



Office of Children
and Family Services

OCFS

2019 Annual Report



Andrew M. Cuomo, Governor
Sheila J. Poole, OCFS Commissioner

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Administrative Hearings	2
Child Care Hearings	
Foster Care Payments	
Homemaker Services	
Protective/Preventive Services	
Transitional Child Care	
Child Abuse and Maltreatment Expungement/Amendment Hearings	
Database Checks for Child Care and Other Provider Positions	
Foster Care Removal	
Adoption Eligibility	
Adoption Subsidy	
Day Care Licensing	
Family-Type Homes	
NYSCB	
Kinship Guardianship Assistance	
Court Challenges to OCFS Administrative Hearings – Pending	
New York State Commission for the Blind	6
Vocational Rehabilitation Program	
Services for Older Blind Individuals	
Children’s Program	
Business Enterprise Program	
Division of Child Care Services	8
Number of Regulated Child Care Providers in New York State	
Child Care Definitions	
Subsidized Child Care in New York State	
Number of Providers Caring for One or More Children With Subsidies in FFY 2019	
Funding for Child Care Subsidies	
Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies	
Union Contracts	
Advantage After-School Program	
Empire State After-School Program	
Division of Child Welfare and Community Services.....	11
Office of Regional Operations and Practice Improvement	
Bureau of Regional Operations	
Bureau of Adult Services	
Bureau of Strategic Partnerships and Collaboration	
Bureau of Native American Services	
Bureau of Monitoring and Quality Assurance	
Bureau of Program Quality Improvement Data	
Bureau of Children’s Medicaid Management	
Office of Performance Improvement	
Family Assessment Response	
Keys to Excellence in Youth Supervision	
Child Fatality Review Unit	
Child Fatality Review Teams	
Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment	
SCR Procedures	
Human Services Call Center	
Office of Prevention, Permanency and Program Support	
Bureau of Program and Community Development	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Healthy Families New York Home Visiting Program William B. Hoyt Memorial Children and Family Trust Fund Public-Private Partnerships Multidisciplinary Teams/Child Advocacy Centers Bureau of Domestic Violence Prevention and Victims Support Bureau of Permanency Services Kinship Program General Demographics for Children in Foster Care Foster Care Admissions and Exits 	
Division of Youth Development and Partnerships for Success	21
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bureau of Youth Development Workforce Development Bureau of Cross Systems Supports Bureau of Education and Transitional Support Services Youth Advisory Board Bureau of Detention Services Bureau of Health and Well-Being Runaway and Homeless Youth Program Human Trafficking Safe Harbour: NY Program Close to Home Oversight and System Improvement Statewide Youth Justice Reform 	
Division of Juvenile Justice and Opportunities for Youth.....	28
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residential Care System Community Services Juvenile Justice Reform 	
Office of the Ombudsman.....	30
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Rights of Youth in Custody OOTO Responsibilities in Protecting the Rights of Youth Communication With OOTO 2019 Projects Out in the Field 	
Conclusion.....	32

Introduction

The New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) oversees a continuum of services for children, families, and communities, and promotes the safety, permanency, and well-being of children and families. The agency continually seeks to improve and integrate efforts to address the needs and build on the strengths of the state's children, youth, and other vulnerable populations. It works to establish a more responsive, seamless service delivery system that is family-centered, outcome-based, and locally responsive.

OCFS's oversight and operational responsibilities include, but are not limited to, foster care, adoption, child protective services, preventive services for children and families, child care, child care resource and referral programs, child care subsidies, rehabilitation services for the blind, and protective programs for vulnerable adults. In addition, the agency coordinates New York State's response to the needs of Native Americans on reservations and in communities and operates specialized programs for juvenile delinquents placed in the care of OCFS by family courts as well as juvenile and adolescent offenders committed to OCFS custody by the criminal courts.

The reports compiled herein, required under New York Social Services Law (SSL) § 17(d) and New York Executive Law § 164, help provide a snapshot of how the system is performing in key areas.

Administrative Hearings

Pursuant to Social Services Law (SSL), applicants for or recipients of government-subsidized foster care services, day care services, homemaker services, and other child welfare services may appeal to OCFS the decisions of social services officials to deny or limit such payments. Local social services officials must determine eligibility for and the level of payment to be provided for such services and must advise individuals of their opportunity to challenge a local determination in an administrative hearing.

Individuals also have the right to an administrative hearing, conducted by OCFS, to challenge a variety of other governmental determinations. Such determinations include, among others, decisions to remove foster children from foster boarding homes; the determination by the Local Department of Social Services (LDSS) to indicate a report of child abuse and maltreatment; the proposed disclosure of such indicated finding to an inquiring provider or licensing agency under section 424-a of the SSL; the decision to deny, revoke, suspend or otherwise limit the license or registration to provide day care for children; denials of applications to adopt children and for adoption subsidies; decisions of the New York State Commission for the Blind (NYSCB) to deny or limit services or participation to its consumers; and decisions to deny, suspend, revoke or otherwise limit an operating certificate to provide long-term residential care to adults in family settings.

Administrative hearings help to protect children and adults, preserve families and to promote the accuracy of local social services district and the state.

Time Period: 1/1/2019 – 12/31/2019

NOTE: *The total number of hearings held in the tables below is often significantly lower than the number of hearings scheduled, and the number of decisions issued due to the fact that many scheduled hearings are resolved short of a full hearing, such as by default, settlement, and party withdrawal.*

Child Care Hearings – Hearings held pursuant to Section 22 of the SSL and Parts 358 and 415 of New York Codes, Rules and Regulations (18 NYCRR) to challenge determinations by social services districts to deny, reduce or terminate day care subsidy payments, or to challenge the adequacy of such payments.

Hearings Requested	Hearings Scheduled	Hearings Held	Hearing Decisions Issued
2263	2583	633	637

Foster Care Payments – Hearings held pursuant to Section 22 of the SSL and Part 358 of 18 NYCRR to challenge determinations by social services districts to deny requests by foster parents for foster boarding home payments at a rate higher than the rate being received by the foster parents, to deny voluntary foster care placement services for natural parents, or to challenge the adequacy of such payments or services.

Hearings Requested	Hearings Scheduled	Hearings Held	Hearing Decisions Issued
655	958	520	521

Homemaker Services – Hearings held pursuant to Section 22 of the SSL and Part 358 of 18 NYCRR to challenge determinations by social services districts to deny, reduce or terminate homemaker services for adults and children, or to challenge the adequacy of services authorized.

Hearings Requested	Hearings Scheduled	Hearings Held	Hearing Decisions Issued
11	31	5	5

Protective/Preventive Services – Hearings held pursuant to Section 22 of the SSL and Part 358 of 18 NYCRR to challenge determinations by social services districts to deny, reduce or terminate adult protective or child protective or preventive services, or to challenge the adequacy of services authorized.

Hearings Requested	Hearings Scheduled	Hearings Held	Hearing Decisions Issued
447	653	148	146

Transitional Child Care – Hearings held pursuant to Section 22 of the SSL and Part 358 of 18 NYCRR to challenge determinations by social services districts to deny, reduce or terminate transitional child care payments, or to challenge the adequacy of such payments.

Hearings Requested	Hearings Scheduled	Hearings Held	Hearing Decisions Issued
436	641	138	116

Child Abuse and Maltreatment Expungement/Amendment Hearings – Hearings held pursuant to Section 422(8) of the SSL in which confirmed subjects of reports of child abuse and maltreatment seek to overturn indicated report determinations.

Hearings Requested	Hearings Scheduled	Hearings Held	Hearing Decisions Issued
3640	3577	907	3413

Database Checks for Child Care and Other Provider Positions – Hearings held pursuant to Section 424-a(2) of the SSL in which applicants for employment, licensure or approval in a field serving vulnerable persons are seeking to overturn determinations to indicate child abuse and maltreatment reports or to obtain a finding that the indication should not be a barrier to contact with children.

Hearings Requested	Hearings Scheduled	Hearings Held	Hearing Decisions Issued
1584	1528	362	1417

Foster Care Removal – Hearings held pursuant to Section 400 of the SSL in which foster parents challenge determinations by authorized agencies to remove children in foster care from the homes of the foster parents.

Hearings Requested	Hearings Scheduled	Hearings Held	Hearing Decisions Issued
37	37	20	37

Adoption Eligibility – Hearings held pursuant to Section 372-e of the SSL to contest denials by an authorized agency of applications of persons seeking to become adoptive parents.

Hearings Requested	Hearings Scheduled	Hearings Held	Hearing Decisions Issued
1	1	0	2

Adoption Subsidy – Hearings held pursuant to Section 455 of the SSL in which adoptive parents challenge the determination to deny or discontinue an adoption subsidy, or the amount of adoption subsidy payments being provided to the parents.

Hearings Requested	Hearings Scheduled	Hearings Held	Hearing Decisions Issued
29	29	10	19

Day Care Licensing – Hearings held pursuant to Section 390(10) and 390(11) of the SSL to contest: denial of an application for licensure or registration of a day care program; or denial of an application for renewal of the licensing or registration of a day care program; or suspension, revocation or limitation of a license or registration to operate a day care program; or the imposition of a fine for violation of statutes or regulations concerning operation of a day care program.

Hearings Requested	Hearings Scheduled	Hearings Held	Hearing Decisions Issued
387	365	43	364

Family-Type Homes – Hearings held pursuant to Section 460-d(4), (7) and (9) of the SSL to contest: denial of an application for the licensing of a family-type home for adults; or denial of an application for renewal of the licensing of a family-type home for adults; or revocation, suspension or limitation of the license of a family-type home for adults; or imposition of a fine for violation of statutes or regulations concerning operation of a family-type home for adults.

Hearings Requested	Hearings Scheduled	Hearings Held	Hearing Decisions Issued
2	2	2	2

NYS CB – Hearings held pursuant to federal law or Section 8714-a of the Unconsolidated Laws to challenge determinations by the New York State Commission for the Blind to deny, terminate, or change services or equipment provided to the blind, or hearings related to the operation of the Business Enterprise Program for the blind.

Hearings Requested	Hearings Scheduled	Hearings Held	Hearing Decisions Issued
0	0	0	1

Kinship Guardianship Assistance – Hearings held pursuant to Section 458-f of the SSL in which prospective kinship guardian(s) or kinship guardian(s) challenge the determination to deny an application for kinship guardianship assistance payments, the determination to discontinue kinship guardianship assistance payments, or the amount of kinship guardianship assistance payments being provided to the kinship guardian(s).

Hearings Requested	Hearings Scheduled	Hearings Held	Hearing Decisions Issued
5	5	2	5

Court Challenges to OCFS Administrative Hearings – Pending

If an individual has appealed a determination and is dissatisfied with the decision of an administrative law judge, the individual may challenge the decision in a court proceeding. The following represents the activity for such challenges for 2019.

Total Number of Cases Appealed:	25
Appeals Resolved:	13
Administrative Hearing Decisions Upheld:	9
Administrative Hearing Decisions Reversed:	4
Appeals Pending:	12

New York State Commission for the Blind

The mission of the New York State Commission for the Blind (NYSCB) is to enhance employability, maximize independence, and assist in the development of the capacities and strengths of people who are legally blind.

NYSCB values the worth, dignity, and rights of people who are blind. It seeks to encourage, empower, and enable individuals to live independently, pursue meaningful employment, and enjoy full inclusion and integration into the cultural, economic, educational, political, and social mainstream of society. The active engagement of participants in their own rehabilitation programs, including the ability to make meaningful and informed choices regarding their vocational goals and the rehabilitation services they receive, is a fundamental principle of all NYSCB programs, projects, and policies.

NYSCB is committed to working closely with children and their families to enable each child to achieve the maximum possible independence in working, living, and participating as an adult. NYSCB seeks to incorporate interactive teamwork in providing vocational rehabilitation services that meet the needs of consumers.

The NYSCB team is comprised of staff (many of whom are legally blind), community-based service providers, and current and potential employers, all of whom share in the rewards of consumer employment and satisfaction. NYSCB carries out its mission through four major program areas: vocational rehabilitation services, services for older individuals, children's services, and the Business Enterprise Program.

Vocational Rehabilitation Program

FFY 18-19 Consumers served: 3,428 Consumers placed in employment: 335

The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Program offers counseling and guidance to assist legally blind consumers in finding or retaining employment. Vocational rehabilitation counselors (VRCs) work with each consumer to develop an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). The IPE serves as a road map to guide the consumer toward his/her employment goals. Goals vary and services may include educational training, preparing for and finding a job, continuing at a current workplace, or learning to use adaptive equipment or technology related to employment. In addition to counseling and guidance, the VR Program may offer services or access to services, including the following:

- Assessments to determine service needs
- Social services casework, including referrals
- Mobility training (which enables consumers to travel safely and efficiently)
- Vision rehabilitation for instruction in activities of daily life
- Low vision exams and devices
- Braille instruction
- Deaf-blind services
- Pretests and transition services for students with disabilities
- Maintenance, transportation, interpreter services, and reader services
- Vocational assessment
- Vocational and educational training, including college
- Job training
- Assistive technology training and equipment
- Job retention services for workers experiencing vision loss

Services for Older Blind Individuals

FFY 18-19

Older individuals served: 3,775

The goal of this program is to make a comprehensive package of rehabilitation services available to older individuals who are legally blind and are not seeking paid employment. This program includes evaluation of an individual's service needs within the framework of personal goals, abilities, and resources, and the provision of appropriate types and amounts of services to promote individual achievement of rehabilitation goals. It is NYSCB's intent that individuals identified and served will achieve the highest level of confidence, self-sufficiency, and independence allowed by each individual's life circumstances and interests, in accordance with their established goals and NYSCB's policy. NYSCB measures each person's success by determining whether they accomplished the goals identified in their Individualized Service Plans (ISP).

Children's Program

FFY 18-19

Children served: 1,788

NYSCB provides rehabilitation services to children who are legally blind and reside in New York State. Working with the family, a children's consultant develops a plan tailored to the child's needs. The plan may include services provided in the home, the community, or private rehabilitation agencies. Services provided through the Children's Program include:

- Counseling and guidance to families
- Advocacy
- Educational consultation
- Vocational coordination
- Low vision services
- Rehabilitation teaching
- Orientation and mobility
- Social casework

The Children's Program provides services outside of school, either after school, on weekends, or during school vacations. NYSCB also provides some legally blind children with the opportunity to attend summer camps and year-round socialization skills programs they might not otherwise be able to attend without the support of NYSCB. The goal of the socialization skills programs is to provide legally blind children with opportunities that encourage independence and increase self-confidence.

Business Enterprise Program

FFY 18-19

Vendors employed: 64

Average income: \$50,887

The Business Enterprise Program (BEP) offers opportunities throughout the state for individuals who are blind to gain the training and skills necessary to independently manage one of several vending facilities located in federal and state properties. After completing an intensive training program, BEP managers become proficient in all aspects of retail management, including purchasing products, controlling inventory, marketing products, maintaining good customer relations, and keeping accurate records.

NYSCB's BEP has three regional offices – New York City, Rensselaer, and Buffalo – that provide coverage for all the counties in the state. A district supervisor, Business Enterprise Program specialists, and a support staff person staff each regional office. The Business Enterprise Program specialists work directly with the licensed program members to assist them in operating their own businesses.

Division of Child Care Services

OCFS, through the Division of Child Care Services (DCCS), licenses, registers, inspects, supervises, and enforces regulations for child care programs, and provides training and technical assistance to child care providers through a contract managed by the Bureau of Training and Development. DCCS is also responsible for the development, implementation, and monitoring of contracts with the following: Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (CCR&Rs), Legally Exempt Enrollment Agencies, the Advantage After-School Program, and the Empire State After-School Program. Additionally, DCCS has oversight responsibilities for the provision of child care subsidies funded under the Child Care and Development Block Grant for approximately 169,000 children annually, and for the enrollment and monitoring of approximately 17,000 legally exempt child care providers annually. DCCS investigates individual and legislative complaints regarding the provision of local services, child care inspections, LDSSs, and community-based organizations to improve the delivery of service and care. DCCS also works to develop new programs and methods of service provision for children, youth, and child care providers that promote positive child development and improve the quality of child care services.

Number of Regulated Child Care Providers in New York State

(Includes New York City Day Care Centers not regulated by OCFS)

- 4,290 day care centers with a capacity for 313,951 children
- 3,370 family day care homes with a capacity for 26,340 children
- 8,017 group family day care homes with a capacity for 123,034 children
- 2,835 school-age child care programs with a capacity for 327,578 children

Total: 18,512 regulated providers with a capacity for 790,903 children

	Region	Center-Based		Home-Based		Total
		Day Care	School Age	Family	Group Family	
Number of Providers	New York City	2,232	1,563	1,185	5,245	10,225
	Rest of State	2,058	1,272	2,185	2,772	8,287
	Total	4,290	2,835	3,370	8,017	18,512
Maximum Capacity	New York City	141,027	230,030	8,982	79,648	459,687
	Rest of State	172,924	97,548	17,358	43,386	331,216
	Total	313,951	327,578	26,340	123,034	790,903

Child Care Definitions

Day Care Center (DCC) - Provides care to an enrolled group of seven or more children at a facility other than a personal residence for three or more hours a day on a regular basis. Maximum capacity is driven by square footage allowance.

Family Day Care Home (FDC) - Provides care to more than two non-relative children in a residence for three or more hours a day on a regular basis. Maximum capacity is eight children, generally with one caregiver.

Group Family Day Care Home (GFDC) - Provides care to more than two non-relative children in a residence for three or more hours a day on a regular basis. Maximum capacity is 16 children, generally with two caregivers.

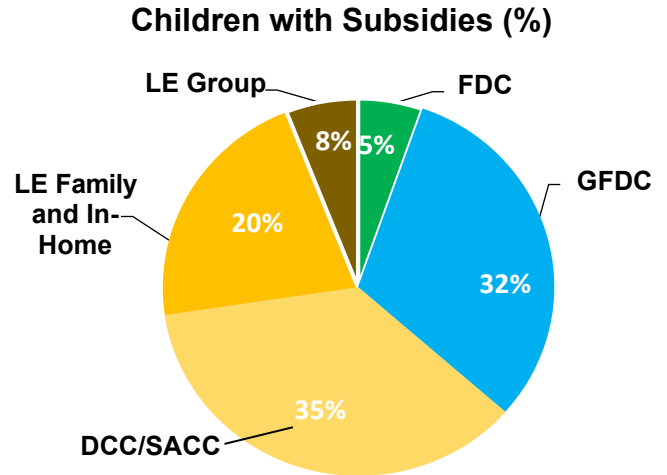
School-Age Child Care (SACC) - Provides child care to an enrolled group of seven or more children in a non-residence facility outside normal school hours. Maximum capacity is driven by square footage allowance.

Subsidized Child Care in New York State

The New York State Child Care Subsidy Program is administered by LDSSs and overseen by DCSS. Approximately 169,000 children in 101,000 families received child care subsidies in FFY 2019.

Of these:

- 35% were cared for in DCCs or SACCs
- 37% were cared for in FDCs or GFDCs
- 28% were cared for in legally exempt (LE) settings, which are almost exclusively home based



Number of Providers Caring for One or More Children With Child Care Subsidies in FFY 2019

	Licensed or Registered			Legally Exempt Enrolled			Total
	DCC/SACC	FDC	GFDC	LE Family	LE In-Home	LE Group	
New York City	1,148	815	4,386	2,254	5,051	175	13,829
Rest of State	2,445	1,611	2,643	5,522	3,881	152	16,254
Total	3,593	2,426	7,029	7,776	8,932	327	30,083

Funding for Child Care Subsidies

In SFY 2019-20, OCFS allocated \$832.1 million to LDSSs through New York State’s Child Care Block Grant. Additional child care subsidy funds for income-eligible families in SFY 2019-20 were made available through Memoranda of Understanding with SUNY (\$2.213 million) and CUNY (\$2.161 million).

Facilitated enrollment projects funded in SFY 2019-20 for child care subsidies to families eligible up to 275 percent of poverty totaled \$9.988 million.

Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) Agencies

OCFS provides funding and supervision to support and enhance the child care services delivered by Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (CCR&R) for children and families throughout New York State as specified in SSL Sections 410-p through 410-t. CCR&R agencies provide multiple services to the child care community. CCR&Rs collect and maintain up-to-date information about all types of legal child care programs in their areas. Counselors can provide parents with information about various types of child care programs, costs, financial assistance, and guidelines for selecting child care.

In FFY 2018, OCFS entered into contracts worth \$19.89 million with 32 CCR&Rs. These contracts are continuing at this level for SFY 2019-20. In FFY 2018, OCFS entered into contracts with seven CCR&Rs to serve as infant/toddler lead agencies for a total of \$1.1 million. In SFY 2019-20, OCFS amended these contracts to increase the total amount to \$3.3 million annually. The increase to these infant/toddler contracts was done to add an Infant/Toddler Mental Wellness component to the program.

Union Contracts

Family-based child care providers are represented by one of two unions: The United Federation of Teachers (UFT) for child care providers in New York City and the Civil Service Employees Association (CSEA) for child care providers in the rest of the state. Funds are made available to these unions to support the improvement of program quality, both through quality grants (individual grants that go directly to providers to help them pay for health and safety items, developmentally appropriate books, toys and other materials, First Aid/CPR training expenses, general supplies, and children's furnishings, including cribs, mats, changing tables, etc.) and funds to support professional development and training. In SFY 2019-20, CSEA received \$2.5 million for Quality Grants and \$1.5 million for Professional Development. UFT received \$2 million for Quality Grants and \$2.5 million for Professional Development.

Advantage After-School Program

In SFY 2019-20, \$33.0 million in funds supported a new Advantage After-School Program request for proposal. Approximately 16,500 children and youth will be served through 147 contracts.

Empire State After-School Program

In SFY 2019-20, the Empire State After-School Program created additional after-school opportunities in targeted high-need areas of New York State. As a result, \$55 million in funds was appropriated to support 80 contracts in approximately 327 sites that will serve about 34,300 children.

Division of Child Welfare and Community Services

New York State is among nine states that have a child welfare system that is state-supervised and locally administered. Within OCFS, the Division of Child Welfare and Community Services (CWCS) is responsible for statewide program monitoring and oversight for services on behalf of families, children, youth, and at-risk adults. The primary program areas it oversees are child protective and preventive services, foster care and adoption, adult protective services, residential and non-residential services for victims of domestic violence, Native American services, youth development activities, kinship care and post-adoption services, and Healthy Families New York.

Guided by state and federal laws and regulations within each of the program areas, CWCS's mandate includes supervision, monitoring, and provision of technical assistance for the implementation of program activities to 58 LDSSs, the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe, and 228 voluntary agency providers.

Specific responsibilities include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Oversight of LDSS child protective, foster care, adoption, and preventive services programs that serve children and families
- Operation of the Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment (SCR), 24 hours a day, seven days a week
- SCR database checks of individuals required to be subject to background checks under SSL 424-a using the SCR database
- Operation of the New York State Adoption Service
- Operation of the Native American Services program
- Oversight of the Adult Protective Services program
- Certifying, licensing, inspecting, and enforcing regulations for certain residential facilities and non-residential programs. These include foster care agencies, family-type homes for adults, domestic violence shelters, and runaway and homeless youth programs.
- Investigation of complaints regarding significant incidents and alleged abuse and maltreatment within licensed residential facilities for children and family-type homes for adults
- Investigation of citizen and legislative complaints with respect to the provision of local services
- Development and implementation of new programs/services and methods of service delivery for adults, children, youth, and families that address social and demographic trends and promote positive human development
- Provision of training and technical assistance to LDSSs and voluntary agencies to improve the delivery of services and care
- Oversight and monitoring of the Children's Medicaid Management transition
- Operation of the Human Services Call Center

Office of Regional Operations and Practice Improvement

This office is responsible for monitoring, oversight and technical assistance to LDSSs and voluntary agencies (VAs). It collaborates with other offices to develop and support strategies to improve the performance of LDSSs and VAs in complying with regulations and in achieving federally established outcome and performance standards.

Bureau of Regional Operations

This bureau maintains six regional offices to provide direct oversight, monitoring, and technical assistance to LDSSs and VAs throughout the state. These offices support child-welfare practice initiatives and follow-up on complaints and inquiries by families. In addition, the regional offices investigate reports of institutional abuse and maltreatment as required by the New York State Justice Center for the Protection of People With Special Needs. The six regional offices are: Albany Regional Office (ARO), Buffalo Regional Office (BRO), New York City Regional Office (NYCRO), Rochester Regional Office (RRO), Syracuse Regional Office (SRO), and Westchester Regional Office (WRO).

Bureau of Adult Services

This bureau is responsible for the oversight of Adult Protective Services and other adult services programs provided through LDSSs as well as local activities related to the operation of Family-Type Homes for Adults.

Adult Protective Services (APS)

Services are available to anyone age 18 or older who has a mental or physical impairment; is at risk of abuse, neglect, or financial exploitation, and has no one else available to assist responsibly. APS clients include the vulnerable elderly, the mentally ill, the developmentally disabled, and the abused and exploited. APS investigates referrals of suspected physical, sexual or emotional abuse, financial exploitation, active and passive neglect, and self-neglect.

Approximately 60 percent of APS cases involve persons age 60 and older, and more than 70 percent of all APS risks reported are for “self-neglect.” Services provided by APS include investigating and assessing the adult’s needs and risk of harm; coordinating with law enforcement and other agencies; counseling; advocacy and case management; applying for benefits and coordinating the delivery of services; finding alternative living arrangements; financial management services; homemaker and housekeeper chore services; crisis interventions; and long-term legal interventions.

Family-Type Homes for Adults (FTHA)

FTHAs are a type of adult care facility in which an operator provides personal care and/or supervision services for four or fewer unrelated adults. Residents of FTHAs must be able to ambulate independently or if appropriate are granted a reasonable accommodation must not require continual medical or nursing care and must not suffer from unstable medical conditions that require continuous skilled monitoring. FTHAs are licensed by OCFS and supervised by LDSSs. The Bureau of Adult Services oversees the LDSSs, investigates complaints, and conducts enforcement actions against homes in violation of statutes and regulations. There are currently 229 licensed FTHA operators in New York State with a capacity of 760 residents.

Bureau of Strategic Partnerships and Collaboration (SPC)

The SPC bureau is responsible for providing leadership in addressing racial disparities in out-of-home placement for children of color within the child welfare system and in supporting efforts to examine and reduce racial and ethnic disparities in the juvenile justice system in collaboration with the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services. These efforts include developing relationships with national organizations and consultants and participating in organizations and alliances dedicated to similar goals. Developing and providing training and learning opportunities for staff are a central part of the work. Requesting and using data to inform the efforts of more than 30 counties with high or extreme rates of out-of-home placements for children of color is also central to the work.

Bureau of Native American Services

The bureau is responsible for responding to the needs of Indian tribes and nations and their members, both on reservations and in the state's other communities. The federal Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978 resulted in an expansion of the agency's consulting and training role with respect to the delivery of services to Native American children. Native American Services is the vital link to the nine state-recognized nations, seven of which are federally recognized. The bureau is empowered to deal with tribal nations directly in upholding New York State's treaty obligations and making tribal annuity payments. Additionally, Native American Services staff oversee the daily operational requirements of the Tonawanda Indian Community House. OCFS is one of three state agencies (including the Education Department and the Department of Health) charged with specific obligations to New York's Native American population.

Bureau of Monitoring and Quality Assurance

The bureau assesses the delivery of child welfare services by LDSSs for compliance with state and federal laws, regulations, and best practice standards. In cooperation with CWC regional offices, the bureau develops monitoring strategies and tools, conducts case reviews, and tracks the development and implementation of program improvement plans.

Bureau of Program Quality Improvement (PQI) Data

The bureau supports a continuous quality improvement framework within OCFS and with key stakeholders such as LDSSs and VAs. The PQI bureau promotes targeted strategic planning through the utilization of data and other evidence to assess performance and track improvement, and it works to build the capacity of child welfare to acquire, process, and apply administrative data to program improvement. Additionally, the bureau supports the county child and family services planning process that includes key CQI principles, such as data and evidence.

Bureau of Children's Medicaid Management (BCMM)

BCMM is responsible for the implementation and ongoing monitoring of the New York State Medicaid redesign recommendations of moving children placed with voluntary foster care agencies (VFCAs) into Medicaid Managed Care. To facilitate this major transition, New York State Public Health Law was amended to create a new licensing category for VFCAs in 2017. With the implementation of the VFCA Health Facilities Law under Article 29-I of the Public Health Law, OCFS's BCMM worked with the New York State Department of Health to implement regulations and an application process. Article 29-I permits VFCAs to comply with corporate practice of medicine, allows VFCAs to contract with Medicaid Managed Care Plans and provide health care services to children in their care. The services provided under Article 29-I include the following:

1. Core Health Services: Nursing, Licensed Behavioral Health Care Services, Clinical Consultation, Medical Escorts, and Managed Care Liaison
2. Limited Health-Related Services: Preventative and Primary Health Care Services including Physician Services, Psychiatric Services, and Psychological Services
3. Children and Family Treatment and Support Services: Other Licensed Practitioner, Community Psychiatric Support and Treatment Services, Psychosocial Rehabilitative Services, Crisis Intervention, Family Peer Supports, and Youth Peer Support
4. Home and Community-Based Waiver Services

OCFS has authorized 80 VFCAs under Article 29-I. This license and ongoing monitoring include the following activities:

1. A review of the VFCA policies and procedures that outline the following: Trauma-Informed Model of Care; Assessments and Treatment Planning; Management of Ongoing Routine, Preventive Health Care; Management of Chronic Health Care Conditions; Management of Urgent and Emergency Health Care; Discharge Planning; Medication and Supplies;

Medical Records; Confidentiality; Consent and Authorizations; Quality Improvement; Health and Safety; Complaints; Medicaid Eligibility That Supports Billing; Telehealth and Telepsychiatry, if applicable; Maintenance of Transportation Equipment

2. A review of the personnel policies and procedures, including written job descriptions and employee manuals; documentation of appropriate current New York State licensure, certification or registration, as required for positions; staffing adequacy to the needs of the population and monitoring of caseload size and supervision ratios; conducting applicable background checks of staff who have regular and substantial contact with child/youth, family, and caregivers through the Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment (SCR), Sex Offender Registry (SOR), Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS), and Justice Center for the Protection of People With Special Needs Staff Exclusion List (SEL), and the Office of the Medicaid Inspector General Medicaid Exclusion List
3. A review of the physical plant policies and procedures
4. Compliance with the New York State issued Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSDT) State Plans of Services for Children's Standards of Care

From 2020 forward, BCMM engages in ongoing monitoring of the Article 29-I VFCA Health Facilities Licenses on a statewide basis.

Managed Care Organizations (MCO) Plans Reviews and Ongoing Compliance Activities: As children in foster care move into a Medicaid Managed Care environment, it is essential that OCFS BCMM work in conjunction with the 18 authorized Medicaid Managed Care Plans to serve this population. BCMM is required to be highly involved in the policy development that will accompany the transition of children placed with VFCAs into Managed Care. This requires BCMM staff to attend on-site reviews of the Medicaid Managed Care Plans that are located statewide. Additionally, OCFS actively participates in the New York State Managed Care roundtable meetings with designated service providers and Medicaid Managed Care Plans. This also includes providing oversight of the Medicaid Managed Care Plans compliance with the New York State Children's Health and Behavioral Health Benefit Administration Medicaid Managed Care Organization Children's System Transformation Requirements and Standards.

Medicaid Eligibility: Children in foster care are categorically eligible for New York State Medicaid. To facilitate this coverage, BCMM works with 58 LDSSs (including the New York City Administration for Children's Services) regarding the continuous coverage provision policies as they apply to Medicaid eligibility, including recently introduced regulations to guarantee coverage for children through the age of 21 as well as the Affordable Care Act Medicaid to 26 requirements.

Office of Performance Improvement

This office provides training and technical assistance to LDSSs and VAs to help them effectively implement new programs and improve practices. Current responsibilities include providing support to counties in implementing and sustaining the Family Assessment Response (FAR) child protective practice and the KEYS model of supervision. This bureau oversees the CWCS training plan and local child fatality review teams. The review of child fatality investigations and writing the child fatality reports were recently added to its portfolio.

Family Assessment Response (FAR)

FAR is an alternative family-led child protective response to achieve safety through family engagement and collaborative partnerships. In 2019, there were 16 counties including the St. Regis Mohawk tribe participating in FAR. OCFS and its training partners offer support, training, coaching, and ongoing data analysis.

Keys to Excellence in Youth Supervision (KEYS)

The KEYS model of supervision supports LDSS supervisors to administer the work of the agency while effectively developing and supporting staff to accomplish the agency's mission. With KEYS, the agency supports clear and consistent supervision, career-long learning, proactive communication, and accountability.

The OCFS Bureau of Training and Development (BTD) offers training, group coaching and on-site assistance to create local implementation teams and effective supervisory and organizational practices. Through BTD, KEYS Core is offered to both new and experienced supervisors.

Child Fatality Review Unit

As required by law, OCFS reviews LDSSs investigations of the fatalities of children who have been brought to the attention of the child welfare system. Specifically, OCFS examines deaths that: 1) are reported to the Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment and are allegedly caused by abuse or maltreatment by a parent or caregiver; 2) occur while a child is in foster care or receiving protective or preventive services; or 3) occur while a child is under the supervision of an LDSS. OCFS issues a separate report on approximately 300 child fatalities per year. OCFS collects information regarding the fatalities, compiles annual statistics and produces a cumulative annual report summarizing its data, findings and recommendations.

Child Fatality Review Teams (CFRTs)

CFRTs use a multidisciplinary approach to identify the cause and manner of death to help determine the most common reasons otherwise healthy children die in New York State. There are 19 CFRTs covering 26 counties across the state that include a cross-system representation of required members who conduct in-depth examinations of child fatalities, identify local trends and develop prevention strategies.

Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment (SCR)

Mandated reporters and members of the public who suspect that a child in a familial home, foster home, or day care program has been or is being abused or maltreated can call the Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment (SCR) toll-free hotline 24 hours a day, seven days a week, at 1-800-342-3720. The state-operated SCR takes the initial call, determines if there is reasonable cause to suspect abuse or maltreatment, and if there is, registers a report and relays the information to the appropriate LDSS. Calls are answered by a trained staff of more than 150 child protective specialists whose qualifications include various combinations of education and/or direct experience in the provision of child protective services (CPS) or child welfare services. Child protective specialists receive a minimum of eight weeks of intensive in-house training, including a minimum of two weeks of on-the-job training, before beginning their shift assignments on the hotline. A staff of 36 supervisors support decision-making and supervisory consultation with callers. In 2019, the SCR received 315,807 calls and electronically transmitted 195,788 reports to LDSSs for further action.

SCR Procedures

- Based on the information provided by a caller, if there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been abused or maltreated, a report is registered and submitted to the CPS unit in the LDSS where the child resides. LDSSs maintain 24-hour coverage to respond to all registered reports in a timely way.
- When registering the report, the SCR conducts a search of its database to determine if anyone named in the report has a history of abuse or maltreatment. This information is also

provided to CPS when the SCR transmits the intake report.

- The SCR completes and electronically sends law enforcement referrals when it receives information regarding crimes or immediate threats to a child's health and safety caused by persons who, because they are not defined as legally responsible for the child, are outside the SCR's jurisdiction.
- The SCR handled 342,456 database check clearance requests, 9,495 administrative review requests, and received 18,022 requests for information.

Human Services Call Center (HSCC)

The HSCC is a high-volume, customer-focused operation committed to providing consistent and high-quality services to all callers. To achieve this goal, HSCC business analysts work with program units within each agency to define calls for transition to the HSCC and to build a robust statewide knowledge base with clear and consistent content. The relationship with the agencies' program units continues after the transition with weekly, monthly, and quarterly reports and status update meetings.

The HSCC supports the following priority initiatives:

- Red Flag Law Information Line
- Paid Family Leave
- Excelsior Scholarship
- Medical Marijuana Program

The HSCC has routinely outperformed its goal of answering 85 percent of all calls within five minutes while handling more than one million calls per year. Responses from the customer agencies confirm that the HSCC provides excellent service while allowing agency staff to focus on their core mission. For the first time agencies have a detailed understanding of their callers' needs, including a full accounting of the time required to handle calls, and the most frequently asked questions. This customer-focused approach has proven to be successful.

Office of Prevention, Permanency and Program Support

This office is responsible for the Bureau of Program and Community Development, Bureau of Domestic Violence Prevention and Victim Support, and Bureau of Permanency Services.

Bureau of Program and Community Development

The bureau oversees approximately 200 community-based organizations and related prevention initiatives that support local and state child welfare priorities as described below:

Healthy Families New York (HFNY) Home Visiting Program

HFNY is an evidence-based child abuse and neglect prevention program offering home visiting services to expectant parents and new families, beginning weekly and decreasing over time until the child starts school or Head Start. Proven results include reductions in low birth weight, increased school readiness, improved parenting skills, and reductions in child abuse and neglect. HFNY is accredited by Healthy Families America, an initiative of Prevent Child Abuse America. Services are offered in 41 counties throughout the state. Eleven of the 44 programs are also supported with federal Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) funds. OCFS works closely with the New York State Department of Health on the implementation of the MIECHV initiative. HFNY subcontracts for statewide standardized core training and staff development, a management information system, and evaluation support. In 2019, HFNY completed 5,654 parent survey assessments, enrolled 3,794 new families, and provided 135,664 home visits to 7,277 new and existing families.

William B. Hoyt Memorial Children and Family Trust Fund (Trust Fund)

The Trust Fund supports programs focused on improving the safety and well-being of children and adults at risk of or experiencing child abuse, intergenerational abuse, and/or domestic violence. Programs prioritize services based on research or evidence, target high-need communities, and emphasize partnerships with local departments of social services and other community partners. In 2019, new programs were started as a result of a competitive process. The Trust Fund, in combination with the federal Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) grant, supports 23 primary and secondary prevention efforts. Funded services include parenting education, home visiting, family resource centers, counseling, and linkages to other supportive services. Targeted populations include teen parents, families experiencing homelessness, low-income families, domestic violence survivors, and kinship families. The Trust Fund also supports the Enough Abuse Campaign to prevent child sexual abuse, training to increase protective factors that can prevent child abuse and maltreatment, and 1-800-CHILDREN, a statewide Parent Helpline.

Public-Private Partnership (PPP)

The PPP initiative is designed to increase services for at-risk children and youth to prevent involvement with the child welfare or juvenile justice systems and/or expedite their return home. A total of \$3.4 million is included in the 2019-2020 state budget for this initiative. Communities are required to invest 35 percent in private funds contributions to support state funds for this initiative. New awards were made this year to 14 providers. Program models include Parent-Child Home Plus program, Therapeutic Supervised Visitation, Functional Family Therapy for high-risk families, Parents as Teacher program, Domestic Violence programs and services to support at-risk youth.

Multidisciplinary Teams/Child Advocacy Centers

OCFS supports 62 approved multidisciplinary teams (MDTs) and child advocacy centers (CACs) including the five boroughs of New York City and the St. Regis Mohawk. MDTs and CACs serve to minimize trauma to child victims through a coordinated, comprehensive, and multidisciplinary response in cases of child sexual abuse, severe physical abuse, and other child abuse allegations. MDTs and CACs support a child's well-being and aid in criminal prosecution. MDTs include, but are not limited to, child protective services, law enforcement, medical professionals, victim advocacy, mental health, and other disciplines as necessary. MDTs coordinate the handling of child abuse cases from the receipt of the initial report from the SCR by the local CPS through the investigation, treatment of victim(s), and the criminal prosecution of the offender(s). MDTs can coordinate prompt treatment referrals and improve evidence collection necessary to hold offenders accountable for their actions. CACs are child-friendly facilities within the community where children can feel safe and at ease while being interviewed by a member of the MDT. At these sites, ongoing case reviews are conducted; medical exams and counseling for victims and their non-offending family members may also be completed.

Bureau of Domestic Violence Prevention and Victim Support

OCFS regulates 62 residential shelters and domestic violence (DV) programs, 30 residential sponsoring agencies with a total of 100 safe dwellings, two safe home networks, and 83 non-residential programs for DV victims. The bureau distributes and monitors federal Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA) funds, including 16 DV programs for underserved populations, four supervised visitation programs for court-ordered visitation in DV situations, 11 trauma-informed programs for DV victims, and 44 FVPSA grants that back DV core services. There are 17 funded child protective services (CPS) and DV collaboration projects with a DV advocate stationed at the local CPS office. The Center for Human Services Research evaluation

report of the CPS/DV projects indicates improvements in case practice and increased referrals to DV services. It also administers the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funds to LDSSs to support non-residential DV services. All funded DV programs are required to enter necessary data into the DV information system, which provides data for state and federally legislated annual reports. OCFS provides extensive guidance, materials, and training for child welfare workers regarding the issues and dynamics of DV.

Bureau of Permanency Services

This bureau includes the New York State Adoption Service (NYSAS) and oversees statewide permanency services, including the Kinship Guardianship Assistance Program (KinGAP), kinship, adoption, adoption subsidy, post-adoption, and the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children. NYSAS is the state entity responsible for the coordination and delivery of federal and state-mandated adoption services to New York State children in need of adoptive families. In compliance with these mandates, the bureau provides services to LDSSs and voluntary authorized agencies, and closely collaborates with OCFS regional offices, particularly regional permanency specialists in the provision of adoption and other permanency related services. Additionally, the bureau is involved in policy formulation, program development, and training activities related to the recruitment and retention of resource families critical to successful permanency outcomes for children in New York State who are awaiting adoption. The bureau is responsible for:

- **Child Photolisting:** Administers the process for the photolisting of children in foster care freed for adoption in the agency's online adoption album
- **Family Adoption Registry and Family Photolisting:** Administers the process for registering families interested in adopting children in foster care in the New York State Family Adoption Registry and the photolisting of families on the agency's adoption album
- **Adoption Subsidy:** Reviews and approves or denies adoption subsidy requests for maintenance and medical coverage based on the special needs of children available for adoption
- **Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC):** Processes requests for the placement of children for foster care or adoption in and out of New York State, adhering to safety and service-need standards established by ICPC
- **Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance:** Processes requests for the continuation of Medicaid for children in receipt of adoption assistance who are moving into or out of New York State
- **Putative Father Registry:** Maintains a registry of putative fathers of children born out-of-wedlock, and responds to agency and court inquiries regarding the registration of putative fathers
- **Parent and Kin Connection Help Line:** Provides information and referral assistance on adoption, foster care, and other support services to parents and professionals
- **Approval of Adoption Agencies:** Reviews applications and renewals of not-for-profit agencies authorized to place children for adoption with New York State families
- **TANF Post-Adoption Services:** Provides oversight and technical assistance to post-adoption programs funded by OCFS for TANF-eligible families
- **Post-Adoption and Post-Legal Guardianship Services:** Provides oversight and technical assistance to regional permanency resource centers that provide these services to families without regard to income
- **Kinship Care Services:** Provides oversight and technical assistance to kinship programs funded by OCFS
- **Kinship Guardianship Assistance Program (KinGAP):** Provides technical assistance to LDSSs on the KinGAP program

Kinship Program

The kinship caregiver program provides support services to kinship caregivers and children in informal and custodial relationships. Additionally, the New York State Kinship Navigator is a statewide program specifically designed to provide information, referral, and resources to kinship caregivers statewide. OCFS provides kinship and KinGAP resources on its website. In 2016, a new, plain-language publication was published, *Know Your Options: Kin Caring for Children*, which introduces options for relative placement when a child cannot live safely with their parents. The brochure was translated into 11 languages. In 2018, OCFS in collaboration with the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance developed a plain-language publication titled *Know Your Resources: Non-Parent Caregiver Benefits* to inform caregivers of financial assistance and other supports for which they may be eligible.

In 2019, OCFS received a second year of funding for the federal grant under the Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program, Title IV-B Subpart 2 of the Social Security Act, and the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2018 to support the development, enhancement, or evaluation of kinship navigator programs. The funding is subcontracted with the New York State Kinship Navigator program to strengthen New York State’s unified kinship navigator system of care.

General Demographics for Children in Foster Care

Statewide: 2019 Children in Foster Care		
Race/Ethnicity	Gender	Age
40% African American	51% male	37% age 0-5
24% of Hispanic origin	49% female	32% age 6-13
25% Caucasian		21% age 14-17
10% Other/Unknown		10% age 18 and over
Source: 2019 Monitoring and Analysis Profiles		

Foster Care Admissions and Exits

Statewide: 2019 Foster Care Admissions and In Care by Age Group				
Age	Admissions			In Care 12/31/18
	Reentered care	First Admissions	Total Admissions	
Under 1 year	79	1,435	1,514	879
1 to 5 years	408	1,737	2,145	4,802
6 to 9 years	307	947	1,254	2,647
10 to 13 years	332	915	1,247	2,345
14 to 17 years	500	1,362	1,862	3,151
18+ years	59	6	65	1,569
All ages	1,685	6,402	8,087	15,393
Source: 2019 Monitoring and Analysis Profiles				

Foster Care Exits

Statewide: 2019 Exit Counts by Exit Type and Exit Age									
Age at Exit	Reunification	Relative	KinGAP	Adoption	Reach Majority*	Permanency Resource	Runaway	Other**	All Exits
Under 1 year	244	158	0	11	0	24	0	5	442
1-5 years	1,055	368	212	821	0	48	0	18	2,522
6 to 9 years	692	223	133	458	3	17	0	9	1,535
10 to 13 years	622	170	99	279	1	17	2	13	1,203
14 to 17 years	1,130	230	75	139	58	38	14	132	1,816
18+ years	91	23	26	26	868	7	5	29	1,075
All ages	3,834	1,172	545	1,734	930	151	21	206	8,593
Source: 2019 Monitoring and Analysis Profiles * Includes "Attained Adulthood" and "Released to Responsibility" ** Includes discharges to OCFS custody, care of a guardian or mental health/penal facility, and child fatalities									

Division of Youth Development and Partnerships for Success

In 2019, a new division within OCFS was created in recognition of the need to enhance the focus on older youth and young adults who are involved with the child welfare and youth justice systems, or are at risk of system involvement, and to support positive youth development across the state. The Division of Youth Development and Partnerships for Success (YDAPS) oversees youth development initiatives, youth voice including the OCFS youth advisory board, services for runaway and homeless youth, educational and vocational advocacy, juvenile detention programs, the Close to Home initiative in New York City, human trafficking, and improving outcomes for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer/questioning (LGBTQ+) youth and families. The division focuses on the interlocking relationships among positive youth development, partnership, and equity to increase opportunities for youth and young adults in New York State to thrive and become productive citizens.

YDAPS focuses on interagency partnerships with the Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS), the Youth Justice Institute (YJI), Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA), Office of Mental Health (OMH), Office of Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS), State Commission of Correction (SCOC), State Education Department (SED), Department of Labor (DOL) and the Office of Court Administration (OCA). The division continues to work in close coordination with the Division of Juvenile Justice and Opportunities for Youth (DJJOY) and the Division of Child Welfare and Community Services (CWCS).

YDAPS has six bureaus:

- Youth Development
- Cross Systems Supports
- Education and Transitional Support Services
- Detention Services
- Health and Well-Being
- Close to Home Oversight and System Improvement

Bureau of Youth Development

This bureau designs, coordinates, and promotes innovative strategies to advance youth development. These strategies cut across all disciplines at the state and local levels. The goal is for all New York State youth to reach their full potential and become healthy, productive adults. This is accomplished through support and funding to programs and initiatives that enable youth to build on their strengths and provide opportunities for youth to gain important life skills and core competencies that allow them to have meaningful roles in their communities.

State aid for the Youth Development Program (YDP) is allocated to municipal Youth Bureaus to provide approved YDPs for youth under the age of 21. Youth development programming is designed to promote positive youth development by undertaking activities to prevent delinquency and youth crime while advancing the moral, physical, mental, and social well-being of youth.

The 2019 final appropriations provide support for YDP in the amount of \$15,621,700. OCFS uses a portion of YDP funding to enter into contracts to provide statewide training for YDP to assist municipalities in obtaining performance data that can be used to improve youth development programming, and for other efforts that directly support youth development programs.

The data from 2019 identified five (5) services, opportunities, and supports (SOS) that were provided most often:

1. Year-Round Seasonal and Recreational Activities
 - a. Statewide, 286,069 youth participated in recreational activities. Eighty-four (84) percent of these youth completed the program, and over 90 percent of the youth achieved one or more of the state defined outcomes.

2. Safe Places/Out of School Time Services

a. Statewide, 20,643 youth participated in Out-of-School Time activities. Eighty-seven (87) percent of the participating youth improved in at least one or more of the following areas: academics, health, social/emotional skills, and/or community engagement.

3. Youth Leadership/Empowerment

a. Statewide, 20,337 youth participated in youth leadership and empowerment activities. Eighty-four (84) percent of these youth achieved one or more of the state defined outcomes.

4. Academic Support Services

a. Statewide, 54,609 youth were provided with Academic Support Services. These youth achieved the following outcomes:

- i. 82 percent of the youth improved their academic performance
- ii. 90 percent of the youth improved their skills and knowledge of the particular subject area that was addressed
- iii. 72 percent of the youth showed an active interest in the subjects presented

5. Healthy Lifestyles

a. Statewide, 21,469 youth participated in Healthy Lifestyle programs. The following were the reported percentages of youth achieving specific outcomes:

- i. 92 percent of the youth increased their knowledge of nutrition and exercise
- ii. 87 percent of the youth increased their knowledge of reproductive health
- iii. 88 percent of the youth increased their physical fitness and activity.

Workforce Development

The Workforce Development Demonstration Project (WDDP) is a two-year community-based alternative education/workforce development program that integrates project-based learning and occupational skills training to prepare disadvantaged youth for long-term career success and opportunities for post-secondary education. OCFS is prioritizing this approach to work-based learning to provide education and learning opportunities designed specifically for youth 16-24 years old who possess many risk factors that inhibit their success as they enter adulthood.

This program utilizes a Pay for Success (PFS) approach, which is performance-based. PFS requires applicants to demonstrate, document, and provide verification of past success delivering the services proposed by the applicant. OCFS awarded 14 contracts to workforce programs in the following counties: Albany, Dutchess, Erie, Monroe, Onondaga, Rensselaer, Rockland, Schenectady, Suffolk, and Ulster. Contracts began in 2019.

Bureau of Cross Systems Supports

The bureau coordinates and oversees a number of cross-system initiatives and program areas, which include statewide juvenile justice reforms, practices related to Persons In Need of Supervision (PINS), LGBTQ+ youth and families, multisystem involved youth, the Supervision and Treatment Services for Juveniles Program, and collaboration on Raise the Age (RTA) implementation.

In 2019, an Empire Fellow dedicated to LGBTQ+ work within OCFS joined the bureau. The revitalized focus of work on sexual orientation, gender identity and expression (SOGIE) included reviews and enhancements to training curricula, assessment of the reported needs of local departments of social services related to LGBTQ+ in their Child and Family Services Plans, the development of a Pride Toolkit, provision of training and technical assistance to state and local

partners, informing practices on the recruitment and retention of LGBTQ+ resource families for youth in foster care, revitalization of the OCFS SOGIE Committee, and engaging community-based providers who serve LGBTQ+ youth and young adults.

Reform legislation regarding PINS was passed in 2019, which required several cross-system implementation efforts with multiple state agencies and OCFS divisions. OCFS provided guidance, multiple trainings, and technical assistance to local departments of social services, voluntary agencies, local probation departments (in collaboration with the Division of Criminal Justice Services), the judiciary (in collaboration with the Office of Court Administration), and other community stakeholders in anticipation of the January 1, 2020, legislative implementation date.

Also in 2019, OCFS made available \$8,376,000 to municipalities under the Supervision and Treatment Services for Juveniles Program (STSJP), which funds services and supports for youth who are: at risk, alleged or adjudicated to be PINS or juvenile delinquents (JD); and alleged to be, or convicted as, juvenile offenders (JOs), adolescent offenders (AOs) or youthful offenders (YOs), to divert these youth from detention or residential care. Fifty-two municipalities submitted STSJP Annual Plans to OCFS, and OCFS approved 175 unique STSJP-funded programs and 119 unique STSJP-RTA funded programs. The 2019 PINS legislation created a new type of service, Family Support Services programs, that can be funded under STSJP. OCFS offered enhanced funding under STSJP for the 2019-2020 program year to the 14 municipalities with the highest number of petitions, detention and/or placements for PINS youth to foster innovations to reduce out-of-home care for this specific population.

Bureau of Education and Transition Support Services (BETSS)

BETSS aims to address the needs and challenges of youth aging out of foster care by strengthening educational stability for youth in secondary education programs, improving access to higher education funding sources for post-secondary or vocational learning, and providing skills-based training, supportive housing options, and leadership development opportunities to help youth make a successful transition to adulthood. The aim is also to provide adults who work with youth in care with the training, knowledge, support, and job aids necessary to effectively assist the youth in their care.

In 2019 the bureau completed the National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) cohort 3, wave 3, which was the follow-up survey population for youth at age 19. The federal requirements are to survey 80 percent of youth who remain in foster care and 60 percent of youth who have left foster care in the federal fiscal year 2019. A total of 829 youth is part of cohort 3.

The bureau collaborated with the Division of Child Welfare and Community Services to transition the agency's work on education stability in January 2019. As a result, the bureau continued to partner with the State Education Department (SED) and the American Bar Association to implement the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and the changes to the law from 2018 to ensure children in foster care are able to maintain their education when in foster care. Learning sessions were held in all six regions of the state to review with local departments of social services the changes to ESSA-related transportation, best interest determinations, and the need to establish agreements with all school districts to meet the education needs of children in foster care.

The bureau also focused on the Education Training Voucher (ETV) program and changed vendors in 2019. The transition to the new vendor began in November 2019, and this was a seamless process for the 553 students receiving ETV. The bureau also worked collaboratively with the State Education Department (SED), to determine eligibility for over 2,100 students who attended a SUNY, CUNY, or private college with a higher education opportunity program (HEOP). Out of that number, 1,005 students were determined eligible for the Foster Youth College Success

Initiative (FYCSI). Also, in 2019, the bureau worked with the Higher Education Services Center (HESC) and SED to ensure that youth in foster care attending college had access to housing during the winter break.

The bureau issued the annual John H. Chafee Independent Living allocation policy and provided individual county data regarding number of youth-in-care between the ages of 14-21 to all counties. In order to improve the allocation and implementation of the Chafee funds, an updated Local Commissioner’s Memorandum was issued with updated coding and instructions for the field.

BETSS contracts with the Professional Development Program (PDP) to provide training to increase the skills of adults working with youth in foster care in order to meet the needs of teens and young adults in care, and to engage youth across the state and provide them with information and supports to aid their transition to adulthood. There are seven youth engagement specialists across OCFS’s six regions. In 2019, the specialists provided 211 days of in-person training and 32 days of web-based trainings.

In 2019, PDP organized six youth speak-out events that 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. Attendance for the events across New York State was 900.

	Youth	Adult Partners	Total
Region 1	105	49	154
Region 2	71	35	106
Region 3	56	73	129
Region 4	94	96	190
Region 5	81	56	137
Region 6	134	66	200

Youth Advisory Board

The mission of the OCFS Youth Advisory Board (YAB) is to make a difference for youth in care by giving them the voice to help create positive changes in the foster care system. The board is comprised of up to 15 members who provide feedback on their experience in foster care and help shape state policies and initiatives. They are young adults from across New York State who advise and collaborate with OCFS on policy topics related to foster care as they shape their transition to independence. YAB members have been speakers at venues such as the OCFS Home Finders Summit, the New York Public Welfare Association’s annual conferences, and various speak-out events around the state.

In 2019, YAB provided feedback to the questions that are asked to youth during the recertification of the foster home process. YAB created a guidance document for caseworkers for face-to-face contacts with youth in care. It identified attributes to consider when matching foster children with foster parents; created resources on topics like “What Foster Parents Should Know,” “What Does a Quality Casework Look Like,” “I Promise” pledges for both youth and staff who work with youth, contact cards to keep important phone numbers and names of people who are allies, *Attorney for Child-Tip Sheet* and *Bill of Rights Tip Sheet for Youth*.

Bureau of Detention Services

YDAPS is also responsible for certifying and monitoring local detention programs (eight secure and 33 non-secure detention facilities) operated by counties and voluntary agencies throughout the state. These programs provide temporary care and supervision to youth ages 7 through 21 during the court process, including pre-adjudication and disposition by family court and/or criminal court. Detention serves youth who face a petition in family court on a delinquency or a Persons In Need of Supervision (PINS) matter, or in the criminal court (or Supreme Court) on a criminal matter. For a delinquency or criminal matter, youth must have been under the age of 18 at the time of the alleged act or crime as of October 1, 2019. Youth up to the age of 18 with a PINS matter may only be held in non-secure detention and youth, alleged to be or sentenced as adolescent offenders may be held in one of the specialized secure detention facilities created under Raise the Age.

Phase 2 of Raise the Age began on October 1, 2019. This brought youth who were 17 at the time they allegedly committed their delinquent or criminal act into the juvenile justice system and allowed for these youth to be held in local detention centers instead of local jails.

The bureau worked in partnership with the New York State Commission on Correction (SCOC) in the oversight and regulation of specialized secure detention programs for older youth. Additionally, the bureau worked with its network of non-secure providers to prepare for the cessation of the PINS youth being remanded to detention as of January 1, 2020.

OCFS has been working with partner agencies to reduce reliance on out of home confinement across all categories of eligible youth. In 2019, we continued to see a reduction in the use of detention for PINS.

Bureau of Health and Well-Being

The bureau focuses on two primary youth populations: those who have experienced or are at-risk of trafficking and/or exploitation, and those who have experienced homelessness, or have run away from home. OCFS supports the safety and well-being of these youth through the administration of the runaway and homeless youth service system, including certification and oversight of residential emergency and transitional living programs, supporting non-residential services including local hotlines, street outreach programs, and case management, and providing training and technical assistance to counties and providers. OCFS works actively to prevent trafficking and support healing for youth who have been exploited through the implementation of numerous policies. It also oversees the Safe Harbour: NY program, which enables New York's child welfare and allied youth service systems to screen, identify, and respond effectively to the needs of children and youth trafficked for sex or labor and improve its system response.

Runaway and Homeless Youth Programs

OCFS certifies, funds, and provides oversight to Runaway and Homeless Youth (RHY) crisis services programs and transitional independent living support programs (TILPs) under the New York State Executive Law, Articles 19-A and 19-H, which comprise the New York State Runaway and Homeless Youth Act. At the end of 2018, there were 132 RHY residential programs certified by OCFS, with a total bed capacity of 1,170 beds (1,052 youth beds and up to 118 infant/dependent beds). Of these, 132 RHY programs, 38 are RHY crisis services programs and 94 are transitional independent living support programs.

The 2019 RHY appropriation was \$4,484,000, which was administered by OCFS through the resource allocation process by the county youth bureaus.

RHY crisis services programs provide short-term crisis shelter and support services to RHY and, if applicable, homeless young adults, for arrangements to be made to return youth home where possible, or to move youth to an alternative residential arrangement when necessary.

TILPs provide long-term residential services and supports to homeless youth and, if applicable, homeless young adults, so that they may learn the skills needed to live independently. Non-residential programs provide case management, crisis intervention, drop-in services, and street outreach, among other services.

Human Trafficking Safe Harbour: NY Program

OCFS continues to provide technical assistance to counties and programs regarding the identification, reporting, and provision of services to youth identified as having been sex trafficked who are in the care, custody, or supervision of LDSSs or are in the community.

In 2019, Safe Harbor: NY was funded with \$3 million in the state budget to provide services to commercially sexually exploited youth. The program was active in 46 municipalities, including New York City. This program supports counties as they raise local awareness, offer training to youth-serving professionals, develop local protocol for services, and directly support youth who have been trafficked, exploited, or are at risk.

Staff from YDAPS were invited to participate in several round tables and policy meetings with federal partners and national policy organizations that focus on the elimination of child sex trafficking. OCFS continues to be sought out for its expertise in this area across the country.

Close to Home Oversight (CTHO) and System Improvement

CTHO is responsible for monitoring and providing technical assistance to the Close to Home (CTH) providers of a continuum of services in New York City. These services consist of residential service programs to youth in New York City who are adjudicated delinquent in non-secure placement (NSP), limited-secure placement (LSP), and services to CTH aftercare provider agencies, all of which are provided via contracts with voluntary agencies. In addition, CTHO monitors and provides technical assistance to the New York City Administration for Children's Services (ACS). CTHO monitors these CTH agencies for compliance with OCFS regulations and best practices in the areas of safety, permanency, and well-being.

The program's goal is to provide services – including education – to the young people in a setting close to their families, in or near their communities, and to have the youth successfully transition back home as productive, contributing members of society. Seven agencies contract with ACS to provide CTH NSP residential services, operating 26 residential programs. Three agencies provide CTH LSP residential services and operate four residential programs. Four agencies provide contracted aftercare services.

In 2019, CTHO conducted site visits to providers and reviewed cases. These visits may include interviews of youth, inspection of the residences, log reviews, child-specific incidents and concerns, and review of human resources files. CTHO staff follow up on significant incidents registered by the Justice Center for the Protection of People With Special Needs (Justice Center) and monitor the corrective action plans related to abuse and neglect allegations reported to the Justice Center.

Statewide Youth Justice Reforms

In 2019, OCFS, in partnership with DCJS, launched the Youth Justice Institute (YJI) at the School of Criminal Justice at the University of Albany. Anchored by a board comprised of executive staff from both state agencies, the chair of the New York State Juvenile Justice Advisory Group, an administrative judge, and the dean of the School of Criminal Justice, the Institute was created to provide technical assistance and training to localities, support local evaluations, identify best practices in the field of youth justice, and support convenings. The YJI brought on an interim

executive director for its initial launch and hired a permanent director in 2019.

OCFS also holds a co-chair position of the Partnership for Youth Justice (PYJ), a multi-stakeholder group that identifies policy and practice issues in the youth justice sphere that require improvement, with a specific focus on improving racial and ethnic disparities across the system. In 2019, PYJ increased its membership of local stakeholders and integrated the regional youth justice teams across New York State into its work. PYJ also formed a Family and Youth Voice Subcommittee, to examine strategies to consistently bring families and youth to PYJ; it oriented a new co-chair and partnership members; worked with YJI and a subcommittee focused on youth with sexual behavioral problems to examine current practice and research in this area; and convened with the new regional representatives to collectively orient these new members and integrate the local perspective into the PYJ 2020 agenda.

Division of Juvenile Justice and Opportunities for Youth (DJJOY)

DJJOY is responsible for the supervision and treatment of youth placed in OCFS custody by the courts, from intake through aftercare. OCFS serves youth from the ages of 7 through 23 who are remanded into the care and custody of OCFS as juvenile delinquents (JDs) by the family courts or committed as juvenile offenders (JOs) or adolescent offenders (AOs), or as JOs or AOs adjudicated to be youthful offenders (YOs), by the criminal courts.

Generally, youth placed with OCFS present serious and complex issues, many of which compromise their own personal well-being and public safety, and many of the youth have extensive histories of prior placements.

DJJOY supports and monitors facility-based operations and programs, community services, and a range of community-based programs. DJJOY has also adopted a trauma-responsive system of care called the New York Model.

Residential Care System

In 2019, the DJJOY residential care system consisted of 12 facilities: four secure facilities, six limited secure facilities, and two non-secure facilities. Except for the Harriet Tubman Residential Center for Girls, which opened in October 2018, all other facilities are accredited by the American Correctional Association (ACA) and have achieved full compliance under the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA).

The following services are provided to youth in DJJOY care: discrete units for youth with mental health issues, for youth with substance abuse issues, and for youth presenting sexually harmful behavior; individual and group counseling; medical and dental services; education; and vocational/employment, recreational, and ministerial services.

- **Reception:** With the January 2019 closure of the Ella McQueen Reception Center for Boys and Girls, all JDs now go directly to their assigned facility and receive medical, educational, psychological, and mental health assessments to determine their service needs going into placement.
- **Secure Residential Facilities:** The most controlled and restrictive of the residential programs, secure facilities provide intensive programming for youth requiring this type of environment. Secure facilities have virtually all program services provided on the premises. Secure facilities are surrounded by security fencing, facility access is strictly controlled, and individual resident rooms are locked at night. Most of the youth in secure facilities are sentenced as JOs or as juvenile offenders/youthful offenders (JO/YOs) and Adolescent Offenders (AOs) adjudicated as YOs by the criminal courts. Certain youth may be placed in secure facilities as JDs where the family court has authorized secure placement within 60 days of custody admission or when the youth has been moved from a limited secure facility for dangerous behavior.
- **Limited Secure Residential Facilities:** This is a restrictive service setting used for initial placement of certain youth adjudicated as JDs. Limited secure facilities may also be used for JDs previously placed in secure facilities as a first step in their transition back to the community. Limited secure facilities have access to all services, the majority of which are provided on the premises.
- **Non-Secure Residential Facilities:** This level of placement is for those youth adjudicated as JDs who have been placed outside their home by a family court, but do not exhibit behaviors that require the more restrictive setting of a limited secure facility. OCFS also contracts with authorized agencies to provide non-secure residential care for some JDs.

Community Services

DJJOY has eleven (11) Community Multi-Services Offices (CMSOs) and four (4) satellite offices. CMSOs provide support to the family while the youth is in residential placement and when the youth is transitioned to community supervision. A regionally located Community Service Team (CST) works with the youth and family from the first day of placement, in preparation for reentry by employing targeted, evidence-based strategies related to education, school placement, vocational and employment opportunities, mental health and substance abuse counseling, and recreational programs.

Juvenile Justice Reform

Over the past 12 years, counties statewide have increased their efforts to rely less on residential confinement with the state and to provide effective residential services to low- and moderate-risk delinquent youth closer to their homes and communities.

DJJOY continues in its effort to reform its juvenile justice system, to serve more complex and difficult youth who have not experienced success in placements prior to coming to OCFS-operated facilities. Specifically, DJJOY is aggressively taking steps to reform services in education and vocation, workforce development, transitional services, family engagement, youth development, and the New York Model system of care. The New York Model is a comprehensive behavior management system that is tailored around the individual treatment needs of each youth. DJJOY has worked to help young people in residential placement to develop competencies and prosocial identities to support positive change and long-term success. As localities statewide utilize new residential programs, and as OCFS's system of residential services becomes more targeted, there is an opportunity and an obligation to the youth, families, and communities to deemphasize correctional hardware and practice.

On April 10, 2017, the Raise the Age (RTA) legislation was enacted (Part WWW of Chapter 59 of the Laws of 2017). The law makes substantive changes to the procedures used to process 16- and 17-year-olds in the criminal and youth justice systems. As a result, the program footprint of youth facilities operated by OCFS will change with the addition of residential beds to accommodate an older population of JDs. DJJOY will work on new curricula to better meet the needs of this population.

DJJOY has expanded the juvenile justice system to accommodate the 16-year-olds who began entering residential youth facilities in late 2018 and this continued in early 2019. In 2018, DJJOY expanded and opened the upper section of the Industry Residential Center in Monroe County to house an additional 80 male youth, and a 25-bed facility was added and reopened for girls at the Harriet Tubman Residential Center in Cayuga County. These facilities also serve the 17-year-olds who began entering residential youth facilities in 2019.

Office of the Ombudsman

The Office of the Ombudsman (OOTO) in the New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) is comprised of attorneys and individuals with expertise in juvenile justice who help protect the legal rights of youth. OOTO maintains offices in Buffalo, Syracuse, and New York City.

“Youth” is defined as any person under 21 held at a county detention center or residing at a county-run, voluntary agency-run, or OCFS-run residential facility as a juvenile delinquent, youthful offender, juvenile offender, and/or adolescent offender.

OOTO’s largest partners are DJJOY, the New York City Administration for Children’s Services through the Close to Home Initiative, county detention centers, and voluntary agencies. OOTO does not provide services to youth in the care and custody in other residential situations.

The Rights of Youth in Custody

Youth in custody have legal rights, defined broadly. These rights begin with those established by the constitutions and laws of the United States and New York State, and extend to rights granted by court orders, decisions, or stipulations; by state and federal rules and regulations; and by OCFS or facility policies. These rights cover many aspects of a youth’s time in care—from intake, to placement, to release or transfer.

OOTO Responsibilities in Protecting the Rights of Youth

Site Visits: OOTO has access to youth residing in juvenile justice facilities across the state. OOTO staff conduct both announced and unannounced visits to OCFS-operated facilities administered by DJJOY, county detention centers, Close to Home programs (administered by the New York City Administration for Children’s Services), and child welfare voluntary agencies that fall under OCFS’s oversight authority.

Investigation and Resolution: OOTO investigates reports made by youth regarding their care and raises these reports to relevant OCFS program areas or other state and local agencies/divisions for resolution. OOTO also connects youth and their families/caregivers to resources across the juvenile justice system that can assist them. OOTO does not provide legal representation to youth in court but can explain juvenile justice-related issues; laws, rules, and policies to youth and their caregivers; and can aid a youth in obtaining an attorney. OOTO is not part of the Justice Center for the Protection of People With Special Needs; it is a separate entity.

Resources: OOTO provides several resources for youth and their families. These include: a youth-oriented video, guide, and palm card on navigating interactions with law enforcement; a guide to advocacy during school disciplinary proceedings; social media safety one-sheets; and region-based, subject-specific lists of legal service providers for youth and families. OOTO worked with DJJOY to provide youth in OCFS facilities access to an encyclopedia of policies applicable to their time in care. OOTO also provides youth rights training to staff at OCFS facilities as well as training about due process proceedings to attorneys that represent youth in court.

Communication With OOTO

Youth may contact OOTO with any concern related to their rights. Regardless of where a youth resides, residential staff may not refuse a youth’s request to call OOTO, and they must be afforded a reasonable level of privacy during the call. Written correspondence between youth and the OOTO is confidential. When OOTO staff conduct site visits, youth can also speak with an ombudsperson about issues related to their care and/or treatment.

Facility staff, a youth’s family or attorney, and/or another interested person may call OOTO if they

have concerns about a particular youth or the rights of youth in care, in general. By statute and policy, OOTO is careful to verify outside contact and maintain confidentiality where required.

Staff in OCFS facilities call OOTO whenever a youth will be in contact with law enforcement. OOTO attorneys advise the youth of their rights when speaking to law enforcement and will connect the youth to an/their attorney.

2019 Projects

OOTO worked on several new initiatives and projects during 2019, including the following:

- Developed a guide for parents and students on school suspensions that provide guidance and resources to navigate school issues
- Developed a youth and parent guide, *Getting Ready for Release and Staying Street Smart*, with an accompanying video
- Increased availability of culturally competent grooming products for youth
- Presented Continuing Legal Education (CLE) to Appellate Division Attorneys for the Child on the OCFS *Fenner* process
- Refreshed OOTO presentation to incoming DJJOY staff on the scope and role of the office.
- Created a Computer-Based Training with the OCFS Bureau of Training
- Created guidance for youth and families on navigating social media
- Created statewide legal services contact list for youth and families
- Worked with DJJOY to create a policy manual for youth to have access to all policies applicable to placement

Out in the Field

In 2019, OOTO made **4,861** points of contact with a youth or about a youth. “Points of contact” include a wellness check (unique phone contact), individual one-on-one consultation with a youth, an email (entire chain) to a facility about a youth issue, a youth’s outreach to OOTO to speak with an ombudsperson or contact from a youth’s parent or attorney to OOTO.

Ombudspersons conducted:

- **224** OCFS facility visits between DJJOY facilities (**13** total facilities) and child welfare agencies (**13** total sites).
- **221** visits to CTH facilities (**32** total sites).
- **131** visits to detention centers (**31** total centers)

Conclusion

OCFS continually strives to meet our mission of promoting the safety, permanency and well-being of New York's children, families and communities. OCFS builds partnerships and funds localities and agencies that provide quality services to those served by our core programs of child welfare, child care, juvenile justice, services for vulnerable adults and for New Yorkers who are blind.

Our agency's investments in preventive and child welfare services are among the highest in the nation. We continued to reduce the number of children who have been removed from their homes and placed in foster care. And when it is not safe for a child to remain at home, we require that local social services departments seek out a kinship or guardianship placement as a first option.

OCFS worked with various partners to realize the goals of Raise the Age. This means that all youth involved in the juvenile justice system are treated as individuals who require care and support and receive treatment and development-based programs and services. OCFS also fosters meaningful family and community engagement, understanding that the goal for all youth is a successful transition back to their communities.

OCFS administered the child care subsidy program to make quality child care accessible to lower income working families. We also administered the expanded Empire State After School Program and the Advantage After School Program so children have a safe and nurturing place to spend the time between the end of the school day and the end of their parents' work day.

Our agency continues to develop, implement and enforce policies that improve the quality of life of the children, families and vulnerable adults we serve and to support programs that do the same, as reflected in this report of our work in 2019.