focused monitoring and technical assistance efforts.

In CQI fashion, OCFS continually seeks to improve data quality. One strategy OCFS employees utilize is to send “data quality reports” to each LDSS that provides child-specific information where data quality improvement opportunities exist (i.e., race/ethnicity, improperly coded elements, missing AFCARS elements). Additionally, OCFS has a focused data quality team that is developing a data quality plan in relation to the Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System (CCWIS).

Qualitative Data Acquired through the Case Review Process

The new PQI process substantially increases the number of cases that are reviewed annually. The size of the county guides the number of cases to be reviewed (no less than 20 cases for small counties, 40 cases for medium counties, 50 cases for large counties and 60 for extra-large counties).

In 2020, OCFS reviewed 1,296 cases, which exceeded its target of 1,000 cases. Approximately 50 percent (658) were part of the new, comprehensive PQI process and included CPS, preventive cases, and children in foster care. The remaining 638 reviews were conducted as part of a specialized CPS review that was developed in response to COVID-19. Between April-July 2020, the full PQI process was paused. It was noted that in schools that were open only for on-line learning, many preventive services were closed or providing telehealth appointments, and in several LDSSs, casework staff were working remotely. These specialized CPS reviews were developed to review open CPS investigations where the seven-day safety assessment indicated that a safety plan was implemented for the children to remain safety in the care of the parent(s)/caretaker(s). A sample of investigations were evaluated across the state and concerns were communicated to OCFS Regional Offices and LDSS for follow up.

The number of case reviews conducted in 2020 are shown in Table 1.

Table 1
### County LDSS Performance Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County LDSS</th>
<th>Traditional CPS INV</th>
<th>CPS FAR</th>
<th>Foster Care</th>
<th>Preventive/Protective Services</th>
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<tr>
<td>Suffolk</td>
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<td>8</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Qualitative Data Acquired through the Review of LDSS Plans and On-going Monitoring

In addition to case reviews and administrative data, OCFS identifies LDSS performance (strengths and needs) through the review of each LDSS’s Child and Family Services Plan (county plan). Each LDSS is required to submit a single comprehensive five-year county plan, with annual updates. The county planning process is designed to support a local collaborative planning process that includes stakeholder involvement and supports a process that focuses on outcomes for children, youth, families, adults, and communities.

### Analysis and Dissemination of Quality Data

New York State provides access to a multitude of predefined 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 predefined reports, there is an ability to create ad-hoc data reports. Electronic access to this data, including the ability to create reports, is available to external partners (LDSSs/VAs). 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, childcare, and public assistance-related data.
Data and case review results are used by the OCFS regional office and LDSS to inform planning, monitoring, and adjustments 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 PIP.

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, LDSS, and VA staff related to the use of data. OCFS’s data leaders’ team, made up of OCFS regional office practice staff, home office staff, and business CONNECTIONS leads, continued to meet quarterly in 2019 to work on data-related issues facing the state. This team uses a “training-the-trainer” model and brings insights and deliverables to the field. Examples of some ongoing data leaders team projects are as follows:

- Supporting LDSS in their strategic planning around improving safety, permanency, and well-being outcomes for youth
- Analysis of long stayers in congregate care settings and an examination of how to mitigate this
- Identification and development of data reports to be used in conjunction with qualitative case reviews for monitoring LDSS practice

Annually, the PQI team also provides OCFS leadership and LDSSs with key reports that provide demographic and key safety and permanency performance indicators. These reports provide a high-level overview of an LDSS’s annual trends and comparison to the New York State performance. OCFS creates a similar performance report for each licensed VA and uses it as an evaluative resource and educative tool when engaging these stakeholders.

Increasing the capacity for OCFS and LDSS staff to utilize data within a CQI context continues to be a priority for OCFS. Due to the impact of COVID-19, training to state, LDSS, and VA staff related to the use of data shifted seamlessly to a virtual environment. OCFS’s data leaders’ team, made up of OCFS regional office practice staff, home office staff, and business CONNECTIONS leads, continued to meet quarterly in 2020 to work on data-related issues facing the state. Examples of some ongoing data leaders team projects are as follows:

- Supporting OFCS Regional office and LDDS staff in the implementation of the PQI process specifically related to strategic planning around improving safety, permanency, and well-being outcomes for youth;
- Developing metrics for an update to Foster Home Data Packets for VAs and LDSSs that support foster homes; and
- Developing data warehouse report building skills.

Additionally, the PQI team provides OCFS leadership and LDSSs with key reports that provide demographic and key safety and permanency performance indicators. Reports developed and distributed in 2020 include:

- Updated Foster Home Data Packets
• Key Performance Indicator Reports for Safety for each LDSS and Permanency for LDSS and VAs
• CPS Performance dashboard with monthly trend data for CPS Intakes, timeliness of 7-day safety assessment, percent of caseworkers with 15+ open investigations and percent of overdue investigations
• FFPSA monitoring dashboard with monthly LDSS data trends of foster care placements by placement type

Leadership:

Results of the annual case review process are shared with the OCFS “PQI Executive Team.” The Executive Team reviews the results of the case reviews and utilizes the CQI process to identify any supports that the state can develop/enhance to support practice, process, and program improvement statewide.
15. 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:

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CAPTA Initiatives and Accomplishments

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

Through CAPTA project coordination, the 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’s 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 New York State, and respond to complaints from individuals that are brought to the attention of the 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 for 2020-2021

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 New York 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 (RCT) 15-Year Follow-up
Healthy Families New York Evaluation, Practice Improvement, and Research Activities

HFNY engages in a variety of evaluation projects designed to better understand and improve the services offered to families. These projects are often developed because of information learned from conversations with HFNY program staff and families or from results generated by the performance monitoring system and annual service reviews. Data are collected from participating families and program staff, often through surveys or program data already collected. The results are then discussed with HFNY Central Administration and program staff and used as the foundation for developing and implementing practices and policies to improve service delivery. Several of HFNY’s recent evaluation, practice improvement, and research projects are highlighted below.

Developing and Piloting a New Family Enrollment Strategy

Engaging and retaining families in home visiting services has long been a challenge for programs, both locally and nationally, across all home visiting models. HFNY uses a two-step process to engage families in services. HFNY programs receive referrals from other community organizations of potential participants. A specially trained HFNY assessment worker contacts the family to conduct a lengthy assessment to determine eligibility for intensive home visiting services and other family strengths and service needs. Families who are deemed eligible are then transferred to another home visitor who provides intensive home visiting services to address those needs.

There have been concerns that this approach of telling their history to one worker and then being told that they will then be receiving services from someone else can be off-putting to some families, resulting in them declining services. A few HFA programs across the country have moved toward a more streamlined assessment and enrollment process where the same worker conducts the assessment of needs and strengths and provides the intensive home visiting services. It is believed that this approach may foster service delivery that is more tailored to individual needs and engages the family in a consistent manner.

In 2017, OCFS finalized the development of a one-step assessment and enrollment strategy that meets the needs of HFNY. This strategy incorporates an initial visit, called the Welcome Family Visit, to engage with families who screen positive for services, describes HFNY program services, and provides some basic information about infant brain development. The worker who conducts this visit will, at subsequent visits after the family enrolls, conduct the assessment of strengths and needs and provide the intensive home visits. In 2018, the three pilot sites chosen for participation began implementing the new strategy. This study is expected to run through 2022. Interim analysis will be conducted annually once all sites have completed years one through three respectively, and culminate in the development of a final report summarizing the findings and providing recommendations for next steps.

Understanding Effective Service Delivery and Outcomes
Between 2019 and 2020, a series of focus groups were designed to explore select topics related to HFNY practice and policy. The content expanded upon topics that were assessed during the home visitor surveys conducted in previous years (e.g., worker competencies, organizational climate, training needs, etc.).

Focus groups with home visitors were developed and conducted during 2020. A total of 10 focus groups were held for different areas of the state with 71 Family Support Specialists participating. Major discussion topics included job orientation and training, challenging situations, worker qualities, supervision, and staff turnover. The information obtained from these focus groups deepened the state’s understanding of the issues that home visitors faced in their work and resulted in the identification of several actionable items that were subsequently undertaken for review by HFNY Central Administration (e.g., allowing out of home visits to count toward the home visit rate in specific circumstances, expanding training support and resources, and reducing/streamlining documentation requirements).

Focus groups with program supervisors were also completed during 2020. The purpose of these groups was to gather supervisor perspectives on HFNY operations and policies and to inform future system-wide decisions. In total, 53 supervisors participated in seven groups: three groups included supervisors based in New York City, and four included supervisors from the rest of the state. Groups were comprised of eight to twelve participants and lasted between one and a half to two hours.

Major discussion topics included roles and responsibilities of supervisors, documentation requirements, supervision of supervisors, training, changes due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and thoughts related to policy and practice changes. Results from these focus groups resulted in the identification of several actionable items that were subsequently undertaken for review by HFNY Central Administration (e.g., allowing virtual home visits to count toward the home visit rate in specific circumstances; incorporating group supervision; providing additional training opportunities in remote supervision, motivational interviewing, staff burnout, and challenging topics; and streamlining documentation requirements).

Exploring Strengths and Challenges in Obtaining Referrals from the Women, Infants, and Children Program

HFNY program enrollment relies heavily on referrals from community organizations. The Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program administered by the New York State Department of Health has historically been one of HFNY’s more fruitful recruitment sources. HFNY programs reported that WIC referrals had declined in recent years. In 2018, to better understand the scope of this decline, HFNY embarked on a study to examine referrals from WIC. The data showed that many programs were indeed experiencing decreasing referrals. OCFS then conducted a series of focus groups to obtain more information from HFNY programs managers about what was working, what was concerning, and what hopes they had for engaging with WIC more effectively in the future. Following these focus groups, program managers completed a survey asking about the nature of their relationships with the WIC programs that served their communities. Results suggest that
strategies such as having a presence at the WIC office, developing service agreements with WIC offices, conducting in-person outreach at WIC to provide information about HFNY services, and having a representative from WIC on the HFNY program’s advisory board can help to increase referrals to the program. Additional information about the study and its results can be found in this research brief: https://www.healthyfamiliesnewyork.org/Research/Publications/WICPosterResults8.15.19FinalforWebsite.pdf.

The results of this study were used to facilitate conversations at the state level between OCFS and DOH to better understand the strengths and challenges that HFNY, Nurse Family Partnership (NFP), and Maternal and Infant Community Health Collaborative (MICHC) home visiting programs and local WIC offices faced regarding reciprocal referrals. As a result of this collaboration, OCFS and DOH developed a streamlined referral form that local WIC offices could use to make referrals to the home visiting programs in their areas. This form was presented at the WIC Quarterly Call in April 2020 and then rolled out for statewide use. Referral data continues to be examined quarterly. This project will continue in 2021.

Financial Literacy
During the focus groups, home visitors reported that many of the families they worked with were experiencing significant financial problems and challenges and that they wished they had more information about the resources that were available to help families address those issues. Children who grow up in poverty or in poorly resourced communities are likely to experience poor health, development, and economic outcomes, however research has shown that interventions designed to improve the financial lives of children and families can improve well-being across many of those domains.

To address the concerns reported by home visitors, HFNY embarked on a pilot project to integrate financial literacy and financial capability into home visiting services. The goal of this project was to develop a better understanding of the types of financial stressors that families in HFNY programs are facing that contribute to their financial distress, and to explore whether additional information, referrals to enhance money management skills, and referrals for more specialized or targeted financial resources might improve families’ financial security and well-being.

During 2019-2020, surveys were developed (in English, Spanish, and French) and distributed to home visitors and families in several pilot sites to find out more about the specific types of financial distress experienced by families in HFNY. The responses to the surveys were used to identify training needs and to inform the development of Financial Resource Guides for each of the participating pilot sites. To date, Resource Guides are available for five counties. Trainings have been developed and already schooled with one program site. Scheduling is in process at two additional sites. This project will continue in 2021.

Curriculum Review
The curricula delivered during HFNY home visits is an important part of improving the lives of the families we serve. HFNY requires program sites to use at least one of four primary curricula:
Partners for a Healthy Baby (Florida State University), Parents as Teachers, Healthy Babies…Healthy Families (San Angelo), and/or Growing Great Kids (Great Kids International). Programs can also use other supplemental curricula or materials to support the work. These curricula help facilitate bonding between families and home visitors, provide information to parents about child development, and encourage positive parent-child interactions.

HFNY performed a detailed analysis of curricula use across programs. Of the almost 73,000 home visits conducted in 2018, 74 percent included at least one curriculum. The curricula most frequently used were Growing Great Kids (32 percent of visits); Partners for a Healthy Baby (19 percent); Parents as Teachers (9 percent), and Healthy Babies…Healthy Families (9 percent). Families who received more home visits not only had more curriculum-based home visits, but they also had higher rates of curriculum use in their visits. Most (86 percent) prenatal families also received at least one visit with a prenatal-focused curriculum. These results demonstrate that home visitors are making a marked effort to deliver curricula during home visits. Additional information about the study and its results can be found in this research brief: https://www.healthyfamiliesnewyork.org/Staff/Documents/CurriculumDeliveryHF2019dated2019_11_20_final.pdf

In 2019, HFNY formed a committee to review and update the HFNY-approved primary curricula; identify the best curricula for special interest groups such as pregnant families, teenage parents, and fathers; and ensure that the endorsed curricula are culturally appropriate for the families served. This committee included representatives from all three branches of HFNY Central Administration and many HFNY program staff, including home visitors, supervisors, and program managers. A report with recommendations was developed in 2020 and is under review by HFNY Central Administration. This project will continue through 2021.

HFNY Randomized Controlled Trial 15 Year Follow-Up Study

Beginning in 2000, the HFNY research team embarked on a longitudinal, randomized, controlled trial to assess the impact of HFNY on child abuse and neglect, child health and development, family functioning, and parenting practices. Families eligible for HFNY in three sites were randomly assigned to either an intervention group that was offered HFNY services or to a control group that was given information for referrals to appropriate services other than home visiting. Baseline interviews were conducted with 1,173 women (HFNY, n=579; control, n=594). Mothers were again interviewed in their homes around the time of the child’s birth if enrolled during pregnancy, and around the child’s first, second, third, and seventh birthdays. Target children were also interviewed around the time of their seventh birthday. The research team obtained videotaped observations of parent-child interactions, and data from child protective services reports, foster care placements, public assistance, birth records, and school records. In 2015, we began a 15-year follow up study, interviewing mothers and their now approximately 15-year-old children. By the end of the 2017, we had completed interviews with 830 mothers (74 percent response rate) and 702 youth (63 percent response rate). During 2018, we began cleaning, coding, and re-structuring the data to carry out some preliminary analyses. During 2018-2019, we also began to request school records and administrative data. Preliminary analyses of survey data were completed in 2020 and additional analyses are expected to be completed in 2021. Data
collection continues for school records and the administrative data. This project will continue through 2021.

**Federal Family Violence and Prevention Services**

Federal Family Violence and Prevention Services Act (FVPSA) funding provides financial support to residential and non-residential programs through non-competitive grants available to all licensed programs. In 2019-2020, OCFS utilized $6.975 million dollars of FVPSA to fund 162 residential shelter locations and 83 non-residential program locations, which included FY 2020 Coronavirus Aid Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES) funding.

**Children’s Justice Act**

The federal Children’s Justice Act (CJA) Grant continues to enhance OCFS’s ability to develop, establish, and operate programs designed to improve (1) the handling of child abuse and maltreatment cases, particularly cases of child sexual abuse and exploitation, in a manner which limits additional trauma to the child victim; (2) the handling of cases of suspected child abuse and maltreatment-related fatalities; (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 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 CJA grant allows OCFS to expand its efforts to develop and maintain MDTs, CACs and CFRTs across the state.

In 2019, 61 LDSSs in addition to the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe, the Akwasanee Nation have an existing or developing CAC. The LDSSs served include those with expansion projects which were implemented in 2017, covering an additional 11 counties and four additional counties that came on board in 2018. The state will soon have a CAC in every county except for one. CACs served almost 24,000 physically and/or sexually abused child victims. The National Children’s Alliance (NCA) has accredited 36 of the programs as meeting their national standards. CJA staff continues to provide technical assistance to the remaining programs that are seeking accreditation.

OCFS partnered with the New York State Office of Victim Services (OVS) to develop CACs in the remaining counties. Four additional counties have begun the process to establish a program in county. The following counties are developing programs that did not have services in county:
Wayne, Tioga, Sullivan, and Steuben. In addition to creating CACs in the remaining counties, the OVS partnership allowed CJA staff to develop CAC mobile units. Seven mobile units were custom built to mirror a CAC. The seven largest counties in the state were targeted to bring services to children that live in rural and underserved communities. Despite having a CAC in county, many of these areas are so geographically large it remains a burden for families to reach the CAC. The addition of mobile units to these large and rural areas allows MDTs to bring the CAC to the child. The units were all deployed in the fall of 2019. Counties have already begun to see child victims and families and are reporting data.

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

One of the primary programs funded through CJA has been the Child Advocacy Resource and Consultation Center (CARCC) Program. In 2016, OCFS issued an Invitation for Bids (IFB) for this program and the New York State Children’s Alliance (NYSCA) was the successful bidder. NYSCA is the state chapter for CACs. OCFS began a new contract with NYSCA on May 1, 2016, to provide technical assistance, resources, and training for child advocacy centers across the state.

As in previous years, NYSCA has been instrumental in assisting CJA staff with the provision of technical assistance for many innovative programs as well as with the provision of support and consultation services, a mentoring program, assistance with marketing, the NYSCA listserv, the National Children’s Alliance Database (NCAtrak), and training offerings. These activities are described in more detail below.

**Evaluation and Assessment**

In partnership with OCFS, NYSCA covers the cost of the NCAtrak database for all accredited child advocacy centers to track cases information. In late 2018, NYSCA began the process of changing databases for the state by first forming an ad hoc committee of members to research and evaluate alternatives to NCAtrak. The ad hoc committee eventually chose the collaborate database created by software company Network Ninja because it felt its features and interface would better meet the needs of CAC users. NYSCA convened a design team also made up of actual CAC users who worked with the Network Ninja team to build the new database, which went live in 2020.

NYSCA requires all member CACs to utilize the Outcome Measurement System (OMS) and monitors the usage of the system, provides technical assistance on an as-needed basis, and provides reports as needed. Assistance will continue in 2020.

NYSCA provides on-site assistance with evaluation of programs and services to overall CACs in New York State on an ongoing basis.

NYSCA, in partnership with OCFS, conducted a survey on the values and needs of all of MDTs/CACs. This survey was used as an assessment tool to gauge the needs of all the counties
in the state when responding to child abuse. The comprehensive assessment was a component in the development of the 2018-2020 CJA recommendations.

In 2019, NYSCA completed a statewide community assessment to better understand the diverse landscape of New York State as well as its varying needs. When we better understand our state’s communities, NYSCA will be able to improve our service delivery to our members, thereby strengthening children and families.

Collaborations

NYSCA hosts a listserv where CACs can post information, and OCFS information is provided. In 2019, over 65 postings were completed.

New York State is divided into six regions that hold combined regional in-person and conference-call meetings to increase collaboration and network among CACs. This also helps CACs and NYSCA share information and resources. Ten regional meetings were held in 2019, with one in each region that included representatives from OCFS.

Advocating and Supporting

NYSCA provides technical assistance to all CACs in the state on an ongoing basis. This includes in-person assistance on-site, phone/conference calls or email communication.

OCFS communicates with NYSCA after completed site-visits with recommendations on support needed by a CAC. NYSCA then works with individual CACs with technical assistance and support to address areas of need.

Sustainability

The NYSCA board and staff constantly seek funding opportunities to continue providing support, advocacy, and technical assistance to all CACs in New York State.

Staffing for NYSCA has increased due to OCFS’s financial support, allowing the chapter to provide needed resources and assistance to CACs.

Community Awareness

NYSCA hosts a website that provides information on child abuse in the state and country, promotes events pertinent to the field of child abuse and job postings. The website was revamped and launched in 2018.

NYSCA publishes e-newsletters for the listserv, including information on upcoming events and conferences, spotlights CAC news, and provides updates on funding opportunities.

MDT and CAC Training

NYSCA continues to offer trainings throughout the state meeting the needs of CACs.

Trainings that were facilitated by NYSCA included:

- How Do I Defend My Interview in Court
- You’re Awesome! Improving Your Advocacy Skills
- Identifying and Balancing Compassion Satisfaction, Compassion Fatigue
- Dealing with Stress and Uncertainty
• Working Remotely and Maintaining a Community
• A Steady Hand at the Helm
• Intro to ACEs
• Medical Exam at the Child Advocacy Center
• TF-CBT Training
• Less is More Training
• Victim Advocacy Training
• Microaggression and Implicit Bias
• Less is More Train the Trainer
• NYSCA Leadership Conference
• Microaggression and Implicit Bias

Trainings such as those listed, as well as others requested by CACs, will continue to be offered throughout 2021. NYSCA surveys CACs regarding training needs, and ongoing opportunities are offered. The addition of an Education and Training coordinator through the NYSCA chapter has allowed for greater efforts in this area as well as assessment of the needs of our programs.

NYSCA held their annual conference virtually in October 2020, offering keynote presentations and 12 breakout sessions.

The CJTF also utilized information from approved CACs’ data collection systems provided by NYSCA as well the Statewide Central Register (SCR) data on child abuse and maltreatment from the OCFS Data Warehouse. The analysis of this information helped guide the recommendations made by the CJTF by providing concrete data regarding topics of concern. Surveys of every county were conducted by NYSCA to determine the level of multidisciplinary response. Task force members were able to utilize this information to determine gaps in service. This led to a focus on exploring how to use regional CACs to meet the needs of areas recognized to be underserved.

In 2012, NYSCA adopted the use of the Outcome Measurements System (OMS) by piloting it with 16 CACs. Now that all CACs have one case tracking system, OMS is used statewide to learn about the quality of services provided to children and families, as well as the use of services for the team member disciplines. Analysis of the 2020 data indicates the following:

• 95 percent of team members agreed that the CAC model fosters collaboration.
• 97 percent of caregivers agreed that their child felt safe at the center. See Appendices.

Accomplishments for 2020-2021

CJA staff conducted 61 virtual technical assistance and/or monitoring reviews of CACs during 2020. CACs and CJA staff both had to pivot due to the COVID-19 pandemic to conduct all technical assistance virtually. Ultimately, all objectives were achieved. Some CACs required multiple virtual visits to provide necessary program development services. Many consultations can be very lengthy and/or require considerable follow-up.

CJA staff worked to develop 62 contracts during the year. This included work on the following:
• Assisting in the development of 50 state and federally funded county or regional work plans, performance targets and budgets
• Assisting in the development and or monitoring of five federally funded contracts for the regional medical programs and seven federally funded contracts for the mobile CAC units, work plans, performance targets and budgets
• Three statewide initiatives through the CJA program
• Assisting program staff with the contract development process
• Assisting program staff with spending adjustments, specifically around the reallocation of funds due to the COVID-19 pandemic
• Assisting in the development of five CAC program expansions statewide and formal OCFS approval for four out of the five
• Providing technical assistance to programs with mobile CAC units and assessing their utilization and effectiveness
• Providing technical assistance to programs regarding the transition to the new statewide data tracking system, “Collaborate”

CJA staff continues to collaborate on intra-agency initiatives with OCFS’s Bureau of Training, Office of Regional Operations and Office of Strategic Planning and Policy Development on the needs of the MDTs as it relates to forensic interviewing training.

Child-First® is still the forensic interviewing training offered by OCFS in New York State. This five-day, 40-hour program provides training on the Child-First® forensic interview protocol, child development, memory and suggestibility, testifying in court, legal issues, and preparing children for court by incorporating lecture and discussion as well as an interview practicum with actors portraying child victims. During the practicum, each student can develop his or her interviewing skills and receive feedback from experts who are on the faculty.

As of FFY 2020, CJA program staff polled CAC/MDTs throughout the state to rank special topic forensic interviewing webinar trainings. Based on the results, new and existing webinars were prioritized based on the feedback from the CAC/MDTs and offered virtually to everyone. CJA program staff also previews and provides feedback on the training/webinar material before they are issued.

CJA program staff also provided nominations of CAC/MDT members to the Northeast Regional Children’s Advocacy Center training specialist for a forensic interviewing mentoring program. The goals of the mentoring and consultation groups are:

• Provide structured feedback to child forensic interviewers
• Provide opportunities to discuss issues and challenges in conducting forensic interviews of children
• Increase knowledge of peer-reviewed literature related to the field of child forensic interviewing
• Provide a networking forum for child forensic interviewers

The training includes:

• Seven group meetings, 90 minutes each
• Two peer review meetings with group leader
• Required readings
The entire training will take approximately 12 to 14 hours to complete for the seven-month period. Mentoring and Consultation Groups is in session. Four Mentoring and Consultation Groups, with up to 10 participants in each group, will be created, and each group will be assigned to a highly skilled forensic interview specialist/trainer. One group will be dedicated to Spanish-speaking forensic interviewers.

In this cohort of 10 individuals, four from New York State are included: one individual from Northern NY, Wayne County, Orange County and Sullivan County. OCFS is hopeful that this initiative is successful and these Mentoring and Consultation Groups can support the professional education and development of CAC/MDT members statewide.

In 2020, 20 five-day child forensic interviewing trainings, with a total of 428 trainees, and 18 advanced issues in forensic interviewing trainings, Successful Outcomes and Emerging Issues, were conducted with a total of 397 trainees. In addition, six webinars were conducted with a total of 529 trainees. These webinars included Interviewing Children with Disabilities, Introducing Physical Evidence in Forensic Interviews, Like a Footprint in Wet Cement: Understanding the Impact of Trauma on Children, Overcoming Difficult Situations in Our Forensic Interviews, Physical Abuse and Poly-victimization, and Forensic Interviews and the Research. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all trainings pivoted to a virtual format. There was excellent feedback from the MDTs regarding the adaptability of the trainings. Accessibility to training is no longer an issue for most MDTs. Some MDTs continue to choose forensic interviewing best practice (FIBP), the previous model offered in New York State, or other nationally recognized and approved forensic interviewing models. OCFS does not require a specific protocol or model, but it must be a nationally approved model and consistent with OCFS standards.

CJA staff also continued inter-agency collaborations with staff from the Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS), Office of Victim Services (OVS) and the New York State Police (NYSP). CJA staff continues to meet with DCJS, NYSP and OVS to collaborate to provide support to the CACs. As of FFY 2020, with the assistance of OVS, the remaining counties, except for Livingston County, have received formal approval from OCFS for their CAC/MDTs. Wayne County stands as the only county still in the development phase, and CJA program staff continues technical assistance efforts to ensure formal OCFS approval by the end of the calendar year. Sixty-one counties have an existing or developing CAC in their county, a CAC on the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe reservation, and access to a CAC, either through a stand-alone CAC, satellite location, and/or mobile unit.

As of FFY 2020, the OCFS partnership with OVS led to the procurement of funding to commence the regional medical program. OCFS and CJA staff will work to develop a medical program in each of the five regional CACs, which has a catchment area of 15 counties and one Native American reservation.

Medical providers will be co-located at each CAC in the region at least one (1) day a week. Specialized medical exams for child victims will be provided in each county to further reduce trauma to the child and create accessibility for all child victims, especially in rural communities. Medical providers will be required to attend monthly case reviews and be available for case consultation to all CAC/MDT members.

CJA staff will provide technical assistance and support for the regional underserved counties to identify providers, develop agreements with the providers, and assist in the development and review of policies and procedures that comply with OCFS program standards.
Additionally, CJA staff is in active discussions with OVS, with hopes to procure extended funding for the seven mobile CAC units and the five CAC expansion programs. This funding will be instrumental for continued CAC/MDT operations involving stand-alone CACs and mobile units, with a catchment area of 14 counties.

As of FFY 2020, CJA staff have begun discussions with DCJS and NYSP to develop a cross-training initiative for law enforcement and child protective services, primarily around suspected child abuse- or neglect-related child fatalities. The primary goal is to improve the assessment and investigation of these cases. These cross-training will help to determine specific outcomes, changes in practice, and any related improvements to the system’s handling of cases of child fatalities. Also, other efforts such as media campaigns are being discussed, with hopes of providing outreach and gaining awareness to potential contributing factors of suspected child abuse- or neglect-related child fatalities.

CJA staff continued to work closely with the New York State Police Special Victims Unit (NYSPSVU) regarding their five-day comprehensive training seminar for professionals on the investigation of sex offenses titled, Crimes Against Children Training Seminar. Attendees typically include law enforcement, child protective services, victim advocates, medical personnel, district attorneys, and other multidisciplinary team members. Topics include sex trafficking, forensic interviewing, victimology, the medical evaluation of child victims, using forensic sciences in child abuse investigations, investigations involving persons with disabilities, crime scene investigations and legal perspectives. Unfortunately, the April 6-10, 2020, seminar was cancelled due to the sudden onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. The NYSPSVU opted not to hold the seminar virtually in the spring of 2021. They are diligently exploring options and are hopeful to hold the seminar in person during the Fall of 2021.

Unfortunately, with the sudden onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2020 Bivona CAC Child Abuse Summit also did not occur. There was simply not enough time and resources to hold the summit virtually. However, in response to COVID-19, the Bivona Child Abuse Summit team has made the decision to transform this event to a virtual experience for 2021. Participants will have access to the Summit’s event app and website, with access to networking, sessions, and sponsors. CJA funds will support the 2021 Bivona Child Advocacy Center Virtual Child Abuse Summit on May 19, 2021. With a primary focus on providing the most up-to-date resources and trends in child abuse intervention and prevention, the Summit offers a wide range of workshops and speakers appropriate for a variety of disciplines. Professionals encouraged to attend the Summit include social workers, law enforcement, legal professionals, judges, mental health and medical professionals, school personnel, daycare providers, child advocacy center staff, and the faith-based community. Workshops are presented by national and international experts and include a wide variety of topics. Summit attendees leave with an incredible amount of information, as well as an understanding about the community resources available for children and families. The goal of the Bivona Child Abuse Summit is to educate members of our community — and beyond — about collaborative ways to prevent, treat, and investigate child abuse.

The Child Advocacy Center of the Finger Lakes, which is one of five regional CAC programs in the state, hosted its sixth annual Believe Conference. More than 50 professionals attended the virtual conference, which featured workshops on cultural competency, human trafficking, trauma, working with families, and more.
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 2018 APSR related to the passage of CARA.

New York State’s 2018 Annual Progress and Services Report, submitted to the federal government on June 30, 2017, specifies the state laws, regulations, and procedures that place New York State 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 substance abuse or withdrawal symptoms or Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder.

As noted in the 2018 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;

Local Commissioners 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 New York State law. This LCM also serves to remind LDSSs of the procedures already in place that constitute New York State’s compliance with the CAPTA amendments.

During this past year, OCFS, OASAS and DOH have also been meeting to develop and implement a consistent Plan of Safe Care that can be used not only by CPS, but also the treatment provider agencies and hospital staff. The Plan of Safe Care template has been developed and approved to be used by all three systems. The implementation of the Plan of Safe Care is being done in three stages.

The first stage is through the child welfare system. OCFS will be requiring the completion and monitoring of the Plan of Safe Care by the LDSS for those reports registered by the New York State Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment that involve infants under the age of one who are born prenatally exposed to substances (both legal and illegal) and for their caregiver. OCFS is working on making system changes that will allow for the collection of data specific to the Plans of Safe Care. OCFS has developed and published a Local Commissioners Memorandum (LCM), 18-OCFS-LCM-06, Plan of Safe Care Forms, that informed LDSSs of the requirement to use the approved template when developing the Plan of Safe Care.

OCFS also updated the New York State Child Protective Services Manual to include a section specifically devoted to the Plan of Safe Care. This section of the manual explains the purpose and requirements of the Plan of Safe Care. The Plan of Safe Care template can be easily located in the Appendices section (chapter 14) of the manual.

The next phase involves women who are pregnant and receiving substance abuse treatment from a service provider. OASAS will work with service providers to implement and monitor the Plan of Safe Care so upon giving birth the mother and her child will have a Plan of Safe Care already developed.

The third phase involves women who are under the care of a doctor, who have been prescribed medications during her pregnancy that may impact the infant upon birth. If a Plan of Safe Care has not been developed by the physician prior to giving birth, the birthing hospital will develop the Plan of Safe Care and forward the Plan of Safe Care to the mother’s physician and/or the child’s pediatrician for monitoring.

New York State did not require changes to law, policy, or procedure.
The release and publication of 17-OCFS-LCM-03 informs 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 New York State law. This LCM also serves to remind LDSSs of the procedures already in place that constitute New York State’s compliance with the CAPTA amendments. As identified above, New York State released 18-OCFS-LCM-06, which requires LDSSs use the Plan of Safe Care Form, OCFS-2196 when developing a plan of safe care.

New York State highlighted the requirements and expectations for plans of safe care. Commissioners of LDSSs 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 need 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 New York State 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 New York State. As stated in the 2017 APSR, Governor Andrew Cuomo reconvened a special advisory group comprised of representatives from treatment and service provider agencies, individuals in recovery recovering and representatives from the New York State Department of Health (DOH), Office of Addiction Services and Supports (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/ 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.

Monitoring:

OCFS will continue to access information from CONNECTIONS on infants with the following designated safety factors:
- Child has a positive toxicology for legal or illegal drugs and/or alcohol
- Caretaker(s) currently abuses alcohol, to the extent that it seriously affects his/her ability to supervise, protect or care for the child(ren)
- 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. During this past year, OCFS, OASAS and DOH have been meeting to develop and implement a consistent Plan of Safe Care that can be used not only by CPS, but also by the treatment provider agencies and hospital staff. The Plan of Safe Care template has been finalized, and OCFS is working on making additional system changes that will allow for the collection of the required data elements.

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 New York State. 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 New York State. 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. Stakeholders in Washington and Warren counties have also begun to work on increasing screening and referring to treatment when indicated. 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. The group in both Onondaga and in the Albany, region have had three on-site visits from the technical assistance team.

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

In November of 2019, OCFS published the brochure, *Guidance for Parents Using Substances or in Recovery*, Pub. 5212. This brochure explains the role of child protective services (CPS) related to substance abuse and provides tips for families on how to work together with CPS caseworkers for the family.

**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), updated accompanying form OCFS-3922 (Revised 07/2017), 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 New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA). This policy requires that all LDSSs designate a human trafficking liaison in their district to receive referrals for services for state-confirmed human trafficking victims.

OCFS has also developed the following policy and guidance to address sex trafficking and provide services to victims, 15-OCFS-INF-08 *Promoting Awareness and Best Practices to Address Human Trafficking*, 16-OCFS-ADM-09 Protocols and Procedures for Locating and Responding to Children and Youth Missing From Foster Care and Non-Foster Care (discussed further below), and with 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 made 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*, is 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. All new foster care, child protective and preventive staff, and new hires are required 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 New York State law in order to meet the federal requirement of May 29, 2017. Building on work initiated in 2018, OCFS created the allegation of child abuse, “child sex trafficking” in 2019.  Policy 19-OCFS-ADM-11 *Sex Trafficking Allegation* was issued to the LDSSs and other applicable agencies that directs all mandated reporters by New York State Law to with reasonable cause to suspect a youth is being trafficked to make a report to the Statewide Central Registry. An investigation will then follow by the CAC, the MDT and/or Law Enforcement.
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.

New York State 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 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 VAs of the requirements regarding the response to youth who are absent without consent, missing or abducted from care or home as set forth in the federal Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act (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, the act 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 VAs — to obtain their perspective on the creation and implementation of procedures and protocols for preventing and reporting children who are absent without consent, missing, or abducted, working with these children upon their return to identify the reasons for their leaving and their experiences while gone, and taking steps to prevent this from occurring again.

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

To assist LDSSs and VAs, OCFS released Informational Letter (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, New York State submitted CAPTA Assurance, signed by Governor Andrew M. Cuomo, to the ACF regional office on January 17, 2017.

Additional and Ongoing Activities

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

Through this funding, OCFS has launched the Safe Harbour: NY program, a statewide child welfare-based response to the commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) and trafficking. In 2019, OCFS funded 52 municipalities through LDSSs and Youth Bureaus. To implement Safe Harbour: NY locally, counties are expected to implement all elements of the Blueprint for Building a Child Welfare Response to Commercially Sexually Exploited and Trafficked Youth. Through this coordinated, statewide response, Safe Harbour: NY aims to increase identification of CSEC and trafficking victims and provide services through New York State’s child welfare and allied youth service systems. In 2020, we reached full statewide participation by all counties in the Safe Harbour: NY program.
Key elements of Safe Harbour: NY include 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: https://ocfs.ny.gov/main/humantrafficking/
- 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’s response to the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act into the Safe Harbour: NY program

**Family First Prevention Services Act**

In 2020, OCFS engaged internal and external stakeholders, including youth with lived experience, in preparation for implementation of Family First. OCFS will be creating a new program model to provide high quality residential care and services to youth who have experienced or are at risk of sex trafficking; these programs will be certified as QRTP-exceptions.

**CJA Implementation**

In 2017, 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 forensic interviewing training and inviting Safe Harbour: NY partners to CJS-sponsored events.

CJA staff continues to collaborate on intra-agency initiatives with OCFS’s Bureau of Training, Office of Regional Operations, and Office of Strategic Planning and Policy Development on the needs of the MDTs as it relates to Forensic Interviewing Training.
In 2017, a new model of forensic interviewing training, Child-First®, was offered in New York State. Child-First® training, conducted at the Gunderson National Child Protection Training Center (Gunderson NCPTC), is designed for those who are part of a multidisciplinary team (MDT). This five-day, 40-hour program provides training on the Child-First® Forensic Interview Protocol, child development, memory and suggestibility, testifying in court, legal issues, and preparing children for court by incorporating lecture and discussion as well as an interview practicum with actors portraying child victims. During the practicum, each student has the opportunity to develop their interviewing skills and receive feedback from faculty experts.

In 2019, 15 five-day Child Forensic Interviewing Trainings and 13 Advanced Forensic Interviewing trainings were conducted. In addition, four webinars were conducted on emerging issues in the field and those requested by the MDTs. There has been excellent feedback from the MDTs about the new training model. Accessibility to training is no longer an issue for most MDTs. Some MDTs are choosing to continue with Forensic Interviewing Best Practice (FIBP), the previous model offered in New York State or another approved forensic interviewing protocol. OCFS does not require a specific protocol, but it must be a nationally approved model and consistent with OCFS standards.

For those MDTs that have adopted the Child-First® Forensic Interview Protocol model, the transition process has been reported to be very smooth. Some MDTs are choosing to continue with the Forensic Interviewing Best Practice (FIBP) protocol, this was the previous model offered by OCFS's Bureau of Training. The MDTs have the option of adopting a specific model of forensic interviewing as OCFS does not require a specific protocol. MDTs must however utilize a nationally recognized and generally accepted model that is consistent with OCFS program standards.

CJA staff continued inter-agency collaborations with staff from DCJS, OVS, and NYSP. CJA staff were actively involved in updating two training initiatives (Less is More and First Responder) supported by the New York State Chapter of the National Children’s Alliance (NCA) and DCJS. CJA staff continue to meet quarterly with DCJS, NYSP and OVS to collaborate and provide support to the CACs. In 2019, with the assistance of OVS, all counties will have an active MDT and access to a CAC either through a stand-alone CAC, satellite location or mobile unit, except for one. CJA staff continue to reach out to this LDSS in hopes of developing a CAC.

OCFS has actively addressed the commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) and human trafficking through the implementation of the federal Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act and development of resources for statewide use. Key technical assistance documents include Responding to Commercially Sexually Exploited and Trafficked Youth: A Handbook for Child Serving Professionals and Responding to Commercially Sexually Exploited and Trafficked Youth: A Blueprint for Systems of Care in New York State (The Blueprint). The handbook contains practical guidance for professionals who work directly with trafficked, exploited, and at-risk youth. The “Blueprint” provides formal guidance to child welfare systems, voluntary agencies, legal and victim advocates, law enforcement and the courts system and other organizations that work with trafficked, exploited, and at-risk youth. These and many other
technical assistance resources are available on OCFS’s human trafficking webpage, revised in January of 2017: http://ocfs.ny.gov/main/humantrafficking/default.asp.

In 2017, OCFS launched a CSEC Train-the-Trainer training for professionals. The training was delivered four times in 2018. Participants are now capacitated to deliver awareness and skill-building training on how to identify and serve CSEC and at-risk youth. Additional sessions will be held in 2019. Additional OCFS trainings on CSEC and Human Trafficking are available to the public through the Human Services Learning Center (https://www.hslcnys.org/hslc/).

Training and technical assistance is also supported via the annual OCFS Anti-Trafficking Summit. In 2017 a keynote was delivered by Katherine Chon, Director of the Office on Trafficking in Persons within the Administration for Children and Families at the US Department of Health and Human Services. In 2020, the event was held virtually. The theme was “Making Connections: Navigating Social Media Safely with Youth” and featured presenters from national trafficking partners including Shared Hope, NCMEC and Thorne, as well as presentations from some of our Safe Harbour coordinators. The virtual platform allowed OCFS to reach over 150 participants in each of the 9 sessions. OCFS also collaborated with other state agencies, OTDA and DCJS, to host a webinar regarding the various state screening and confirmation processes related to trafficking and CSEC in 2020.

In 2019, OCFS continued to receive funding through the enacted New York State budget to support the Safe Harbour for Exploited Children Act that protects commercially, sexually exploited children (CSEC) by recognizing them as victims and offers services that pave the way for better outcomes. 2020 funds allowed for these services to expand to each of NY’s counties, led by LDSSs and youth bureaus.

Through this coordinated response, Safe Harbour: NY aims to increase the identification of CSEC and trafficking victims and provide services through New York’s child welfare and allied youth service systems.

Safe Harbour: NY implementation is guided by the Blueprint for Building a Child Welfare Response to Commercially Sexually Exploited and Trafficked Youth and focuses on the following elements:

- Development of a critical multidisciplinary partner team to guide county efforts
- Enhancement of existing service systems to best meet the needs of trafficked, sexually exploited, and at-risk youth by developing policies and protocols to more effectively and efficiently support trafficked, sexually exploited, and at-risk youth
- Consider available service assets, alleviate gaps in services and supports in order to better meet the needs of trafficked, sexually exploited, and at-risk youth
- Develop a comprehensive, local plan to train relevant professionals to identify and address child trafficking and sexual exploitation
- Raise public awareness of human trafficking as a local issue
- Engage trafficked, sexually exploited, and at-risk youth in supportive services to promote their recovery from victimization
• Collect data on youth identified and served through program efforts

CJA staff assisted in the development of several specialized training initiatives for MDT/CAC members, and for the treatment, management, and prosecution of child abuse cases, particularly those involving sexual abuse and exploitation. CJA funds supported the 2019 Bivona Summit, which was attended by over one thousand professionals from various disciplines across the state, the third annual Hope Changes Everything conference in Plattsburgh, NY, the Stand Against Child Abuse conference in Syracuse, NY and the Believe conference in Geneva, NY.

CJA staff continued to establish and maintain linkages with other national, state, and local organizations that support interagency and multidisciplinary collaboration on child abuse cases, particularly child sexual abuse cases. These collaborations included attending meetings and/or teleconferences with the following:

- 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
- Prevent Child Abuse New York
- 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
- New York State Police Sex Offense Training Seminar

Further, CJA staff assisted in the development of several specialized training initiatives for MDT/CAC members, and for the treatment, management, and prosecution of child abuse cases, particularly those involving sexual abuse and exploitation. CJA funds also supported the 2019 Bivona Summit, which was attended by over one thousand professionals from various disciplines across the state, the first annual Hope Changes Everything conference in Plattsburgh, NY, the Stand Against Child Abuse conference in Syracuse, NY and the Believe conference in Geneva, NY.

CJA staff worked closely with the New York State Police Special Victims Unit to conduct a five-day comprehensive training seminar for professionals on the investigation of sex offenses titled, “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 on April 1-5, 2019. It included topics such as sex trafficking; forensic interviewing; victimology; the medical evaluation of child victims; the use of forensic sciences in child abuse investigations; investigations involving persons with disabilities; crime scene investigations; and legal perspectives. The next training was scheduled for April 6-10, 2020, which was postponed due to COVID-19.
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 utilized to protect and support victims, and to treat and support the family. This course is 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 2019 recommendations. In 2021, the New York State Citizen Review Panels for Child Protective Services have focused their advocacy voice on recommendations to strengthen and support New York State’s child welfare workforce. The recommendations were submitted by required statutory deadline of February 1, 2020. This is attached as Appendix A. The response from OCFS, Appendix B, describes how the state will address the recommendation 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 (CBCAP)

Accomplishments for 2020-2021

Both the Trust Fund and CBCAP funding recognize the multigenerational nature of family violence and emphasize primary prevention and secondary prevention. Both seek to engage families before the system intervenes and emphasize a strength-based approach to services. Trust Fund and CBCAP initiatives 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 well-being through enhanced family support services.

Funded programs address the following outcomes, which align with efforts at the local, state, and federal level to promote the safety, permanency, and well-being of children and families:

- 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 (Trust Fund)

In 2021, 23 programs across New York State continued contracts to provide services to strengthen and support families. The programs are connected to community partners, including LDSSs, to engage families in services. Programs were successful in providing services and collecting data on 2,613 adults and 1,853 children during the year. There was a slight decrease in the number of participants served following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020. However, programs quickly adapted to the situation and continued to engage a substantial number of families in services.

One adaptation was to address the increased needs of families related to one protective factor: concrete support in times of need. Programs addressed concrete needs by connecting more families to resources such as food pantries, Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Medicaid and by delivering items to families including cleaning supplies, food, and diapers. Programs drew upon their host agency resources, using in-kind donations, unrestricted funds, and grant funds when permitted to support this work. As the families’ basic needs were met, the programs were able to shift attention to building the other protective factors.

Programs were also able to shift from in-person services to virtual to adhere to state and national public health guidelines. This included providing services via phone, video conferencing, and texts, and providing socially distant in-person services outdoors. Programs delivered parent handouts, developmental toys, and books for the families to use during virtual sessions. Parent education workshops and playgroups were offered using systems such as Skype and Zoom. As regions moved to a level of reopening, some programs resumed in-person services while adhering to social distancing and mask-wearing guidelines.

These adaptations required programs to overcome challenges. Some programs lacked technological capacity and some families lacked devices, internet, or minutes on their cell phone to access services remotely. Additional information regarding the status of funded community-
based prevention programs can be found at https://ocfs.ny.gov/search/docs.php?find=cbp-status&sortby=date&sortdir=desc&lang=%25&type=2&topic=%25.

Another highlight of 2020 was the inception of monthly video calls with prevention programs. These calls began in April to provide a venue for communication and peer support using the Standards of Quality framework.

Listed below are the number of individuals assisted by Trust Fund programs during the reporting period, including during the pandemic.

- **Child abuse prevention programs:**
  - 2,133 adults
  - 1,731 children

- **Domestic violence prevention programs:**
  - 194 adults
  - 122 children

- **Intergenerational family violence prevention services and trainings:**
  - 286 community members and professionals

- **Protective Factors Trainings through Prevent Child Abuse NY:**
  - 9 Participants trained: 649

- **Enough Abuse Campaign (EAC) through Prevent Child Abuse NY:**
  - EAC trainings: 22 Participants trained: 303
  - Train the trainer: 2 Number of new trainers: 12

The 2020 CBCAP federal grant award of $3,122,544.00 allows OCFS to continue to fund the programs awarded grants under the 2019 Trust Fund RFP, including Family Resource Centers (FRC) and other evidenced-based parenting education programs engaged in efforts to support high risk families and work collaboratively with LDSSs, where appropriate. This FY2020 grant was an increase from the FY2019 grant and allows OCFS to fund additional prevention programs from the 2019 Trust Fund RFP approved-but-not-funded list.

In 2020, adults and children accessed crucial support and resources from community-based programs that received Trust Fund or CBCAP funding. 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
- Increased awareness of elder abuse

In this reporting period, six Family Resource Center (FRC) programs offering a total of 14 FRC sites, one mobile FRC, and 10 additional child abuse prevention programs, the parent helpline, regional child abuse prevention initiatives and events, and public education materials were supported with a combination of state and federal funds. CBCAP funds were also used to support the existing Enough Abuse Campaign. These additional child abuse prevention programs partner with families to provide home visits, parenting education, therapeutic services for children and parents, engagement of teen parents and refugee families, and to connect at-risk families to local
resources. CBCAP funds were also used to support the ongoing training and implementation of SOQ training and support across most of the prevention programs.

As in past years, the following core elements were required for all child abuse prevention programs funded under the Trust Fund:

- Opportunities for caregivers to practice skills with children
- Appropriate group size
- Effective dosage/intensity of services
- Peer support and shared leadership
- Physical space appropriate for adult and child activities
- Increased access to child care, transportation, and other concrete supports and services
- Developmentally appropriate parent/child activities
- Creative outreach efforts, needs assessments, community referrals, and follow up
- Home visits, as applicable

Services include home visits, parenting education, therapeutic services for children and parents, and connecting at-risk families to local resources. These funded programs serve families from a wide range of educational and ethnic backgrounds, language capacities, and economic conditions. Some programs make focused efforts to reach specific populations, such as teen parents, families experiencing homelessness, and families with a parent or child who has a disability.

OCFS continues to distribute public education materials related to critical child safety issues. These materials are provided free of charge and include prevention tip sheets, brochures, and other items. In 2020, over 31,000 items were requested and provided for families throughout New York State. Publications can be downloaded or ordered from the OCFS website at: https://ocfs.ny.gov/main/cps/tips.asp.

There are ongoing concerns with preventable child fatalities related to unsafe sleep environments. OCFS collects data on child fatalities through Child Fatality Review Teams and other data sources. Contributing factors include unfamiliarity with safe sleep practices and a lack of a safe sleep space. During this reporting period, OCFS provided concrete support for families in need through 1,366 portable “pack ‘n plays,” 436 child car safety seats, 2,164 large cans of infant formula, 630 cases of baby wipes, and 1,250 cases of diapers for families. These items were purchased with OCFS funds from a variety of sources. The items were distributed through various means: LDSSs, including Native American tribal entities; CFRTs; kinship and permanency programs; HFNY programs; community-based organizations; and substance abuse service programs funded by the New York State Office of Addiction Services and Supports. The COVID-19 pandemic, including the need for New York State to totally shutdown and effectively quarantine all but the essential workers, created an increased demand for all these items. In addition, OCFS promotes safe sleep practices through information on the website and in printed materials.

A significant partner in New York State’s child abuse prevention work is Prevent Child Abuse New York (PCANY). OCFS maintains a close relationship with PCANY through funding, setting strategic direction of some PCANY initiatives, and coordinating efforts. PCANY activities funded through OCFS include the following:

- Regional Child Abuse Prevention Initiatives utilizing the Protective Factors Framework with over 649 individuals trained and convening cross-system coalitions in four
Parent Information and Resource Center, including the Parent Helpline that assisted 1,302 individuals in 2020 through calls, emails, in-person requests, and website searches. All these activities include a parent leadership/engagement component.

OCFS uses data to support program improvement to enhance outcomes for families being served by Trust Fund and CBCAP-funded programs. As in past years, a key component of this is the OCFS prevention database. The information collected is used by OCFS and by programs to evaluate the effectiveness of services, utilization rates, retention of families, and family engagement. Eighteen (18) reports can be utilized to assess the effectiveness of the services and other aspects of programs funded through CBCAP.

**Plans for 2021-2022**

In addition to plans described earlier in this section, the plan for the coming year includes continued funding of the following primary and secondary prevention programs and, if new funding becomes available, new contracts for programs on the 2019 Trust Fund RFP approved-but-not-funded list will be funded:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Summary of Services</th>
<th>Service Area</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Albany County Opportunity Inc.</td>
<td>Parenting education workshops, educational supports, and materials, while increasing protective factors in families.</td>
<td>Albany County, City of Albany</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child &amp; Family Resources Inc.</td>
<td>Drop-in care program for children while caregivers attend appointments, run errands, or need respite for self-care; weekly year-long parenting education groups; group for grandparents. Components of domestic violence prevention education and intergenerational abuse prevention will also be included as part of ongoing groups.</td>
<td>Ontario, Seneca, and Yates Counties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Care Coordinating Council of the North Country, Inc.</td>
<td>Three Family Resource Centers offering families with young children a broad array of resources and programs to support families including parenting education, parent-child playgroups, developmental screenings, and services for parents of children with special needs. Parenting education classes using the Incredible Years and the Nurturing Parent Program.</td>
<td>Clinton, Franklin, and Essex Counties</td>
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<td>Program</td>
<td>Summary of Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child Development Council of Central New York, Inc.</td>
<td>Identify support services needed to address issues related to the initial allegations of a hotline report. Will collaborate in referrals to other services related to meeting basic needs, housing, health, mental health, and substance abuse services. Families are referred from CPS and other sources for preventive work.</td>
<td>Cortland County</td>
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<tr>
<td>Children of Promise, NYC</td>
<td>The program offers clinical therapy and psychoeducation through trauma-informed support groups combined with individual and family therapy through the co-located outpatient mental health clinic.</td>
<td>Community District 6 of the South Bronx.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cornell Cooperative Extension Association of Tioga County</td>
<td>Family Resource Centers offer early and comprehensive support including evidence-based parenting education, information and referral, parent-child activities, linkages with early intervention and health services, support groups, community networking, parent leadership, family social activities, and parenting support/home visits for families, including those with children in foster care.</td>
<td>Primarily Tioga County; some participants residing in neighboring counties such as Broome, Tompkins, Chemung, and Bradford County Pennsylvania</td>
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<tr>
<td>Family Help Center Inc.</td>
<td>An expansion of an evidence-based early childhood parent-training program targeting at-risk families and children enrolled at a child care center. Families of focus in this program are those in the homeless shelter system. The evidence-based models used in the program are Parents Interaction with Infants (PIWI) and Positive Solution for Families (PSF) and will teach parents a multitude of parenting skills and strategies.</td>
<td>City of Buffalo and Erie County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forestdale. Inc.</td>
<td>Focuses on domestic violence in families and individuals who are most at risk. Services are provided to survivors, perpetrators, and children who have witnessed and/or experienced domestic violence. Serves low-income neighborhoods.</td>
<td>North, Northeast, &amp; Northwest Queens; Southeast &amp; Southwest Queens; Central &amp; West Central Queens; West Queens; Jamaica; Rockaways.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Program</td>
<td>Summary of Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>Harlem Dowling-Westside Center for Children and Family Services</td>
<td>Provides individual and group level evidence-based interventions to children/youth ages 0-17 and their parents/caregivers. Primarily serves diverse, low-income families in need of preventive and other critical support services, and families who present with safety and risk factors that can potentially result in maltreatment and/or abuse of children in the home. Programs/interventions provided include: Generation PMTO Treatment Program and Strong African American Families (SAAF) &amp; Strong African American Families-Teen (SAAF-t) Interventions.</td>
<td>Central Harlem – Communities of Washington Heights, Harlem, Jamaica, and Far Rockaway – Zip codes 10026, 10027, 10030, 10037, 10039.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jewish Family Service of Buffalo &amp; Erie County</td>
<td>Parenting education and support services provided to refugee populations in partnership with other refugee agencies that will provide translation services. Staff will be trained to deliver The Incredible Years evidenced-based program.</td>
<td>Buffalo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal Services of the Hudson Valley</td>
<td>The program will provide direct legal services and conduct relevant legal education training sessions to families with key emphasis on stabilizing permanent housing. Targeted demographics are low-income minority families and those at risk for child abuse or maltreatment and/or domestic, intergenerational, or family violence.</td>
<td>Westchester County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lifespan of Greater Rochester, Inc</td>
<td>Elder Abuse Prevention Program with dedicated social worker to serve as a liaison and resource for cases identified. Provide case management to individual LGBTQ+ elders. Will connect elders to services, including networks designed to serve LGBTQ+ individuals to reduce isolation and address specific risk factors for repeated victimization. Provide education to professionals and community members to promote awareness, understanding, and prevention of LGBTQ+ elder abuse.</td>
<td>Monroe County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanicville Area Community Services Center Inc.</td>
<td>Pre-K program; Formal Parenting Education group for parents; other resources like an FRC</td>
<td>Mechanicville area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program</td>
<td>Summary of Services</td>
<td>Service Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------</td>
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<td>-------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nassau BOCES Board of Cooperative Educational Services</td>
<td>Implements Parent Child+ model to engage parents in early childhood education, largely serving families in minority groups. Parent Child+ is an evidence-based, early childhood home-visiting program that focuses on children in high-risk populations.</td>
<td>Nassau County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niagara Falls City School District</td>
<td>Family Resource Center providing parenting education services</td>
<td>Niagara Falls, Niagara County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oswego County dba Oswego County Health Department</td>
<td>Oswego Healthy Families program will serve pregnant women and families with a child under the age of 3 months in high-risk areas; visiting program will utilize the HFA Model. Following the program model using a strength-based approach and curriculum guidance, services focus on supporting a nurturing parent-child relationship and promoting healthy growth and development.</td>
<td>Oswego County: Altmar, Parish, Pulaski, and Richmond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pro Action of Steuben and Yates, Inc.</td>
<td>FRC is using Your Journey Together curriculum to expand the program to serve more families and provide supervised visit hours.</td>
<td>Steuben County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rising Ground, Inc.</td>
<td>Services focus on parenting education utilizing the Parenting Journey curriculum, workshops, peer support, family recreation activities, structured playgroups, facilitating access to medical and mental health services, building opportunities for community involvement and parent leadership, and linkage to community supports.</td>
<td>Bronx Community Districts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program</td>
<td>Summary of Services</td>
<td>Service Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rochester Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children</td>
<td>Serves parents under the age of 21 and their children, targeting the recruitment of families in Rochester, an area of high teen pregnancy rates. Parenting education is provided and support by incorporating Infant Mental Health practices and evidence-based Parents as Teachers (PAT) services, in addition to positive parent-child activities. Counseling takes place in a variety of settings and address interpersonal relationship support and interpersonal violence, sexuality education, and trauma history. Case management is provided to collaboratively assess, plan, facilitate, and advocate for options and services. Participants are connected to health care, including pediatric care, family planning, and developmental screening with referrals/connections to Early Intervention when needs are identified. Other supports include self-sufficient efforts, educational and employment support, and peer support groups.</td>
<td>Rochester, Monroe County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tompkins County Department of Social Services</td>
<td>The project aims to engage disconnected at-risk young parents ages 16-24 in preventive education and services to reduce the occurrence/reoccurrence of abuse and violence in young families. Services include case management, psychoeducational component to address the trauma experienced by this population, planning and taking steps to bring about long-term health, wellness and stability that will build resilience and reduce the occurrence or reoccurrence of future abuse and violence in the family.</td>
<td>Tompkins County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Westchester Jewish Community Services</td>
<td>Parent-Child+ home visiting to assist parents in working with their child learning early literacy skills.</td>
<td>Westchester County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young Women’s Christian Association of Schenectady “YWCA of Schenectady”</td>
<td>The program addresses family violence by providing clinical counseling and parent education services for families experiencing domestic violence to prevent child abuse and make long-term positive changes for more stable homes.</td>
<td>Schenectady County</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
16. John H. Chafee Foster Care Program for Successful Transition to Adulthood (the Chafee Program)
John H. Chafee Foster Care Program for Successful Transition to Adulthood (the Chafee Program)

Agency Administering the Chafee Program

OCFS is responsible for the implementation of the John H. Chafee Foster Care Program for Successful Transition to Adulthood (the Chafee Program), including the federal Education and Training Voucher (ETV) program carried out under this plan. OCFS is committed 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 the federally funded Title IV-E Program for foster care youth in New York State since the program’s inception in 1987.

Program Design and Delivery

In New York State, the Chafee Program for current and former foster care youth who entered foster care at age 14 years or older is directly administered by OCFS for youth adjudicated as juvenile delinquents receiving care in its direct care residential facilities, and by each of the 58 local LDSSs, as well as the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe (hereinafter included in the reference to LDSS). In addition, LDSSs have the option of providing independent living services to foster care youth who are between the ages of 18 - 23 years old and former foster care recipients who are between the ages of 18 - 23 years old either directly or through a purchase of services contract. The Independent Living Program for each LDSS must have an array of services available (as described below) for youth who entered foster care at age 14 or older. See the Tribal Consultation section for other tribal information.

The Chafee 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 in or discharged from OCFS direct care facilities, is administered by Welfare Research, Inc. on behalf of OCFS in accordance with the terms of a contract.

Chafee Program

New York State has a state-supervised, locally administered child welfare system. New York State’s Chafee Programs for foster care and former foster care youth are administered by LDSSs. New York State’s ETV Program is administered by Welfare Research, Inc. In addition, OCFS has direct service responsibilities for the Chafee Program for youth adjudicated as juvenile delinquents receiving care in its directly operated residential facilities.

New York State’s Chafee 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. The Chafee program is designed to engage youth in age
and developmentally appropriate activities, positive youth development and experimental learning that reflects what youth experience in families that are intact.

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

The Chafee 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 youth maintain and support them and must assist the youth to establish contact with such agencies, service providers, or persons by making referrals and by counseling the youth 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, enter and succeed in postsecondary 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. Employment/Vocational Training, which should be selected based on assessments of interests and aptitudes, is provided, where appropriate, to youth in foster care who will not pursue postsecondary 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. Daily Life Skills Training offers, at a minimum, job search, driving instruction, career counseling/preparation, locating housing/apartments, budgeting and financial management and literacy skills, alcohol and substance abuse prevention, health education and risk prevention activities, home management skills including but not limited to, shopping, cooking and house cleaning, and family support and healthy marriage education training.

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 participating in the Independent Living programs and serve as an incentive to participate in the program; they also provide money management experience.

D. Aftercare Services are provided to youth who are between the ages of 18 and 21 years and include financial, housing, counseling, employment, education, and other appropriate supports 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. In New York State, the term, Another Planned Living Arrangement With a Permanency Resource (APPLA), is used in lieu of Independent Living. 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 the youth remains in the custody of the LDSS, 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 does not include shelter for adults, shelter for families, or any other congregate living arrangement that houses more than 10 unrelated persons, with the exception of college dormitories or new, innovative models which provide intensive employment or other supportive services in residential settings. In addition, youth receiving room and board services will be required to be supervised. Supervision will include at least monthly contact with the youth if the youth has not sustained adequate housing and income continuously for six months. Additionally, face-to-face quarterly contacts would be required. Quarterly casework contacts are required to be maintained for youth who have sustained adequate housing and income continuously for the past six months.

New York State’s approach to room and board services affords LDSSs the flexibility to determine how much of their Chafee Program 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 23; and the expenses that will be covered under the room and board program; and

- the maximum dollar amount that will be paid to any youth for room and board assistance; the length of time room and board assistance can be provided to eligible youth; and any stipulations related to employment or school for the provision of room and board.

In addition, New York State provides preventive housing services, including rent subsidies of up to $300 per month, and up to three years, to youth in foster care who have a goal of independent living when the acquisition of housing is needed to complete the discharge.

In New York State, 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 23 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 23. In addition, LDSSs 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.
New York State authorizes “Supervised Settings for Independent Living”. Such settings include a variety of housing options for older youth making the transition to self-sufficiency. Such options range in level of supervision and support offered depending on the needs of the youth.

- New York State’s Supervised Independent Living (SILP) Program assists older youth in making the transition to self-sufficiency. OCFS regulations enable LDSSs or VAs that operated supervised Independent Living Programs approved by OCFS to certify homes or apartments as supervised independent living units. The benefit of LDSSs or VAs 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 youths having access to and placed in these programs. OCFS regulations include 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.

- LDSSs or VAs may operate supervised settings of youth in foster care in dormitories, off-campus homes, or apartments for the purpose of enrollment and attendance in a college, university, or other postsecondary educational institution. LDSSs or VAs may approve such setting based on the need of the youth and his or her ability to live independently. Support must be given in accordance with the youth’s need for supervision and guidance.

- LDSSs or VAs may operate supervised settings for youth in foster care in community apartments, houses, room rentals, and ability to reside with non-foster care individuals. LDSSs or VAs may approve such setting based on the need of the youth and his or her ability to live independently. Support must be given in accordance with the youth’s need for supervision and guidance.

To support the development of these skills by youth, OCFS contracts with the SUNY Albany Research Foundation, Professional Development Program (PDP) to deliver trainings to child welfare staff at VAs, LDSSs, and other youth-serving agencies in the state 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. PDP has seven staff located in the six OCFS regional offices, who provide training and technical assistance to those preparing youth ages 14 to 21 years for self-sufficiency.

PDP provides multiple trainings and technical assistance for staff working with youth. These programs highlight skill building around issues such as life skills, education, employment, permanency options, risk prevention, health, communication essentials, budgeting, human trafficking, LGBTQ, cultural competency and accessing community resources. All trainings and technical assistance are regional and based on the needs of the youth-serving agency or LDSS. Annual "Youth Speak-Out Events" are held regionally, which give foster care youth the opportunity to voice their concerns, feelings, and discuss solutions about their foster care experience to state and local administrators, family court staff, and of course, their peers.

P.L. 116-260 Consolidated Appropriations Act-Supplemental Chafee

On December 27, 2020, the President signed P.L. 116-260 Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021, Division X, contains provisions that provides vital relief to young people and formerly in foster care. OCFS is working diligently on implementation strategies with young adults to promote that youth voice is driving this initiative. In addition, OCFS is working with WRI to develop an application portal to administer funds to eligible individuals between the ages of 18 through 26 to September 30, 2021, for youth and young adults impacted by the COVID-19 health pandemic period defined as April 1, 2020, to September 30, 2021. In addition, the portal application will be available to eligible individuals between the ages of 18 through 22 until September 30, 2022.

Services to Youth across the State

New York State’s Independent Living Program is administered by LDSS’s, and New York State’s ETV Program for foster care and former foster care youth is administered by WRI. 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 PDP, conducts ongoing needs assessments for training regarding working with youth in care of LDSS, VAs and youth serving agencies. Additionally, OCFS regional offices provide periodic technical assistance and monitoring of Independent Living service provisions. OCFS has also created Data Warehouse reports for LDSS to track youth receiving IL services. 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. 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 often completed by all youth placed in OCFS DJJOY facilities. The assessment uses the New York State Department of Labor CareerZone ONET interest assessment web portal. Career preparation is part of education/vocational programming where youth take part in a Career and Financial Management course.

Youth at select residential facilities can 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.

OCFS 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 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 treatment 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 will arrange to speak or meet with interested young fathers who have questions and to provide available information about 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 2018, the work under the Youth in Progress (YIP) contract was solely provided by 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 2021, the youth groups will continue to strive towards becoming youth driven, which promotes independence and leadership skills for the youth involved.

The Ongoing Goals of Youth Voice Meetings and Events:

- 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
- Increase awareness, availability, and participation in services provided to youth transitioning out of care

New York State will cooperate in any national evaluations of the effects of OCFS programs in achieving the purposes of CFCIP.

Accomplishments for 2020-2021

Youth Voice

The OCFS’ Youth Advisory Board (YAB) was both active and productive in 2020. The board kicked off in 2017 at the Hilton Garden Inn in Troy, New York. It was a powerful experience involving energetic conversations focused on sibling reunification, normalcy, transitional housing, and education within the foster care system. The YAB informs leadership, provides insight on foster care policies, and collaborates with the executive staff at OCFS. YAB’s mission is to make a difference for youth in care by giving them the voice to help create positive changes in the foster care system.

In 2020, YAB continued to meet virtually to discuss a range of policy issues that has the potential to create a positive impact on the foster care system. YAB developed guidance documents for youth in care that were shared across the state. In addition, the YAB assisted with the development of a Peer Specialist position within OCFS, participated in LGBTQ+ work within YDAPS and attended the Youth Engagement Summit- just to name a few. YAB consists of up to 15 YAB members who are over 18 and represent regions throughout New York State and the diversity of youth in care in New York State. They were selected from numerous applicants because of their expertise and willingness to make a change in the foster care system.
The regional contract (RC01), which was awarded to the PDP in 2016, is ongoing. In 2021, the focus is expected to be centered around the data received from the statewide need’s assessment. The data will allow for the training and youth engagement needs of the state to be met in a more effective way. In 2021, OCFS added youth with lived experience in foster care as consultants for curriculum development and co-facilitators of training.

PDP hired youth engagement specialists in each of the six regions. The specialists 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 2020 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. The COVID-19 pandemic limited the ability of youth in progress meetings.

In 2021, OCFS has instructed PDP to use the data collected by the need’s assessment on New York State 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 2021 PDP will recruit subject matter expert consultants who have a lived experience in foster care in New York State to assist with training. These young adults will support curriculum reviews and trainings to the field. This will provide a direct conduit for youth voice to new and existing staff who are working with children and youth in foster care.

In 2020, in partnership with OCFS, the PDP coordinated six speak outs. The speak-out events 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 virtually starting on November 18, 2020, with a statewide event, virtual youth voice events continued regionally and were held on December 2, 2020, for the Rochester Region, December 3, 2020, for the Buffalo Region, December 8, 2020, for Westchester/Long Island Region, December 9, 2020, for the Albany Region, December 10, 2020, for New York City Region and December 11, 2020, for Syracuse Region.

The statewide virtual event was attended by 257 youth and staff. At the Region 1 virtual youth event there were 56 in attendance. At the Region 2 virtual youth event, there were 28 attendees in attendance. At the Region 3 virtual youth event there were 30 attendees. At the Region 4 virtual youth event, there were 78 attendees. At the Region 5 virtual youth event, there were 72 attendees. At the Region 6 virtual youth event, there were 126 attendees in attendance. The OCFS summer internship was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic; however, plans are developed to provide internship opportunities throughout the year 2021.
National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD)

The NYTD contract was awarded to the Center for Human Services Research (CHSR). OCFS works in collaboration with the CHSR to ensure that the youth in and out of care survey percentages are met.

In 2021, CHSR will continue to maintain a list of NYTD liaisons and work to build relationships with OCFS, LDSS staff, tribes, VAs, 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- survey rosters to NYTD liaisons and inform LDSS staff, tribes, and VAs of the upcoming survey for the current 21-year-old follow-up population and the FFY22 19-year-old follow-up population. Outreach materials (electronic and/or printed) will also be distributed to NYTD liaisons and LDSS staff, tribes and VAs. 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 2021, CHSR with OCFS will continue to look for innovative methods to increase both the caseworkers and youth involvement rate.

Accomplishments:

OCFS continues to contract with the CHSR to conduct the NYTD survey. 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. CHSR continues to provide data to each regional office and to individual county NYTD liaisons so that they can see the outcomes of their outreach and engagement efforts. Additionally, the NYTD data from Cohort 2 was shared with LDSS, VAs, the youth engagement specialists, who will be able to target training and technical assistance needs to specific regions, VAs and LDSSs. OCFS held conference calls for LDSS regarding improving outcomes of older adolescents who have been in care, specifically focusing on youth ages 17-21.

OCFS has continued to work with our NYTD contractor CHSR to improve outreach education to OCFS regional office staff, LDSSs, VA 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. 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, LDSS, VA and clinical staff at the agencies are periodically being held to improve understanding of the NYTD process. Data reports continue to be used by OCFS regional office staff and CONNECTIONS staff to identify any missing independent living services and tribal affiliation in the youth’s case record.

The results of the NEW YORK STATE NYTD FFY2020 17-year-old baseline survey:
Cohort 4 – Wave 1 Final numbers (17-year-old baseline population)

A period – 10/1/19 – 3/31/20
B period – 4/1/20 – 9/30/20

Total number of youths in cohort = 1057

Number of youths surveyed for the 20A period: 561
Number of youths surveyed for the 20B period: 496

NYTD

OCFS continues to work with ITS and CONNECTIONS staff to develop the changes needed to the CONNECTIONS and Welfare Management systems to improve NYTD data collection. As a result, new fields have been created to capture data in CONNECTIONS for tribal affiliation, Education grade levels and information on college semesters completed, reporting of juvenile justice history, start dates for independent living services provided purchased and provided directly and whether the service is continuing for the youth and race/ethnicity. The changes were implemented as of January 2019. Also, OCFS has improved the purchase of service codes for authorizing payments for IL services as of May 2020.

ETV

As of January 1, 2021, OCFS continues to contract with WRI to administer and serve as New York State’s fiscal agent for the ETV Program. In FFY 2021, OCFS will be responsible for reviewing and approving eligible youth that have applied for an education training voucher. OCFS will continue to use other state match funds, provided by the New York State Higher Education Services Corporation, to meet the 20 percent required federal match.

The following priorities will be applied in the initial selection of eligible participants for the ETV program for FFY 2021:

- First priority will be given to youth over the age of 21 who received an ETV award in FFY 2020, who continue to be enrolled in and attend a postsecondary 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 2019.

- Third priority will be given to youth who are 20 years of age and will be 21 by July 1, 2021, who are enrolled in and attending a postsecondary 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 2020.
• Fourth priority will be given to youth who are 17, 18, 19 and 20 years of age who are enrolled in and attending a postsecondary educational or vocational training program and making satisfactory progress toward completion of that program.

Youth Voice

The deliverables that were met in 2020 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 350 trainings offered. 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 virtually due to COVID-19 restrictions. 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 virtual 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 2021, the OCFS foster care internships will continue to be supervised by the youth engagement specialist.

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

OCFS created interactive computer-based trainings for foster, adoptive and kinship parents on the reasonable and prudent parent standard and developed a classroom training for new foster parent trainings. These are required prior to any foster parent becoming certified. The YAB has created a committee specifically looking at issues of normalcy, to provide guidance and feedback to OCFS regarding ways to improve this critical outcome.

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 2018, OCFS began 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.

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 the “Bill of Rights” and have it explained to them. 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 was 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 clarified the requirement for domestic violence programs to provide services to males and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and questioning (LGBTQ) persons, and provided 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 VA 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 November 10, 2016, OCFS issued 16-OCFS-INF-10, *Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, and Gender Expression (SOGIE)*. The purpose of this Informational Letter was 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.

On February 7, 2019, OCFS welcomed an Empire State Fellow with a focus on policy and practice with LGBTQ youth in out-of-home care, including youth in foster care, juvenile justice, and shelter settings. The Empire State Fellow and existing SOGIE Committee have partnered to further the work of creating affirming and supportive environments for youth who identify as LGBTQ.

Responding to 2019 state legislation, OCFS developed a training on the needs and experiences of runaway and/or homeless LGBTQ youth for runaway and homeless youth shelter staff statewide. On January 23, 2020, OCFS issued, 20-OCFS-ADM-03, Runaway and Homeless Youth Provider Training on LGBTQ Cultural Competency. The purpose of this Administrative Directive is to mandate LGBTQ cultural competency training for all runaway and homeless youth shelter staff in New York State.

On July 14, 2020, OCFS issued 20-OCFS-INF-10, to identify the Getting Down to Basics: Tools to Support LGBTQ Youth in Care toolkit from the Child Welfare League of America and Lambda Legal, as a resource.

In November 2020, OCFS conducted listening sessions with LGBTQ youth placed in foster care in New York State in order to evaluate the efficacy of programming. LGBTQ-identified members of the OCFS Youth Advisory Board assisted in the development and execution of these listening sessions and OCFS plans to conduct further listening sessions for more information and feedback.

In December 2020, the SOGIE Committee updated the content and resources on the OCFS LGBTQ webpage to include current research, hyperlinks to LGBTQ centers and providers, and resources for LGBTQ youth and their caregivers.

On March 5, 2021, OCFS hosted an LGBTQ Provider and Foster Care Learning Exchange, with the goal of bringing foster care providers and districts together with LGBTQ affirming and informed providers across New York State. Through strengthening these local relationships, OCFS seeks to increase access to LGBTQ-affirming and informed care for LGBTQ youth in foster care.

OCFS continues to improve its services for children and youth in foster care of all SOGIEs. OCFS is working on informational letters, administrative policy, and training content which explain to staff how to discuss issues relating to SOGIE in an affirming manner, which behaviors from adult caregivers are considered affirming and which are considered rejecting by LGBTQ youth, 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. OCFS is also reviewing options for increasing the use of supervised and supported independent living programs for youth over the age of 16 for better transitional housing planning for youth aging out of care. OCFS worked with the State University of New York (SUNY) system to address issues of student homelessness during school breaks, and successfully identified and provided winter break housing to students in foster care who would otherwise have been homeless. OCFS will continue to work with SUNY to address the issues related to homeless students in foster care.

New York State issued several rounds of RFPs 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.

In 2020 and 2021, OCFS partnered with the federal Housing and Urban Development office and the ACF regional office to promote the use of the Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) housing vouchers. HUD, ACF and OCFS held webinars with the field, OCFS provided the initial material regarding the FYI vouchers and the updated information to all local social services districts and runaway and homeless youth programs. New York State was an early adopter of these vouchers and we continue to provide technical assistance to any district seeking to create an MOU with their local public housing authority (PHA).

Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic created highly uncertain conditions for housing, particularly for any youth who was at a residential college. Early in the pandemic, OCFS worked closely with their state education department, state university system and the NYC public university partners to support the housing needs of any youth in foster care or formerly in care to promote stable housing. The use of the federal family first transition funds were also made available to help with housing instability for youth who had aged out between March 1, 2020 and March 31, 2021.

**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 VAs 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](https://brightfutures.aap.org/Bright%20Futures%20Documents/18-Adolescence.pdf)
OCFS released Administrative Directive 11-OCFS-ADM-09, *Reproductive Health and Services for Youth in Foster Care*, which advised LDSSs and VAs of the requirements pertaining to reproductive health services for youth in foster care. This ADM also provided guidance and resources to assist LDSSs and VAs 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.
17. Statistical and Supporting Information
Statistical and Supporting Information

a. CAPTA Annual State Data Report Items

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 or 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 of 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 the following:

- New York State Social Services Law
- Child abuse and maltreatment allegations and definitions
- Interviewing public and mandated callers
- Decision-making/evaluating information against the law
- Criteria for registering a Child Protective Services (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 for a CPS Worker - 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 cite 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 the Training Plan Update section).

Education, qualifications, and training of such personnel

As CPS personnel are employees of a LDSS or of NYC ACS, 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 LDSS. As noted above, by state requirements, each CPS caseworker statewide must satisfy minimum educational and training qualifications.

In regard to training, the number of CPS personnel from LDSSs outside NYC completing CPS trainings each year is tracked in an administrative database managed by OCFS. As shown in Appendix D, this database can be used to produce annual statistics on the number of CPS workers who attended training (6,724), Appendix D, number of classes attended (58,848) and number of class hours (179,293), and average hours of training per worker (27). In addition, OCFS is also able to provide curriculum-specific information for workers outside NYC. Also noted
in Appendix D, county-by-county data for 2020 include the number of staff trained in “Response Training”, “Common Core”, and “Supervisory Core.”

Caseload or workload requirements

Child welfare caseload sizes and staffing ratios are determined at the LDSS level. Aside from the requirement in Social Services Law §423(1)(c) that a CPS unit must have sufficient staff of sufficient qualifications, New York State does not have statutory authority to establish specific 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 2020 was 8.3. This is the average of the 12 months in 2020 (see Appendix I for county breakdown).

Juvenile Justice Transfers

The number of youths transferred to juvenile justice facilities in FFY 2019-2020 was 90 youths, an increase from FFY 2018-19, which was 77. This population consists of children who:

- were in CONNECTIONS 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 2019-20 (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 2019-20, 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 be
reported 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
• Deaths of foster children

c. Education and Training Vouchers:

Education and Training Voucher (ETV) Program

New York State’s 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 20 USC §1002. 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 21st birthday, until the youth
turns 23 years old, as long as they are enrolled in a postsecondary 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, 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. Youth in foster care after
attaining the age of 14 are also eligible to receive ETV funds.
As of January 1, 2020, OCFS contracts with WRI, 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 2021, first priority will be given to youth over the age of 21 who received an ETV award in FFY 2020, who continue to be enrolled in and attend a postsecondary educational or vocational training program, and who are making satisfactory progress toward completion of that program.

Requirements addressed prior to funding students include the following:

- WRI confirms that postsecondary 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 WRI 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 childcare 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 New York State 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
  - Each applicant is assigned a unique Program ID Number the first time they apply
- The Program ID filters applicant data to confirm
  - New/1st time applicant
  - Previous applicant
  - Previously funded student
    - Continuous enrollment
    - Returning after leaving school for one semester or more
- Amount of funding students receive, for what purpose, and when funding is disbursed
- Names of schools and institution type including two- or four- year, public or private
- Academic progression as documented in submitted official transcripts
  - the number of credits students successfully achieve
  - the number of remedial classes taken and passed
- Retention and graduation (students are tracked in cohorts to determine outcomes)
the number of students who reapply annually because they are continuing their studies
and making progress toward graduation.
the number of students who return to the program after leaving school for one
semester or more

New York State ETV and WRi’s joint mission is to support foster youth in postsecondary programs
and address their unique educational challenges. OCFS works in partnership with WRi to
develop performance outcomes. The ETV portal application is reviewed annually for any
technology or application updates necessary.

**P.L. 116-260 Consolidated Appropriation Act 2021 Changes**

On December 27, 2020, the P.L. 116-260 Consolidated Appropriation Act was passed. The law
makes various temporary changes to Child Welfare due to the COVID-19 pandemic emergency.
In reference to ETV, $50,000,000 supplemental funds have been passed to support the program
nationwide. The various temporary changes to the ETV program are summarized below for New
York State plan:

- Increase the maximum ETV award from up to $5,000 to $12,000 per eligible youth through
  September 30, 2022.
  - Up to age 27 to September 30, 2021
- Youth who received ETV before turning 21 can continue to receive ETV through age 26,
  for the defined federal COVID-19 period of April 1, 2020-September 30, 2021.
- Waive the requirement that youth make satisfactory academic progress toward completing
  their post-secondary education or training program if a youth has been unable to achieve
  it due to COVID-19 for the defined federal COVID period of April 1, 2020-September 30,
  2021.
- ETV may be used for expenses that are not part of cost of attendance to help support
  youth to remain enrolled in a post-secondary or training program for the defined federal
  COVID period of April 1, 2020-September 30, 2021.
- Youth may receive ETV for a maximum of 5 years, whether those years are consecutive
  or not.

**Supplemental Funds ETV New York State Priorities:**

- To be eligible for supplemental funds from age 23-26, student must have been made
  eligible for ETV prior to age 21.

- Satisfactory academic progress is waived for the COVID-19 period for all ETV students.

- Supplemental funding priority for students age 23-26 will be granted based on the
  academic year last funded with ETV. (Priority of ETV funding for students under age 23
  remains as listed above.)
  - First priority will be provided to students last funded in 2020.
  - Second priority will be provided to students funded in previous years.

**Appeal Rights for Denial of ETV Award**
Federal law requires that the state provide the opportunity for a fair hearing to an individual whose claim for benefits available pursuant to Title IV-E of the Social Security Act is denied or is not acted upon with reasonable promptness, see 42 U.S.C. § 671(a) (12). An applicant who is denied an ETV award due to their foster care status will be advised, in writing, by OCFS of the right to appeal the denial. The denial letter from OCFS will inform the applicant that if they disagree with the denial, the youth must appeal that denial by requesting an administrative review, in writing, within 15 calendar days from the date of the denial letter. The denial letter will include an administrative review request form. OCFS will conduct the administrative review in a timely manner. OCFS will then advise the appealing applicant, in writing, of the determination of the administrative review. Should the applicant disagree with the administrative review outcome, there is a right to a fair hearing. The administrative review determination letter will contain the information about the hearing opportunity.

**Accomplishments 2021-2022**

594 youth received ETV awards during academic year 2020-2021

225 (38 percent) were New 2019-2020 Students and 369 (62 percent) were Returning Students

Male: 180 (30 percent)

Female: 414 (70 percent)

Age and Number of students:

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Ethnicity:

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*In some cases, this might be an estimated number since the academic year ends June 30, 2021.

Funding available in FFY 2021 for the New York State ETV program: $1,589,334
All eligible New York State 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.

d. Intercountry Adoptions:

Under the federal 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 (COA), or after December 2018, the Intercountry Adoption Accreditation and Maintenance Entity (IAAME), may provide any of the defined adoption services for Hague 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). The Intercountry Adoption Accreditation and Maintenance Entity (IAAME) is responsible for accreditation of adoption agencies. Thirteen (13) VAs are accredited.

As residents of New York State, children adopted from other countries have access, if they otherwise satisfy the eligibility standards, to mandated preventive services. In addition, all New York State VAs providing intercountry adoption programs are regulated and supervised by OCFS. To provide greater support to families in need of post-adoption services, OCFS has awarded 16 contracts to regional Permanency Resource Centers (PRCs). These programs provide a statewide network of 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).

In 2020, there were five children reported placed into foster care who had been adopted from other countries. One child was reunited with their parent in October. The other four children have a goal of return to parent. For one of the four, the current foster parent has indicated they are willing to adopt if the child does not return to the parents.

e. Monthly Caseworker Visit Data:

In Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2020, New York State continued to maintain contacting over 95 percent of the foster children. New York State achieved an FFY 2020 Contact percentage of 96.0 percent. This is similar to our performance in 2019 when we achieved 96.02 percent in FFY 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 percent’. OCFS has done well with this metric; OCFS tracked this metric for FFY 2011
and achieved an ‘In Care Contact percent’ = 81.5 percent. Interim data for FFY 2020 (October 2020 – January 2021) Foster Children contacts showed an ‘In Care Contact percent’ = 94.3 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. Below is a trend in percentages:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Reported Actual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10/1/15</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>95.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/1/16</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>95.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/1/17</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>95.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/1/18</td>
<td>95</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/1/19</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>95.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/1/20</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>95.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

OCFS implemented a Foster Children DataMart 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 VA staff. This data mart is updated weekly; timely updates enable LDSSs, VAs, 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 VAs). These contractors have worked collaboratively with VAs 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 requirements, perform data analysis, testing, and provide assistance to OCFS, LDSS, and VA 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 OCFS 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, OCFS BREPA 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.
18. Targeted Plans within the CFSP
A. Foster and Adoptive Parent Diligent Recruitment Plan Update

Plans for 2020-2024

2020-2024 Key Priorities continue to be:
- Targeted recruitment of needed homes
- Recruitment data tracking
- Improved customer service to foster/adoptive parents
- Greater foster parent retention

OCFS regulations require LDSS and VAs 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. LDSSs and VAs were required to create and submit their next five year Foster and Adoptive Parent Recruitment and Retention Plan on 12/31/19. The Plan will be in effect from 1/1/2020-12/31/2024. VAs may serve multiple counties and their retention plan is a reflection of the children entrusted to their care.

These plans detail the racial and ethnic diversity of available homes and project the number of homes needed to fill any gaps. Additionally, these plans detail identified strategies to reach sufficient numbers of: kinship foster care placements, homes for sibling groups, and homes for needed ages, such as infants or teens. These plans must be in compliance with MEPA and its subsequent amendments.

Additionally LDSSs and VAs are requested to:
- examine vacancy and utilization rates to support their analysis of needed homes,
- identify the number of children in different levels of foster care, and
- compile data broken down by race and ethnicity, age and special needs.

As a result of these comprehensive plans, every LDSS and VA in New York State sets specific targets for recruiting a diverse pool of foster and adoptive parents and works toward measurable outcomes in this area. Additional emphasis has been placed on the recruitment of kinship homes, with the statewide goal of 50 percent of child in foster boarding homes being placed with approved kinship foster homes.

When developing the plans, LDSSs and VAs 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 VAs are directed to evaluate the extent to which their objectives were met, document results, and identify opportunities for improvement. OCFS regional offices will continue to review each submission prior to a plans approval.

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Permanency specialists in the OCFS regional offices will continue to monitor LDSS and VA implementation of their plans and continue providing technical assistance to LDSSs and VAs to determine compliance with the federal 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.

Additionally, over the past several years OCFS has held Home Finding Summits to provide information to Home Finders in recruiting and retaining foster and adoptive parents. On August 11 and 12, 2020, OCFS once again held its annual Home Finders Summit. The Summit was held virtually due to COVID-19 and was very well attended, with 256 attendees from LDSSs and VAs. This year’s keynote speaker, Dr. Jennifer Cornish Genovese, spoke about Caseworker Self-Care: How Caseworkers Can Care for Themselves While Caring for the Needs of Others. Workshops included:

- Approval of Emergency Foster Boarding Homes and Expanded Waiver Authority
- MAPP Update
- Using Group Case Consultation for Effective Supervision

Recruitment of Therapeutic Foster Boarding Homes
As OCFS prepares for the implementation of Family First, OCFS has been sharing with LDSSs and VAs the need to recruit more foster homes, including therapeutic homes as we look to reduce the state’s use of congregate care. During 2020, OCFS provided to LDSSs and VAs metrics related to foster homes. The metrics included length of service, experience fostering teens, and the number of active and inactive homes.

OCFS has also reinforced the importance of placing children with kinship (relative and fictive kin) homes versus stranger foster care home. Several targets were set to motivate districts and agencies to reduce their use of congregate care and to increase the number of children placed in kinship foster homes. As part of their recruitment and retention plans, LDSSs were asked to set individual targets to come into alignment with the state’s goal of no more than 12 percent of children placed in congregate care, and 30 percent or more children being placed with kin. An analysis of the placement data showed that as a state we surpassed the goal of 30 percent of children being placed with kin, with 41.5 percent being placed in kinship homes as of 9/30/2020.

Statewide Recruitment Data Tracking
Recruitment data entry is now supported in the state’s primary child welfare data system, CONNECTIONS.

Foster home data shows that there has been increase in the number of foster homes that have been recruited. In 2018 a total number of 4,134 foster homes were certified or approved, and in 2019, that number was 4,271 an increase of three percent. It also be noted that the overall
number of children in foster care decreased from 17,860 in 2018 to 17,446 in 2019, a decrease of two percent.

Retaining Foster Parents
During 2019, LDSSs were provided Family First Transition Funds to help them prepare for the implementation of the Family First Preventive Services Act. Several counties, Oswego, Chenango, Tioga, Madison, Cortland, and Cayuga have used these funds to implement Fostering Futures in their county which will help to support and retain foster parents. Welfare Research Inc. (WRI) has provided training and support to the counties as they undertake this initiative.

Adoption Home Study
OCFS regulations outline the requirements for LDSSs and VAs that conduct adoption home studies as well as the process a person must follow to become an approved adoptive parent. To optimize this process, OCFS convened a workgroup of multiple stakeholders to obtain their perspectives on the critical components of an adoption home study and gather ideas for creating a thorough and standardized process. In 2020, OCFS released the forms as templates through issuance of an administrative directive titled, Adoption-Only Home Study Forms (20-OCFS-ADM-15). These standardized forms must be used for the adoption home study process for the approval of prospective adoptive parent(s) who are not also seeking certification or approval as foster parent(s). These templates provide a standardized, statewide approach to an adoption home study process. In New York State, any person seeking to adopt through an authorized agency who does not wish to be approved or certified as a foster parent must be offered the opportunity to apply as an adoptive applicant only. The adoption-only home study templates are intended to provide a clearer, more comprehensive assessment of the motivation and ability of an applicant to adopt.

Ongoing Dissemination: Recruitment Blueprint:

The Recruitment Blueprint (Taking Action) is scheduled for ongoing dissemination of the Recruitment Blueprint. Technical assistance was made available to any county requesting assistance. Counties will continue to use the established standardized certification and approval process set forth in 18-OCFS-ADM-07, Foster/Adoptive Home Certification or Approval Process.

Accomplishments for 2020-2021

**OCFS hosted the Home Finder Summit in August 2021. The format once again was a virtual format. Sessions included a review of the adoption only Home Study Forms that were disseminated in September 2020; implementation of Family First; and guidance on recruitment and requirements of Therapeutic Foster Boarding Homes.**

Plans for 2021-2022

**OCFS will continue to support the Home Finder Summit as a means to provide up-to-date information on successful strategies for recruiting foster and adoptive families.**
OCFS will continue to provide data to LDSSs and VAs specific to the number of foster homes, and of those homes how many are kinship homes.

B. Health Care Services Plan Update

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 amendment requires states and tribes, in coordination with the State Title XIX (Medicaid) agency, and in consultation with pediatricians and other experts in health care, and experts in and recipients of child welfare services, to develop a plan for ongoing oversight and coordination of health care services for children in foster care. States are required to submit a copy of the Health Care Services Plan with their CFSP.

New York State continues to be a state-supervised, locally administered system of foster care. As such, provision and oversight of the medical care received by children in foster care is the responsibility of the LDSSs, that are the legal custodians and case managers, and the VAs with which these LDSSs contract to provide foster care services. Over 80 percent of New York State children in foster care are are cared for by non-public VAs rather than LDSS operated facilities or LDSS certified or approved foster homes. OCFS will continue to routinely conduct site visits and provides technical assistance to LDSSs and VAs to monitor the quality of services provided.

The models of delivery for health care services to children in foster care has traditionally varied significantly across New York State. However, with the implementation of Article 29-I of the New York State Public Health Law Voluntary Foster Care Agencies (VFCAs) Health Facilities licensure, New York State is standardizing and enhancing health care services to children in foster care. VFCAs will have medical staff that provide tracking and oversight of routine and specialty health services.

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. The New York State Social Services Law provides the statutory authority for OCFS to supervise LDSSs and VAs an to 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 its 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 LDSS and VA staff that included medical professionals and was last revised in 2009. OCFS plans to update the manual sometime in 2020-2024.

Provision of Dental Services for Children and Youth in Foster Care
Effective January 2020, the *Medical Program Dental Policy and Procedure Code Manual*, issued by New York State, provides guidance on requirements for participation in Medicaid, dental services, payment, definitions, and dental procedure codes. The New York State Department of Health (DOH) has also updated (11/2018) sections VI and VIII of the *Dental Policy and Procedure Code Manual*. Providers should use this manual to determine when the Medicaid program considers dental services "essential." The application of standards related to individual services is made by DOH when reviewing individual cases.

In 2017, as a result of the findings in the CFSR case reviews, OCFS released 17-OCFS-ADM-12, *Provision of Dental Services for Children and Youth in Foster Care* to inform LDSSs and VAs of the regulatory requirements regarding the provision of regular oral and/or dental care screenings and referral for necessary dental care of children and youth in foster care. Each child admitted into foster care must be given an initial medical examination within 30 days after admission. All children up to age three must have their mouths examined at each periodic individualized medical examination and all children three years of age or older must have a dental examination by a dentist and must be provided dental work as needed.

The *Foster Care Practice Guide*, issued by New York State, has been updated (01/2019) and is now posted on the OCFS website. The guide is designed to support caseworkers and supervisors in their practice. The resource includes guidance on health services including dental. OCFS, along with its New York State partners at DOH, Office of Mental Health, and Office of Addiction Services and Supports, and the Office for People With Developmental Disabilities have been working to transition the children’s behavioral health and health systems through the governor’s charge of Medicaid Redesign (see below). The state partners have worked with Dr. John Lyons to revise the current CANS-NY to create two CANS instruments that account for the differences in younger and older youth. The use of the CANS is twofold – Health Home acuity and Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) eligibility. See below for further information about these new services.

**Medicaid Managed Care Transition**

The New York State Medicaid Redesign Team (MRT) was created to further the vision of restructuring New York State’s Medicaid program. The MRT has developed a multi-year action plan to, improve patient experience of care, improve health of the population, and control costs. This includes the foster care population, whose medical needs, and therefore Medicaid expenditures, are *exponentially higher than the general pediatric Medicaid population*. Evidence suggests that children who have been placed in foster care have significantly higher rates of unmet health needs compared to children in the general population, and use of inpatient and outpatient mental health services at a rate of 15-20 times higher than the general pediatric Medicaid population – therefore this is a small, discrete population of children with high needs.

Children placed in foster homes licensed by the LDSS (referred to as “direct care foster care”), which includes approximately 3,500 children, moved into Managed Care in April 2013. OCFS and DOH created a policy paper that outlined 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 New York State Medicaid Redesign impacts children in foster care in significant ways with the following timelines:

1. **Health Homes Care Coordination began December 2016**

2. **Medicaid Children and Family Treatment Support Services (CFTSS)** began January 2019; includes the following:
   - Community Psychiatric Supports and Treatment
   - Other Licensed Practitioner
   - Psychosocial Rehabilitation Services
   - Family Peer Support Services
   - Crisis Intervention
   - Youth Peer Advocacy and Training

3. **Home and Community Based Services (HCBS)** began April 2019

4. **Children placed with VAs are projected to move into Medicaid Managed Care in July 2021**: This includes approximately 14,000 children who are served by 80 VAs. This group of children represents a significantly more complex set of health and behavioral health care needs. VAs 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 New York State Child Welfare system is a highly complex set of relationships that includes LDSS, VAs and the health care system. This set of relationships requires a highly coordinated approach to achieve desired outcomes. New York State 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.

5. **Article 29-I Voluntary Foster Care Agencies Health Facilities Licensure**: OCFS and DOH have developed the Article 29-I VFCA Health Services License for the provision of core health related services for foster children in the care of a VA in 2019. Regulations were completed by DOH and OCFS, and the regulation was officially adopted on February 20, 2019, by the addition of Parts 769 and 770 to Title 10 NYCRR under statutory authority of PHL §2999-g. A Memorandum of Agreement was developed by DOH and OCFS that outlines the responsibilities of oversight of the Article 29-I Health Facilities Licensure. OCFS issued guidelines to the VAs for the Article 29-I Health Facilities Licensure that outlines the components of the Article 29-I Licensure of VAs to provide limited health-related services, that enables VFCAs to contract and bill Medicaid Managed Care Plans and to comply with the Corporate Practice of Medicine. All VAs were issued approvals prior to the effective date of the License, which is July 1, 2021, so that the VAs can contract with Medicaid Managed Care Plans.
VAs are applying to be licensed to provide core health-related services and other limited health-related services under Article 29-I. 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. VAs will continue to receive and operate a “Residual Medicaid Per Diem” to include services that are health-care related and vital to VAs’ operations. This includes nursing and social work, which are non-encounter-based services.

To guide this transition, New York State issued several guidance documents including the following:

- 29-I VFCA Health Facilities Licensure Guidelines issued May 2018
- Transition of Children Placed in Foster Care and New York State Public Health Law Article 29-I Health Facility Services into Medicaid Managed Care issued January 2021
- 29-I Health Facility Billing Guidance issued December 2020
- 29-I Health Facility Billing Webinar issued December 2020
- 2017 New York State Children’s Health and Behavioral Health Benefit Administration Medicaid Managed Care Organizations Children’s System Transformation Requirements and Standards

An essential part of this transition is verifying the readiness of the 16 New York State DOH contracted Medicaid Managed Care Plans. OCFS, along with DOH, conducted a thorough review of each Medicaid Managed Care Plan in 2021. This included a review of their policies and procedures, followed by a Webex review and a final report of findings and required corrective action.

Medicaid Eligibility

Effective January 1, 2014, the Affordable Care Act (ACA) requires states to provide Medicaid coverage to eligible Former Foster Care Youth (FFC), if otherwise eligible, through the end of the month of their 26th birthday without regard to income. FFC Youth are those youths who were under the responsibility of New York State (in the custody of the LDSS or OCFS commissioner) 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 DOH and 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.

These efforts by OCFS with active collaboration and coordination with sister New York State agencies resulted in 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. 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 need and a right to view the information. The goal is the CP portal, which will provide the children leaving care with a place to access all of their relevant information.

**Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act (CARA), Plan of Safe Care, and OCFS 2196 Plan of Safe Care Form**

The Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act (CARA) was signed into law on July 22, 2016, with the purpose of addressing the nation’s prescription drug and opioid epidemic. The enactment of CARA included several amendments to the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA). These amendments relate to the needs of infants born and identified as affected by substance abuse or withdrawal symptoms resulting from prenatal drug exposure or FASD.
On April 28, 2017, OCFS issued an 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 to provide LDSSs with information about CARA and its amendments to CAPTA, including details about the plan of safe care requirement. Pursuant to that LCM, LDSSs are required to develop a plan of safe care to ensure the safety and well-being of an infant born and identified affected by substance abuse or withdrawal symptoms resulting from prenatal drug exposure or a Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder. The plan must address the needs of both the infant and the affected family or caregiver and include in the case progress notes details of the plan of safe care, the identity of any other professionals who were involved in the development of the plan and indicate what other appropriate service referrals were made by either CPS or the other professionals involved with the family.

To support the development, implementation and monitoring of the plan of safe care, New York State issued 18-OCFS-LCM-19 CAPTA/CARA State Grant FY2018 to advise local departments of social services (LDSSs) of the availability of federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act of 2016 (CARA) funds in the State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2018-19 and the use of these funds. The LCM outlined the availability of the funds for the purpose of hiring behavioral health consultants or public health nurses to assist in the identification of families experiencing substance abuse disorders, and in the development, implementation, and monitoring of plans of safe care with infants and families affected by substance abuse. OCFS also allowed the sharing of a behavioral health consultant or public health nurse among smaller LDSSs within upstate New York.

Full-time or part-time behavioral health consultants or public health nurses were required to be co-located on-site at the LDSS and work alongside CPS and preventive services caseworkers, to identify and support the behavioral health needs of both the adults and children where substance abuse is an issue. This included the development, implementation, and monitoring of the plan of safe care for children born prenatally who were exposed to substances.

LDSSs awarded funding were required to submit quarterly reports to New York State detailing the number for each of the following:

- Visits made with CPS and/or preventive services
- Number of plans of safe care developed, implemented, and monitored
- Screenings and/or assessments completed for children and adults by the behavior health consultants/public health nurse
- Children and adults with a positive screen
- Referrals made by the behavioral consultant/public health nurse to services identified through the Plan of Safe Care form

In October 2019, New York State issued 19-OCFS-LCM-27 - CAPTA/CARA State Grant FY2019 advising LDSSs of the continuation of federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act
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 New York State 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 NYCCRR 428.1 – General Statement (Uniform Case Recording for Indicated CPS Reports)
- 18 NYCCRR 428.6 – Family Assessments and Service Plans
- 18 NYCCRR 432.2(b)(3) – (5) Child Protective Service: Responsibilities and Organization – Investigation/Assessment; Providing, arranging for and/or Coordinating Services and Monitoring

**Family First Prevention Services Act**

On December 19, 2018, OCFS released 18-OCFS-INF-06 Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) (P.L. 115-123). The informational memo introduced and highlighted FFPSA and outlined key provisions that impact child welfare including health care components. FFPSA allows, for the first time, Title IV-E funds to be used for preventive services and programs. Reimbursement is allowed for up to 12 months of mental health services, substance abuse treatment, or in-home parent skill-based training. In addition, FFPSA, requires that procedures and protocols are established to prevent that children in foster care placements are not inappropriately diagnosed with mental illness, other emotional or behavioral disorders, medically fragile conditions, or developmental disabilities, and placed in settings that are not foster family homes because of the inappropriate diagnoses.

**Initial and Follow-Up Health Screenings**

OCFS promulgated regulations regarding appropriate medical care of children in foster care. OCFS regulation 18 NYCRR 441.22 sets forth the schedule for initial and follow-up health screenings for children in foster care. The New York State Social Services Law provides the statutory authority for OCFS to supervise LDSSs and VAs and to 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 LDSS and VA staff that includes medical professionals and was updated in 2019.
The Health Care Services Plan Update by section, and the 2019 APSR, indicate how health needs are identified through the screenings, are monitored, and treated considerate of the emotional trauma of maltreatment and removal. CONNECTIONS, the New York State system of record tracks, and records information regarding health care services. The Children’s Passport for Foster Care (CP-FC) will support caregiver assessment by providing. Information that serves as a source 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.

Health Homes

OCFS encourages LDSSs to refer children in foster care to the Health Home Serving Children Program, to provide continuity of health care services, at any point during their time in foster care and specifically requires the LDSS to refer eligible children to this program in preparation for their discharge from foster care. OCFS release, 18-OCFS-ADM-14, Health Home Referral Requirements for Children in Foster Care, further describes the procedures and steps for LDSS staff to take to refer children in foster care to the Health Home Serving Children Program so that they may receive the service of Health Home Care Management, and describes the New York State Department of Health’s (DOH) authority to permit LDSSs to delegate to voluntary foster care agencies (VFCAs), which are also Health Home Care Management Agencies (CMAs), the authority to make referrals to Health Homes Serving Children for children in foster care.

Health Services

OCFS and DOH continue to work together in development of the Article 29-I VFCA Health Services License for the provision of core health related services for foster children in the care of VAs are applying to be licensed to provide core health related services and other limited health related services under the Article 29-I. Qualified Residential Treatment Programs (QRTP) must be licensed and accredited by either the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities, The Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations, The Council on Accreditation, or any other independent, not-for-profit accreditation organization approved by DHHS. The accreditation process includes medical standards that require qualified health practitioners with licensure to provide health services.

Psychiatric Diagnoses and Medications

FFPSA, requires that procedures and protocols are established to prevent that children in foster care placements are not inappropriately diagnosed with mental illness, other emotional or behavioral disorders, medically fragile conditions, or developmental disabilities, and placed in settings that are not foster family homes because of the inappropriate diagnoses. In addition, the oversight of prescription medicines, including protocols for the appropriate use and monitoring of psychotropic medications will be components of Managed Care Plans. Managed Care Organizations (MCOs) must implement oversight and monitoring the use of psychotropic medications for children in foster care, including the oversight of any child

- under the age of six taking any psychotropic medications;
• on more than one medication from the same class (antidepressants, antipsychotics, ADHD medications, anxiolytics/hypnotics, mood stabilizers); or
• on three or more psychotropic medications.

If any of these prescribing methods occur, MCOs must provide quality standards and oversight through its physician network through alerts, consultation, and education. New York State has met these requirements as further described in the 2019 Annual Progress and Services Report.³

**OCFS and the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Response**

OCFS as it pertains to health service provisions became absorbed with the necessary responses to best help children, families, providers, and staff. OCFS has devoted a web page with information on the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) with critical information and direct links to the New York State Department of Health Website both including daily updates, information pertaining to vaccination availability and regional vaccination sites. The OCFS Coronavirus Website features current News and Updates, Informative Webinars, Letters to Child Care Workers, and Additional Resources. The site also has an FAQ and Guidance pages, Executive Orders, and applicable pages for federal resources, help for parents, resources for the blind and volunteer opportunities. The OCFS Corona Website with direct links to the New York State Department of Health Site covers the full array of providers and service recipients.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, OCFS made several adaptations to requirements for foster care programs to address the crisis and keep children and families safe. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Allowing flexibility in the foster home certification and approvals (for medical documentation and criminal background clearances).

- Allowing for flexibility in use of technology in home visits and visits with children and families.

- Providing guidance regarding visitation and family engagement.

- Encouraging LDSS to examine the impact of the pandemic and access and availability of services resulting therein along with the child’s best interest when determining whether to file a termination of parental rights (TPR) petition.

- Providing flexibility regarding educational and employment requirements youth must meet to remain in care past age 18 and requirements around youth re-entry into foster care.

- Providing for flexibility in congregate care staffing models while still maintaining safety,

• Daily calls with voluntary agencies regarding suspected or positive cases of COVID-19.
• Delivery of personal protective equipment and supplies to programs during the pandemic.

In terms of OCFS releases to the field pertaining to COVID-19 there was an obvious effort to meet the emergent need of direction and guidance to respond to the many needs that erupted as the virus continued to impact children, families, and communities. As noted, a multitude of directives and guidance documents related to the COVID-19 pandemic were issued by OCFS and are listed on OCFS’ website.

**Administrative Directives**

**20-OCFS-ADM-06 - COVID-19 Guidance for Child Care Subsidy**

This Administrative Directive (ADM) provides LDSS guidance regarding options available to expand the childcare services that are provided under the New York State Child Care Block Grant to families affected by the novel coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2, and clarifies how such waivers must be administered. Due to the ongoing state of emergency, social distancing guidelines, and the widespread nature of the crisis, all families in New York State are impacted by the novel coronavirus, which causes COVID-19.

**20-OCFS-ADM-07-CARES Child Care Scholarships for Essential Workers**

This Administrative Directive (ADM) informs LDSSs of the distribution of federal funding through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act to childcare resource and referral (CCR&R) agencies to pay for child care assistance for income eligible essential workers during the COVID-19 pandemic.

**20-OCFS-ADM-12 - Guidance on Child Care Subsidy Eligibility and Breaks in Activities During the COVID-19**

This Administrative Directive (ADM) directs LDSSs on how to treat Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (PUC) and fluctuating income during the pandemic caused by the novel coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19), when determining eligibility for childcare services that are provided under the New York State Child Care Block Grant (NEW YORK STATECCBG). This ADM also provides guidance to LDSSs on continuing payments for breaks in activities as regions reopen.

**20-OCFS-ADM-23-Stafford Act Flexibility**

This Administrative Directive (ADM) notifies LDSS and VAs of the flexibility to waive certain title IV-E requirements due to the COVID-19 pandemic as authorized by the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. §5141) (Stafford Act). The ADM also introduces the process LDSSs and VAs must follow for requesting such flexibility.
Informational Letters

20-OCFS-INF-08 and 09-COVID-19 Guidance for Child Care Providers

The purpose of these Informational Letters (INF) is to reiterate certain important information for child-care providers necessary for them to continue operations during the current public health emergency.

OCFS throughout the year continued to provide support for the myriad of service needs that became obvious during the pandemic and responded with support as mandated by Governor Cuomo and executed by OCFS, LDSSs and VAs in the State of New York.

C. Disaster Planning Update

Emergency Preparedness/Disaster Plans:
OCFS continues to refine and test its disaster plans 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.

In 2021, OCFS’s plans address state and local needs as well as federal requirements to

- identify and continue the 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’s paramount priority has been to protect the health and safety of the children and families OCFS serves, stakeholders, and OCFS employees. 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. OCFS will be rewriting sections of its disaster plans based on its response to and impacts from COVID-19. 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. Included in the agency COOP is the COOP-Lite. The COOP-Lite is an action document used to reestablish essential services during emergencies. It includes listings of agency critical functions, organizational structure, notification chart, 24-hour contact information, relocation sites, and stakeholder contact information.
A copy of the template used by OCFS juvenile justice facilities to develop a “Ready Emergency Data Book,” which details each OCFS DJJOY facility’s continuity of operations plan in the event of an emergency.

Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP) is an internal agency management tool which sets forth basic information necessary to prevent, mitigate, respond to, and recover from emergencies.

At the direction of New York State’s governor, all New York State agencies were to draft and follow an Emergency Management Operations Protocol (EMOP) in the fall of 2018. The mission of the EMOP is to provide protocols and work in concert with the agency’s COOP and CEMP for the continued delivery of essential services to the children, families, and communities of New York State in anticipation of or during emergency incidents. These protocols will assure that we are able to continue to provide essential services and allow us to minimize the impact of these events on our constituents.

Emergency Response Plans (ERP): OCFS updated its Emergency Response Plan for OCFS offices. This plan provides guidance for employees to respond to emergency situations. The rollout of this updated plan includes training at each of the OCFS offices, which started in November of 2019 and will continue into 2021.

OCFS Pandemic Influenza Plan: Chapter 168 of the Laws of 2020 requires each New York State agency and authority to prepare a plan for the continuation of operations in the event of an emergency disaster declaration involving a communicable disease. OCFS has drafted this plan based on guidance in accordance with this law.

The OCFS COOP was updated in 2019 using the New York State Office of Emergency Management guidance to meet Emergency Management Accreditation Program (EMAP) standards and based on impacts from COVID-19.

This plan 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, COOP

- prioritizes essential functions and associated applications and data bases;
- provides key concepts of business continuity operations;
- identifies roles and responsibilities of key OCFS staff;
- describes how the agency and its five (5) programs and two support units will function if essential services are disrupted;
- outlines the mechanics and flows of communication within and outside the agency;
- identifies when and by whom the plan is activated and provides procedures for telecommuting, relocation and for a return to normal operations;
• outlines agency requirements for COOP awareness training and exercises; and
• establishes procedures to update and maintain the COOPs.

New York continued with its EMAP accreditation of this Continuity of Operations Plans following a review of the state agency COOPs in 2019.

In relation to OCFS’s 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 LDSSs pursuant to the federal Child and Family Services Improvement Act of 2006, P.L. 109-288. The submitted local plans are incorporated into state planning.

OCFS keeps an active volunteer list to assist in disaster response. Every year, volunteer OCFS staff members are sent to State Emergency Operations Center courses sponsored by the New York State Office of Emergency Management (SOEM). These same volunteers participate in exercises to hone these skills. The training and exercises prepare personnel when they are assigned to work in Emergency Support Function 6 at the Emergency Operations Center.

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 serves in the New York State Emergency Support Function 6 (ESF 6), Mass Care, Emergency Assistance, Temporary Housing and Human Services and is the Co-Lead of the New York State Disaster Assistance Center Group with 24 state agencies and the American Red Cross. As part of ESF 6, OCFS participated in the update of the ESF 6 annex to the State Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan.

During full-scale activations of the State Emergency Operations Center (EOC), OCFS, in coordination with other state Human Services agencies, will participate in daily LDSS calls with impacted counties.

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 for 2020-2021:

**OCFS Emergency Responses and Preparedness Coordination**

OCFS is responding to the novel coronavirus pandemic impacting New York State. OCFS staffed the State Emergency Operations Center in support of ESF 6 activation in March 2020 to July 2020, for the state response to COVID-19. OCFS deployed staff to support state testing sites, county nursing needs, logistical sites, call centers, the Department of Labor unemployment insurance remote support, State Liquor Authority enforcement detail, the Department of Health
community enforcement detail, vaccine distribution and logistical support. The OCFS Human Services Call Center has been a “go to” resource for the Governor’s Office – The OCFS Human Services Call Center, which handles 39 different lines within 10 state agencies, was able to support the state’s COVID-19 response by taking on 10 additional lines while working remotely. These lines include crisis counseling, outbound COVID-19 calls, a State University of New York student crisis line for the OMH, health care volunteer survey, paid family leave for COVID-19, nursing home assistance and coordination center, pandemic-EBT, CARES-3 grant line. These lines were launched to assist New Yorkers seeking help with mental health concerns related to COVID-19, questions about Paid Family Leave, COVID-19 test results for those tested, and contacting close to 80,000 New Yorkers who responded to the call to volunteer as nurses, physicians, and for other critically needed health care providers. OCFS worked with the New York State Emergency Operations Center to provide hand sanitizer to the tribal nations. Similarly, OCFS provided voluntary agency programs and non-profits with hand sanitizer and personal protective equipment (PPE).

CWCS and YDAPS have worked around the clock to be responsive to the needs and concerns of detention providers, foster care agencies, domestic violence shelters and runaway and homeless youth shelters throughout the state. LDSS and not for profits have expressed their gratitude to OCFS for our responsiveness and support. The Division of Child Care Services has been at the front lines in managing seismic shifts in childcare needs and availability throughout the state. OCFS provided hand sanitizer and PPE for child care providers through child care resource and referral agencies (CCR&Rs). With so many families staying at home, many childcare programs have closed. But first responders’ childcare needs have moved to the forefront, requiring new programs to serve the health care workers, grocery and food service personnel, firefighters, law enforcement and those in the trucking and delivery industry. OCFS is administering the distribution of $164 million in federal CARES funds for child care scholarships for qualifying essential workers and support for child care providers. OCFS will continue to support its programs and the citizens of New York State.

While deployed at the state EOC in ESF 6, OCFS was assigned to the feeding task force. The task force developed a feeding survey to capture insecurities in the food bank and food pantry distribution system.

**State Agency Collaboration**

**Emergency Support Function 6 Planning**

OCFS is a member of the New York State Emergency Support Function 6 (ESF 6), Mass Care, Emergency Assistance, Temporary Housing and Human Services, and is the Co-Lead of the New York State Disaster Assistance Center Group. OCFS participates in the planning process to update the ESF 6 annex, *Standard Operating Guide and Action Checklist*. OCFS is leading the rewrite of the Disaster Assistance Center plan following the October 31, 2019 windstorm and flooding event. OCFS is collaborating with other ESF 6 state agencies in developing tactical worksheets for ESF 6 mission functions.
Pediatric Surge Annex Planning Group
OCFS continued its participation in the Pediatric Surge Annex Planning Group the first quarter of 2020.

Choose Safe Places for Early Care and Education
New York State Department of Health and OCFS have partnered in the Choose Safe Places for Early Care and Education (ECE) program. New York is one of 25 states using Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) cooperative agreement funds to build their capacity to assess and respond to site-specific issues involving human exposures to hazardous substances in the environment. The program encourages thoughtful consideration about where to locate Early Care and Education (ECE) programs. It provides towns, cities, and states a framework to adopt practices that will make sure ECE programs are located away from chemical hazards.

OCFS NY-Alert
OCFS uses OCFS NY-Alert as its primary notification system to contact OCFS employees efficiently and simultaneously in a work-related emergency and as a tool to request OCFS staff to support the state’s response to an emergency.

OCFS Geographic Informational Systems (GIS)
OCFS uses desktop geographical information systems (GIS) software and the web-based Critical Infrastructure Response Information System (CIRIS). These are used to identify facilities and providers in impacted areas for disaster response, state EOC exercises and support county emergency preparedness. OCFS provides databases of programs and providers in support of GIS use in county and state disaster response. These were used in exercises that OCFS participated in and were also used to support county disaster preparedness and planning as well as for the COVID-19 response.

Disaster Preparedness Commission Trainings/Exercises
OCFS participated in the following trainings and exercises through the Disaster Preparedness Commission, which focused on disaster training and response protocols:

- ICS for Executives February 6, 2020
- Training and Exercise Plan Workshop Feb 26, 2020
- Health and Human Services Branch Exercise Feb 17, 2020
- New York State Emergency Operations Center Course
- New York Responds Course
- State Mass Fatality Exercise January 24, 2020
- FEMA Ready Raccoon – At the request of DHSES IA OCFS participated as a co-lead for disaster assistance centers July 16, 2020
- DHSES Collaboration Coalition Conference November 18, 2020
Family Assistance Operations Virtual Workshop December 7, 2020

Indian Point Emergency Planning Zone (EPZ) Child Care Seminar
OCFS supported the Westchester County Office of Emergency Management with Indian Point Radiological Emergency Preparedness (REP) training for childcare providers located in the 10 Mile Emergency Protection Zones in 2020. 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 childcare 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 served as a member/participant in the following:
- New York State Disaster Preparedness Commission
- DHSES Homeland Security Senior Advisory Committee (HSSAC)
- New York State Nuclear Safety Sub Committee Power Pool bi-annual Meeting
- Emergency Support Function 6
- Multi-Agency Coordination (MAC) Group
- Department of Health Pediatric Surge Annex Planning Group

E-FINDS
OCFS’s juvenile justice facilities participate in the New York State Evacuation of Facilities in Disasters System (New York State e-FINDS), the emergency location tracking system to track facility residents in the event of an evacuation.

Plans for 2021-2022
- OCFS will continue to support the state’s response and recovery from the novel coronavirus pandemic. OCFS will participate and host after-action reviews of this effort to capture best practices and identify areas of improvement. These will be documented in an incident action plan and used to improve OCFS disaster preparedness.

- OCFS will continue with its annual cycle of updating its disaster plans capturing best practices and addressing areas for improvement during the ongoing state response and recovery to COVID-19.

- OCFS will participate in state disaster planning initiatives and state exercises.

D. Training Plan Update
OCFS Training Transition

The OCFS has the overall responsibility for the provision and oversight of workforce and professional development programs that support the staff of the public human services systems to effect proper and efficient administration of the programs of the OCFS. Training goals are accomplished through a combination of direct training provided by state employees, those administered by OCFS under Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with educational institutions, and contracts with other community-based training providers. In addition to mandated training, staff development needs are met through a variety of workforce development projects that enhance and build skills necessary to support the agency’s mission. Within OCFS, the Bureau of Training and Development (BTD) oversees and coordinates the necessary state-administered training functions through contract monitoring and direct training.

As referenced in previous updates, OCFS began restructuring the current training system to address the issue of an ever-increasing demand for caseworker and VA training in 2017. The increase was caused, in large part, by the high turnover rate of workers in the human services field, which continues to this day and has been exacerbated by the global pandemic, COVID-19. The goals of the restructuring and transformation of the training system are still to convert existing curricula to competency-based training, build capacity to train more staff, maximize the considerable resources entrusted to us, and take a critical look at our training for areas where savings might allow for reinvestment into our training system.

While OCFS made progress in converting curricula to be more competency-based in 2017, 2018, and 2019, forward progress was halted in 2020 and in the first half of 2021 as OCFS dealt with the issues caused by COVID-19. Given OCFS’ state responsibility to train local child protective caseworkers, OCFS needed to immediately pivot its focus on how to continue to provide this critical training in a virtual world. All time, energy and focus was on the conversion of a full classroom training experience to a fully virtual one. It took two weeks to get the first week of training up and running so the trainees who had started in the classroom could complete their training and be available to the counties as caseworkers.

OCFS’ next step was to work with program to convert the topics from the entire Child Welfare Foundations Program identified in regulation as required for all new CPS workers into the virtual classroom format, so OCFS could begin training new caseworkers. The skills-based portions of CWFP and CPSRT were not able to be converted to a virtual platform; trainees who received training virtually will be expected to return to the OCFS training center to demonstrate their skills via skill practices and simulations, once it is safe to return to the classroom. OCFS staff are working now on developing what that part of the training will look like. Given that OCFS had over 500 caseworkers take the program virtually, it will be a challenge to get those staff scheduled to return for this part of the training. Depending on when OCFS can have in-person training again, this work will most likely extend well into 2022.

In 2020 and throughout 2021, COVID-19 continued to impact OCFS’ ability to offer training at the Human Services Training Center (HSTC). Up until COVID-19 hit, OCFS had met its target of
expanding the number of training slots to meet the demand for the training by the counties. OCFS was at the point of beginning to cancel some classes due to low enrollment as OCFS had exceeded the demand. OCFS continued to meet demand virtually throughout COVID, and, once it is safe to do so, in-person training will begin, following all necessary social distancing guidelines. The impact of those guidelines is yet to be seen; it will most likely result in much smaller class sizes as it does not have the capacity to seat 30 trainees and two trainers in any of its training rooms, with six-foot social distancing. If this is the case, OCFS will need to offer more training classes to reach the same number of trainees, which will have an impact on its resources as well as the time it will take to get staff fully trained.

As of March 17, 2020, BTD cancelled all OCFS sponsored classroom training and continued to cancel it on a month-by-month basis throughout 2020 and into 2021. As stated above, trainers offered mandated training virtually throughout most of this time. To meet the needs of the target population, a switch to the virtual classroom was needed. Not all classroom training was converted into the virtual format. Decisions on which courses were to be converted was based on the needs of the target population, regulation, and the type of content. Several specialty courses were converted and are being delivered on the virtual platform. These include supervisory courses as well as leader certification courses in the foster/adoptive function as well. The knowledge-based content of the classroom training was the focus of the conversion to the virtual classroom courses. BTD worked with the vendors to convert classroom training into the virtual classroom format. The virtual classroom format is a synchronous training that is offered through a virtual platform such as WebEx. There is a live trainer and participants during a scheduled date and time. These sessions also utilized the functionality of the WebEx platform such as the chat feature for discussions and break out rooms for small group activities. The courses that were converted are identified by “classroom/virtual classroom” in the Mode of Delivery. In some instances, the length of training for the virtual classroom differs from the classroom. One of the reasons for the difference in duration is that the skills-based portions have been removed and will be completed once we return to the classroom. The duration is represented by classroom duration/virtual classroom duration.

In 2021, OCFS hopes to be able to refocus some attention on looking for ways to find savings to reinvest in its training system and to use technology to enhance our training efforts.

The training efforts provided by OCFS are a vital component to support and implement its core mission. The focus of these efforts is to:

- support the delivery of state and OCFS agency mandates;
- provide core skills, technical and managerial training for all OCFS staff as a foundation for an improved workforce;
- enhance core skills training and best practice models for case workers, child protective services workers and supervisors;
- provide foundational supervisory training to OCFS and the child/family welfare workforce to develop and enhance leadership and managerial skills;
- provide training for the prevention of domestic violence;
- continue enhancements to adult protective services training;
• provide continuous improvement in foster and adoptive caregivers training;
• assist LDSS in preparing their workforce and enhance their proficiency and performance;
• improve the skills of staff in VAs;
• provide training and information for mandated reporters and the general public on child abuse and neglect;
• develop the child daycare provider community and improve ethical operation of the daycare subsidy system;
• provide mandated training for staff of residential facilities; and
• provide skills training and support in juvenile justice facilities.

In addition to using its own trainers to deliver child welfare training, OCFS collaborates with the following expert vendors to develop and deliver training to LDSSs and VAs, 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 New York State 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 its inception, PDP has worked with New York State’s 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 New York State and is fully accredited by the Middle States Commission of Higher Education. The School of Social Welfare’s (SSW) partnerships in child welfare span decades. Since 2001, SSW has supported workforce research and development through its New York State Social Work Education Consortium (SWEC). SWEC includes 42 schools of social work, 57 LDSSs, NYC, and OCFS.

SSW provides an ongoing continuing education credit program, “Social Work Education Consortium” (SWEC), for LDSS staff. SWEC fosters collaboration and educational partnerships with all 42 schools of social work, 57 LDSSs, and OCFS. Funding will be available to cover graduate and undergraduate courses. SWEC is organized into six regional work groups comprised of representatives from LDSSs and social work education programs. Each region can access tuition resources for employees pursuing a social work degree at the baccalaureate or master’s level. The regional structure allows for linkages with schools of social work in the region to access degree programs. Activities in 2020 will be focused on tuition for social work courses at the baccalaureate and master’s level.
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 LDSS and VAs. They have provided training on sexual abuse, health and medical issues, trauma-sensitive programs, and advanced casework practice.

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 New York State’s 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 New York State, in other states, 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.

New York Public Welfare Association
The New York Public Welfare Association (NYWPA) is a not-for-profit organization that provides information, policy analysis, and technical assistance to federal, state, and local policy makers and direct support to districts. Under contract with OCFS, NYPWA provides Leadership Training, New Commissioner Training and State Conference workshops for LDSS commissioners and administrators.

New York State Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence (OPDV)
OPDV is a small New York State agency of approximately 28 staff. For almost 30 years, the agency has provided training on domestic violence to professionals from many areas including 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.
City University of New York, Brookdale Center for Healthy Aging (Brookdale) of Hunter College
The Brookdale Center, established in 1974, is a nationally recognized academic gerontology center. Through its history, Brookdale has been at the forefront of innovation in services, programs, and advocacy for older New Yorkers. Through the contract with OCFS the Brookdale Center delivers the Adult Abuse Training Institute (AATI) that supports the development of knowledge and skills for Adult Protective Services (APS) staff and supervisors. Brookdale’s Learning and Development center delivers classroom and distance learning training (virtual classroom/teleconferences) to various departments and levels of personnel working within LDSSs and human services agencies throughout the state. Courses addressing adult learning theory and training fundamentals are provided to statewide LDSSs’ staff development coordinators and trainers.

City University of New York, School of Professional Studies
Established in 2003, the School of Professional Studies (SPS) has developed extensive experience in designing and delivering customized training that addresses organizational performance needs with relevant and innovative learning solutions. SPS provides OCFS with services related to developing, delivering, tracking, and evaluating training as well as distance education activities. Specifically, SPS develops and delivers synchronous and asynchronous training to a variety OCFS training audiences. Expert technical staff provide programming and management of the Human Services Learning Center (HSLC). The HSLC is a comprehensive and easy-to-use web-based learning management solution for the administration, documentation, tracking, and reporting of training programs, classroom and online events, e-learning programs, and training content. OCFS utilizes HSLC for federal reporting purposes, tracking in-service training by county, and other ad hoc reporting needs. The HSLC allows users to search an online course catalog, register for classes, complete online evaluations, build training plans, take mandated courses online, and track their continuing education. The registration feature of the training management tool system tracks all user activity and provides a complete training history for its users. Additionally, complete training plans or training paths can be designed and tracked for each user. Organizations in HSLC include state, LDSSs, and VAs, as well as day care providers, individuals who are mandated reporters, and foster and adoptive parents.

Youth Research Inc. (YRI)
YRI is a not-for-profit organization that is closely affiliated to OCFS. Its mission is focused on assisting OCFS and its’ partners in being recognized as national leaders of innovation, collaborative research, and excellence in a full range of learning opportunities; receiving, holding and administering grants in support of OCFS; and conducting studies and research in any field in keeping with the purposes and objectives of OCFS. As such, YRI will support OCFS on a variety of work products and initiatives.
Overit Multimedia Inc.
Overit is a commercial, full-service creative services firm that provides video, audio, copywriting, project management, digital services and more. Overit has 25 years of experience assisting clients in web design and development, content marketing, public relations, video/motion development, and audio production as well as other disciplines of marketing communications.

New Horizons Computer Learning Centers
New Horizons is a commercial organization that has provided industry leading technical training for 35 years. It is an authorized partner to top technology providers, including Microsoft, Cisco, and VMware.

Cost Allocation for Training

The OCFS BTD is responsible for the provision and oversight of training and professional development programs that support the staff of the public human services system to affect 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. To be eligible for reimbursement, the federal government requires that these costs are distributed to benefitting federal, state, or combined federal/state programs on a quarterly basis. 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. In regard to New York State’s claiming methodology for training expenses, OCFS maintains that all training costs are fairly and equitably allocated to Title IV-E programs at 50 percent and 75 percent. Further, all of the other proportionately benefitted federal and state programs are in accordance with the federally approved State Operations CAP which has been approved by Cost Allocation Services (CAS) of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). The training portion of the CAP has been approved by the DHHS since 2000, and OCFS has been diligent in notifying DHHS CAS of any necessary amendments. The last amendment to the training portion of the CAP was submitted to DHHS CAS on March 4, 2019, and incorporated changes related to the opening of the Human Services Training Center.

OCFS BTD and technology staff designed course reports to identify 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 VA agency staff, it will break it down by title. Experience has shown that for the VAs, the field is often left blank and thus, will be reported out as “undefined.” OCFS has completed its programming of this report, Federal Fiscal Report, available upon request.

OCFS has a second report developed that averages the most recent three-year period of trainees to assist in the projections (by functional area for LDSS, by agency division for OCFS and by title for the VAs). This second report, Federal Fiscal Summary, is available upon request.

See Appendix J regarding New York State’s approved cost allocation plan for training.

Training Conducted in Federal Fiscal Year 2020-2021 and Proposed in 2021-2022
It is expected that many of the training programs provided in 2020, as described in the “Program Support” section of the APSR and listed below, will be offered again during the 2021 year, based upon OCFS’s Practice Model and subject to the availability of funding and vendor contracts. Training courses listed include Child Welfare Foundations Program (CWFP), Child Protective Services Response Training (CPSRT), and specialty and advanced training, including refreshers, for experienced caseworkers, supervisors, and administrators.

Courses are identified as follows:

**Course Key:**

**Course Title:** Title of course. Note: courses with an asterisk (*) are new for 2021.

**Mode of Delivery:** Classroom, Computer-Based (CBT/WBT), Virtual Classroom, Skills Clinics, Technical Assistance, and/or Training Forums.

**Duration:** # days or # of hours per delivery

**Work Plan Code:** A code utilized by OCFS to identify and organize contracted deliverables; if N/A, the course is delivered by OCFS trainers.

**Approved Audience:** OCFS-approved and federally eligible training targeted, but not limited to, local departments of social services, child protective services and child welfare caseworkers, supervisors and administrators, provider agencies and ACS caseworkers and supervisors working in the program areas of preventive, adoption services, foster care and child protective services. Each course can include one or more target population.

**Training Provider:** OCFS Training Vendor or OCFS Trainer

**Estimated cost per delivery:** This cost accounts for single and multi-day classroom deliverables or WBT/CBT or Virtual Classroom deliverables.

**Title IV-E administrative function(s):** as described in 45 CFR 1356.60(b)(2); 1357.15(t) and SSA 474(a)(3)(B)

**Short-term training:** The following training courses are considered short-term, unless specifically identified as long-term. Current training provided via contract 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 and is identified as long-term training.

**GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE CONCEPTS IN CHILD WELFARE**

**Supporting and Promoting Race Equity and Cultural Competence in Child Welfare**

**Mode of Delivery:** Classroom/Virtual Classroom

**Duration:** 2 days/2 days

**Work Plan Code:** CC33

**Approved Audience:** Local departments of social services (LDSS) and OCFS-licensed voluntary foster care agency administrators, supervisors, and caseworkers; state OCFS home office and regional office staff; other identified stakeholders

**Training Provider:** SUNY Albany - PDP
Estimated cost per delivery: $5,721
Title IV-E administrative function(s): case management and supervision, referral to services, placement of the child, development of the case plan, cultural competency related to children and families

The purpose of this activity is to provide training that develops knowledge and skills of the trainees to build and strengthen cultural competency in New York State’s Child Welfare system. 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 children, and in some cases Latino/Hispanic children in our child welfare system.

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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Trainees</th>
<th>Offerings</th>
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<tr>
<td>2020-2021 (actual)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2021-2022 (proposed)</td>
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Racial Equity Learning Exchange Training
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 2 days
Work Plan Code: CC33
Approved Audience: LDSSs and OCFS-licensed VA administrators, supervisors, and caseworkers; state OCFS home office and regional office staff; other identified stakeholders
Training Provider: SUNY Albany - PDP
Estimated cost per delivery: $4,998
Title IV-E administrative function(s): cultural competency related to children and families

This two-day training will allow staff to engage in a learning experience about achieving equity in child welfare and provide a framework for action planning. The training will include national child welfare and juvenile justice data trends, definitions, and conceptual frameworks that help frame how child welfare systems respond to racial and ethnic differences in ways that create and perpetuate disparities. Training will provide an overview of specific state and national data trends. Policies and practices that contribute to training will also include an overview of theories of practice used in the field to address racial bias and oppression.

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FOUNDATIONAL CHILD WELFARE TRAINING (Initial Training)

Child Welfare Foundations Program
Mode of Delivery: Classroom, WBT, OJL/Virtual Classroom, WBT, OJL
Duration: 19days/ 12days
Work Plan Code: CW01
Approved Audience: New LDSS and voluntary agency child welfare and child protective services caseworkers
Training Provider: YRI
Estimated cost per delivery: $168,233
Title IV-E administrative function(s): referral to services, case management and supervision, placement of the child, development of the case plan

This training provides the foundation for all child welfare professionals, regardless of specific job function (child protective services, preventive, foster care). This is a multipart training. It has been designed around the core competencies of the New York State Office of Children and Family Services (New York State OCFS) Practice Model. These translate into the 10 domains of the training: The New York State OCFS Practice Model, Critical Thinking, Cultural Competence, Strengths-Based Family Engagement, Assessment, Interviewing, Self-Management, Intervention, Collaboration and Service Planning. The program supports training participants in building competency and achieving performance outcomes in all these areas. Learning activities in each domain will consist of one or more modalities (classroom instruction, WBT, skills clinic), and all domains will include an on-the-job learning (OJL) component. There are 19 days of classroom training, and there are 12 days of virtual classroom. In addition, all participants must complete 1.5 days of WBTs and 6.25 days of OJL (note that classroom training/virtual classroom includes two days of CONNECTIONS training funded under a different work plan).

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CPS Bridge Program
Mode of Delivery: Classroom/Virtual Classroom
Duration: 1½ days/½ day
Work Plan Code: CW03
Approved Audience: New LDSS child protective services (CPS) caseworkers
Training Provider: YRI
Estimated cost per delivery: $8,971 2021-2022
Title IV-E administrative function(s): referral to services, case management and supervisions, placement of the child, development of the case plan

This program is for CPS workers who attended the Child Welfare Foundations Program, to prepare them for the Child Protective Services Response Training. The training includes content on risk and the Risk Assessment Profile (RAP) as well as foundational legal content necessary to attend CPSR training. OCFS will begin the process of revising CPSRT in 2021 to include this content. When revisions are complete, CPS Bridge will no longer be offered.

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<td>2021-2022 (proposed)</td>
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Child Protective Services Response Training (CPSRT)
Mode of Delivery: Classroom and WBT/Virtual Classroom and WBT
Duration: See below
Work Plan Code: CW03
Approved Audience: LDSS CPS and child welfare caseworkers, supervisors, and managers; and New York State OCFS staff involved in FAR. However, participants must first have taken a foundation training program, such as the Child Welfare Foundations Program.
Training Provider: Y R I
Estimated cost per delivery: $44,460
Title IV-E administrative function(s): case management and supervision, development of the case plan, referral to services

Supplemented by pre- and mid-classroom web-based modules, this initial eight-day course, consisting of seven (7) days of classroom/virtual classroom training and one day of training in CONNECTIONS, fulfills the mandated core training for Investigative/FAR and on-call CPS staff by building upon a set of interpersonal engagement, assessment, and decision-making skills and values learned in the Child Welfare Foundations 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.

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Supervising CPS
Mode of Delivery: Classroom and WBT/Virtual Classroom and WBT
Duration: 4 days/2 days
Work Plan Code: CW03
Approved Audience: LDSS CPS Supervisors
Training Provider: YRI
Estimated cost per delivery: $20,775 2021-2022
Title IV-E administrative function(s): case management and supervision, development of the case plan, case reviews

This course is mandated for CPS supervisors and builds on critical skills to model, coach, and monitor strengths-based, child-centered, family-focused practice in CPS. It focuses on issues and skills relevant to CPS supervisors, including supervising the CPS response, decision-making, safety and risk assessment, decisions about ongoing services and any family court involvement, managing safety over the life of the case, coaching, and monitoring CPS practice.
KEYS Core Training
Mode of Delivery: Classroom, WBT, Online/Virtual Classroom, WBT
Duration: 5 classroom days and two 1.5-hour online sessions/2 virtual classroom days
Work Plan Code: CW01
Approved Audience: New LDSS and voluntary agency child welfare supervisors and senior caseworkers
Training Provider: YRI
Estimated cost per delivery: $20,208 2021-2022
Title IV-E administrative function(s): case management and supervision

KEYS Core Training focuses on the development of leadership and supervisory effectiveness skills, and on the needs of new supervisors and the competencies they most need within the first six months of assuming a supervisory position. KEYS Core Training includes: Transitioning from Worker to Supervisor, The Process of Supervision, and Case Consultation. This program will provide new supervisors with the knowledge and skills necessary to effectively support, develop, and supervise child-centered, family-based, strengths-based child welfare practice in alignment with the KEYS Model of Supervision.

This training consists of pre-classroom web-based training, five days of classroom training/2 days of virtual classroom, and two one and a half hour online coaching sessions. The coaching sessions are for the classroom training only.

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CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES (CPS) Training

NOTE: Foundational Child Protective Services training courses are listed in the Foundational Child Welfare Training section.

Child Forensic Interviewing
Mode of Delivery: Classroom/Virtual Classroom
Duration: 5 days/5 days
Work Plan Code: CC31
Approved Audience: LDSS CPS caseworkers and supervisors, multidisciplinary team members, joint response team members, and Child Advocacy Center staff
Training Provider: SUNY Albany - PDP and Zero Abuse Project
Estimated cost per delivery: $16,743
Title IV-E administrative function(s): case management and supervision, referral to services, development of the case plan

This training utilizes the ChildFirst® Forensic Interview Protocol, a flexible model that includes poly-victimization screening and explores all forms of maltreatment. The foundation of ChildFirst® is the best interest of the child. The training also includes child development, memory and suggestibility, cultural considerations, working effectively as a multidisciplinary team (MDT), testifying in court, legal issues, and preparing children for court. 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.

Child Forensic Interviewing Special Topics Training
Mode of Delivery: Classroom/Virtual Classroom
Duration: 1 day/1 day
Work Plan Code: CC31
Approved Audience: LDSS CPS caseworkers and supervisors, multi-disciplinary team members, joint response team members and Child Advocacy Center staff
Training Provider: SUNY Albany - PDP and Zero Abuse Project
Estimated cost per delivery: $2,600
Title IV-E administrative function(s): case management and supervision, referral to services

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.

Child Forensic Interviewing Special Topics Webinars
Mode of Delivery: Webinar
Duration: ½ day
Work Plan Code: CC31
Approved Audience: LDSS CPS caseworkers and supervisors, multidisciplinary team members, joint response team members and Child Advocacy Center staff
Training Provider: SUNY Albany - PDP and Zero Abuse Project
Estimated cost per delivery: $1,000
Title IV-E administrative function(s): case management and supervision, referral to services

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.

Combined data for all Forensic Interviewing training

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</table>
Sexual Abuse Dynamics and Intervention Training
Mode of Delivery: Classroom/Virtual Classroom
Duration: 3 days/3 days
Work Plan Code: CC06
Approved Audience: LDSSCPS and child welfare caseworkers, supervisors and administrators, provider agencies and ACS caseworkers and supervisors working in the program areas of preventive, adoption services, foster care services, and child protective services
Training Provider: Stony Brook University
Estimated cost per delivery: $19,875
Title IV-E administrative function(s): case management and supervision, development of the case plan

This course provides the basic knowledge of the dynamics of sexual abuse and the impact of sexual abuse on the child and their family. It builds on skills and abilities for caseworkers who encounter various aspects of sexual abuse in their ongoing casework with families. This training, offered statewide, provides child welfare staff an abstract on the dynamics of sexual abuse as well as on the treatment modalities utilized to protect and support victims, and to treat and support the family. This course will be provided to a combined audience of CPS caseworkers and other child welfare caseworkers. This course builds staff competencies 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.

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Interviewing Children: A Skills Clinic (CPS)
Interviewing Children: A Skills Clinic (Child Welfare)
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 1 day
Work Plan Code: CC06
Approved Audience: LDSS CPS and child welfare caseworkers, supervisors and administrators, provider agencies and ACS caseworkers and supervisors working in the program areas of preventive, adoption services, foster care services, and child protective services
Training provider: Stony Brook University
Estimated cost per delivery: $10,000
Title IV-E administrative function(s): case management and supervision, development of the case plan

Interviewing Children: A Skills Clinic affords workers 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 is open to LDSSs, including ACS and provider agencies caseworkers and supervisors, the course is offered in two particularized deliverables. One training (CW) is offered to preventive, foster care and adoption caseworkers and supervisors; the other training (CPS) is for child protective services caseworkers and supervisors. Sexual Abuse Dynamics and Intervention Training is the prerequisite for these courses.

### CPS Skills Clinic

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### Child Welfare Skills Clinic

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<td>2021-2022 (proposed)</td>
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### Domestic Violence Training for Child Protective Workers – Mandated

**Mode of Delivery:** Classroom/Virtual Classroom  
**Duration:** 2 days/3 days  
**Work Plan Code:** CC13  
**Approved Audience:** CPS workers and supervisors in LDSSs  
**Additional Audience:** LDSS child welfare staff, provider agency staff, LDSS administrators and managers, and OCFS regional office staff  
**Training Vendor:** Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence  
**Estimated cost per delivery:** $4,309  
**Title IV-E administrative function(s):** referral to services, case management and supervision, development of the case plan

This training program assists CPS caseworkers to identify the presence of domestic violence in families and to conduct accurate safety and risk assessments. It teaches how to support and sustain non-DV offending parents’ efforts to protect themselves and their children and meet their needs and how to engage DV offending parents to assume responsibility for the impact of their abusive behavior on their children and to meet their needs for safety, permanency, and well-being. The training is designed to help participants to integrate best-practice domestic violence practice strategies within their CPS practice, use self-reflection in their day-to-day work, and build
their ability to apply critical thinking skills to interviews, assessments and decision making. Mandated for all CPS workers.

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<th>Offerings</th>
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FAMILY ASSESSMENT RESPONSE (FAR) Training

Mode of Delivery: Varies, see below
Duration: Varies
Work Plan Code: CW03
Approved Audience: Varies, see below
Training Provider: YRI
Estimated cost per delivery:
  Estimated cost per classroom training day is $4,567 2021-2022
  Estimated cost per coaching day is $4,567 2021-2022
Title IV-E administrative functions: case management and supervision, development of the case plan, case reviews, referral to services

FAR became a permanent child protective service in New York State in June of 2011. FAR counties (exclusive of NYC) include Allegany, Chemung, Columbia, Madison, Nassau, Niagara, Onondaga, Orange, 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, composed of classroom work and web-based CBTs, provides trainees with a thorough overview of the philosophical and practice framework for FAR within New York State. 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. 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.

FAR TRAINING COURSES:

Advanced Supervision in FAR
Mode of Delivery: Classroom/Virtual Classroom
Duration: 1 day/1 day
Work Plan Code: CW03
Approved Audience: 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 key objectives are to enhance the knowledge and skills of supervisors, administrators, and other key individuals to better support staff; promote effective FAR practice and implementation; maintain FAR process fidelity and support child safety.

Assessing Safety and Risk in FAR
Mode of Delivery: Classroom/Virtual Classroom
Duration: 1 day/1 day
Work Plan Code: CW03
Approved Audience: 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

Focuses on understanding the differences between safety and risk and how it relates to the FAR process, identifying successful approaches to risk and safety assessment within FAR, knowing when risk is or is not an indicator of moving a family to a traditional CPS investigation track, and effective engagement and communication with families in the FAR process.

FAR Process and Practice Training
Mode of Delivery: Classroom and WBT/Virtual Classroom and WBT
Duration: 2 days/2.5 days
Work Plan Code: CW03
Approved Audience: FAR-approved LDSS CPS caseworkers and supervisors and appropriate administrators and provider agencies, identified OCFS regional and home office staff

Provides participants with a thorough overview of the philosophical and practice frameworks for family assessment response for New York State. It includes the core principles, values and practices, protocols and procedures for FAR cases and will prepare caseworkers for engaging a family within FAR.

Increasing the Voice of Children and Youth in FAR
Mode of Delivery: Classroom/Virtual Classroom
Duration: 1 day/1 day
Work Plan Code: CW03
Approved Audience: FAR-approved LDSS CPS caseworkers and supervisors and appropriate administrators and provider agencies, identified OCFS regional and home office staff

This course provides new FAR case workers and supervisors the skills necessary to effectively engage children and youth in FAR and to facilitate family leadership through family-led processes so that children and youth are safe, and families are supported in remaining together.

Solution-Focused FAR Practice
Mode of Delivery: Classroom/Virtual Classroom
Duration: 1 day/1 day
Work Plan Code: CW03
Approved Audience: 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

Increases the capacity of FAR caseworkers and supervisors to advance a practice shift, acquire new skills to support the integration of FAR and, more importantly, to facilitate family leadership through family-led processes so that children are safe, and families are supported in remaining together.

Supervising to a Practice Shift in FAR
Mode of Delivery: Classroom/Virtual Classroom
Duration: 1 day/1 day
Work Plan Code: CW03
Approved Audience: 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

Illuminates the role of the FAR supervisor and helps identify strategies for engaging and supervising workers, learn how to identify worker practice strengths and challenges, and how to create a plan to enhance or develop worker capacity and commitment.

FAR Training courses combined:

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<th>Trainees</th>
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FAR Coaching
Mode of Delivery: Coaching
Duration: 1 day/1/2 to 1 day
Work Plan Code: CC33
Approved Audience: 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

On-site coaching is provided to all FAR counties to augment and foster their level of skill in delivering FAR. Coaching is provided in the form of direct observation, practice modeling, case consultation, coaching for supervisors, and feedback on various practice activities to support the transfer of learning.

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SUPERVISORY TRAINING
NOTE: KEYS Core is listed in the Foundational Child Welfare Training section.

KEYS Supervision Essentials Training
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: Three 2-day modules/6 days
Work Plan Code: CW01
Approved Audience: Experienced LDSS and voluntary agency supervisors
Training Provider: YRI
Estimated cost per delivery: $24,226
Title IV-E administrative function(s): case management and supervision

KEYS Supervision Essentials is offered to support the implementation of the 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 subsequent modules.

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Quarterly Webinars for Supervisors
Mode of Delivery: Virtual Classroom
Duration: 1.5 hours
Work Plan Code: CW01
Approved Audience: experienced LDSS and voluntary agency supervisors
Training Provider: YRI
Estimated cost per delivery: $2,572
Title IV-E administrative function(s): case management and supervision

Topics may include but are not limited to assessment, family engagement, safety, and risk.

The following chart is the combined total of all webinars listed above.

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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
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</table>
Directors of Services Leadership Training Forum
Mode of Delivery: Forum/Training Event/Virtual Classroom
Duration: 2 days
Work Plan Code: EVNT01
Approved Audience: case management and supervision, child welfare and child protective services, preventive services, foster care, and adoption services
Training Provider: YRI
Estimated cost per delivery: $82,597
Title IV-E administrative function(s): case management and supervision, cultural competency related to children and families

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 2021, 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 OCFappr Data Warehouse.

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FOSTER CARE AND ADOPTION TRAINING

Leader Certification Programs
Mode of Delivery: Classroom/Virtual Classroom
Duration: See below
Work Plan Code: CW02
Approved Audience: LDSS and voluntary agency staff
Training Provider: YRI
Estimated cost per delivery: $64,454
Title IV-E administrative function(s): referral to services, case management and supervision, placement of the child, development of the case plan

A description of components follows:

- GPSII/MAPP: This nine-day classroom/virtual 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. This training is no longer being utilized.

• Deciding Together/MAPP: This 2½ day classroom/2-day virtual classroom training assists staff to work with individual families to prepare them to foster or adopt.

Combined data for all Leader Certification Programs

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Trainees</th>
<th>Offerings</th>
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<tr>
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<td>2021-2022 (proposed)</td>
<td>282</td>
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COMPASS In-Service Leader Certification
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 4 days
Work Plan Code: CW02
Approved Audience: Trainers of foster and adoptive parents, foster care, and adoption trainers, and agency administrators in LDSSs and provider agencies
Training Provider: YRI
Estimated cost per delivery: $42,778
Title IV-E administrative function(s): referral to services, case management and supervision, placement of the child, development of the case plan

This training program provides GPSII/MAPP Leaders with the COMPASS knowledge and skill development needed to provide local foster/adoptive parent in-service training.

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<th>Year</th>
<th>Trainees</th>
<th>Offerings</th>
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<td>2021-2022 (proposed)</td>
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Foster/Adoptive Parent Training Special Topics

Foster and Adoptive Parent Training Specialty Topics include all COMPASS in-service; Shared Parenting/MAPP; Deciding Together/MAPP; Caring for Our Own/MAPP Overview; Child Sexual Abuse/MAPP Sessions 1-5; Caring for Children Who Have Experienced Trauma: A Workshop for Resource Parents; and Kinship Care Overview and Promoting Options to Kin/Relative Caregivers.
Mode of Delivery: Classroom and Virtual Classroom  
Duration: see below  
Work Plan Code: CW02  
Approved Audience: Foster and adoptive parents, caseworkers and supervisors, home finders, trainers and agency administrators in local districts, voluntary and provider agencies  
Training Provider: YRI  
Estimated cost per delivery: $3,802  
Title IV-E administrative function(s): referral to services, case management and supervision, placement of the child, development of the case plan

- Special topics are offered either in classroom or through distance learning on such areas as loss and separation, preparing children for adoption, managing difficult behaviors, sexual abuse, child development and discipline, among others. Offered upon request only.
- 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. Offered upon request only.
- "Kinship Care Overview: Presenting Options to Kin/Relative Caregivers is a half-day classroom training to assist LDSSs and voluntary authorized agency staff to be able to help relative foster parents in determining the placement and permanency needs of their kin, including determining the level of support to meet their needs and understand placement options and their implications. Offered upon request only.
- Half-day classroom training that focuses on applying the Reasonable and Prudent Parenting Standard including immunity from liability. Offered upon request only.
- Half-day virtual classroom technical assistance for certified GPSII/MAPP leaders: delivering the content of GPSII/MAPP and Deciding Together on the virtual platform.

Combined data for Special Topics, Caring for Children, Kinship Care Overview, Reasonable and Prudent Parenting and technical assistance for Leaders.

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<th>Offerings</th>
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<td>2021-2022 (proposed)</td>
<td>30</td>
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Home Finders Summit  
Mode of Delivery: Classroom/Virtual Classroom  
Duration: 2 days  
Work Plan Code: EVNT01  
Approved Audience: Foster and adoptive parents, caseworkers and supervisors, home finders, trainers and agency administrators in local districts, voluntary and provider agencies  
Training Provider: YRI  
Estimated cost per delivery: $158,217
Title IV-E administrative function(s): referral to services, case management and supervision, placement of the child, development of the case plan

The Home Finders Summit is a two-day training program that provides home finders and their supervisors with additional knowledge, materials, tools, insight, training topics, skills practice and networking opportunities that will enhance their effectiveness as home finders in the local preparation, selection, and the development of prospective foster/adoptive parents.

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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
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<td>2021-2022 (proposed)</td>
<td>275</td>
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Virtual Classroom Training for Foster and Adoptive Parents
Mode of Delivery: Virtual Classroom
Duration: Varies
Work Plan Code: CW02
Approved Audience: Foster and adoptive parents, foster care, and adoption caseworkers, trainers and agency administrators in local districts and provider agencies
Training Vendor: YRI
Estimated cost per delivery: $34,806
Title IV-E administrative function(s): referral to services, case management and supervision, placement of the child, development of the case plan

Virtual classroom trainings for foster and adoptive parents cover various topics and are of various lengths. Schedules are announced twice a year.

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Achieving Permanency through Surrender and Termination of Parental Rights
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 6 Days
Work Plan Code: CW02
Approved Audience: LDSS and voluntary agency preventive, foster care and adoption caseworkers and supervisors
Training Provider: YRI
Estimated cost per delivery: $53,487 2021-2022
Title IV-E administrative function(s): referral to services, case management and supervision, placement of the child, development of the case plan

This course specifically provides participants with the basic knowledge and skills to assess the effectiveness of diligent efforts, apply the skills necessary to engage parents in the decision to surrender, coach parents and children in managing separation and loss, assess 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 related to freeing the child through surrender or termination of parental rights.
## RESIDENTIAL CHILD CARE – VOLUNTARY AGENCIES TRAINING

### Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI) Train-the-Trainer

**Mode of Delivery:** Classroom  
**Duration:** 5 days  
**Work Plan Code:** RC03  
**Approved Audience:** Voluntary agency trainers  
**Training Provider:** Cornell University  
**Estimated cost per delivery:** $41,411  
**Title IV-E administrative function(s):** case management and supervision

The Train-the-Trainer program creates a cadre of agency-based trainers who prepare staff within VA 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. 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.

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### Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI) One-day Update

**Mode of Delivery:** Classroom  
**Duration:** 1 day  
**Work Plan Code:** RC03  
**Approved Audience:** Voluntary agency trainers  
**Training Provider:** Cornell University  
**Estimated cost per delivery:** $7,391  
**Title IV-E administrative function(s):** case management and supervision

Vendor will deliver offerings of the one-day training program for certified trainers. Updates will offer the latest in curriculum improvements and modifications. Trainees will have the opportunity to review techniques and refresh training skills. Completion of this course will meet the recertification requirement.
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**Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI) Two-day Updates**

**Mode of Delivery:** Classroom/Virtual Classroom  
**Duration:** 2 days/2 days  
**Work Plan Code:** RC03  
**Approved Audience:** Voluntary agency trainers  
**Training Provider:** Cornell University  
**Estimated cost per delivery:** $14,561  
**Title IV-E administrative function(s):** case management and supervision

In 2020, this curriculum was revised to reflect changes in the needs of the populations served, evolving conditions existing in organizations, and evaluation and on-going research that examines best practices and improved outcomes for children in out-of-home care.

With the revisions to the curriculum, the vendor developed and offered a new 2-day update for certified TCI trainers so that they would have access to the revised materials and an opportunity to practice new activities. Completion of this course meets the recertification requirement.

Vendor will continue to provide this training in 2021.

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**YOUTH SERVICES**

**Mode of Delivery:** Varies  
**Duration:** Varies  
**Work Plan Code:** RC01  
**Approved Audience:** Varies – general: LDSS and foster care agency caseworkers, supervisors, and child care workers, foster parents, youth bureau staff, youth in foster care, and Division of Juvenile Justice and Opportunities for Youth (DJJOY) staff and youth, OCFS Division of Youth Development and Partnerships for Success (YDAPS), and OCFS-licensed Runaway and Homeless Youth Shelter staff  
**Training Provider:** SUNY Albany - PDP  
**Estimated cost per delivery:** Varies- average $1,014  
**Title IV-E administrative function(s):** development of the case plan and case management and supervision; cultural competency; communication skills required to work with children and families

The Statewide Youth Services Training provides adults who work with youth in care in New York State 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 VA staff: caseworkers, supervisors and child care workers; foster parents; youth bureau staff; OCFS CWCS staff, Division of Youth Development and Partnerships for Success (YDAPS) staff and Division of Juvenile Justice and Opportunities for Youth (DJJOY) staff, and OCFS-licensed Runaway and Homeless Youth Shelter staff. Training is recommended, but not required.

**Topic Specific Classroom Training**

This training is offered as full- or half-day training and is delivered statewide. For 2021, 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 New York State. 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 New York State. These events provide youth with a voice in identifying issues they have with policies and practices that influence their lives. Youth in care have an opportunity to present their individual issues and concerns to a panel of regional policy makers who can effect local change. These events will also present an opportunity for the youth to take part in the recruitment of new members for regional youth leadership programs.

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<tr>
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<th>Offerings</th>
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The courses for Youth Services training include:

**Adolescent Sexuality: Promoting Sexual Health and Sexual Responsibility**

**Mode of Delivery:** Classroom or Virtual Classroom  
**Duration:** ½ day classroom or ½ day virtual classroom

Adolescents can experience challenges adjusting to the emotional issues associated with sexual development. It is essential that the adults in each youth’s life are prepared to guide that youth through that process in a healthy and appropriate manner. This training is intended to help those adults to become knowledgeable about the stressors facing adolescents, especially foster care youth, and to assist these adults in developing the necessary skills to provide education and support. The classroom version is a half-day, utilizing various multimedia resources, providing opportunities for large group discussions, and will include interactive hands-on activities. The half-
Boundaries: Setting Limits and Sharing Safety
Mode of Delivery: Classroom or Virtual Classroom
Duration: ½ day classroom or ½ day virtual classroom

This course introduces the concepts of boundaries and self-disclosure and how they are associated with the role of adult caregivers working with youth in out-of-home settings. Through activities and discussion participants will begin to explore what is appropriate and inappropriate when interacting with young people, including over-familiarity, over-identification, over-involvement, and self-disclosure. Participants will learn and practice strategies that they can use with youth in all types of out-of-home settings.

Bullying: Spot It, Stop It
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 1 day

Bullying in schools, out-of-home settings, and virtually all locations in which young people gather, continues to be a national problem. Bullying impacts children who are bullied, children who perpetrate bullying behaviors and the social environment. Bullying has devastating short-term and long-term consequences. This training provides participants with information about the types of bullying, the impact of bullying, and tools to create a physical and social setting in which bullying is reduced.

Promoting Resilience: Fostering Youth Empowerment (course updated in 2020; previous title was Creating Youth Leaders in Your Agency)
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: ½ day

This training will provide participants with concrete strategies that can be easily used with day-to-day interactions with youth to purposefully build resiliency. Youth with high levels of resilience are better equipped to make positive choices toward a successful future. Throughout life, youth can face seemingly insurmountable challenges that may require skills to help them handle a variety of situations and achieve self-sufficiency. Developing resiliency will help youth to acquire those necessary skills, including strengths, skills to cope, the ability to recover from hardship and prepare them for future challenges. Strategies to develop resilience can be simple and easy to integrate into daily interactions with youth. Despite our best efforts, we cannot prevent adversity and daily stress; but we can help youth learn to be more resilient by changing how they think about challenges and adversities.

Creating LifePaks with Youth in Care
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: ½ day

The disconnection of a child/youth from his/her past is frequently a result of placement and/or adoption produced by the severing of important connections that existed prior to placement, and by the failure to help the child/youth preserve his/her history as a part of his/her identity formation. Research has shown that failure to preserve a child's/youth's connection to history has a long-term effect on the child's/youth's self-esteem, self-concept, and ability to form lasting attachments and relationships throughout their lifetime. This training will help adult caregivers use the process...
of developing a LifeBook/LifePak with a youth to produce a tangible product, while helping the youth explore future goals.

**Supporting Youth in Effective Money Management**  
*Mode of Delivery: Classroom*  
*Duration: ½ day*

Budgeting and money management can be quite a challenge for adults, even more so for any adolescent, and more specifically for the youth we serve. The challenges around money management may include a lack of experience, being more prone to impulse spending and having limited income. This training will present creative and engaging ideas that participants can use to support the youth they serve in strengthening their skills and knowledge of money management. Suggested activities, games, and resources about money management that can be used with youth individually or in groups will be included.

**Essential Communication Skills for Working with Youth in Care**  
*Mode of Delivery: Classroom or Virtual Classroom*  
*Duration: ½ day classroom or ½ day virtual classroom*

This training will assist adult caregivers with developing the essential skills needed to provide safe supervision of and effective communication with youth in care. It will examine the concept of self-awareness and look at how adult responses and physical posturing give nonverbal messages to youth with whom they interact. It will also explore the significance of developing skills of positioning, observation, and decision-making, and introduce the concepts of therapeutic intervention and positive role modeling.

**Life Skills Toolbox (Foundational)**  
*Mode of Delivery: Classroom*  
*Duration: 2 days*

This course is designed to build on the Promoting Positive Youth Development and Well-Being (PPYD) course or the Working with Youth in Care trainings. Participants should take one of these courses as a prerequisite. This training will assist participants to link assessment, the foundation for designing a life skills plan, with the resources contained in the toolbox. The Life Skills Toolbox provides a competency-based structure for selecting specific life skills that need instruction and provides activities and resources that teach the specific life skill.

**Motivating and Engaging Youth**  
*Mode of Delivery: Classroom/Virtual Classroom*  
*Duration: 1 day/ ½ day*

Engaging and sustaining the focus of youth in care for case planning and implementation can be especially challenging, given their foster care experience both prior to and while in care. This training will discuss concepts of motivation, examine youth needs and how they may be met, consider where youth may be in the Stages of Change, and identify and utilize tools for assessing youth motivation. Practice using a model for engaging youth and increasing their motivation will enable caregivers to assist youth with their successful transition to self-sufficiency, via life skills development and future planning.

**Permanency Options for Youth**  
*Mode of Delivery: Classroom or Virtual Classroom*
Duration: ½ day classroom or ½ day virtual classroom
Work Plan Code: RC01
Approved Audience: LDSS and foster care agency child welfare staff: caseworkers, supervisors and child care workers; foster parents; youth bureau staff; OCFS CWCS staff, Division of Youth Development and Partnerships for Success (YDPS) staff, and the Division of Juvenile Justice and Opportunities for Youth (DJJOY) staff, and OCFS-licensed Runaway and Homeless Youth Shelter staff

Permanency for children and youth is critical to a child’s sense of well-being, safety, and long-term success in life, especially for youth in care. When young people age out of the foster care system, they need responsible adults who are willing to provide various supports that will help the youth transition to adulthood. This training will focus on defining permanency and identifying, for case managers in LDSSs and VAs in New York State, the permanency options for children and youth to be explored if reunification with birth families is not possible. Those options include adoption; guardianship, including KinGAP; and Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA).

Preparing Youth in Care for the College Experience
Mode of Delivery: Classroom or Virtual Classroom
Duration: ½ day classroom or ½ day virtual classroom
Work Plan Code: RC01
Approved Audience: LDSS and foster care agency caseworkers, supervisors, foster parents, childcare workers, OCFS CWCS staff, Division of Youth Development and Partnerships for Success (YDPS) staff, youth bureau staff, and Division of Juvenile Justice and Opportunities for Youth (DJJOY) staff and OCFS-licensed Runaway and Homeless Youth Shelter staff

This course will acquaint adult caregivers with a basic understanding of what they can do to help youth in care prepare for the college experience. Many youths in care face educational obstacles due to multiple placements, attending multiple schools and inconsistent messages from adult caregivers. As a result, these youth may be ill prepared for making a successful transition from high school to college. This training will provide adult caregivers with information about the vocabulary and processes necessary to assist youth in preparing for and successfully getting started in their college career.

Preparing Youth for Employment
Mode of Delivery: Classroom or Virtual Classroom
Duration: ½ day classroom or ½ day virtual classroom
Work Plan Code: RC01
Approved Audience: LDSS and foster care agency caseworkers, supervisors, foster parents, child care workers, OCFS CWCS staff, Division of Youth Development and Partnerships for Success (YDPS), youth bureau staff, and Division of Juvenile Justice and Opportunities for Youth (DJJOY) staff and OCFS-licensed Runaway and Homeless Youth Shelter staff

Youth in care often experience difficulty in securing and maintaining employment due in part to their lack of skills and self-confidence. This training will focus on the interpersonal, workplace, and technological skills needed in today’s job market, and how participants can foster these skills in the youth with whom they work. Participants will be able to assist youth in career exploration, teach youth how to use portfolios as a career development tool, assess and strengthen youth employment readiness skills, explore methods to assist youth in developing job seeking and job
keeping skills, and identify local programs and community resources to assist youth with career exploration, job skills development, and employment opportunities.

**Promoting Positive Youth Development and Well-Being (PPYD) (Foundational)**
Mode of Delivery: Classroom and pre-class module CBT
Duration: 2 days
Work Plan Code: RC01
Approved Audience: LDSS and foster care agency caseworkers, supervisors, foster parents, child care workers, OCFS CWCS staff, Division of Youth Development and Partnerships for Success (YDPS) staff, youth bureau staff, and Division of Juvenile Justice and Opportunities for Youth (DJJOY) staff and OCFS-licensed Runaway and Homeless Youth Shelter staff

This training will assist those working with youth in care to promote positive youth development and well-being using Positive Youth Development (PYD) strategies. PYD strategies encourage service providers to look at youth from a holistic perspective, view youth as partners in their own development, provide youth with the skills and opportunities to foster better decision-making, and prepare youth to take the lead in achieving their goals. Understanding adolescent development, and how the trauma that youth in care have experienced affects their development, is necessary for caseworkers who work with adolescents in care. Being able to communicate with youth and use PYD strategies will assist workers in partnering with youth, better assessing their needs, and creating realistic youth-led plans. This will, in turn, help youth successfully transition from care and sustain life-long success.

**Street Smarts: Safety Skills for Youth in Care**
Mode of Delivery: Classroom or Virtual Classroom
Duration: ½ day classroom or ½ day virtual classroom
Work Plan Code: RC01
Approved Audience: LDSS and foster care agency caseworkers, supervisors, foster parents, child care workers, OCFS CWCS staff, Division of Youth Development and Partnerships for Success (YDPS) staff, youth bureau staff, and Division of Juvenile Justice and Opportunities for Youth (DJJOY) staff and OCFS-licensed Runaway and Homeless Youth Shelter staff

This course explores some of the personal safety issues youth face in the community, in school, and interacting with their peers. Participants will look at some of the reasons youth in care are more vulnerable to risk in their lives, societal violence as it pertains to adolescents, how to help youth deal with difficult situations, and ways to help youth learn to keep themselves safe when they are living on their own.

**Transition Plan: Helping Youth in Care Plan for Their Future Training**
Mode of Delivery: Classroom or Virtual Classroom
Duration: ½ day classroom or ½ day virtual classroom
Work Plan Code: RC01
Approved Audience: LDSS and foster care agency caseworkers, supervisors, foster parents, childcare workers, OCFS CWCS staff, Division of Youth Development and Partnerships for Success (YDPS) staff, youth bureau staff, and Division of Juvenile Justice and Opportunities for Youth (DJJOY) staff and OCFS-licensed Runaway and Homeless Youth Shelter staff
Youth transitioning from the foster care system need to be equipped and prepared to achieve self-sufficiency. With many new advancements in legislation, policy, and practice, those working in the field have tools to create a youth directed plan to prepare youth for life after foster care. Implementation of these tools is key, and this training will not only educate, but provide a forum to discuss adoption of these tools into service provision.

LGBTQ+ Milestones and Meaning
Mode of Delivery: Virtual Classroom
Duration: ½ day
Work Plan Code: RC01
Approved Audience: LDSS and foster care agency caseworkers, supervisors, foster parents, childcare workers, OCFS CWCS staff, Division of Youth Development and Partnerships for Success (YDPS) staff, youth bureau staff, and Division of Juvenile Justice and Opportunities for Youth (DJJOY) staff, and OCFS-licensed Runaway and Homeless Youth Shelter staff

This training provides a brief introduction to the history of the LGBTQ+ movement, an overview of the laws and policies that define the rights of LGBTQ+ youth and the expectations for those working with them, and some of the current vocabulary and resources to support emerging allies. Members of the LGBTQ+ community have historically been denied fair and equal treatment compared to their heterosexual/cisgender counterparts. The discrimination faced by the LGBTQ+ community, combined with the ever-present pressures of adolescence and maturation, contribute to LGBTQ+ youth being represented in out-of-home placements at a disproportionately high rate and being particularly vulnerable to risks such as suicide or substance abuse, among many others. In order to reduce these risks, youth need supportive/affirming adults to help them navigate the challenges of adolescence and society while they come to terms with their own identity. It is recommended that participants attend this virtual classroom training prior to attending the half-day companion classroom training, Building Responsive and Respectful Care.

LGBTQ+ Building Responsive and Respectful Care (course updated to pilot-ready in 2020, will be finalized after pilot)
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: ½ day
Work Plan Code: RC01
Approved Audience: LDSS and foster care agency caseworkers, supervisors, foster parents, childcare workers, OCFS CWCS staff, Division of Youth Development and Partnerships for Success (YDPS) staff, youth bureau staff, and Division of Juvenile Justice and Opportunities for Youth (DJJOY) staff, and OCFS-licensed Runaway and Homeless Youth Shelter staff

This training is designed to introduce information associated with successfully providing support and respectful care to all youth and particularly Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Questioning (LGBTQ+) youth. This training will provide information, resources, and strategies designed to assist staff in building informed and respectful care environments and relationships with LGBTQ+ youth. Participants will have the opportunity to build knowledge and resources to promote successful practices when working with LGBTQ+ youth. LGBTQ+ youth are particularly vulnerable to risks such as suicide, substance abuse, physical/sexual abuse, running away, homelessness, and sex trafficking. In order to reduce and/or overcome these risks, youth need the support of staff who are equipped with information and strategies to empower youth.

Courses for Child Welfare Staff and Supervisors
Section 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 Child Welfare Foundations Program 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 CPS supervisors.

**Advanced Legal Issues Training**
**Mode of Delivery:** Classroom
**Duration:** 2 days
**Work Plan Code:** CC28
**Approved Audience:** Child welfare staff in LDSSs
**Training Provider:** Stony Brook University
**Estimated cost per delivery:** $15,750
**Title IV-E administrative function(s):** placement of a child, development of the case plan, case management and supervision.

This course expands on legal issues introduced in the Child Welfare Foundations Program (or other foundational training) and CPSRT. The course provides the knowledge and skills needed to bring a case of child abuse and/or neglect through the Family Court System.

**Prerequisites:** Child Welfare Foundations Program or other OCFS-approved foundational training; and CPSRT

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<th>Trainees</th>
<th>Offerings</th>
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**Medical Issues Training**
**Mode of Delivery:** Classroom/Virtual Classroom
**Duration:** 2 days/2 days
**Work Plan Code:** CC28
**Approved Audience:** Child welfare staff in LDSSs
**Training Provider:** Stony Brook University
**Estimated cost per delivery:** $12,700
**Title IV-E administrative function(s):** placement of a child, development of the case plan, case management and supervision

This course provides the knowledge and skills to make informed decisions about accidental or inflicted injuries to children and to distinguish between potential abuse/maltreatment and naturally occurring medical conditions. This training is especially relevant to the work of CPS staff.

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<tr>
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<th>Trainees</th>
<th>Offerings</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>48</td>
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Psychotropic Medications
Mode of Delivery: Classroom/Virtual Classroom
Duration: 1 day/1 day
Work Plan Code: CC28
Approved Audience: Child welfare staff in LDSSs
Training Provider: Stony Brook University
Estimated cost per delivery: $6,500
Title IV-E administrative function(s): placement of a child, development of the case plan, case management and supervision

This course provides participants with basic knowledge of psychotropic medications and treatment applications, so they are able to support the child’s treatment plan and advocate for the child’s well-being on issues of mental health treatment.

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<th>Year</th>
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<th>Offerings</th>
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<tr>
<td>2021-2022 (proposed)</td>
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Special Topics Legal Training
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 1 day
Work Plan Code: CC28
Approved Audience: Child welfare staff in LDSSs
Training Provider: Stony Brook University
Estimated cost per delivery: $5,250
Title IV-E administrative function(s): placement of a child, development of the case plan, case management and supervision

This training provides child welfare LDSS and VA staff with up-to-date information regarding changing laws and legal requirements around child welfare, and to meet their need for clarification on existing laws and regulations. This training is provided upon request through OCFS regional offices.

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<th>Year</th>
<th>Trainees</th>
<th>Offerings</th>
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<td>2021-2022 (proposed)</td>
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Domestic Violence Training for Child Welfare Workers
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 2 days
Work Plan Code: CC13
Approved Audience: Child welfare (CW) workers in local districts, provider agencies and OCFS regional and home office staff
Training Provider: NEW YORK STATE OPDV
Estimated cost per delivery: $8,617
Title IV-E administrative function(s): referral to services, case management and supervision

This skill-based training assists child welfare (CW) workers with families where domestic violence and child abuse and maltreatment overlap. This training provides a comprehensive overview of adult domestic violence, the role of CW in domestic violence cases, and the impact of domestic abuse on the safety of adult victims and children. There will be opportunities for participants to assess for and respond to domestic violence, discuss safety planning with the protective parent, evaluate the effectiveness of various interventions, and review legal remedies.

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<th>Offerings</th>
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<td>2021-2022 (proposed)</td>
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Child Welfare Requirements for Identifying and Working with Sex Trafficking Victims
Mode of Delivery: CBT
Duration: 30 minutes
Work Plan Code: SYS04
Approved Audience: and voluntary agency staff
Training Provider: SUNY Albany - PDP
Title IV-E administrative function(s): referral to services

In September 2014, the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act was signed into law. This Act has two primary purposes: to improve the safety, permanency, and well-being outcomes of children and youth involved with the child welfare and juvenile justice systems, and to protect and prevent at-risk children and youth from becoming victims of sex trafficking. By viewing this program, trainees will learn how to summarize the requirements for identifying, documenting, reporting, and responding to children and youth who are sex trafficking victims or at risk of being victims, and they will become familiar with the sex trafficking identification screening tools. One version of the video includes Spanish captions.

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Family Assessment Service Plan Training
Mode of Delivery: Classroom/Virtual Classroom
Duration: 1½ days/1½ days
Work Plan Code: CC04
Approved Audience: LDSS and OCFS-licensed voluntary foster care agency administrators, supervisors, and caseworkers; state OCFS home office and regional office staff; other identified stakeholders
Training Provider: SUNY Albany - PDP
Estimated cost per delivery: $6,209
Title IV-E administrative function(s): case reviews, referral to services, case management and supervision

This training focuses on case recording requirements in CONNECTIONS and provides hands-on practice on documenting in the Family Assessment and Service Plan (FASP), health services, education, and permanency hearing reports. See also: Child Welfare Casework Documentation.

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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
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Family Assessment Service Plan with Foster Care Training
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 2 days
Work Plan Code: CC04
Approved Audience: LDSS and OCFS-licensed voluntary foster care agency administrators, supervisors, and caseworkers; state OCFS home office and regional office staff; other identified stakeholders
Training Provider: SUNY Albany - PDP
Estimated cost per delivery: $8,159
Title IV-E administrative function(s): case reviews, referral to services, case management and supervision

This training focuses on case recording requirements in CONNECTIONS and provides hands-on practice on documenting in the Family Assessment and Service Plan (FASP), health services, education, and permanency hearing reports. This course provides in-depth training specifically on the additional screens required in CONNECTIONS for foster care cases. See also: Child Welfare Casework Documentation.

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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
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Progress Notes Training
Mode of Delivery: Classroom/Virtual Classroom
Duration: 1 day/1 day
Work Plan Code: CC04
Approved Audience: LDSS and OCFS-licensed voluntary foster care agency administrators, supervisors, and caseworkers; state OCFS home office and regional office staff; other identified stakeholders
Training Provider: SUNY Albany - PDP
Estimated cost per delivery: $5,077
Title IV-E administrative function(s): placement of a child, development of the case plan, case management and supervision

Progress Notes Training is designed to develop and strengthen caseworkers’ ability to conduct quality casework contacts so they are able to document efforts to engage families, gather information to assess safety, risk, abuse/maltreatment, develop and implement service plans, support decision-making, including reasonable efforts, and to support placement, return home, concurrent planning, adoption, eligibility determinations, and casework contacts. Progress Notes are part of the child welfare uniform case record.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
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Casework Documentation Special Topics Training
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 1 day
Work Plan Code: CC04
Approved Audience: LDSS and OCFS-licensed voluntary foster care agency administrators, supervisors, and caseworkers; state OCFS home office and regional office staff; other identified stakeholders
Training Provider: SUNY Albany - PDP
Estimated cost per delivery: $4,039

Title IV-E administrative function(s): placement of a child, development of the case plan, case management and supervision

Casework Documentation Special Topics training is used to improve participants’ understanding and effective use of the documentation system and provides local districts/voluntary agencies training on requested topics related to specific needs.
Courses may include:
- Case Documentation for CPS Workers
- FASP with Foster Care Issues
- Using the FASP as a Case Planning Tool
- Documenting Safety and Risk Assessments
- Permanency Hearing Reports

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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Trainees</th>
<th>Offerings</th>
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Progress Notes Follow Up
Mode of Delivery: N/A
Duration: N/A
Work Plan Code: CC04
Approved Audience: LDSS and OCFS-licensed voluntary foster care agency administrators, supervisors, and caseworkers; state OCFS home office and regional office staff; other identified stakeholders
Training Provider: SUNY Albany - PDP
Estimated cost per delivery: N/A
Title IV-E administrative function(s): placement of a child, development of the case plan, case management and supervision

This activity provides follow-up and feedback for caseworkers who have completed Progress Notes classroom training. Trainers review and give feedback on submitted samples of progress notes. They focus on documentation best practice ensuring accuracy, clarity, and objectivity. This will enhance the quality of progress notes submitted to the CONNECTIONS documentation system.

Note: In 2020, this technical assistance activity was open to all Progress Notes trainees, but participation was voluntary. Trainers spent a half to one hour per feedback; the total time was combined into days spent.
In 2021, this activity is a mandated part of Progress Notes training and will not be tracked separately.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
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Legal Updates for CPS and Child Welfare Webcast
Mode of Delivery: Webcast/Virtual Classroom
Duration: 3 hours/3 hours
Work Plan Code: AV01 and CC28
Approved Audience: Experienced (on the job more than one year) child welfare and CPS staff, senior caseworkers, supervisors, directors of service and LDSSs attorneys.
Training Provider: Overit Multimedia and Stony Brook University
Title IV-E administrative function(s): referral to services, case reviews, case management and supervision

This annual program reviews highlights of case law updates that affect child protective services, foster care, and adoption practice in New York State. Attorneys viewing this program live will be eligible to receive Continuing Legal Education Credit (CLE). A recorded version of the program will be available in HSLC for the year after the original webcast. The content portion of this webcast is supported under the CC28 workplan. The audio/visual portion of this webcast is supported under the AV01 workplan.

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Adolescent Substance Use
Mode of Delivery: CBT
Duration: 2-3 hours
Work Plan Code: CC05
Approved Audience: LDSS and OCFS-licensed voluntary foster care agency administrators, supervisors, and caseworkers; state OCFS home office and regional office staff; other identified stakeholders
Training Provider: SUNY Albany - PDP  
Title IV-E administrative function(s): referral to services, case development, case management and supervision

The prevalence of adolescent substance use and the seriousness of the possible impact of substance use on the adolescent’s well-being make it imperative that caseworkers have an understanding of adolescent substance use, have access to resources about adolescent substance use, and know the best ways to engage with an adolescent and his/her family about possible substance use. This WBT training is designed for caseworkers working with adolescents who may be using alcohol or other drugs. This training will increase workers’ competence and confidence to work with adolescents who are suspected of using substances, teach workers how substance use negatively impacts adolescents, and help workers to decide what actions to take with an adolescent and his/her family to address the problem of adolescent substance use.

Co-occurring Disorders for Child Welfare Workers  
Mode of Delivery: CBT  
Duration: 2-3 hours  
Work Plan Code: CC05  
Approved Audience: LDSS and OCFS-licensed voluntary foster care agency administrators, supervisors, and caseworkers; state OCFS home office and regional office staff; other identified stakeholders  
Training Provider: SUNY Albany - PDP  
Title IV-E administrative function(s): referral to services, case development, case management and supervision

Research supports the fact that many clients diagnosed with substance use disorders are also diagnosed with at least one mental health disorder. The coordination of services to provide such clients with the maximum benefit can be a significant challenge. This training presents participants with information on specifics of working with clients affected by both a substance use and mental health disorder. This program focuses its impact on the family and the implications for delivering services to families who are affected by mental illness and substance use.

Working with Alcohol and Substance Affected Families  
Mode of Delivery: Classroom  
Duration: 1 day  
Work Plan Code: CC05  
Approved Audience: LDSS and OCFS-licensed voluntary foster care agency administrators, supervisors, and caseworkers; state OCFS home office and regional office staff; other identified stakeholders  
Training Provider: SUNY Albany - PDP  
Estimated cost per delivery: $2,733  
Title IV-E administrative function(s): referral to services, case development, case management and supervision

Because of the high incidence of alcohol and other substance use within families receiving child welfare services, caseworkers and supervisors need to recognize substance use disorder and its effect on the family. Working with Alcohol and Substance Affected Families (WASAF), training is designed to enhance caseworker skills in addressing the dynamics and needs of families that are affected by alcohol and other substance use disorders. This program provides the foundational information on substance use disorders, recovery, and relapse, the nature and causes of dependency, stages of chemical dependency, and its implications for child welfare caseworkers.
Staff will learn about various treatment options and to recognize their role in referring families to these services.

This training program builds the knowledge and skills necessary to identify, assess, and plan with families affected by alcohol and substance abuse. LDSS and VA 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.

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<th>Year</th>
<th>Trainees</th>
<th>Offerings</th>
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<td>2021-2022 (proposed)</td>
<td>300</td>
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**WASAF Special Topics Training**

**Mode of Delivery:** Classroom/Virtual Classroom  
**Duration:** 1 day/1 day  
**Work Plan Code:** CC05  
**Approved Audience:** LDSS and OCFS-licensed voluntary foster care agency administrators, supervisors, and caseworkers; state OCFS home office and regional office staff; other identified stakeholders  
**Training Provider:** SUNY Albany - PDP  
**Estimated cost:** $2,188  
**Title IV-E administrative function(s):** referral to services, case development, case management and supervision

The following courses are offered as Special Topics training:

**Helping People Change: Techniques for Engaging and Motivating Child Welfare Clients and Their Families**

Helping clients change behavior is an important role for child welfare professionals. Identifying the need for change in families and individuals affected by substance use disorders appears logical; motivating the client for change is challenging. This six-hour training will provide participants with an understanding of the complexity of intentional behavior change and skills-based techniques to identify client readiness to make change and to address barriers to change. Participants will be introduced to strategies for reducing resistance as well as learning strategies to enhance motivation and engage the substance affected client and their family for improved child welfare outcomes.

**Substance Use and Family Dynamics**

The goal of this training is to raise participants’ awareness of commonly used substances, signs and symptoms associated with use, and drug trends in New York State, as well as how parental drug use can affect child safety and risk. Participants will be able to educate children and families on the short term and longer-term effects of alcohol and other drug (AOD) use. Moreover, this training will provide best practice techniques for engaging and planning with youth and families around suspected or confirmed AOD use. Participants will also learn the potential effects of treatment and relapse on child safety, permanency, and wellbeing.

**Opioid Use and Family Dynamics**

This targeted training on heroin and prescription opiates will enhance the child welfare caseworkers’ knowledge, skills, and abilities, and better equip them to be more effective...
when identifying, intervening, and referring children and families affected by opioid use disorders (OUD). This training will raise participants’ awareness of the effect of heroin and other opiates on the family, help them recognize how it impacts child safety and risk. This training will educate workers on the short term and longer-term effects of opioid misuse on the individual and the family unit as a whole. Participants will also learn the potential effects of treatment and relapse on child safety, permanency, and well-being.

WASAF Special Topics classroom training combined:

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<th>Offerings</th>
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<tr>
<td>2021-2022 (proposed)</td>
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WASAF Synchronous Training
Mode of Delivery: Virtual Classroom
Duration: 2 hours
Work Plan Code: CC05
Approved Audience: LDSS and OCFS-licensed voluntary foster care agency administrators, supervisors, and caseworkers; state OCFS home office and regional office staff; other identified stakeholders
Training Provider: SUNY Albany - PDP
Estimated cost per delivery: $896
Title IV-E administrative function(s): referral to services, case management and supervision

The following courses are offered as synchronous training:

**Opiates and Child Welfare**
Due to the current epidemic in New York State with respect to heroin and prescription opiate medication, child welfare caseworkers are struggling to find ways to help children and families find protection and services. This course will help child welfare caseworkers to become more confident and competent when working with children and families who are affected by opioid use disorders. A targeted training on heroin and prescription opiates will enhance the child welfare caseworker’s knowledge, skills, and abilities, and better equip them to be more effective in the identification, intervention, and referral to treatment of children and families affected by opioid use disorders.

**Overview of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder**
Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) refers to a spectrum of permanent birth defects that can include growth deficiencies, abnormal facial features, central nervous system abnormalities, behavioral disorders, and impaired intellectual development. This training provides participants with information on the primary and secondary disabilities caused by prenatal exposure to alcohol and includes strategies to help children and adults affected by FASD.

WASAF Synchronous Virtual Classroom combined

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<th>Trainees</th>
<th>Offerings</th>
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</table>
Special Topics Training
Mode of Delivery: Classroom and CBT/Virtual Classroom and CBT
Duration: ½ to 2 days/½ to 1½ days
Work Plan Code: CC33
Approved Audience: LDSS and OCFS-licensed voluntary foster care agency administrators, supervisors, and caseworkers; state OCFS home office and regional office staff; other identified stakeholders
Training Provider: SUNY Albany - PDP
Estimated cost per delivery: $1,376 to $5,504
Title IV-E administrative function(s): referral to services, case management and supervision, placement of the child, development of the case plan; communication skills required to work with children and families; cultural competency related to children and families.

These trainings will provide targeted training to LDSSs and VAs to support the implementation of strategies and concepts taught in the Child Welfare Foundations Program or to address other emerging needs. Topics may include, but are not limited to, the courses described below:

Principles of Partnership: Platinum Rules
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 2 days

This training explores the six Principles of Partnership outlined in the Child Welfare Practice Model. It is a two-day training for leadership and useful for teams, whole agencies, or groups wanting to increase the effectiveness of partnerships, both internally and externally, thereby improving outcomes for children and families. The training 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).

Partners in Change Training
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 2 days

This training explores the six Principles of Partnership outlined in the Child Welfare Practice Model. It is a one-day training for CWCS child welfare staff, including SCR staff, as well as LDSS and VA caseworkers. The training 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
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: ½ day
This half-day classroom activity is to provide follow-up training that continues to develop knowledge and skills of the trainees who attended Platinum Rule and Partners in Change training.

**Involving Fathers for Children: Fundamentals**  
*Mode of Delivery: Classroom and CBT/Virtual Classroom and CBT*  
*Duration: 1½ days/1½ days*

This course focuses on the importance of fathers and their involvement in their children’s lives. This information can be applied throughout the child welfare continuum of services. This course includes skills and strategies for identifying, locating, and engaging fathers and their extended families in the casework process. It is designed to equip all caseworkers, case managers, and supervisors to work successfully with fathers in a wide range of family situations and structures.

**Involving Fathers for Children: Preventive and Foster Care Specialty**  
*Mode of Delivery: Classroom/Virtual Classroom*  
*Duration: 1 day/1 day*

This course builds on the Involving Fathers for Children: Fundamentals course. It provides information, skills, and strategies designed specifically to enhance the casework practice of preventive and foster care workers.

**Concurrent Planning**  
*Mode of Delivery: Classroom/Virtual Classroom*  
*Duration: ½ day/½ day*

This course focuses on the importance of concurrent planning in achieving permanency for children in foster care. Concurrent planning involves strong and active family engagement, informed case practice, and legal strategies aimed at achieving timely permanency. This information can be applied throughout the child welfare continuum of services. This course is designed to help workers integrate the concepts of concurrent planning into their work with children, youth, and families to achieve timely permanency.

**Safety and Risk Assessments**  
*Mode of Delivery: Classroom/Virtual Classroom*  
*Duration: 2 days/1 day*

This training is designed to strengthen the safety and risk assessment skills of child welfare caseworkers. This practice-focused training includes discussion, group-assessment, and practice activities. The intent of the training is to enhance each participant’s ability to accurately apply the processes and protocols set forth to assess safety and risk, choose appropriate safety decisions, and partner with each family in effectively responding to all child welfare concerns.

**Combined Total of all Special Topics Training**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Trainees</th>
<th>Offerings/Days</th>
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<td>1085</td>
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CHILD WELFARE ELIGIBILITY TRAINING

The purpose of this training is to provide LDSSs with the knowledge and skill needed to determine eligibility accurately, effectively, and efficiently for federal funding of child welfare and Medicaid programs. This training is delivered via virtual classroom modality. In 2019, recordings were made of the virtual classroom sessions and posted as asynchronous training. 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 for 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.

Bridging Services Eligibility and Fiscal Claiming
Mode of Delivery: CBT (Recorded Virtual Classroom)
Duration: ½ day
Work Plan Code: DLT01
Approved Audience: The LDSS should send paired staff: one child welfare eligibility staff person and one fiscal claiming/accounting staff person.
Training Vendor: CUNY School of Professional Studies
Estimated cost of delivery: $5,301
Title IV-E administrative function: data collection and reporting; case review

This class provides descriptions of the funding categories available to pay for child welfare programs. It emphasizes the importance of accurate eligibility coding in the child welfare systems such as WMS, CCRS and CONNECTIONS to maximize the county’s reimbursement. This course bridges the gap between child welfare eligibility and fiscal claiming. Staff will leave with a better understanding of how eligibility work processes impact fiscal claiming and how fiscal claiming impacts reimbursement. As part of the training, two corresponding schedules (Schedules G and H) will be reviewed.

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<th>Year</th>
<th>Trainees</th>
<th>Offerings</th>
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<tr>
<td>2021-2022 (proposed)</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>ongoing</td>
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Non-Reimbursable Payments
Mode of Delivery: CBT (Recorded Virtual Classroom)
Duration: ½ day
Work Plan Code: DLT01
Approved Audience: Accounting, data entry, child welfare caseworkers, their supervisors and those responsible for entries in WMS, CCRS, CONNECTIONS, and/or reviewing the Non-Reimbursable Payments Report and/or monitoring Title IV-E eligible cases
Training Vendor: CUNY School of Professional Studies
Estimated cost of delivery: $5,301
Title IV-E Administrative Function: data collection and reporting; case review
Approved Audience: The LDSS should send paired staff: one child welfare eligibility staff person and one fiscal claiming/accounting staff person.

This course focuses on making accurate entries in the systems associated with the provisions of child welfare services. These systems include the Child Care Review Services (CCRS), CONNECTIONS (CONNX), the Welfare Management System (WMS) and the Benefit Issuance Control System (BICS). The class will include a walkthrough of the claiming process, a discussion on non-reimbursable payments and adjusting claims data in BICS by correcting erred cases found on the non-reimbursable reports.

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<th>Offerings</th>
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Temporary Assistance to Needy Families - EAF for Child Welfare Workers
Mode of Delivery: CBT (Recorded Virtual Classroom)
Duration: ½ day
Work Plan Code: DLT01
Approved Audience: Child welfare workers, services eligibility workers, and child welfare supervisors
Training Vendor: CUNY School of Professional Studies
Estimated cost of delivery: $5,301
Title IV-E administrative function: data collection and reporting; case review
Approved Audience: The LDSS should send paired staff: one child welfare eligibility staff person and one fiscal claiming/accounting staff person.

This class trains workers on the child welfare eligibility requirements of TANF - EAF and the required documentation. Complying with the TANF - EAF eligibility requirements is necessary in order to claim federal funding. The training will help workers improve their ability to apply the correct rules when making eligibility determinations and authorizations, thus maximizing potential reimbursement.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Trainees</th>
<th>Offerings</th>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>2021-2022 (proposed)</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>ongoing</td>
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Title XX Below 200% of Poverty
Mode of Delivery: CBT (Recorded Virtual Classroom)
Duration: ½ day
Work Plan Code: DLT01
Approved Audience: Child welfare workers and service eligibility workers
Training Vendor: CUNY School of Professional Studies
Estimated cost of delivery: $5,301
Title IV-E administrative function: data collection and reporting; case review
Approved Audience: The LDSS should send paired staff: one child welfare eligibility staff person and one fiscal claiming/accounting staff person.
This course trains workers on the eligibility requirements of Title XX Below 200 percent of Poverty and the required documentation. Complying with the Title XX Below 200 percent of Poverty eligibility requirements is necessary in order to claim federal and state reimbursement. The Title XX Below 200 percent training will help workers improve their ability to apply the correct rules when making eligibility determinations and authorizations, thus maximizing potential reimbursement.

The table below contains cumulative data for Bridging Services Eligibility and Fiscal Claiming, Non-Reimbursable Payments, Temporary Assistance to Needy Families - EAF for Child Welfare Workers, and Title XX Below 200 percent of Poverty.

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<td>2021-2022 (proposed)</td>
<td>50</td>
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**Title IV-E Purchase of Services**
Mode of Delivery: CBT (Recorded Virtual Classroom)
Duration: ½ day
Work Plan Code: DLT01
Approved Audience: Child welfare workers and service eligibility workers
Training Vendor: CUNY School of Professional Studies
Estimated cost of delivery: $5,301
Title IV-E administrative function: data collection and reporting; case review
Approved Audience: The LDSS should send paired staff: one child welfare eligibility staff person and one fiscal claiming/accounting staff person.

This class will provide direction based on federal policies regarding expenditures eligible for Title IV-E reimbursement and the proper Welfare Management System (WMS) POS type codes to be used for such expenditures. It will also include instructions on how to appropriately document Title IV-E eligible purchase of services. In addition, the training will include a discussion regarding inappropriate authorizations and the inappropriate use of purchase of service type codes to claim Title IV-E foster care reimbursement for expenditures that are not allowable under the Title IV-E funding category.

<table>
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<th>Year</th>
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**Kinship Guardianship Assistance Eligibility**
Mode of Delivery: CBT (Recorded Virtual Classroom)
Duration: ½ day
Work Plan Code: DLT01
Approved Audience: Child welfare workers, services eligibility workers, their supervisors, and voluntary agency staff
Training Vendor: CUNY School of Professional Studies
Estimated cost of delivery: $5,301
Title IV-E administrative function: data collection and reporting, case review
Approved Audience: The LDSS should send paired staff: one child welfare eligibility staff person and one fiscal claiming/accounting staff person
This training will familiarize LDSS and VA staff with the on determining eligibility for the Kinship Guardianship Assistance Program (KinGAP). It includes instructions on determining whether the child's kinship guardianship assistance payment is Title IV-E reimbursable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Offerings</th>
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**Title IV-E Candidacy for Foster Care**  
**Mode of Delivery:** CBT (Recorded Virtual Classroom)  
**Duration:** ½ day  
**Work Plan Code:** DLT01  
**Approved Audience:** Child welfare workers and service eligibility workers  
**Training Vendor:** CUNY School of Professional Studies  
**Estimated cost of delivery:** $5,301  
**Title IV-E administrative function:** data collection and reporting; case review  
**Approved Audience:** The LDSS should send paired staff: one child welfare eligibility staff person and one fiscal claiming/accounting staff person.

This course trains workers on how to determine candidacy for foster care; it includes a discussion on the methods for documenting that a child is a candidate for foster care placement. In addition, it includes instructions on meeting the rules related to candidacy that allow the LDSS/ACS to receive Title IV-E reimbursement for certain administrative costs associated with child preventive cases when the LDSS's/ACS's involvement with the child and family is for the specific purpose of either preventing the removal of the child from their home.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Trainees</th>
<th>Offerings</th>
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<td>2021-2022 (proposed)</td>
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**CW Eligibility Title IV-E Foster Care**  
**Mode of Delivery:** CBT (Recorded Virtual Classroom)  
**Duration:** 1 day  
**Work Plan Code:** DLT01  
**Approved Audience:** Child welfare and service eligibility workers and supervisors  
**Training Vendor:** CUNY School of Professional Studies  
**Estimated cost of delivery:** $5,301  
**Title IV-E administrative function:** data collection and reporting; case review  
**Approved Audience:** The LDSS should send paired staff: one child welfare eligibility staff person and one fiscal claiming/accounting staff person.

This course familiarizes staff with the eligibility requirements of Title IV-E foster care and the required documentation. Complying with Title IV-E foster care eligibility standards means the availability of 50 percent federal reimbursement of the costs for foster care maintenance and administration. This training will assist workers improve their ability to apply the correct rules when making eligibility determinations and authorizations so that federal reimbursement is maximized.
<table>
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<th>Trainees</th>
<th>Offerings</th>
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**CONNECTIONS Training**

Mode of Delivery: Varies, see below
Duration: Varies
Work Plan Code: CONN01
Approved Audience: LDSS and provider agency casework, management, and implementation staff, and other OCFS staff
Training Provider: SUNY Albany - PDP
Estimated cost per delivery: Varies – average $2,205
Title IV-E administrative function(s): placement of the child, development of the case plan, and case

**Child Protective Services Response CONN Training**
Mode of Delivery: Classroom/Virtual Classroom
Duration: 1 day/1 day
Approved Audience: Child protective services workers and other participants enrolled in CPS Response Training

This course is part of CPS Response Training and is intended solely for participants who are enrolled in that course. The purpose of this training is to instruct CPS casework staff on how to record and maintain information obtained during a CPS investigation in CONNECTIONS. Through discussion, demonstration, and hands-on practice exercises, participants will be able to identify the relationship between the programmatic principles and system functionality for safety assessments; describe the stages and reports associated with a CPS investigation; record a risk assessment and discuss the importance of accurately identifying primary and secondary caretakers; add and substantiated/unsubstantiated allegations, as well as record and modify injury information associated with an allegation; complete the Sex Trafficking Screening window; conclude an investigation, and submit it for supervisory approval; generate a Notice of Indication and the Mandated Reporter Letter; manage their caseload using the Open Caseload Inquiry (OCI) report; and consolidate an investigation, recognizing the policy guidelines and system criteria that must be met. (This course builds on the skills learned in the foundations Child Protective Services Response Training.)

**CONNECTIONS Case Management for Child Welfare Workers or **Case Management in CONNECTIONS for the Child Welfare Foundations Program:**
Mode of Delivery: Classroom/Virtual Classroom
Duration: 2 days/2 days
Approved Audience: Case managers, case planners, caseworkers, and other professionals who maintain information in the Family Services Intake or Family Services Stage in CONNECTIONS.

**Only for trainees enrolled in the Child Welfare Foundations Program**
This course provides instruction to child welfare caseworkers on documenting their work in CONNECTIONS. This includes hands-on practice creating a Family Services Intake and completing work in a Family Services Stage. Participants will describe CONNECTIONS stage types, roles, and to-dos as they pertain to the Family Services Intake (FSI) stage and the Family Services Stage (FSS); identify the purpose of the FSI stage; create an FSS stage from an FSI stage; identify the purpose of the FSS stage; identify the windows that comprise an FSS stage; maintain personal information for an FSS stage; record, modify, view, search, and print progress notes; describe the components of the Family Assessment and Service Plan (FASP) window; utilize additional caseload management tools; maintain information on the Tracked Children Detail window; launch a FASP; complete specific FASP components; submit a FASP for review and/or approval; describe when to complete a Plan Amendment or Removal Update; schedule a Service Plan Review; submit an FSS-stage closure for approval; identify resources to help support your work in CONNECTIONS; and launch a FASP.

Documenting Casework Contacts with Foster Children in CONNECTIONS
Mode of Delivery: CBT
Duration: 45 minutes
Approved Audience: LDSS and voluntary agency caseworkers and supervisory staff

This course provides local district and voluntary agency caseworkers and supervisory staff with instruction on the proper completion of progress notes that document casework contacts with foster children, including 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.

Adding New Persons and Relating Persons in CONNECTIONS
Mode of Delivery: Virtual Classroom
Duration: 45 minutes
Approved Audience: LDSS and voluntary agency workers

The purpose of this course is to familiarize district and voluntary agency workers with the process of adding and relating individuals to a stage in CONNECTIONS, to include completing thorough Person Searches as a primary step in the process. Performing a thorough Person Search helps workers avoid creating duplicate person IDs before adding and relating individuals to a stage. This affects not only system data, but also the accuracy and completeness of a person’s historical record in CONNECTIONS. Participants will have the opportunity to practice what they have learned via a link to a simulation.

CPSRT Starting the Investigation
Mode of Delivery: Virtual Classroom
Duration: 1/2 day
Approved Audience: Child protective services workers and other workers who attend CPSRT Training

This course is part of CPS Response Training and is intended solely for participants who are enrolled in that course. The purpose is to instruct casework staff responsible for documenting CPS investigations on how to accurately record, view, and maintain case information in CONNECTIONS. Participants will be able to understand security considerations related to working in CONNECTIONS; describe 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 the foundation Child Protective Services Response Training and is followed by the full-day Child Protective Services Response CONN Training classroom training.)

Documenting the Family Assessment Response in CONNECTIONS (course is being updated in 2021)
Mode of Delivery: Virtual Classroom
Duration: 1/2 day
Approved Audience: Caseworkers responsible for working with FAR cases

This course provides LDSS and VA workers with how to navigate to and record information in the FAR stage in CONNECTIONS. Participants will 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 will also be discussed, as well as the Stage Summary window.

Introduction to Your CONNECTIONS Workload*
Mode of Delivery: CBT
Duration: 1 hour
Approved Audience: LDSS and voluntary agency caseworkers

The course provides new local district and voluntary agency workers with a basic orientation of CONNECTIONS. At their own pace, participants will become familiar with both the structure and context in which casework activities are documented. The training includes information about CONNECTIONS stages and roles, security, the My Workload tab, and To-Dos.

Updating Person Demographic Information in CONNECTIONS
Mode of Delivery: Virtual Classroom
Duration: 45 minutes
Work Plan Code: CONN01
Approved Audience: LDSS and voluntary agency workers

The purpose of this course is to familiarize LDSS and VA workers with how to record and maintain person demographic information in CONNECTIONS. Participants will learn about the components of the Person List window including the sub-tabs of the Person Info tab. The process of copying primary address and phone number information will also be discussed. Participants will have the opportunity to practice what they have learned via a link to a simulation.

Using the Display All Case History Window in CONNECTIONS
Mode of Delivery: Virtual Classroom
Duration: 45 minutes
Approved Audience: LDSS and voluntary agency workers

The purpose of this course is to familiarize district and voluntary agency workers with how to easily view relevant history using the implied role path, how to determine when a worker has an implied role, and how to use the Display All Case History window to view information for all cases of which a Person ID in a stage is a part. As a result of completing this course, participants will be able to identify all cases of which a Person ID in the selected stage is a part; and access and view historical information in CONNECTIONS with an implied role.
Working with Permanency Hearing Reports in CONNECTIONS
Mode of Delivery: Virtual Classroom
Duration: 2 hours
Approved Audience: Caseworkers and other staff from LDSSs and provider agencies who work with Permanency Hearing Reports.

The purpose of this course is to familiarize new LDSS and VA foster care workers with the process of completing Permanency Hearing Reports in CONNECTIONS. Participants will learn about the Permanency Law, the types and features of Permanency Hearing Reports, and the CONNECTIONS roles that can maintain them. The objectives for this course are also offered as part of the content provided in the Foster Care One-Day (classroom) Training.

Working with Progress Notes in CONNECTIONS Family Services Stages
Mode of Delivery: Virtual Classroom
Duration: 2 hours
Approved Audience: LDSS and voluntary agency workers

The purpose of this training is to familiarize new district and voluntary agency casework staff with the process of recording and maintaining progress notes in CONNECTIONS Family Services Stages. The training includes detailed discussion of the various progress notes windows accompanied by hands-on demonstrations and a practice simulations of progress notes-related tasks.

CONNECTIONS: Initiating the Placement Request
Mode of Delivery: Virtual Classroom
Duration: 2 hours
Approved Audience: LDSS and voluntary agency workers

The Placement Module in CONNECTIONS standardizes foster care placement across counties and promotes fact-based, consistent decision-making. Workers requesting placement services need to be familiar with how to initiate a placement request and which information to include in the request. Participants will learn how to record placement details such as critical address information, resource parameters, and child and placement options as part of a request for placement services. Trainees will be provided with hands-on practice, discussions, and demonstrations that reinforce key documentation in CONNECTIONS. This course is an updated version of Initiating the Placement Request in CONNECTIONS virtual training.

CONNECTIONS: Completing the Placement Request
Mode of Delivery: Virtual Classroom
Duration: 2 hours
Approved Audience: LDSS and voluntary agency workers

This training will instruct participants on how to access a placement request from the Placement Dashboard window, prepare the request to search for resources, determine the best fit for placement, and verify the placement in CONNECTIONS. This course is an updated version of Completing the Placement Request in CONNECTIONS classroom training, focusing on functionality implemented in Phase 3 of the Placement module build. This course includes detailed discussion of the various windows involved in the placement process, accompanied by demonstrations and a hands-on simulation of placement-related tasks. Participants will be able to: identify the overall purpose of the placement request process; access the Placement
Dashboard window and identify the window components; record child-specific, placement-related information for a placement request; identify Resource Search parameters and prepare to update the Request Status; complete a placement search and create a placement referral; and accept a referral and close the placement request.

**CONNECTIONS: Navigating the Family Assessment and Service Plan (FASP) Components**

*Mode of Delivery: Virtual Classroom*
*Duration: 1 day*
*Approved Audience: Local district and provider agency workers and supervisors*

The Family Assessment and Service Plan (FASP) provides a uniform and effective method to document the assessment of family and child functioning, strengths, and needs. Ongoing assessments are important to achieving the goals of safety, permanency, and well-being for children. These assessments form the basis for determining what aspects of family functioning need to change in order to support the desired outcomes. The FASP is also where the Service Plan is documented, outlining the tasks and activities family members and service providers are to perform, as well as identifying the status of these tasks and activities. This training is intended to familiarize participants with identifying caretaker information, maintaining the Family Relationship Matrix, recording information on the Tracked Children Detail window, and navigating the FASP components.

**CONNECTIONS: Uploading Photos and Documents**

*Mode of Delivery: Virtual Classroom*
*Duration: 2 hours*
*Approved Audience: LDSS and voluntary agency workers*

With the Uploads function, workers can transfer photos and documents to the My Uploads tab of the main CONNECTIONS window. From there, they can be linked to a stage, progress note, Person ID, allegation, or health record, fully integrating them into the system. This process allows for increased exchange of vital records, documents, and photographs pertinent to the provision of services and case related information. Through the use of hands-on practice, discussions, and demonstrations, this training will prepare participants to upload and maintain photos and documents in CONNECTIONS.

**NYC Integrated Core CONNECTIONS Training (Satterwhite) part 1**

**NYC Integrated Core CONNECTIONS Training (Satterwhite) part 2**

*Mode of Delivery: Classroom*
*Duration: 4 days*
*Approved Audience: CPS workers from NYC’s ACS*

This course is part of NYC’s training for CPS workers and is intended solely for participants who are enrolled in that course. The purpose of this four-day course is to train caseworkers on how to document, search, and maintain within CPS and Family Services Stages, including Family Assessment and Service Plans (FASPs) in CONNECTIONS. Through discussion, demonstration, and hands-on practice exercises, participants will edit Tracked Children Detail (including Program Choices and Permanency Planning Goals), launch and edit a FASP, discuss submitting and approving FASPs, record safety and risk, and launch a Plan Amendment. This course is part of the CPS Practice Core Training.

**Preventive Case Management in CONNECTIONS for NYC**
Mode of Delivery: Classroom Duration: 2 days
Approved Audience: NYC case managers, case planners, caseworkers, and other professionals who maintain information in the FSS

This course offers ACS and provider agency staff with instruction on recording preventive casework activities in the CONECTIONS Family Services Stage (FSS). Also included are overviews and step-by-step instructions on 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 FASPs) launch, edit, and submit a completed FASP; and describe the FASP approval process.

Foster and Adoptive Home Development
Mode of Delivery: Classroom Duration: 2 days
Approved Audience: FAD Caseworkers and any other professionals who create and maintain FAD homes in CONNECTIONS.

Title IV-E administrative functions: placement of the child, development of the case plan, case management and supervision, and recruitment and licensing of foster homes and institutions

The purpose of this course is to train caseworkers how to create and maintain Foster and Adoptive (FAD) homes in CONNECTIONS. Through discussion, demonstration, and hands-on practice exercises, participants will 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
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 1 day
Approved Audience: Caseworkers and other staff from local district and provider agencies who work with foster children in CONNECTIONS

The Foster Care One-Day Training course focuses on case recording requirements in CONNECTIONS for foster care workers. This training covers the components in CONNECTIONS that are specifically required for foster care workers. This training 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. Discussion is accompanied by hands-on demonstrations and practice exercises using CONNECTIONS.

Performing Person Merges and Splits in CONNECTIONS*
Mode of Delivery: Virtual Classroom
Duration: ½ day
Approved Audience: LDSS workers

The purpose of this training is to provide a comprehensive overview of the Person Merge and Person Split functions in CONNECTIONS. Participants will learn how to complete Person Merges and Splits; understand their impacts on person data in CONNECTIONS; understand when to use the Person Unrelate, Remove Person – Added in Error, and End Date Stage Involvement
functions; and review OCFS recommendations for best practices around merging and splitting. This training includes hands-on practice, discussions, and demonstrations.

Combined data for all CONNECTIONS training

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<th>Offerings</th>
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ADDITIONAL SYSTEMS TRAINING

Microsoft Office Training - various courses
Mode of Delivery: Classroom and/or Virtual Classroom
Duration: Half-day and full-day courses
Work Plan Code: SYS05
Approved Audience: LDSSs and voluntary agencies
Training Provider: New Horizons
Estimated cost per delivery: $161 per seat in training
Title IV-E administrative function(s): general skills for overall job performance

Introductory and/or advanced level courses are offered in Office, Windows, Outlook, Word, Excel, Access, PowerPoint, OneNote, SharePoint, and Visio. The vendor has a public schedule of offerings and trainees will be included in one of these sessions upon request. If there are numerous staff from one location who need the same training, then the vendor will host a session at the location upon request.

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<th>Offerings</th>
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Detention Risk Assessment Instrument System (DRAIS)
Mode of Delivery: Webinar
Duration: 2 hours
Work Plan Code: SYS04
Approved Audience: OCFS and LDSSs
Training Provider: SUNY Albany - PDP
Estimated cost per delivery: $250
Title IV-E administrative function(s): general skills for overall job performance

This course provides instruction on the Detention Risk Assessment Instrument System (DRAIS). The system is used to guide detention decisions in juvenile delinquent detention cases. Topics include:
- Accessing DRAIS
- Searching for youth
- Entering a new Detention Risk Assessment Instrument (DRAI) for youth without a preexisting DRAI
- Entering a new DRAI for youth with a preexisting DRAI
The user agreement form cannot be signed and submitted to create a user account unless staff has attended training. Staff must attend a training session prior to being assigned a user account.

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Trainees</th>
<th>Offerings</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>2021-2022 (proposed)</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>6</td>
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**WMS Services User Training**

*Mode of Delivery: Classroom*

*Duration: 1 day*

*Work Plan Code: SYS04*

*Training Provider: SUNY Albany – PDP*

*Estimated cost per delivery: $1,547*

*Title IV-E administrative function(s): general skills for overall job performance*

The purpose of this course is to explain how to open and document changes to Services cases in the Welfare Management System (WMS). This course is designed for staff who enter Services cases in WMS. This includes Adult Protective/Preventive Services (APS), Child Welfare Services (including Foster Care), Residential Domestic Violence Services, Adoption Services, Kinship Guardianship Assistance Program (KinGAP), Independent Living, and Child Care Services caseworkers; data entry operators; supervisors; and other staff. It provides instruction on how to access and navigate WMS, how to enter a Services case in WMS, and how to perform Childcare/Maintenance for open Services cases. Although the scenario used for opening a case is from the Child Care Services world, the skills taught during the course are suitable for staff involved in a variety of Services cases as outlined above.

<table>
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<th>Trainees</th>
<th>Offerings</th>
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**STARS HSLC Training**

*Mode of Delivery: Classroom*

*Duration: 1 day*

*Work Plan Code: DLT01*

*Approved Audience: OCFS, OTDA, LDSS staff development organizations (including NYC) and voluntary agencies in New York State*

*Training Provider: (CUNY School of Professional Studies)*

*Estimated cost per delivery: $9,506*

*Title IV-E administrative function(s): general skills for overall job performance*

This training orients training vendors and LDSS Staff Development Coordinators on the STARS/HSLC system. Users will develop and enhance their skills with the application.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Trainees</th>
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**DISTANCE LEARNING**

Asynchronous Distance Learning Training for State, Local District, and Voluntary Agency Staff  
Mode of Delivery: CBT  
Duration: Varies  
Work Plan Code: DLT01  
Approved Audience: State, LDSS, and voluntary agency staff  
Training Provider: CUNY School of Professional Studies  
Estimated cost per delivery: $5,301  
Title IV-E administrative function(s): SEE BELOW

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**Motivational Interviewing: An Overview**  
Duration: 1 hour  
Title IV-E administrative function(s): case management and supervision

This course introduces basic motivational interviewing constructs. Participants are introduced to 'stages of change' and various components that an individual may experience related to changing behavior. The ability to use a select set of interpersonal skills to build relationships and motivate an individual toward a change process is introduced.

---

**Overview of Trauma**  
Duration: 1 hour  
Title IV-E administrative function(s): case management and supervision

Understanding how trauma affects both children and adults is essential for those who work in the child welfare system. Training of workers will help them better understand the different types of trauma, the symptoms of traumatic stress, the impact on long term health issues, and the signs of secondary traumatic stress.

---

**Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act Presentation**  
Duration: 1 hour  
Title IV-E administrative function(s): case management and supervision

The purpose of this online presentation is to provide a summary of the major components of the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act (P.L. 113-183). It covers key aspects of the law including: the identification, documentation and provision of services to youth at risk for sex trafficking, the reasonable and prudent parent standard for youth in foster care, youth who are absent or missing from care, and the transition of youth in foster care to a successful adulthood.

---

**Using the Initial Trafficking Interview Tool for Youth**  
Duration: 1 hour  
Title IV-E administrative function(s): case management and supervision

This training covers proper use of the optional OCFS Initial Trafficking Interview Tool for Youth. It is recommended for any professionals who work with vulnerable youth and are interested in using interview tools to identify instances of human trafficking.
Needs Assessment for Training Professionals
Duration: 1 hour
Title IV-E administrative function(s): case management and supervision

An organization’s needs must be carefully examined before any strategy is undertaken to meet them. A systematic assessment can identify and prioritize needs so various interventions, including training, can have a positive impact in the organization. A needs assessment gathers information that helps us understand and evaluate the importance of needs by describing the target population, defining problems, offering solutions, and communicating results. This 45-minute introductory course in needs assessment will provide participants with an overview of the needs-assessment process, including strategies and methods for identifying, analyzing and prioritizing needs, as well as reporting the needs assessment findings in order to plan constructive interventions to meet those needs. As a result of participating in this training, participants will understand the three categories of needs assessment (organizational, operational and individual), explore the advantages and disadvantages of methods for assessing needs in each category, and develop an awareness of the difference between training and non-training issues.

New York State Child Welfare System: Improving Outcomes Webinar (Recorded)
Duration: 1½ hours
Title IV-E administrative function(s): case management and supervision

This is a recorded version of the webinar (of same name) that was delivered on November 22, 2016. This program reviews the current state of services provided and funded by New York State OCFS. It reviews the service statistics and highlights areas that the agency needs to improve upon.

Asynchronous Distance Learning Training for Local District and Voluntary Agency Staff

Mode of Delivery: CBT (Webinar when noted)
Duration: Varies
Work Plan Code: DLT01
Approved Audience: LDSS and voluntary agency staff
Training Provider: CUNY School of Professional Studies
Estimated cost per delivery: $5,301
Title IV-E administrative function(s): See below

Safetyville
Duration: 3 hours (varies)
Title IV-E administrative function(s): case management and supervision

Safetyville is an interactive tool that provides caseworkers and other field staff with specific personal safety guidelines for 17 different situations. Participants can take as many or as few topics as they wish. It is meant to provide practical safety guidance for human services staff in and out of the office.

Safetyville Lite
Duration: 1 hour
Title IV-E administrative function(s): case management and supervision
Safetyville Lite is an abbreviated version of the larger Safetyville training. Safetyville Lite is designed to provide staff with the very basics about personal safety in field. It is appropriate for staff that do not do field work but still need a primer on personal safety.

**Bloodborne Pathogen Training for Voluntary Agencies and Local District Staff**
**Duration:** 1 hour  
**Title IV-E administrative function(s):** case management and supervision

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration, or OSHA, requires employers to take steps to protect the health and safety of workers at risk of exposure to blood or other potentially infectious body fluids. And residential staff interactions with youth and families, these staff may be exposed to infectious agents. The purpose of this training is to provide residential voluntary agency staff and local district staff the information and skills necessary to protect the well-being and health of residents and staff. This training covers the nature and transmission of the Hepatitis B Virus (HBV), Hepatitis C Virus (HVC) and the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV). It covers the safe handling of body fluids, methods of transmission and methods of protection. At the end of this CBT, you'll be able to:

- Summarize basic facts about the transmission, symptoms, and prevention of HBV, HVC, and HIV;
- Explain certain safety policies and procedures detailed in this video, and describe how to safely use a spill kit to clean up a blood or body fluid spill.
- This CBT alone does not fulfill the OSHA training requirement, which includes the ability of trainees to submit questions for clarification.

**Human Trafficking/Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children: An Overview**
**Duration:** 1 hour  
**Title IV-E administrative function(s):** case management and supervision

This one-hour training will discuss what human trafficking is and New York State’s response. Training topics will include who the traffickers and victims are; how to recognize victims and survivors; how to provide a trauma-informed response to survivors. Information will be shared regarding legal framework and some of the resources available through OCFS and local departments of social services to assist survivors.  
Note: This is a necessary pre-requisite to the mandatory protocol training.

**Overview of the Multiethnic Placement Act**
**Duration:** 1 hour  
**Title IV-E administrative function(s):** case management and supervision

The purpose of this training is to provide an overview of the requirements of the Multiethnic Placement Act of 1994, or MEPA. It reviews the requirements for foster care and home-finding staff as they work to find appropriate placements for youth in need.

**Right-to-Know Training**
**Duration:** 1 hour  
**Title IV-E administrative function(s):** case management and supervision
This course focuses on your right to know about hazardous chemicals in your workplace. This training meets the requirements for the Right-to-Know annual refresher training for OCFS staff. This training covers topics such as the Right-to-Know Law, Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) as well as identifying toxic/hazardous substances in your work area. Staff interested in this training should check with their agency as to whether or not this training will meet your annual training requirement.

**Sexual Harassment Prevention Training**  
*Duration: 1 hour*  
*Title IV-E administrative function(s): case management and supervision*

This course is designed to provide all staff with valuable training and additional tools you can use to identify inappropriate behavior and assist in maintaining a work environment free from all forms of harassment. Staff interested in this training should check with your agency as to whether or not this training will meet your annual training requirement.

**Effective Meetings**  
*Duration: 1 hour*  
*Title IV-E administrative function(s): case management and supervision*

In this training, participants learn how to have effective meetings as they go through preparing for meetings, including creating an agenda and selecting participants; conducting meetings, ensuring that participants stay focused on the task at hand; participating in meetings where they are not the leader in a helpful and valuable manner; and following-up after the meeting with effective meeting notes and action assignments.

**Information Security Awareness (LDSS)**  
*Duration: 1 hour*  
*Title IV-E administrative function(s): case management and supervision*

This course is designed to provide staff with information regarding information security procedures and processes required to protect the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of its information. This training will help you understand your role and responsibilities regarding maintaining confidentiality, the protection of information, and the proper use of information technology assets to minimize security risks to the children and families we serve. Staff interested in this training should check with your agency as to whether or not this training will meet you annual training requirement.

**Internal Controls (LDSS)**  
*Duration: 1 hour*  
*Title IV-E administrative function(s): case management and supervision*

This training is on the topic of Internal Controls and was designed to meet the general requirements of for internal controls training. This training will enable participants to understand the laws surrounding internal controls, the key elements in an effective system of internal controls, the impact of poor internal controls and how they are involved with the internal control and risk management process. Staff interested in this training should check with your agency as to whether or not this training will meet your annual training requirement.

**Language Access Training (LDSS)**  
*Duration: 1 hour*
Title IV-E administrative function(s): case management and supervision

This training is on the topic of language access and is for all employees of OCFS. This training will enable participants to understand the linguistic and cultural diversity of the population we serve, or may potentially serve, and be aware of available tools and resources to comply with federal and state requirements.

Webinar: CWFP Supervisor Overview
Duration: 1 hour
Title IV-E administrative function(s): case management and supervision

This training will focus on the expectations and role of supervisors in onboarding new staff participating in the Child Welfare Foundations Program. This program will provide supervisors with a roadmap of how to navigate the program, how to support their staff through the program and useful tools to help along the way. There will also be an opportunity for questions and answers.

Workplace Violence Prevention Training (LDSS)
Duration: 1 hour
Title IV-E administrative function(s): case management and supervision

Training for all staff on workplace violence legislation, definitions, agency policies, forms, risks associated with workplaces in general and possible methods used to mitigate these risks.

HIPAA Training
Duration: 1 hour
Title IV-E administrative function(s): case management and supervision

This training explores HIPAA requirements which provide for the confidential handling of personal medical information for youth in the care of the agency. It provides basic HIPAA information and details a set of learning scenarios that will demonstrate the practical application of HIPAA requirements in OCFS and facility settings. It fulfills the mandatory training requirement for OCFS Staff on the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act as required by laws and agency policy.

ICWA: What Caseworkers Need to Know
Duration: 1 hour
Title IV-E administrative function(s): case management and supervision

This course is an introduction to the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA). The course explores the history of Native Americans in New York State and the need for ICWA to address historical trauma and disproportionate rates of foster care placements for Native American children. Caseworkers’ requirements in adhering to ICWA will be discussed, as well as, the positive impact this act has on Native American families in New York State.

Combined data for all Asynchronous Training for state, local district, and voluntary agency staff

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<th>Trainees</th>
<th>Offerings</th>
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277
Workforce Development Training for local district staff is delivered by four vendors under separate contracts: CUNY Brookdale Center for Healthy Aging/LDST01 (statewide), CUNY School of Professional Studies/DLT01 (statewide), and NYPWA/LDST04 (statewide).

Training provided by New York Public Welfare Association (NYPWA)/LDST04

New Commissioner Training  
Mode of Delivery: Classroom  
Duration: 1 day  
Work Plan Code: LDST04  
Approved Audience: New LDSS commissioners  
Estimated cost per delivery: $3,533  
Title IV-E administrative function(s): case management and supervision

This training will be offered on-site to all new LDSS commissioners with support from an experienced commissioner trainer. The contractor will survey new commissioners to determine areas of interest and need. The contractor will develop and deliver an individually customized training program based on the county government structure and the specific content and skills needed by the new commissioner.

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<th>Year</th>
<th>Trainees</th>
<th>Training Days</th>
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<td>2021-2022 (proposed)</td>
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Leadership Training  
Mode of Delivery: Classroom/Virtual Classroom  
Duration: 1 day/½ day  
Work Plan Code: LDST04  
Approved Audience: Commissioners, deputy commissioners  
Estimated cost per delivery: $3,472  
Title IV-E administrative function(s): case management and supervision

This training will assist LDSSs in responding to the number and depth of changes that the social services system is experiencing through analysis and interpretation of new requirements under state and federal laws; and analysis and impact of new programs or systems that show an improvement in operational efficiency at the local level.

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<th>Year</th>
<th>Trainees</th>
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Training provided by CUNY Brookdale Center for Healthy Aging/LDST01

Supervisory Training Certificate Program
This a multi-part (seven) course as defined below. All seven modules must be completed.
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 14 days
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: LDSS supervisors
Training Provider: CUNY Brookdale Center for Healthy Aging
Estimated cost of delivery: $82,161
Title IV-E administrative function: general supervisory skills or other generic skills needed to perform specific jobs; job performance enhancement skills (e.g., writing, basic computer skills, time management)

Supervisory Training Certificate Program Course 1 - Improving Communication
Developing strong communication skills are essential to be a successful supervisor. Participants will learn the communication skills of effective supervision - an integrated set of principles and specific skills for interacting with employees.

Supervisory Training Certificate Program Course 2 - Building High Performance Teams
Effective supervisors help employees build their strengths and constructively manage their differences so that they can achieve agency goals. Participants learn how to assess their team's effectiveness, improve working relationships, and team functions.

Supervisory Training Certificate Program Course 3 - Planning and Goal Setting
Part of successful supervision requires building a shared vision. When all team members are moving in the same direction and pursuing the same goals, their individual and collective behaviors are more likely to produce positive results. This course provides an opportunity to apply goal setting and planning tools to real world projects.

Supervisory Training Certificate Program Course 4 - Work Management
Supervisors fulfill two major functions in an agency. The first is to monitor unit workflow to ensure that key activities, conditions, and outcomes are achieved. The second function is to determine why something is going (or has gone) wrong and then formulate corrective actions.

Supervisory Training Certificate Program Course 5 - A Winning Training Approach
Supervisors are the primary source of employee learning, partnering with staff development personnel to ensure employee development. This course helps participants develop their skills as trainer/coaches to teach, motivate, and empower the employees they supervise.

Supervisory Training Certificate Program Course 6 - Managing Conflict
Managers and supervisors play important roles in setting a climate where conflict can be minimized and/or dealt with effectively. This course provides strategies for managing conflicts in the work to achieve desired results. Participants will take part in activities that explore the supervisor's role in managing conflict and how to use it productively to maintain positive team relationships.
Supervisory Training Certificate Program Course 7 - Selection Interviewing and Performance Evaluation

Selection interviewing and performance evaluation are components of an organization's system of performance management. Supervisors play a vital role in the selection process for there is no substitute for the supervisory interview when a new staff member joins the team. Performance evaluations appraise, in a systematic way, employees' job-related traits and behaviors as they affect performance. Participants will learn how to conduct evaluations that improve worker performance and encourage positive relationships.

Supervisory Training Certificate Program:

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<th>Year</th>
<th>Trainees</th>
<th>Offerings</th>
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<td>2021-2022 (proposed)</td>
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Adult Learning Theory and Principles
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 3 days
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: LDSS staff
Training Provider: CUNY Brookdale Center for Healthy Aging
Estimated cost per delivery: $16,541
Title IV-E Administrative function(s): general skills for overall job performance

Training provides LDSS staff development coordinators and trainers with the knowledge and skills to design and deliver training programs that incorporate the principles of adult learning, developing training objectives, design, delivery, and evaluation of training programs.

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Advanced Supervisory Training Program: The Coaching Clinic
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 3 days
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: LDSS supervisors
Training Provider: CUNY Brookdale Center for Healthy Aging
Estimated cost per delivery: $13,577
Title IV-E administrative function: general supervisory skills or other generic skills needed to perform specific jobs

How do organizations respond to the demands for higher and higher levels of performance from employees? How can organizations help their staff respond positively and effectively to these growing demands? Many progressive leaders are choosing coaching as a fundamental part of their response. The Coaching Clinic is for supervisors to experience and learn performance coaching. Performance coaching is a process that creates a powerful commitment to open communication, mutual learning, and a partnership in achieving individual and agency goals. The
Clinic is designed as a learning lab providing participants with varied opportunities to practice and receive feedback on the mastery of their coaching skills using self-selected work situations.

Field Evaluation of Training Program
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 2 days
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: LDSS staff, OCFS and OTDA staff
Training Provider(s): CUNY Brookdale Center for Healthy Aging
Estimated cost per delivery: $10,587
Title IV-E administrative function: general supervisory skills or other generic skills needed to perform specific jobs

This training provides support to OCFS Bureau of Training and Development/OTDA Bureau of Training and Staff Development project managers in field evaluation of state contractual training programs. Field evaluation is a formal process of structured observation, recording, and reporting.

Financial Management
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 1 day
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: LDSS staff, OCFS and OTDA staff
Training Provider(s): CUNY Brookdale Center for Healthy Aging
Estimated cost per delivery: $7,704
Title IV-E administrative function: general supervisory skills or other generic skills needed to perform specific jobs

Training for LDSS Staff Development Coordinators

Orientation for Staff Development Coordinators
Mode of Delivery: Classroom/Virtual Classroom
Duration: 1 day/1 day
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: LDSS staff development coordinators
Training Provider(s): CUNY Brookdale Center for Healthy Aging
Estimated cost per delivery: $662
Title IV-E administrative function: general supervisory skills or other generic skills needed to perform specific jobs

New staff development coordinators will be oriented to the field of staff development and training and will gain insight on how to assist their staff in becoming more skilled in their jobs, as well as opportunities to positively influence the direction of their agency.

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<th>Year</th>
<th>Trainees</th>
<th>Offerings</th>
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<td>2021-2022 (proposed)</td>
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Basic Training for Staff Development Coordinators
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 2 ½ days
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: LDSS staff development coordinators
Training Provider(s): Brookdale Center for Healthy Aging
Estimated cost per delivery: $7,214
Title IV-E administrative function: general supervisory skills or other generic skills needed to perform specific jobs

This training provides a framework and integrated model for understanding the tasks and responsibilities of a staff development professional and the ways in which various functions overlap. This model will enable staff development coordinators to develop and maintain a strong staff development program in their local district.

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<td>2021-2022 (proposed)</td>
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Fundamentals Training for Staff Development Coordinators
Mode of Delivery: Classroom/Virtual Classroom
Duration: 1 day/1 day
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: LDSS staff development coordinators
Training Provider(s): CUNY Brookdale Center for Healthy Aging
Estimated cost per delivery: $4,208
Title IV-E administrative function: general supervisory skills or other generic skills needed to perform specific jobs

This training focuses on topics that are essential for the successful operation of a staff development program on topics such as, but not limited to, Training Evaluation and the Role of Staff Development in Agency Orientation.

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<td>2021-2022 (proposed)</td>
<td>30</td>
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Advanced Training for Staff Development Coordinators
Mode of Delivery: Classroom/Virtual Classroom
Duration: 2 days/1 day
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: LDSS staff development coordinators
Training Provider(s): CUNY Brookdale Center for Healthy Aging
Estimated cost per delivery: $16,841

Title IV-E administrative function: general supervisory skills or other generic skills needed to perform specific jobs

This training focuses on new and emerging trends in management, training, facilitation, organizational development, and organizational change. Topics can include, but are not limited to, the following: system applications, facilitation skills, leadership and management competencies, and workforce and organization development.

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<th>Year</th>
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<td>2021-2022 (proposed)</td>
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Staff Development Coordinator Samplers
Mode of Delivery: Virtual Classroom
Duration: ½ day
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: Local district staff development coordinators
Training Provider(s): CUNY Brookdale Center for Healthy Aging
Estimated cost per delivery: $3,208

Title IV-E administrative function: general supervisory skills or other generic skills needed to perform specific jobs

Facilitated dialogues through the virtual classroom on current/emerging issues in staff development on topics including Individual Training Plan Development, Behavioral Interviewing for new hires, Workforce Planning, Needs Assessment and Survey Development, and Organizational Development.

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<th>Trainees</th>
<th>Offerings</th>
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Courses for All LDSS Staff (LDST01)
Cumulative data for courses for all LDSS staff is in the chart below. The courses are chosen via a needs-assessment and are listed individually following the chart.

Mode of Delivery: Classroom/Virtual Classroom
Duration: 1 to 2 days / 1 to 2 days
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: Local district staff
Training Provider: CUNY Brookdale Center for Healthy Aging
Estimated cost per delivery is $4,053
Title IV-E administrative function: See individual courses.

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<td>2021-2022 (proposed)</td>
<td>2,260</td>
<td>113</td>
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Advanced Writing Skills: Honing Written and Verbal Communication
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 1 day
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: Local district staff
Title IV-E administrative function: job performance enhancement skills (e.g., writing, basic computer skills, time management)

Written and verbal skills are necessary to business communication and essential for effective job performance. This course concentrates on specific written and verbal techniques to help enhance these skills.

Affirming Diversity
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 1 day
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: Local district staff
Title IV-E administrative function: general skills for overall job performance

Diversity is an increasingly important issue for organizations in the 21st century. Today’s highly diverse workplace requires people to work productively and cooperatively with a variety of viewpoints, ideas, and perspectives. Awareness, an understanding and appreciation of others is the key to harmonious interaction. This course is designed to help participants develop empathy, avoid destructive stereotyping, reduce frustration and anxiety. The goal is to affirm the value of diversity and create a better workplace community.

Assertive Communication Skills
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 1 day
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: Local district staff
Title IV-E administrative function: job performance enhancement skills (e.g., writing, basic computer skills, time management)

Many people often find it difficult to speak up and say what they mean. The inability to verbally confront one another honestly and directly damages interpersonal relationships, decreases productivity, and increases stress. Most people are never taught how to ‘confront’ properly and effectively. Participants will learn how to use communication techniques that will help them to assertively address issues, build self-confidence, set boundaries, determine appropriate responses, and enhance personal empowerment.

Be Memorable! Effective Techniques to Make Your Customer Service Outstanding
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 1 day
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: Local district Staff, supervisors, case managers
Title IV-E administrative function: general skills for overall job performance

This course will help you establish your personal brand and attitude, show you how to identify and address customer needs and generate return business. We will teach customer service essentials that will help you provide the best results in person, by phone or electronically. You’ll learn how to deal with difficult customers and gain great insight on how to make your customer service consistent, outstanding, and memorable every time. Those that have taken this course love our “5 Important Things to Do Every Day” for exceptional customer service.

Become a Time Management Master
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 1 day
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: Local district staff, supervisors, case managers
Title IV-E administrative function: general skills for overall job performance

In this course, you’ll create a personalized time management action plan. You’ll dig deep into how you currently spend your time and identify what’s working and what’s not. We’ll learn to set goals, organize your time, plan wisely, tackle procrastination, and create habits and rituals and how to manage multiple priorities and deadlines. In addition, we’ll cover how to manage successful meetings and save time, handle interruptions, and how to delegate effectively. Because we know that every person and every job is different and has its own challenges and responsibilities, this course will concentrate closely on personalization of strategies and will deliver on many proven methods that can be adopted as is or customized for each individual participant. Attendees will leave with a time management plan that they can start implementing right away.

Building Better Teams
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 1 day
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: Local district supervisors
Title IV-E administrative function: general supervisory skills or other generic skills needed to perform specific jobs
This workshop will help participants focus on the value of working as a team; ways to develop team norms and ground rules; how to identify their team player style and how to use it with their own team; techniques for building team trust; the stages of team development and how to help a team move through them; the critical role communication skills will play in building and maintaining a team atmosphere; ways that team members can be involved and grow in a team setting.

Change Management
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 1 day
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: Local district supervisors
Title IV-E administrative function: general supervisory skills or other generic skills needed to perform specific jobs

This course will provide attendees with tools and strategies to prepare them and their team for change and to lead, motivate and inspire their team. Participants will learn how to craft the “what’s in it for me?” message that employees need to hear before you get their buy in. Participants will be able to identify and address the common reactions to change and develop strategies to help facilitate and cope with pushback and gain support. “Appreciate Inquiry” is discussed in this course and how it applies to change management to unveil the positive core of a company.

Change Management
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 1 day
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: Local district staff
Title IV-E administrative function: general skills for overall job performance

This is a half day or full day course which teaches participants about change and how to manage change in an organization. Participants will learn about different change theories, how to apply emotional intelligence competencies to recognize and manage themselves and others during times of change, the emotional impact of change and strategies for helping teams work through the different challenges that changing circumstances present.

Coaching
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 1 day
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: Local district supervisors
Title IV-E administrative function: general supervisory skills or other generic skills needed to perform specific jobs

This training demonstrates both effective coaching techniques and barriers that can hamper successful coaching. Techniques are all applicable to the business world and the working world.

Coaching and Counseling Skills for Supervisors
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 1 day
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: Local district supervisors
Title IV-E administrative function: general supervisory skills or other generic skills needed to perform specific jobs

Giving feedback to employees is an essential part of supervision. Such encounters, if handled correctly, can be a tremendous help in closing the gap between what employees do and what needs to be done. Handled ineffectively, they can undermine the working relationship. This one-day training is for supervisors who are dissatisfied with their coaching and counseling performance and/or who are afraid of bruising employees’ self-esteem.

Coaching and Mentoring Essentials for Managers
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 1 day
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: Local district supervisors
Title IV-E administrative function: general supervisory skills or other generic skills needed to perform specific jobs

This course includes defining coaching and mentoring and discussing the differences between the two – mentoring being a relationship that provides guidance and accountability and coaching going deeper and more personal to including dealing with feelings, fears, weaknesses, and strengths. You will learn how to effectively match yourself and others to mentees for a successful outcome through learning about personality types, analyzing skill sets and more. Knowing how to identify the right connections can enhance the mentoring experience. We will also review how to structure the relationship (frequency of meetings, etc.), how to measure the results of the relationship and ways to grow the relationship for maximum benefit.

Coaching for Accountability
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 1 day
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: Local district supervisors
Title IV-E administrative function: general supervisory skills or other generic skills needed to perform specific jobs

Supervisors and managers are called to coach employees toward accomplishing workplace outcomes. However, there is an important difference between coaching, supervising, and mentoring, and in the conversations, they have with employees, supervisors and managers must be clear in their own heads about what conversations they are having. This workshop will focus on the following: guiding participants in an understanding of the methods to use to increase accountability and responsibly among employees to reduce risk and staff turnover; leveraging an understanding of approaches to active listening and active engaging to reduce risk of employee stress issues; developing participants in their ability to motivate through delegation and to spread and flatten risk strategically in an organization.

Communicate with Clarity and Confidence
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 1 day
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: Local district staff, supervisors, case managers
Title IV-E administrative function: general skills for overall job performance
This course includes understanding communication barriers and developing non-verbal and communication skills, using the STAR method of speaking, developing ways to be a better, more active listener, how to ask good questions and even how to deliver bad news. We'll touch on some essential interpersonal skills including a review of the levels of conversation, tips on how to remember names, influencing skills, bringing people to your side, sharing your opinion, and making an impact. Also included will be some effective tips for business writing, including emails and reports and the importance of proofreading.

**Communication Across the Generational Divide**  
Mode of Delivery: Classroom  
Duration: 1 day  
Work Plan Code: LDST01  
Approved Audience: Local district staff  
Title IV-E administrative function: general skills for overall job performance

In today's workplace, people often struggle when tackling the complexities of effectively working in a multiage workforce. The course will provide insights and strategies that will minimize the miscommunication that frequently fuels generational conflict. Participants will gain the tools they need to promote respect and strengthen communication and collaboration to make the workplace more productive.

**Compassion Fatigue**  
Mode of Delivery: Classroom  
Duration: 1 day  
Work Plan Code: LDST01  
Approved Audience: Supervisors and managers  
Title IV-E administrative function: general supervisory skills or other generic skills needed to perform specific jobs

Compassion fatigue is one of the secondary traumas that results from being weakened emotionally and physically by the strain of long-term exposure to the struggles of others. While we provide services to the social services clients, we often find ourselves and our staff experiencing this unique type of stress. This workshop will provide participants with the techniques and tools to determine the level of compassion fatigue in them and their staff's life and how to minimize this stress for their team and therefore, provide better services to the clients they serve.

**Conversational Leadership**  
Mode of Delivery: Classroom  
Duration: 1 day  
Work Plan Code: LDST01  
Approved Audience: Local district supervisors  
Title IV-E administrative function: general supervisory skills or other generic skills needed to perform specific jobs

Effective leaders understand how powerful an opportunity can be when they tap into the intelligence, wisdom, and innovation present in their workforce. Conversational leadership provides the space and infrastructure for knowledge sharing to take place; for employees, stakeholders, and the community to be involved in discussing big, important questions; and to generate solutions that people within the organization act on. This workshop will teach participants about the wisdom inherent in encouraging leadership, how to describe the four I’s of
conversational leadership, apply the principles of conversational leadership to improve results and organize a simple World Café’ as an example conversational leadership.

Creating a Successful Team
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 1 day
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: Local district supervisors
Title IV-E administrative function: general supervisory skills or other generic skills needed to perform specific jobs

This course is full of easy-to-implement strategies to build, manage and motivate your ultimate team. Participants will learn the types of teams, the four stages of team development, the five Commandments of a Successful Team, common mistakes in team building and the six Thinking Hats of Problem Solving as a Team. The training covers problem solving and conflict resolution and share team building activities to use to build trust and confidence. In addition, participants learn how to make the most of team meetings and how to consistently encourage teamwork, learn some new ideas for motivation, steps to retaining high performers and improving team performance.

Creative Problem Solving and Decision Making
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 1 day
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: Local district staff
Title IV-E administrative function: general skills for overall job performance

This training introduces exercises and tips for arriving at creative solutions to problems. Key topics include: the creative process and its applications to creative thinking, planning and innovation at work; factors that enhance and inhibit creative thinking; strategies for maximizing creativity at work; creativity tools and techniques; leadership strategies to foster individual and team creativity in work units.

Critical Thinking
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 1 day
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: LDSS staff
Title IV-E administrative function: general skills for overall job performance

This workshop will teach participants how to define critical and non-critical thinking, identify their critical thinking style, describe other thinking styles, work through the critical thinking process, develop and evaluate explanations, improve key styles, use analytical thought systems, and prepare and present powerful arguments.

Critical Thinking and Casework
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 1 day
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: Caseworkers and eligibility staff
Title IV-E administrative function: general skills for overall job performance
This course provides participants with a foundation of skills and techniques for critical thinking. Participants will engage in a variety of hands-on activities that will enhance their ability to make quality decisions for job related situations. Critical thinking helps individuals examine their thought processes and improve their effectiveness. Critical thinking is the ability to ask the right questions, challenge assumptions, and see other viewpoints with clarity.

**Critical Thinking and Decision Making for Managers**
*Mode of Delivery: Classroom*
*Duration: 1 day*
*Work Plan Code: LDST01*
*Approved Audience: LDSS supervisors*
*Title IV-E administrative function: general supervisory skills or other generic skills needed to perform specific jobs*

Critical thinking is essential in the workplace, particularly for employees in management roles. Their decisions can affect an individual employee, a department, or the entire workforce. Therefore, critical thinking skills are sought-after professional characteristics for employees with high-level responsibilities and authority. This course is designed to provide supervisors with a foundation of skills and techniques for critical thinking and decision-making.

**Customer Service Skills**
*Mode of Delivery: Classroom*
*Duration: 1 day*
*Work Plan Code: LDST01*
*Approved Audience: LDSS staff*
*Title IV-E administrative function: general skills for overall job performance*

Excellent customer service lies at the heart of any successful organization. Giving great service means that internal (co-workers) and external customers (clients) feel that they are valued. Great customer service is ‘people helping people’ in ways that result in increased performance, which contributes to the success of the entire organization, and creates a positive/productive working environment. Areas covered include customer treatment - internal/external, communicating clearly, attentive listening, handling uncomfortable situations, and problem solving.

**Dealing Effectively with Difficult People and Situations**
*Mode of Delivery: Classroom*
*Duration: 1 day*
*Work Plan Code: LDST01*
*Approved Audience: LDSS staff, supervisors, and case managers*
*Title IV-E administrative function: general skills for overall job performance*

This popular course includes strategies to deal effectively with difficult people and situations and participants perform exercises where you identify a situation in their own life (past or present) to learn how they can deal with all difficult situations in a healthier, more positive way, learn how to talk to people without putting them on the defensive, how to pay attention to non-verbal signs, and how to achieve positive outcomes.

**Dealing with Difficult People**
*Mode of Delivery: Classroom*
*Duration: 1 day*
*Work Plan Code: LDST01*
Approved Audience: LDSS supervisors
Title IV-E administrative function: general supervisory skills or other generic skills needed to perform specific jobs

All manner of personalities at work in the workplace. Many people get along, but there are the select few that managers and supervisors have to deal with whose behavior meets the classic definition of “difficult.” This module will focus on the following areas: guiding participants in an understanding of the importance of distinguishing between a difficult conversation and a crucial conversation with a difficult personality; leveraging an understanding of how to confront team members assertively and effectively in the workplace in order to generate more optimal outcomes; developing an understanding of the impacts of fear, the resistance, and fixed versus “malleable” mindsets in the workplace.

Delegation and Empowerment
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: ½ day
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: LDSS supervisors
Title IV-E administrative function: general supervisory skills or other generic skills needed to perform specific jobs

This is a half-day class for supervisors that provides them with an understanding of the difference between delegation and empowerment and when to use each. We discuss situational management and how to use indicators such as trust to determine which approach to take with individual direct reports.

Deliver Feedback and Conduct Performance Reviews that Motivate Employees
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 1 day
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: LDSS supervisors
Title IV-E administrative function: general supervisory skills or other generic skills needed to perform specific jobs

In this course, participants will learn when and how frequently feedback should occur, how to choose the best time and place and how to thoroughly prepare and plan prior to feedback delivery. The course covers how to use the “feedback sandwich” successfully, how to set goals for optimal performance, how to ask for a self-assessment and how to tie performance to compensation.

The course also shares how to keep emotions in check, diffuse anger and negative emotions and go over common mistakes that managers make when conducting employee reviews. Participants leave with ideas for incentives and how to begin creating a culture of recognition. If you are the one getting reviewed, we’ll also dive into tips on how to successfully prepare for their own annual performance review.

Developing Effective and Self-Directed Teams
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 1 day
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: LDSS staff, supervisors, and case managers
Title IV-E administrative function: general skills for overall job performance
Working in teams is the “new normal” in the workplace and especially in the human and social services field and no longer is an option to work independent from others. This highly interactive workshop will provide participants the opportunity to:

- Assess the diversity of personality styles that comprise teams
- Define, compare, and contrast team, workgroups, groups, and cohorts
- Define and explore the five (5) stages of team development
- Identify the characteristics of highly dysfunctional teams
- Define and assess the five (5) levels of dysfunctional teams
- Develop team development action plans

**Developing the Leader Within**

**Mode of Delivery:** Classroom  
**Duration:** 1 day  
**Work Plan Code:** LDST01  
**Approved Audience:** LDSS staff, supervisors, and case managers  
**Title IV-E administrative function:** general skills for overall job performance

This course is an excellent refresher for seasoned leaders as well as a great foundation for aspiring leaders. It includes an in-depth definition of leadership, reviews social influence and conscious leadership and goes over the 12 important qualities that a great leader possesses, including clarity, inspiration, and communication to name a few. In a self-auditing exercise, the course will help participants analyze the roles they take on at work and beyond even though they may not have a leadership title. The course will review different leadership styles, which styles participants are using to influence others, and work specifically on any areas based on the participant's personal reflection or peer/employer feedback. Participants will leave armed with strategies to nurture and develop your leadership skills.

**Drive Productivity – Get Things Done!**

**Mode of Delivery:** Classroom  
**Duration:** 1 day  
**Work Plan Code:** LDST01  
**Approved Audience:** LDSS staff, supervisors, and case managers  
**Title IV-E administrative function:** general skills for overall job performance

This course provides a game plan for increasing your productivity including time management strategies, the four P's of goal setting, setting SMART goals and prioritizing tasks to make productivity skyrocket. We'll also teach tips for overcoming procrastination, one of the biggest culprits that thwarts our productivity. Participants will learn helpful and easy to implement ideas on planning and scheduling and some unexpected ways to increase productivity. Plus, the trainer will share the 10 most important things to do that will guarantee participants will have a more productive day and learn how to improve motivation to increase drive and productivity.

**Effective Conflict Communication**

**Mode of Delivery:** Classroom  
**Duration:** 1 day  
**Work Plan Code:** LDST01  
**Approved Audience:** LDSS supervisors  
**Title IV-E administrative function:** general supervisory skills or other generic skills needed to perform specific jobs
Conflicts at work come in several different forms, from argumentation to harassment and bullying. Many supervisors and managers are unable to confront conflicts effectively because they lack the skills to do so. This workshop will focus on guiding participants in an understanding of what conflict is and is not in the workplace, leveraging an understanding of how workplace conflicts are related to the stories that we tell our co-workers and ourselves in order to generate more optimal outcomes, and developing an understanding of the ways in which conflict is addressed in the workplace and how to leverage better approaches to create better functioning teams and workgroups.

Effective Conflict Resolution
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 1 day
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: LDSS staff, supervisors, and case managers
Title IV-E administrative function: general skills for overall job performance

This course includes the conflict resolution styles, creating an effective atmosphere to resolve conflicts, getting to the root cause of the problem, generating options, and building a solution. You’ll learn diffusing methods including stress and anger management techniques, neutralizing emotions, focusing on what the other party needs and building positive energy. The course also helps participants understand the six phases of the conflict resolution process. A very important addition to this course is how to maintain the relationship after the conflict resolution process.

Effectiveness-Based Supervision, Management and Leadership
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 1 day
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: Newly promoted supervisors and managers
Title IV-E administrative function: general supervisory skills or other generic skills needed to perform specific jobs

This highly dynamic two-day management and leadership workshop provides concepts, models, tools, and approaches for effectively supervising, managing, and leading diverse individuals, teams, and workgroups. Throughout the workshop, participants will have the opportunity to practice critical management and leadership skills. This highly interactive workshop will provide participants the opportunity to:

- Define the critical roles and responsibilities supervisors, managers, and leaders
- Define, compare, and contrast supervision, management, and leadership
- Assess leadership styles
- Define Effective Communications
- Assess Communication styles
- Define situational leadership
- Identify what motivates staff
- Identify approaches to managing change
- Define effective performance management
- Define and explore the difference between coaching and counselling
- Define effective delegation

Emotional Intelligence Competencies for Managers
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 1 or 2 days  
Work Plan Code: LDST01  
Approved Audience: LDSS supervisors  
Title IV-E administrative function: general supervisory skills or other generic skills needed to perform specific jobs

This is a full day or two-day course for supervisors and directors that introduces the range of Emotional Intelligence (EI) competencies and how they can be applied in the workforce. We will start with emotional self-awareness, then emotional self-management, relationship/social awareness and finally applying EI relationship management methods to their daily challenges within a LDSS environment.

Enhancing Your Professional Etiquette  
Mode of Delivery: Classroom  
Duration: 1 day  
Work Plan Code: LDST01  
Approved Audience: LDSS staff, supervisors, and case managers  
Title IV-E administrative function: general skills for overall job performance

This course will start with analyzing participants’ personal brand: defining themselves, developing and controlling their image, personal and professional influences, sharpening their brand and branding personality strategies. The course includes a comprehensive overview of general business etiquette, dressing appropriately in the workplace, email and phone etiquette, best practices for business writing, etiquette during business meals and more. Participants will review effective networking for success and how to seek out mentors to help grow their career and maintain a positive, influential personal brand. We’ll also discuss social media at length and include our popular “Ten mistakes not to make on social media.”

Ensuring a Respectful and Culturally Competent Workplace  
Mode of Delivery: Classroom  
Duration: 1 day  
Work Plan Code: LDST01  
Approved Audience: LDSS staff, supervisors, and case managers  
Title IV-E administrative function: general skills for overall job performance

Today’s workplace requires skill sets that promote working with and serving diverse colleagues and client populations in respectful and culturally competent manner. This highly interactive and self-reflective workshop will provide participants the opportunity to:  
• Define respectful workplace communications and behaviors  
• Identify causes of disrespectful behaviors in the workplace  
• Develop skills in “seeing the world through the eyes of others”  
• Practice appropriate responses to disrespectful workplace interactions.  
• Define respectful workplace communications and behaviors  
• Identify causes of disrespectful behaviors in the workplace  
• Develop skills in “seeing the world through the eyes of others”  
• Practice appropriate responses to disrespectful workplace interactions  
• Define cultural competency  
• Assess and explore their levels of cultural competence

Essential Skills for Leaders
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 1 day
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: LDSS supervisors
Title IV-E administrative function: general supervisory skills or other generic skills needed to perform specific jobs

In this course, participants will learn how to set expectations and goals, assign work, implement delegation, provide productive feedback, and manage their time and their team's time to align with their duties and responsibilities. Participants will also learn strategies for special situations such as being promoted from within the team. The course will cover the important qualities and attributes that a great leader possesses and discuss how participants can own and implement them. The course will also delve deeper into how you can identify candidates early for potential leadership roles, build competencies in others, pair others with mentors, provide training and support, establish peer networking and providing continuous growth opportunities for yourself. Participants will gain the skills to strengthen their own leadership competencies and motivate their team.

Fundamentals of Supervision
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 2 days
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: New LDSS supervisors
Title IV-E administrative function: general supervisory skills or other generic skills needed to perform specific jobs

This training is designed to provide participants with the opportunity to develop or enhance a variety of skills needed to supervise effectively. Key topics include Supervisory Self-Assessment, Leadership and Motivation, Handling Performance Problems, Supervisory Communications, and Organizational Dynamics. Individuals will be expected to attend both days.

Get a Grip! Managing Stress and Thriving in The Workplace
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 1 day
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: LDSS staff
Title IV-E administrative function: general skills for overall job performance

This course offers practical techniques for living and thriving in our high-stress times. Participants will leave this course with their own personal toolbox filled with a wide but manageable array of stress management techniques, strategies, and tactics.

How to be a Team Player
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 1 day
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: LDSS supervisors
Title IV-E administrative function: general supervisory skills or other generic skills needed to perform specific jobs
Every organization wants its employees to operate smoothly in a team environment. But the reality is that stressors, conflicts, differences of opinion, and other elements can lead to teams fracturing. This module will focus on guiding participants in an understanding of how different communication styles and approaches work in a hierarchical organizational structure, leveraging an understanding of the seven parts of influence that individuals use in organizational communications to generate more optimal outcomes, and developing in participants an understanding of emotional intelligence to develop better communicating teams through an understanding of the impact of emotions on approaches to team communication.

I'll Do It Later! Dealing with Procrastination
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 1 day
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: LDSS staff, supervisors, and case managers
Title IV-E administrative function: general skills for overall job performance

This workshop will share the three primary areas in which procrastination occurs and will give participants strategies to manage procrastination and perfectionism, which many times go hand-in-hand. Participants learn how to analyze what tasks they are procrastinating, identify why and then take the first step (even if it’s small) towards getting it done. The course reviews “eat the frog” theory and why it works so well and learn how to set realistic deadlines that won’t lead to disappointment and missed deadlines. In addition, the course teaches you how to set rewards for each participant to help them move through even the most unpleasant task, and they will also learn the 10 important steps to overcome procrastination.

Important Soft Skills Necessary in the Workplace
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 1 day
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: LDSS staff, supervisors, and case managers
Title IV-E administrative function: general skills for overall job performance

In this course, participants learn the definition of soft skills and the course will teach the intricacies of many of those skills, including communication, teamwork, and problem solving, to name a few. Participants will understand the key soft skills everyone should possess to help relate more effectively to others. In addition, they will learn how to develop and enhance their soft skills to improve their professionalism in the workplace.

Interpersonal Skills: Interacting with People You Work With
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 1 day
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: LDSS staff
Title IV-E administrative function: general skills for overall job performance

This training will provide skills to manage office communications and interpersonal relationships more effectively. Key topics include Verbal, Vocal and Visual Elements of Communications and Their Effect on Credibility and Rapport; Common Problems in day-to-day Communications with Colleagues, Subordinates and Managers; Communication Styles; Communication Etiquette; Presentation Skills to Get Ideas Accepted and Implemented; Conflict Management; and Teambuilding Communications.
It's My Boss…Not Me! Secrets About Managing Up
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 1 day
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: LDSS staff
Title IV-E administrative function: general skills for overall job performance

Managing your 'boss' is more than just avoiding a potentially dangerous situation. Learning how to work effectively with the boss is the most critical single task on a worker's agenda. Knowing how to constructively interact with one's supervisor can increase personal effectiveness and create a win-win situation for all involved.

Just for Women – Finding the Leader Within
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 1 day
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: LDSS supervisors
Title IV-E administrative function: general supervisory skills or other generic skills needed to perform specific jobs

This course is crafted especially for female business professionals who are looking to move forward in their organization by developing the best possible leadership style to fit the positions they want. It will include discussion on the leadership gap and barriers to women’s leadership, along with an understanding of traits of female managers. Participants will learn how to use their competitive edge and increase their strength and abilities while keeping emotions in check. The course will go over how to take “smart risks” and gain a career advantage, how to feel confident, get credit for work and how to conduct themselves in a manner that earns them respect. Participants will gain knowledge on how to encourage networking opportunities, how to pair with women mentors and create educational opportunities. The course will also delve deep into important issues such as nurturing women leaders, working together and not tearing each other down, viewing your competition in a positive light and learning how to collaborate with people they don’t like.

Leadership and Influence – Advanced
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 1 day
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: LDSS supervisors
Title IV-E administrative function: general supervisory skills or other generic skills needed to perform specific jobs

This workshop includes an in-depth review of the characteristics of a leader, the three theories of leadership, leadership skills (telling, selling, participating, and delegating). Being a great leader is also about leaving a legacy. The course will offer plenty of great ideas and tactics to strengthen and invigorate the participant’s team including how to be a sought-after role model, how to inspire a shared vision, how to think and act creatively so that it becomes team culture, and how to enable others to thrive. Participants will learn motivating and influencing skills, strategies for talent and performance management, how to plan for succession, how to manage change, team goal setting strategies and how to establish individual performance goals. This course will not only reinvigorate
participants but will give them tremendous tools to build an efficient, motivated team and to leave a lasting impression on them.

**Leadership Roles and Responsibilities**

**Mode of Delivery:** Classroom  
**Duration:** 1 day  
**Work Plan Code:** LDST01  
**Approved Audience:** LDSS staff  
**Title IV-E administrative function:** general skills for overall job performance

Most of the United States adult population was raised with the idea—given through overt or unstated cultural, media, and societal messages—that “Everyone can be a leader or serve in a leadership capacity.” At work we are judged by how well we make decisions, render judgments, manage others, and lead other adults. And yet, when asked to volunteer to lead (or when we are told to lead), many of us have one of two reactions: We either sit on our hands and do nothing, waiting for “someone else” to lead. Or, we begrudgingly take on the leadership challenge and lead in spite of our desire not to. This workshop will focus on: guiding participants in an understanding of what leadership is and is not, how communication styles affect leadership styles and what the role of the brain is in decision making; leveraging an understanding of team dynamics, managing other people, and how power works in the workplace in order to generate more optimal outcomes; developing an understanding of the 5 exemplary leadership practices from Kouzes and Posner to minimize workplace disputes and increase workplace leadership success.

**Leadership Skills for Supervisors: Communication, Coaching and Conflict Mode of Delivery:** Classroom  
**Duration:** 1 day  
**Work Plan Code:** LDST01  
**Approved Audience:** LDSS supervisors  
**Title IV-E administrative function:** general supervisory skills or other generic skills needed to perform specific jobs

This one-day course will give supervisors the skills in communication, coaching and conflict with learning ways to prioritize, plan and manage your time; identify your primary leadership style; develop some flexibility to use other leadership style; determine ways you can meet the needs of employees, co-workers thorough communication and coaching and explore ways to make conflict a powerful force for creative, well-rounded solutions to problems.

**Manage Email Effectively**  
**Mode of Delivery:** Classroom  
**Duration:** 1 day  
**Work Plan Code:** LDST01  
**Approved Audience:** LDSS staff, supervisors, and case managers  
**Title IV-E administrative function:** general skills for overall job performance

This course includes easy-to-implement strategies to effectively manage email and save time. The course will teach participants to research and use features of their email system they might not have known about, how to streamline their email on all devices for quick reference and access and the course will share some surprising statistics about email. In addition, important email etiquette strategies – like when it’s appropriate and important to cc someone (and when it’s not!) will be taught. Participants will be inspired to be more proactive, rather than reactive when handling email.
Management and Supervision
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: Multi-day
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: LDSS supervisors
Title IV-E administrative function: general supervisory skills or other generic skills needed to perform specific jobs

This is a 24 or 32-hour series of classes that provide tools to supervisors working in LDSS or other county government environments. The sessions focus on the skills needed in the Supervisory toolkit including coaching, communication, motivating others, performance appraisals, feedback, time management, team-building and other emotional intelligence competencies for supervisors. An overview version of this class could also be done as a one day or two-day session.

Managing Common People Problems – A Clinic
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 1 day
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: LDSS staff
Title IV-E administrative function: general skills for overall job performance

This course focuses on interpersonal communication issues with persons within the organization and their customers. Content and style of such communications intend to create a suitably positive work environment. A variety of workplace issues will be diagnosed, discussed, analyzed, and queried in group settings. Work on strategies for resolving some of the worst communication issues encountered in various interpersonal communication situations will be highlighted.

Managing the Multigenerational Workforce
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 1 day
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: LDSS supervisors
Title IV-E administrative function: general supervisory skills or other generic skills needed to perform specific jobs

For managers and supervisors, there are currently four generations of employees in the workplace. There are issues of managing and developing different generations and communicating with them in the ways in which they want to be communicated with. This workshop will focus on providing attendees with information, practical tips, and concrete skills that will allow managers and supervisors to generate greater outcomes with themselves, their employees, and their processes and to ensure productivity gains through better task/job performance.

Managing Workplace Anxiety
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 1 day
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: LDSS staff, supervisors, and case managers
Title IV-E administrative function: general skills for overall job performance
This course includes a breakdown of common types of anxiety, how to recognize symptoms in yourself and others, coping strategies, issues with avoidance, differences in anxiety and normal nervousness and physical symptoms of anxiety. We will also dive into how to recognize the positive aspects of anxiety, how to identify common anxiety triggers, and the important task of seeking help if and when you need it.

**Managing Workplace Incivility**  
**Mode of Delivery:** Classroom  
**Duration:** 1 day  
**Work Plan Code:** LDST01  
**Approved Audience:** LDSS supervisors  
**Title IV-E administrative function:** general supervisory skills or other generic skills needed to perform specific jobs

Workplace incivility is a growing problem. Workplace incivility issues lead to workplace bullying, harassment, and could potentially open employers, supervisors, and managers up to EEOC issues and more. There are ways to avoid, manage, and limit the effects of workplace incivility without resorting to “fluff” or techniques that don’t work. This workshop will focus on providing attendees with information, practical tips and concrete skills that will allow managers and supervisors to generate greater outcomes with themselves, their employees, and their processes and to ensure productivity gains through better task/job performance.

**Motivational Interviewing**  
**Mode of Delivery:** Classroom  
**Duration:** 1 day  
**Work Plan Code:** LDST01  
**Approved Audience:** LDSS staff, supervisors, and case managers  
**Title IV-E administrative function:** general skills for overall job performance

Motivational Interviewing (MI) is a form of strengths-based counseling with the aim of helping people to change through a collaborative, strength-based and person-centered approach. This highly interactive workshop will provide participants the opportunity to:  
- Define the features of Motivational Interviewing  
- List the benefits of Motivational Interviewing  
- Identify approaches and techniques of Motivational Interviewing  
- Practice Motivational Interviewing

**Organizing Your Workspace and Time: A Time-Management Course**  
**Mode of Delivery:** Classroom  
**Duration:** 1 day  
**Work Plan Code:** LDST01  
**Approved Audience:** LDSS staff  
**Title IV-E administrative function:** job performance enhancement skills (e.g., writing, basic computer skills, time management)

This training will assist staff to increase productivity while strategically improving time management skills and workspace clutter.

**Positive Counseling for Managing Problematic Employee Behaviors**  
**Mode of Delivery:** Classroom  
**Duration:** 1 day
It is not uncommon for supervisors to avoid or put off addressing problematic employee behaviors until the situation seems out of control. They often feel helpless and ill equipped to address the unsatisfactory behavior of their direct reports when confronting a behavior, giving feedback, or conducting a counseling session.

**Powerful Public Speaking and Presentation Skills**
*Mode of Delivery: Classroom*
*Duration: 1 day*
*Work Plan Code: LDST01*
*Approved Audience: LDSS staff, supervisors, and case managers*
*Title IV-E administrative function: general skills for overall job performance*

This course will teach participants how to prepare for and conduct engaging and informative presentations to any audience, from five people to several hundred. The course will cover how to identify their audience to create a customized presentation, share great tips on how to take their thoughts and content and effectively turn it into a powerful presentation, uncover strategies for establishing credibility with their audience, and we’ll even touch on overcoming nervousness. We’ll discuss the best delivery methods to enhance their presentations such as PowerPoints, flip charts, video, white board, audio, etc.

**Pre-Supervisory Training**
*Mode of Delivery: Classroom*
*Duration: Multi-day*
*Work Plan Code: LDST01*
*Approved Audience: LDSS supervisors*
*Title IV-E administrative function: general supervisory skills or other generic skills needed to perform specific jobs*

This is an 18- or 24-hour series of classes that works as part of an overall succession planning process for LDSS. It is designed for either brand new supervisors or people interested in becoming supervisors. The topics covered are similar to the management and supervision classes, but there is also a lot of focus on changed roles, setting good boundaries, communications both up and down the ladder, and learning to embrace a supervisory perspective. An overview of this class could also be done as a one day or two-day session.

**Preventing Compassion Fatigue**
*Mode of Delivery: Classroom*
*Duration: 1 day*
*Work Plan Code: LDST01*
*Approved Audience: LDSS staff*
*Title IV-E administrative function: general skills for overall job performance*

Compassion fatigue occurs when human services providers experience secondary trauma and don’t engage in necessary self-care. This is a factor common in fields that require a high level of emotional labor on the part of providers for their clients. This module will focus on the following areas: guiding participants in an understanding of how workplace stressors and traumas impact
human services professionals in their workplace; leveraging an understanding of compassion fatigue and burnout in order to generate more optimal holistic outcomes in the workplace; developing an understanding of strengths, well-being, and self-care to develop better responses to trauma and workplace stress that can affect us in the workplace and the home.

**Prioritize Work – Critical vs. Non-Critical**

**Mode of Delivery:** Classroom  
**Duration:** 1 day  
**Work Plan Code:** LDST01  
**Approved Audience:** LDSS staff, supervisors, and case managers  
**Title IV-E administrative function:** general skills for overall job performance

In this course, there will be a variety of methods for prioritizing work introduced and analyzed. Participants can determine which method works best for them or take a piece or two from each method and make it their own. We’ll review strategies for prioritizing tasks as critical vs. non-critical using the Urgent-Important Matrix for task prioritization and learn how to train and manage your attention – a growing issue and concern for employees and employers – by delving into strategies to focus on your work through proven time management methods. Participants will learn how to prioritize tasks based on how they feel about them. They will learn why we procrastinate and understand why it is holding them back and impeding progress and what to do overcome it.

**Productive Confrontation**

**Mode of Delivery:** Classroom  
**Duration:** 1 day  
**Work Plan Code:** LDST01  
**Approved Audience:** LDSS staff  
**Title IV-E administrative function:** general skills for overall job performance

This one-day training provides participants the opportunity to develop or enhance their ability to convey a difficult message to someone and get them to listen non-defensively.  

**Key topics:**  
- How to strike a balance between focusing on the goal and flexibility;  
- Methods of giving ‘bad news’ with maximum effectiveness and minimum offensiveness;  
- Effective communication skills for people under pressure;  
- Turning opposition into understanding;  
- Seven attitudes for dissolving conflicts;  
- Knowing when to engage and disengage;  
- The art and practice of agreement.

**Profound Leadership: Critical Thinking Skills**

**Mode of Delivery:** Classroom  
**Duration:** 1 day  
**Work Plan Code:** LDST01  
**Approved Audience:** LDSS supervisors  
**Title IV-E administrative function:** general supervisory skills or other generic skills needed to perform specific jobs

This training will explore key components involved in the process of critical thinking and critical decision making. Critical thinking is the ability to evaluate the assumptions, evidence, and
inferences of what one reads, sees, and hears. It includes the ability to present ideas, original or otherwise in a sound, logical, and thorough manner. This course is designed to teach the skills necessary for critical thinking techniques, listening for reasons and communicating both thoughts and feelings clearly.

**Rock Solid Negotiation Skills**  
**Mode of Delivery:** Classroom  
**Duration:** 1 day  
**Work Plan Code:** LDST01  
**Approved Audience:** LDSS staff, supervisors, and case managers  
**Title IV-E administrative function:** general skills for overall job performance

In this course, participants will gain an understanding of what negotiation is, learn to negotiate in a professional manner, get prepared by calculating the strengths and weaknesses of their position as well as knowing the other side, learn the best ways to communicate through negotiations and gain strategies for coming out with a win-win solution. Learn how to bargain, how to deal with difficult issues and of course, close the deal. Participants will also learn more intangible skills to help them negotiate more successfully such as dealing with their emotions, being adaptable and flexible, putting themselves in the other person’s shoes and seeing the bigger picture.

**Safety in the Workplace**  
**Mode of Delivery:** Classroom  
**Duration:** 1 day  
**Work Plan Code:** LDST01  
**Approved Audience:** LDSS staff, supervisors, and case managers  
**Title IV-E administrative function:** general skills for overall job performance

This course includes a review of types of work hazards, how to promote and enforce safety standards, stress management, identifying and avoiding workplace violence, identifying company hazards, identify employees that may be suffering from drug and alcohol abuse and strategies to help them find resources and writing and implementing a safety plan. We will also cover how to get buy-in from all employees to increase communication and adherence to safety guidelines and also how to put incentives in place that will reward safe workplace practices and encourage employees to become active members in the process.

**Self-Awareness- Be Your Best You at Work and Beyond**  
**Mode of Delivery:** Classroom  
**Duration:** 1 day  
**Work Plan Code:** LDST01  
**Approved Audience:** LDSS staff, supervisors, and case managers  
**Title IV-E administrative function:** general skills for overall job performance

This course includes learning about the four “selves,” mood management, interpersonal awareness, limitations of self-awareness, and independence vs interdependence. Walk away with tools to increase your self-awareness, learn the keys to empathy and active listening, be aware of social cues and body language, sharpen your conversation skills and gain insight on how to build rapport. We’ll also discuss many ways you can take initiative – taking a chance, recognize when you can step in, weighing the consequences, finding opportunities, being persistent and balancing initiative and restraint. The skills and insight you receive in this course can open you up for advancement or promotion at work, increase your influence with your peers and team and help make you a more aware person.
So, You Want to be a Supervisor
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 1 day
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: Non-Managerial Employees
Title IV-E administrative function: general supervisory skills or other generic skills needed to perform specific jobs

Many workers have aspirations to join the managerial ranks. Unfortunately for many, when their dream becomes a reality, they are woefully unprepared. Workers who become supervisors must prepare themselves to face unique issues not encountered in their previous, non-supervisory roles. This course is specifically designed to assist non-managerial workers to manage their career path to first-line supervisor.

Strategies for Innovation Implementation
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 1 day
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: LDSS supervisors
Title IV-E administrative function: general supervisory skills or other generic skills needed to perform specific jobs

This course is best for leaders, top management, and business owners as it will provide ideas on how to spark innovation in your team and affect the entire company culture. This course includes methods to create a culture of innovation, how to facilitate innovation and effectively change the current status quo while preserving useful components that are still successful. We'll teach ways to solicit idea generation, brainstorming techniques and establishing processes for implementing innovation. We'll provide strategies to embrace and integrate your millennial workforce, increase retention, and breathe new life into your organization.

Stress Management
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 1/2 day
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: LDSS staff
Title IV-E administrative function: general skills for overall job performance

This is a half-day class designed to provide participants with an understanding of typical stressors, the different strategies one can use when faced with stressful events and both communication and coping mechanisms that minimize the harmful effects of stress on the body. We also will be discussing the impact of stress on teams and groups of workers and how to recognize those signs and develop appropriate strategies.

Succession Planning
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 1 day
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: LDSS staff
Title IV-E administrative function: general skills for overall job performance
The need is great for an agency to plan for those who will be future leaders. Temporary and permanent backup talent also needs to be established. Organizations want and need more from their succession plan. This will explain the benefits of a systematic plan, develop a plan; identify leaders and explain the operation and evaluation of the succession plan.

**Surviving and Transforming Negativity in the Workplace**
*Mode of Delivery: Classroom*
*Duration: 1 day*
*Work Plan Code: LDST01*
*Approved Audience: LDSS staff*
*Title IV-E administrative function: general skills for overall job performance*

If phrases like 'It won't work,' 'They will never...' and 'I can't...' are all-too-familiar expressions in your workplace - you have got a problem. It is an illness called Negaholism and it insidiously claims many victims in the workplace. Individuals who are addicted to negative behavior and thinking can slow projects to a grinding halt, destroy work teams, and spread poisonous mindsets throughout the workplace. During this course, participants will learn how to diagnose Negativity, and gain powerful tools to eliminate negativity in themselves and in others.

**Take Control of Your Workday: Plan, Organize and Thrive**
*Mode of Delivery: Classroom*
*Duration: 1 day*
*Work Plan Code: LDST01*
*Approved Audience: LDSS staff, supervisors, and case managers*
*Title IV-E administrative function: general skills for overall job performance*

This course provides strategies to increase your efficiency and productivity by focusing on very tactile areas of your workday that you can easily control through proven systems. We will tackle areas such as effective planning and scheduling, creating, and using effective to do lists, email management, workspace organization and creating an effective filing system (both paper and digital document management). Your workday will become manageable, controlled, and organized! You’ll identify your organizing personality (yes, we all have one!) using Deb’s matrix that was featured in Better Homes and Gardens “Secrets of Getting Organized” Magazine and use that knowledge to create your ultimate workspace. Most importantly, we’ll also share tips and strategies to help you stay on track and continue to be productive and organized in the future.

**Teambuilding**
*Mode of Delivery: Classroom*
*Duration: 1 day*
*Work Plan Code: LDST01*
*Approved Audience: LDSS staff*
*Title IV-E administrative function: general skills for overall job performance*

This is a full-day class focused on learning how to read team dynamics and then apply different team building techniques. Participants will take away from the training strategies for engaging teams, how to build upon exercises to deepen a team’s understanding of their interactions and methods to raise awareness within a team of communication challenges and how to address them.

**The Basics of Performance Evaluation**
*Mode of Delivery: Classroom*
Duration: 1 day
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: LDSS supervisors
Title IV-E administrative function: general supervisory skills or other generic skills needed to perform specific jobs

This course is designed to provide the participants with the opportunity to develop or enhance skills for setting performance goals and standards and for effectively evaluating staff based on set goals. Key topics include methods of employee evaluations; development of tasks and standards; employee involvement in the interview; documentation to support the evaluation; using reward and recognition; and legal aspects of performance evaluation.

The Importance of Emotional Intelligence in the Human and Social Services Field
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 1 day
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: LDSS staff, supervisors, and case managers
Title IV-E administrative function: general skills for overall job performance

As Human and Social Services professionals, we are charged to serve diverse client populations with multiple barriers to assist them to cope with life’s challenges in pursuit of achieving higher levels of self-sufficiency. This larger than life service mandate requires that we are very in tune with ourselves and have the abilities and skills to cope with workplace demands, challenges, changes and shifts in effectively carrying out our roles and responsibilities. This highly interactive and self-reflective workshop will provide participants the opportunity to:

- Define the five (5) client types served in the Human and Social Services field
- Describe the characteristics of internal and external clients served
- Define Emotional Intelligence and its importance and value in the workplace
- Self-assess individual levels of Emotional Intelligence across four skill areas: 1) Self-awareness, 2) Self-management, 3) Social Awareness and 4) Relationship Management
- Develop personal action plans to develop and enhance Emotional Intelligence skills and behaviors

The New Manager (Feedback, Goal Setting and Coaching)
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 1 day
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: LDSS supervisors
Title IV-E administrative function: general supervisory skills or other generic skills needed to perform specific jobs

This course is designed for employees who are new to the management ranks and supports development in four basic areas: organization knowledge, understanding of people, receptive communication skills, and expressive communication skills.

The Professional Supervisor
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 2-3 day
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: LDSS supervisors
Title IV-E administrative function: general supervisory skills or other generic skills needed to perform specific jobs

With a host of new challenges and responsibilities to tackle, new supervisors need training that helps them adjust to their new role. Learning how to supervise your new employees on a trial and error basis can lead to discouragement. This 2 to 3-day workshop can help you overcome many of the problems a supervisor may encounter, and to set the groundwork for a successful change in your working life. At the end of this workshop, you will be able to recognize the responsibilities you have as a supervisor, to yourself, your team, and your organization; learn key techniques to help you plan and prioritize effectively; acquire a basic understanding of leadership, team building, communication, and motivation and what part they play in effective supervision; and develop strategies for motivating your team, giving feedback, and resolving conflict.

Time and Priority Management
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 1 day
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: LDSS supervisors

Title IV-E administrative function: general supervisory skills or other generic skills needed to perform specific jobs

For managers and supervisors, managing time and competing priorities can sometimes be a struggle. There are issues of managing people and processes, but also there are issues of managing performance. This workshop will focus on providing attendees with information, practical tips and concrete skills that will allow managers and supervisors to generate greater outcomes with themselves, their employees, and their processes and to ensure productivity gains through better task/job performance.

Time Management: Get Organized for Peak Performance
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 1 day
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: LDSS staff

Title IV-E administrative function: general skills for overall job performance

Time is money, the adage goes, and lots of it gets lost in disorganization and disruption. This one-day workshop helps you organize and prioritize for greater workplace efficiency. You’ll learn to get a grip on your office space, organize your workflow, learn how to use your planner effectively, say no without guilt, and delegate some of your work to other people. This workshop is full of ideas for organizing your work area and your paperwork and working on the “right” things.

To Know Thyself: Effective and Essential Workplace Interpersonal Skills
Mode of Delivery: Classroom
Duration: 1 day
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: LDSS staff

Title IV-E administrative function: general skills for overall job performance

Working with diverse colleagues, managers and client populations requires effective and relationship management skills that promote positive interactions and outcomes. This highly interactive and self-reflective workshop will provide participants the opportunity to:
- Identify client types
- Identify what motivates oneself and others
- Assess behavior and communication styles
- Identify approaches for interacting with challenging personality and behavior styles
- Practice responding and interacting to challenging situations
- Develop personal action plans to further develop and enhance interpersonal skills

**To Know Thyself II: Self-Care and Compassion Fatigue: Maintaining Workplace Morale**

**Mode of Delivery:** Classroom  
**Duration:** 1 day  
**Work Plan Code:** LDST01  
**Approved Audience:** LDSS staff  
**Title IV-E administrative function:** general skills for overall job performance

Our work as Human and Social Services professionals seems never ending and is very demanding, which often impacts our ability to maintain consistent levels of productivity thus impacting workplace morale. This highly interactive and self-reflective workshop will provide participants the opportunity to:

- Assess lifestyle and events stressors
- Discuss the importance of emotional intelligence in relationship to compassion fatigue
- Define, compare, and contrast compassion satisfaction, burnout, and compassion fatigue
- List symptoms and effects of compassion fatigue
- Assess compassion satisfaction and fatigue
- Explore and identify self-care areas of development
- Develop personal action plans to prevent workplace burnout that leads to compassion fatigue

**Transformational Change Management**

**Mode of Delivery:** Classroom  
**Duration:** 1 day  
**Work Plan Code:** LDST01  
**Approved Audience:** Experienced LDSS supervisors  
**Title IV-E administrative function:** general supervisory skills or other generic skills needed to perform specific jobs

The workplace of the 21st Century is changing at a rapid pace; this is especially true of the social service workplace. Some of the changes we initiate for a variety of reasons that we feel will be of benefit to others professionally and personally. Developing the skill of viewing change as an opportunity to transform rather than a catastrophe is important for professional and personal success.

**Understanding and Coping with Traumatic Strain in the Workplace**

**Mode of Delivery:** Classroom  
**Duration:** 1 day  
**Work Plan Code:** LDST01  
**Approved Audience:** Caseworkers and frontline staff  
**Title IV-E administrative function:** general skills for overall job performance

The purpose of this training is to offer a practical reference to understanding the causes and complexities of vicarious trauma. It will guide trainees through the definition of trauma the relation
of vicarious trauma to the primary trauma of the client, recognizing signs and symptoms, identifying possible triggers and helping them to establish positive coping mechanisms to battle the strain of empathic fatigue.

**Work Life Balance – from Surviving to Thriving**
**Mode of Delivery:** Classroom  
**Duration:** 1 day  
**Work Plan Code:** LDST01  
**Approved Audience:** LDSS staff, supervisors, and case managers  
**Title IV-E administrative function:** general skills for overall job performance

This course includes the benefits of a healthy balance, signs of a health imbalance, how to take advantage of employer resources, time management tips and goal setting. This course also delves into stress management – perhaps one of the most difficult things to manage in our lives. We will cover how to understand stress, review steps to create a stress-reduced lifestyle, how to use routines to reduce your stress, environmental and physical relaxation techniques, coping with major events, and identify stressors and creating a plan. Once we reduce your stress, we’ll move on to happiness! We’ll talk about purposeful planning for happiness, how to plan your day and how to relate better to others. You’ll get tips for how to accentuate the positive, take control of your career happiness, set boundaries and practice positivity.

**Working Proactively Rather than Reactively to Drive Success**
**Mode of Delivery:** Classroom  
**Duration:** 1 day  
**Work Plan Code:** LDST01  
**Approved Audience:** LDSS staff, supervisors, and case managers  
**Title IV-E administrative function:** general skills for overall job performance

This workshop includes the pros and cons of proactive and reactive strategies, tips to help you move from working reactively to proactively and differentiating between proactive tasks vs. reactive tasks so you can gauge how your time is currently being spent. We’ll also learn the traits of proactive people vs. reactive people, Steven Covey’s 7 Habits of Highly Effective People – Circle of Concern vs. Circle of Control and teach you some effective proactive vs. reactive language to use with yourself and others.

**Working with Emotional Intelligence**
**Mode of Delivery:** Classroom  
**Duration:** 1 day  
**Work Plan Code:** LDST01  
**Approved Audience:** LDSS staff  
**Title IV-E administrative function:** general skills for overall job performance

Research shows a strong link between emotion and reason, feelings, and thoughts. Making decisions based on emotions is not an exception; it is the rule. In the workplace, individuals who are not emotionally smart tend to waste time on personality conflicts, often lose self-control in stressful situations, and sabotage their own success. This course will assist all levels of staff in learning how to recognize, acknowledge and manage personal feelings.

**Workplace Diversity**
**Mode of Delivery:** Classroom  
**Duration:** 1 day
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: LDSS staff, supervisors, and case managers
Title IV-E administrative function: general skills for overall job performance

This course includes understanding diversity and stereotypes and discusses gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, and disability. You will learn how to break down barriers, identify essential verbal and non-verbal communication skills and how to be proactive by encouraging diversity. We'll home in on how to change your personal approach and encourage workplace and social changes around you. The course will also include a general overview of how to handle individual complaints as well as those brought upon the organization.

Courses for All LDSS Staff – Virtual Classroom (LDST01)
Mode of Delivery: Virtual Classroom
Duration: Varies
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: LDSS staff
Training Provider: CUNY Brookdale Center for Healthy Aging
Estimated cost per delivery is $1,452
Title IV-E administrative function: See individual courses

Cumulative data for virtual classroom courses is in the following chart. The courses are chosen via a needs assessment and are listed individually following the chart.

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<th>Year</th>
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But I Don’t Have Customers
Mode of Delivery: Virtual Classroom
Duration: 2 hours
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: LDSS staff
Title IV-E administrative function: general skills for overall job performance

Internal customers are often ignored and or taken for granted - an attitude that compromises the productive flow of work through organizations. This virtual classroom course helps workers understand the importance of each other and the roles they play in the organization. The course teaches the steps and techniques for defining internal customers and providing them with good service to create a positive and productive work environment.

Coaching: The Key to Developing Workers
Mode of Delivery: Virtual Classroom
Duration: 2 hours
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: LDSS supervisors
Title IV-E administrative function: general supervisory skills or other generic skills needed to perform specific jobs
Coaching can create a more skilled and productive employee. It helps the employee master new skills and/or strengthens old ones; it builds confidence; and generates a sense of accomplishment. This course will utilize a 5-step model to help supervisors develop worker knowledge and skills. In addition to the model there is an emphasis on the importance of the coaching relationship - an important dynamic between the supervisor/coach and the worker.

**Conquer Your Stress**  
Mode of Delivery: Virtual Classroom  
Duration: 2 hours  
Work Plan Code: LDST01  
Approved Audience: LDSS staff  
Title IV-E administrative function: general skills for overall job performance

Stress and control are inversely important. The more control you have, the less stress you experience. The key to managing stress is to learn what you can control. In this two-hour training you will learn the causes and symptoms of stress. You will also learn a variety of fun and easy techniques to regain control of your mind. Key topics include What is Stress? Short and Long-Term Symptoms of Stress, Burnout, Thinking Powerfully, Diet, Guided Imagery, and the Importance of Correct Breathing.

**Finding Your Leadership Voice**  
Mode of Delivery: Virtual Classroom  
Duration: 2 hours  
Work Plan Code: LDST01  
Approved Audience: LDSS supervisors  
Title IV-E administrative function: general supervisory skills or other generic skills needed to perform specific jobs

In times of change, organizations need leaders who can inspire, motivate, advance innovation, and collaborate to get extraordinary things done. Leadership experts Jim Kouzes and Barry Posner identified five practices of exemplary leadership that serve as a guide for leadership excellence. This session will address the first practice of the Kouzes and Posner model – Model the Way: Finding Your Voice. Participants identify leadership styles, clarify values, and discover their leadership voice.

**Improving Performance Through Feedback**  
Mode of Delivery: Virtual Classroom  
Duration: 2 hours  
Work Plan Code: LDST01  
Approved Audience: LDSS supervisors  
Title IV-E administrative function: general supervisory skills or other generic skills needed to perform specific jobs

Feedback is an essential part of the performance management process. Successful supervisors understand how and when to use feedback to help employees improve performance. This interactive course will introduce a valuable feedback tool and examine the characteristics if both descriptive and evaluative feedback.

**Improving Personal Productivity**  
Mode of Delivery: Virtual Classroom  
Duration: 2 hours
Today’s workplace is often-fast paced, complex and unpredictable. Supervisors are asked to balance multiple demands, set priorities, meet deadlines, and get more done in less time. This course will address how to effectively manage time, priorities and demands using practical techniques.

**The Art and Skill of Delegation**

**Mode of Delivery:** Virtual Classroom  
**Duration:** 4 hours  
**Work Plan Code:** LDST01  
**Approved Audience:** LDSS supervisors  
**Title IV-E administrative function:** general supervisory skills or other generic skills needed to perform specific jobs

The real measure of your effectiveness as a supervisor lies in your ability to get things done through people. Delegation allows the supervisor to achieve unit/organizational goals through others. Effective delegation requires careful planning, effective communication, commitment, and participation. Effective delegation empowers both the supervisor and the employee.

**The M Factor: Motivating Your Staff**

**Mode of Delivery:** Virtual Classroom  
**Duration:** 2 hours  
**Work Plan Code:** LDST01  
**Approved Audience:** LDSS supervisors  
**Title IV-E administrative function:** general supervisory skills or other generic skills needed to perform specific jobs

Motivating employees to achieve their potential is one of the most difficult challenges facing any manager or supervisor. This training will offer participants the background they need to understand what motivation is and how to tap this drive among their direct reports.

**The Young and the Rest of Us**

**Mode of Delivery:** Virtual Classroom  
**Duration:** 4 hours  
**Work Plan Code:** LDST01  
**Approved Audience:** LDSS staff  
**Title IV-E administrative function:** general skills for overall job performance

The newest diversity on the block is generational diversity. Age has taken its place beside gender, race and culture in a way that binds some groups of people together and drives other groups crazy. This workshop is designed to help supervisors understand the issues of age diversity in today's workplace. Participants will learn practical strategies, techniques and tools that will help them deal with the challenges of cross generational management.

**Walking the Tightrope: Managing Difficult Conversations**

**Mode of Delivery:** Virtual Classroom  
**Duration:** 2 hours
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: LDSS staff
Title IV-E administrative function: general skills for overall job performance

We've all been there. We know that we must confront an underperforming employee, coworker, or boss about some especially sticky situation, and we know the encounter will be uncomfortable. This course presents a step-by-step approach for handling these unpleasant exchanges in a manner that reduces anxiety and accomplishes their objective. You will learn how to prepare; how to have the conversation without defensiveness; and how to keep it productive and focused.

Working with You Hurts: Avoiding Emotional Traps at Work
Mode of Delivery: Virtual Classroom
Duration: 2 hours
Work Plan Code: LDST01
Approved Audience: LDSS staff
Title IV-E administrative function: general skills for overall job performance

This course focuses on the importance of interpersonal relationships between co-workers. Participants will learn how to mitigate destructive patterns that contribute to toxic behaviors at work. Topics include Symptoms of Toxic Workplace Relationships; Setting and Maintaining Boundaries; Unhooking Self from Difficult Situations.

Training provided by CUNY School of Professional Studies/DLT01

Mandated Reporter Online Training
Mode of Delivery: CBT
Duration: 2 hours
Work Plan Code: DLT01
Approved Audience: Mandated reporters in New York State
Training Provider: CUNY School of Professional Studies
Estimated cost per delivery: $0
Title IV-E administrative function(s): child abuse and neglect issues

This on-line course is available at any time, every day. It features interactive exercises that are customized for the major disciplines: social services, education, law enforcement, child day care and medical. It addresses definitions, indicators, and how to make a report to the Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment. It is fully narrated and includes videotaped segments that enhance the learning points. This course meets the New York State Education Department mandatory requirements for training in child abuse identification and reporting.
* Once the training begins, trainees have 30 days to complete the course. Users can save their progress at the end of each section enabling a self-paced learning experience that may be completed in either one sitting, or in multiple sessions. Although this course will meet the one-time requirement for mandated reporters, trainees are encouraged to take this course periodically as a refresher with current information.

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Teaching with Virtual Learning Platforms
Mode of Delivery: Virtual Classroom
Duration: varied
Approved Audience: LDSS staff

This course is intended to develop the skills and knowledge that staff need to construct and conduct a virtual classroom course.

Supervisory Courses
Mode of Delivery: Virtual Classroom
Duration: See below
Work Plan Code: DLT01
Approved Audience: LDSS staff
Training Provider: CUNY School of Professional Studies
Estimated cost per delivery: $1,962
Title IV-E administrative function(s): general supervisory skills or other generic skills needed to perform specific jobs

Conflict Resolution
Duration: 2 hours
Approved Audience: LDSS staff

Conflict is a necessary and integral part of realistic and effective problem-solving discussions. It is the essence of sound decision making because disagreement is the best vehicle for broadening perspectives, discovering alternatives, and stimulating creative interaction among team members. The effects of disagreement, however, depend on how they are managed by team members. Conflict can be disruptive, or it can be constructive. When mismanaged, conflict can destroy a team’s effectiveness; when handled well, it can greatly increase the quality of a team’s work and make members feel proud of their work in the team. This class will provide participants with an understanding of the impact of conflict in the workplace, the causes of conflict, reactions of staff and others to conflict, steps towards resolving conflict as well as principles and strategies for effective mediation.

Coaching for Performance
Duration: 2 hours
Approved Audience: LDSS staff

This training will provide participants the opportunity to rate themselves as coaches. It will outline tools for the coaching process, review how to provide feedback to staff, developing a coaching discussion plan and guidelines for conducting a coaching session. Participants should be prepared to discuss the challenges they have encountered when coaching staff and be ready to participate in small group activity.

Conducting Performance Appraisals
Duration: 2 hours
Approved Audience: LDSS staff

This program will cover the following topics: Elements of Successful Performance Appraisals How Do I Compare with Other Managers’ Attitudes toward Performance Appraisal Some Common Errors Made in Conducting Evaluations Why Performance Evaluations Fail The Purpose of Evaluations The Evaluation Process Goals and standards
Managing Difficult Employees
Duration: 2 hours
Approved Audience: LDSS staff

As long as there have been supervisors, there have been difficult employees. If there is a supervisor who has not yet had this experience, sooner or later he or she will. Since managing the performance and behavior of staff is a key role for supervisors, the ability to deal with difficult behaviors is critical. After all, an important goal of supervision is to get the best results possible from each staff member. Too often difficult employees are 'written off,” labeled as 'bad people,' or as 'hopeless,' and as a result, little is done to try to move them to a better place.

Transitioning from Employee to Supervisor
Duration: 2 hours
Approved Audience: LDSS staff

The experience of a first-time supervisor is often one of the most trying times in their career. In the past, they were only responsible for their own work. However, now the new supervisor is responsible for overseeing the work of the team in addition to his or her own assignments. Often the new supervisor had not had adequate preparation for the new position and is faced with a whole set of unique issues that were never encountered in their role as a worker. Therefore, it’s not uncommon for new supervisors to experience a ‘roller coaster’ of mixed feelings.

Combined data for all supervisory courses

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<td>2021-2022 (proposed)</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>20</td>
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ADDENDUM

New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) employees are required to complete multiple mandated trainings on an annual basis.

Mandated Training courses for all OCFS Employees For 2021

Each title represents the course topic; no other description is included.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prevention of Violence in the Workplace</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prevention of Violence in the Workplace Local Assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prevention of Workplace Discrimination for Supervisors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Trafficking/Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children: An Overview (this is a one-time mandate for all employees, not annual)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language Access for Frontline Employees</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fire Safety and Emergency Evacuation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gender Identity Toolkit (this is a one-time mandate for all employees, not annual)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Internal Controls</td>
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<tr>
<td>Equal Employment Opportunity: Rights and Responsibilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reasonable Accommodation for the Public</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supervisor's Guide to Reasonable Accommodation of Employees with Disabilities and Pregnancy-Related Conditions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supervisor's Guide to Reasonable Accommodation of Religious Observance or Practices</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sexual Harassment in the Workplace</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cyber Information and Security Awareness</td>
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<td>Privacy and Security of Health Information</td>
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<tr>
<td>Right to Know</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ethics for New York State Employees</td>
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Note: Reasonable Accommodation has three courses: One is for frontline staff; all three are for supervisors.
Training for OCFS Bureau of Special Hearings Staff

Mode of Delivery: Classroom

Duration: 2 days
Work Plan Code: N/A
Approved Audience: OCFS Bureau of Special Hearings staff, including hearing officers and administrative law judges, training provider OCFS legal staff and professional legal consultants/trainers
Estimated cost per delivery: $14,000
Title IV-E administrative function(s): See below

This three-day virtual training provides specialized Continued Legal Education training in a variety of topics for OCFS 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 included:

- Year in Review: Notable Cases 2020 Judicial Notice in Administrative Hearings
- Public Officers Law Ethics Training for OCFS Administrative Law Judges: 2020
- Child Abuse and Maltreatment Case Law Update (June 2019-June 2020)
- An Overview of the Mind Sciences of Bias 2020

In 2021, the following proposed training modules are scheduled to be offered during this three-day virtual training event:

- Child Abuse and Maltreatment Case Law Update (June 2020 – June 2021)
- SCR Reform Statute and its Impact on Administrative Review/Hearings
- Year in Review: Notable Cases 2021
- Nuts and Bolts of the New Criminal History De Novo Hearings
- An Overview of Mind Sciences of Bias 2021
- Public Officers Law Ethics Training for OCFS Administrative Law Judges: 2021

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Trainees</th>
<th>Offerings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2020-2021 (actual)</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021-2022 (proposed)</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to mandated training for all OCFS staff, the Bureau of Training and Development also offers Enhanced Learning Opportunities for OCFS staff. Training programs entitled “Supervisory Institute,” “Paraprofessional Institute,” and “Fundamentals in Supervisory Practice” are offered as certificate programs. Enhanced Learning Opportunities courses vary in length, depending on the course and modality. Most of these courses are developed and delivered by OCFS trainers. Others are proprietary training purchased to be delivered by OCFS trainers to provide OCFS staff with a full cadre of learning opportunities.

Supervisory Institute (SI)
This training institute is an intensive, nine-month certificate program and a targeted investment in the development of OCFS middle managers, who are key to fulfilling our agency vision and mission. The institute consists of 2.5 days of training per month for nine months to enhance and build upon a variety of supervisory skill sets. The skills being trained were chosen as critical to supervisory success based on research into best practices in the field of supervision, needs assessments of OCFS staff and supervisors, reviews of other state agency's supervisory programs, and requests by OCFS leadership. Staff are nominated for acceptance into the Supervisory Institute by their supervisors. The supervisors who nominate their staff for attendance also attend monthly training sessions focused on what the trainees are learning and how to best support the new skills in the workplace. The first cohort of the Supervisory Institute began on September 15, 2009. As of January 2019, 237 trainees have graduated, with two offerings scheduled for delivery in 2019. SI courses include: Program Introduction – Becoming an Effective Learner/Johari Window; Crucial Conversations; Myers Briggs Type Indicator; Emotional Intelligence; Essentials Skills for Managing Todays Workforce; Coaching; Counseling and Discipline; Performance Evaluation; Effective Workplace Writing; Critical thinking Skills; and Ethical Decision Making

**Paraprofessional Institute (PI)**

This training program is designed for the professional development of the paraprofessional staff within the agency. It will provide participants with the skills and knowledge needed to perform their job duties effectively as well as ready them for potential future career advancement opportunities. Participants attend approximately two days of training each month for three months. Training days will not be consecutive; they will take place approximately every other week. months of independent, online learning tailored to the needs of both their current job duties and future career goals that they may have. Three offerings of this program have been offered to-date. In 2019, two (2) offerings will be delivered. PI courses include: Program Introduction – Becoming an Effective Learner and Stress Management; Emotional Intelligence; Customer Service; Critical Thinking; Effective Workplace Writing; Career Advancement Workshop; and Independent Learning.

**Fundamentals in Supervisory Practice (FISP)**

Fundamentals in Supervisory Practice is designed for the professional development of entry level supervisors to provide them with the basic skills and knowledge needed to support them in the performance of their supervisory duties, as well as ready them for potential future career advancement opportunities. Over the course of three months, supervisors will have attend five days of classroom training. The structure of the program includes one full day of classroom training focused on supervisory skills, along with four half-days providing an opportunity for facilitated discussions with Subject Matter Experts (SME) representing various offices within the Agency; there are also four online/self-directed learning opportunities. FISP courses include:

- Gauging Your Supervisory Skills (GOER);
- Facilitated Discussions-Query the Experts:
  - Special Investigation Unit
  - Equal Opportunity Diversity Development
  - Ethics
  - Internal Controls
  - Legal
  - Personnel
  - Counseling and Discipline
- Online Trainings:
  - SLMS – Essentials of Supervision: Attendance and Leave Benefits
Courses listed here are designed for OCFS staff looking to enhance their skills. The OCFS courses listed above are described in this section. Most courses require a commitment of not just the trainee, but also the supervisor to attend classes or meetings over the course of several months. Some of these courses are available to local districts on an as needed basis.

**Basic Group Facilitation Skills**

½ day
This course explores the role of the facilitator and a variety of basic facilitation concepts including that stages of a facilitation, barriers to participation, tools to increase participation, and facilitation "DOs" and "DON'Ts." Participants will be exposed to a number of processes tools for facilitation and discuss which ones work best in various situations.

**Basic Project Management: An Overview**

1 day
This course explores core project management concepts and tools. It aims to impart a working knowledge of basic project management and the ability to use a select set of essential project management tools and templates on the job. Participants will explore the discipline, life cycle, roles and responsibilities, communications, scope-schedule-cost management, and integration of these fundamentals into a coherent total project effort that yields desired results within the available time and resources, to be able to engage in short-term, non-technical project-based work.

**Becoming an Effective Learner**

3 hours
This course explores the characteristics of effective learning and learning types. Participants will be able to understand and identify differences in the ways people learn. The course also explains how to use this information to improve communication and enhance personal as well as professional development.

**Bridges Out of Poverty**

1 day or a 2-hour overview
This course explores a larger perspective for understanding poverty by viewing economic class issues through a “triple lens” approach - individual, institution and community/policy. It works to build an accurate mental model of poverty using the knowledge of people in poverty to influence the lens through which service providers view themselves, their clients, and their communities so that they are more aware and skilled in working with individuals who are in poverty and providing services to achieve sustainability. Participants will learn about language experience, cognitive issues, and barriers to change.

**Change Management**

4 hours
This course explores the skills required for handling change constructively and productively. Participants will be able to explain three different kinds of change and identify staff needs for each. The course also enables participants to assess organizational change, identify their own reaction
to the change and how it impacts others. Participants will develop an action plan for dealing with changes that are current at the time of the training.

Coaching for Performance
1 day
This course explores the skills required to effectively coach staff into developing their own job-related skills and behaviors to effectively provide services to the people we serve. It helps participants identify reasons to engage in coaching, benefits to the coach and the coached as well as the organization. Participants will learn and practice various skills used in effective coaching in this highly interactive skill-based course. Participants will create an action plan to apply knowledge and insight gained during this course.

Critical Thinking
1 day
This course explores the characteristics of effective critical thinkers and the role of critical thinking in making decisions. It also examines the impact that biases, values, and beliefs have on critical thinking. Participants will identify and discuss the use of information gathering, inquiry, inductive and deductive reasoning. Participants will apply critical thinking to a case study and a real workplace situation. They will also get to create a personal action plan.

Crucial Conversations
2 days
This course explores the strategies required to conduct crucial conversations which can have a profound impact on one’s career, happiness, and future. Participants will identify the choices that are open to them when faced with a situation where the stakes are high, opinions vary, and emotions run strong. The course gives participants the tools to step up to difficult conversations, say what’s on their mind and achieve positive outcomes.

Effective Meetings
1 hour online (HSLC) or 3 hours classroom
In this training you will learn how to have effective meetings as we go through Preparing for meetings, including creating an agenda and selecting participants; Conducting meetings, ensuring that participants stay focused on the task at hand; Participating in meetings where you are not the leader in a helpful and valuable manner; Following up after the meeting with effective meeting notes and action assignments.

Emotional Intelligence
1 day
This course explores how emotional intelligence (EI) relates to personal and professional success. The course also covers principles of EI and looks into personal emotional intelligence competencies: self-awareness and self-management of emotions. Further, it touches upon social emotional intelligence competencies: social awareness and relationship management. Participants will create an EI development plan.

Enhancing Customer Service Skills
4 hours or 1 day
This course explores the various elements of professional customer service. It helps agency staff identify behaviors that enhance customer service skills in order that they may communicate effectively and in a professional manner when handling calls from the public, including customers with limited English proficiency (LEP). In addition, participants will understand how to access and
effectively use language assistance resources for LEP customers both over the phone and in-person.

**Essentials of Supervision: Gauging your Supervisory Skills**
1 day
A one-day course designed to identify the skills, assets, and abilities in five critical supervisory skill areas: guiding the work; organizing the work; developing your staff, managing performance; and managing relations.

**Essentials of Supervision: OCFS-Policies into Practice (HSLC)**
1 hour
This online course provides Participants an opportunity to learn how to identify and recognize resources to inform supervisory decisions. Participants will utilize the information and resources and apply that information to typical supervisory situations through the analysis of a scenario.

**Ethical Decision Making**
1 day
This course explores ethical dilemmas consistent with New York State Public Officers Law. At the end of this course participants will be able to define values, morals, and ethics. They will be able to analyze situations and use resolution principles to choose a course of action when faced with an ethical dilemma. The course will go over the nine checkpoints of ethical decision-making in a real or simulated ethical dilemma situation.

**First Aid/CPR/AED (National Safety Council)**
1 day
This course explores first-aid response procedures to injuries or sudden illnesses in a systematic way. Participants at work and in the community, will learn how to prioritize tasks (i.e., how to handle life-threatening problems before attending to less serious ones). This course teaches rescue breathing, CPR, secondary survey, bleeding control, bandaging, rescues and use of automatic external defibrillators. Participants will also learn how to manage choking, burns, eye/nose injuries, bites/stings, poisoning, diabetic emergencies, stroke, seizures, and temperature extremes.

**Instructional Design and Development – Instructional Theory into Practice (ITIP)**
4½ days
This course explores the Instructional Theory into Practice model for systematically designing training. It covers learner-centered instruction, adult learning theory, needs assessments, performance objectives, instructional strategies, training aids and evaluation methods. Participants will design and develop a lesson plan.

**Leadership Tools and Competencies**
1 day
This course explores the many aspects of leadership that revolve around vision, ideas, and direction. It focuses on inspiring people with direction and goals. Participants will review Warren Bennis’ leadership qualities; review definitions of values, morals and ethics; identify their core values and the application of those values at work; distinguish leadership from any other types of work they may be doing; and apply the networked talent model to their work.

**Managing Group Disturbances**
3 hours
This course explores the specific protocols that staff need to follow in order to prepare and manage a group disturbance more effectively. At the end of this training, participants will be able to: Recognize a group disturbance by exploring the agency’s definition of a group disturbance; recognize the importance of maintaining the proper mindset in a group disturbance; evaluate how to respond to a group disturbance through the use of a specific set of protocols and develop a summary action plan to apply to their own facility-specific procedures.

**Meeting Management**
3 hours
This course explores the various aspects of managing meetings to improve efficiency. Specifically, the procedures to plan, conduct and follow-up on meetings will be covered. This course also addresses the methods one can employ to diagnose and correct poor meeting behaviors to keep on task.

**Myers Briggs Type indicator (MBTI)**
4 hours
This course explores the MBTI instrument which describes personal preferences and how knowing those preferences can be useful to participants. Specifically, it looks into the opposite ways that people have of gaining energy, gathering information, coming to conclusions about that information and dealing with the world around us. The MBTI instrument was developed by Isabel Myers and Katharine Briggs as an application of Carl Jung's theory of psychological types. Advanced applications: MBTI results can be used in the context of training on teamwork, communication, decision-making, managing change or working through conflict.

**Navigating Transitions in the Workplace-A Guide for Employees**
1 day
This course explores experiences and attitudes participants have about change. Topics include models for thinking about change, building resilience, and developing strategies to cope with change will also be discussed.

**Performance Evaluation: A Dynamic Tool for Supervisors**
1 day
This course explores the importance of performance evaluation and it will help supervisors understand the value of performance evaluation as an ongoing, cyclical process. Participants will practice critical elements of the process and learn communication and feedback techniques that make performance evaluation a meaningful tool.

**Effective Presentations**
4 hours
Learn how to feel competent and comfortable when conducting training or delivering presentations! Learn to identify and utilize strategies for overcoming stage fright and how to prepare a presentation utilizing an outline, attention getting opening, transitions and an effective closing. In this class you will have the opportunity to practice giving both impromptu and planned presentations.

**Principles of Partnership: The Platinum Rule**
2 days
Creating Partnerships from top to bottom - This relationship training is based on our six principles of partnership and four social styles model. We each have a preferred way of interacting with others. It's a part of our personality. This training is designed for teams, whole agencies or groups wanting to increase partnership potential. Partners will learn four style preferences and how they
impact and conflict with each other. We will teach tools for modifying your own style or adopting to another to increase your impact. This allows us to shift from the "Golden Rule" partnering with others as they want to be treated.

Respectful Communications
1 day
This course explores topics such as keys to effective communication, personal responsibility, disrespect in the workplace, as well as other topics. Participants are provided with tools and techniques for improving communication in the workplace. Case studies, small group discussions, and listening skill building activities are included.

Situational Awareness
1 day
This course introduces a new Personal Risk Assessment Model and provides instruction on the continuous process of assessing and mitigating personal risk while working in the field. There will be opportunities for participants to engage in activities designed to assess risk in real-life. Participants will be introduced to techniques to help recognize, assess, and mitigate risk(s) while working in the field. The target audience for this program will be CMSO staff and LDSS staff.

Storyboarding
1 day
This course explores the “displayed thinking” process that is the essence of Storyboarding. By the conclusion of this course, participants will be able to both facilitate and scribe a storyboard and should be able to implement it in a variety of situations.

Stress Management
3½ hours
This course will explore the physiological and psychological impacts that stress has on people. It will help participants to identify their personal stressor and how they respond to them. It will also explore various ways of managing stress including mindfulness and changing the way we perceive stress.

Time Management
3½ hours
This course explores a slew of time-management strategies. Participants will be able to recognize several time-management tactics and proven approaches to manage time. They will also understand their personal approach and learn to implement or enhance a personal time-management system.

Effective Workplace Writing
1 day
This course explores the characteristics of effective workplace writing, the use of the A-P-G tool to analyze a writing task and conduct a needs assessment, the “four Cs” of writing, and various techniques and tools for editing. Several common errors found in writing are also reviewed. This course will include a study of basic grammar and the opportunity to evaluate and provide feedback to another participant’s writing product as well as several editing exercises.
i. Independent Legal Representation Attorney Training in Child Welfare Matters

To support high quality legal representation in child welfare proceedings, the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) Children’s Bureau has policies that allow the State Title IV-E Agencies to claim Federal financial participation (FFP) for administrative costs of independent legal representation provided by an attorney to title IV-E foster care candidates (pre-placement) and title IV-E foster care (in-placement) eligible children and their parents; including short term trainings to the attorney in child welfare matters. Attorneys that provide independent legal representation services to children and their parents will receive training to provide a comprehensive overview of the myriad of laws regarding child welfare in New York State and the nuances therein. Such training may also assist attorneys and their staff in identifying available services and supports for their clients and tools to help them understand their rights and the complicated processes that directly affect their lives and well-being.

OCFS is establishing Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) with the Office of Court Administration (OCA), the Office of Indigent Legal Services, New York City, local county and tribal governments to allow these entities to claim for Title IV-E reimbursement for administrative and attorney training costs, per the OCFS claim form, for attorneys that provide independent legal representation services to Title IV-E foster care candidates (pre-placement) and Title IV-E foster care (in-placement) eligible children and their parents in child welfare matters. Specifically, these entities will either directly hire or contract with training experts to develop and deliver short-term attorney trainings that must be closely related to the examples cited in 45 CFR 1356.60(c)(1) and (2) in order to be eligible for Title IV-E reimbursement.

Each entity that has an approved and executed MOU with OCFS and provides attorney trainings, shall compile a compendium and description of all trainings to be submitted to OCFS for review and approval. OCFS will review the submitted short term attorney training proposals that must be on topics closely related to one of the examples cited in 45 CFR 1356.60(c)(1) and (2) to confirm the training to be an allowable administrative activity under the Title IV-E program and will include in updates for the Annual Progress and Services Report (APSR) Title IV-B Plan for federal approval. Federally approved trainings will be eligible for Title IV-E reimbursement with supporting source documentation, per the OCFS claim form.

For example, training topics could include, but would not necessarily be limited to:

- Title IV-E policies and procedures;
- Cultural competency and language access related to children and families;
- Child abuse and neglect issues, such as the impact of child abuse and neglect on a child;
- General overviews of the issues involved in child abuse and neglect investigations and the pertinent standards of evidence;
- Voluntary placements and surrenders;
- Capacity and obtaining informed consent from clients;
• Termination of parental rights;
• Adoptions and guardianship proceedings;
• Juvenile delinquency;
• Persons in need of supervision;
• Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children;
• Other available services;
• Special considerations for youth over the age of 18;
• Motion practice and evidentiary rules;
• Special considerations for child testimony and interviews;
• Understanding the impact of trauma; and
• Overview of applicable case law.