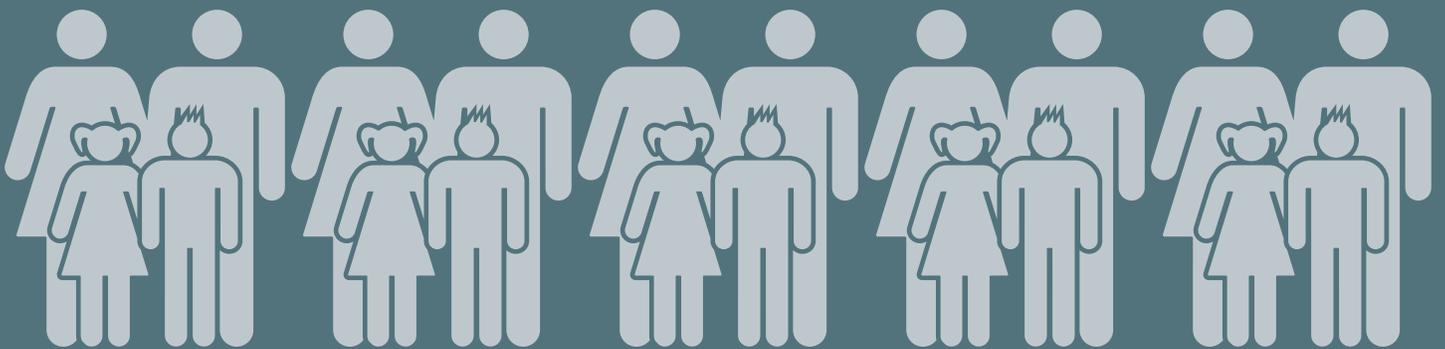
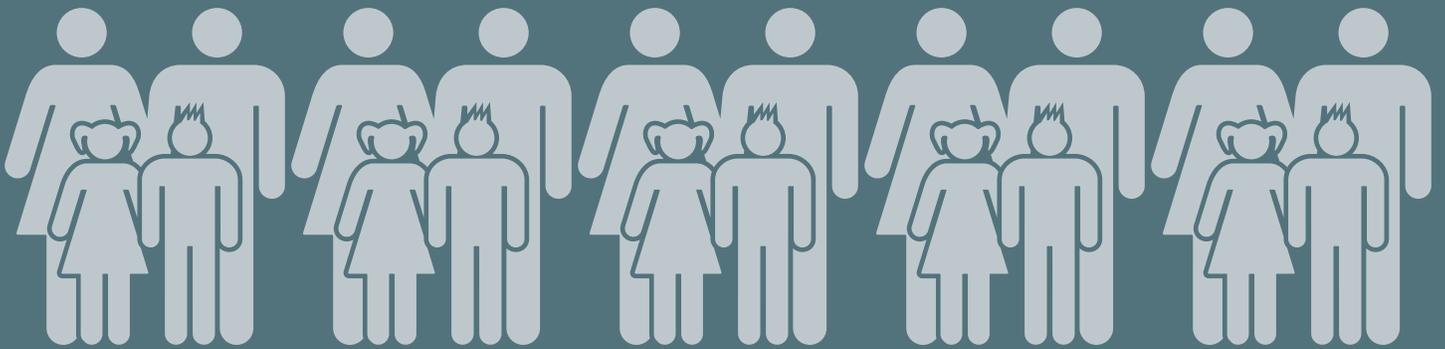


Harness the Power of Home Visiting

A Proven and Cost-Effective Tool to Prevent Child Maltreatment

New York State Citizen Review Panels 2017 Annual Report





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The New York State Citizen Review Panels for Child Protective Services are an important conduit of public sentiment and offer an external perspective on the efficacy of New York State’s child protection policies, practice, program, and fiscal priorities. The Panels, appointed by the Governor and NYS Legislature, are composed of volunteers with a breadth of experience and knowledge in child welfare practice and law, social work, education, and technology, among other areas. Each of the three Panels has up to 13 members. Of those members, the Governor appoints seven, and the Senate President and Assembly Speaker appoint three each.

The Western Panel covers the 17 counties in the western region of the state. The New York City Panel covers the five boroughs of New York City. The Eastern Panel covers the remaining 40 counties.

The Panels are authorized by both state and federal law to examine the policies, procedures, and practices of the state and local social service districts and, where appropriate, the outcome of specific cases. The Panels evaluate the extent to which the agencies are effectively discharging their child protection responsibilities and are authorized to hold public hearings. They have reasonable access to public and private facilities receiving public funds to provide child welfare services within the Panel jurisdictions. (See the inside back cover for more information on the Panels’ roles and authority.)

For summaries of Panel activities and a list of Panel members, refer to the Appendices.



Executive Summary

Home visiting programs prevent child abuse and neglect, advance children’s well-being, reduce foster care placements, and save the state and localities money. So why isn’t New York State providing home visiting to every eligible child?

The Panels urge the Governor, Legislature, and state agencies to invest an additional \$108 million in federal, state, and local dollars for home visiting programs over the next three years: \$20 million in the first year (FY 2018-19), \$35 million in the second year, and \$53 million in the third.

This year, the New York State Citizen Review Panels for Child Protective Services have focused their advocacy voice on **one recommendation: significantly increase funding for home visiting programs**. By providing services to at-risk families before and after the birth of their child, when families are most in need of and receptive to help, home visiting programs have demonstrated positive outcomes for families while also providing a significant savings: **an estimated \$1.75 to \$5.70 saved¹ for every dollar spent**. Effective initial intervention by trained professionals through home visiting services yields cost savings by potentially avoiding government-funded services such as foster care.

There are a variety of programs, many evidence-based, through which voluntary home visiting services are delivered, each with a program model, target population, and service design. Researchers have conducted studies with promising results on the effectiveness of various home visiting programs, including up to a 50% reduction in child maltreatment.²

As of the date of this report, home visiting programs are significantly underfunded, with only an estimated 5% of eligible families currently enrolled.³ New York should seize this opportunity to provide this service for all eligible families, thereby strengthening families while ultimately also realizing substantial budgetary savings. **The Panels urge the Governor, Legislature, and state agencies to invest an additional \$108 million in federal, state and local dollars for home visiting programs over the next three years: \$20 million in the first year (FY 2018-19), \$35 million in the second year, and \$53 million in the third.**

2017 Annual Report



Since their creation in 1999, New York State's Citizen Review Panels have been diligently committed to their charge to help improve the state's child welfare system. Each year, after careful study and thorough discussions, they have made specific recommendations to the New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS), the NYS Legislature, the NYS Division of Budget, and the Governor's office to improve the child welfare system and increase the services needed for prevention and treatment of abuse and neglect. The Panels remain committed to the issues raised in previous years' reports and to those recommendations put forward that have not yet been implemented.

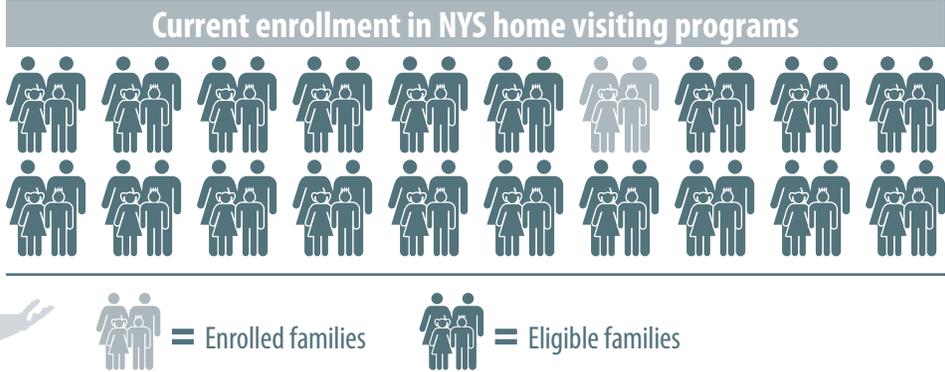
Through prior knowledge, presentations, and discussions with various guests at the Citizen Review Panel meetings,⁴ Panel members are informed of and acknowledge the complex nature of the child welfare system and its competing demands such as:

- Workforce-related issues such as ongoing worker turnover, unmanageable caseloads and workloads, and underpaid staff;
- The increasing impact of the opioid epidemic on caseload and service availability; and
- Financial constraints placed on both the state and counties, causing child welfare financing to directly compete with other fiscal priorities.

These competing demands have tremendous impact on the NYS child welfare system; however, after 17 years of making multiple recommendations each year,⁵ the Panels believe now is the time to focus on one critical strategy. This year, the Panels are putting forward only one recommendation, carefully selected because it has shown to make a real difference in preventing abuse and neglect. **The Panels' message to the Governor, Legislature, and NYS agencies and departments is to substantially increase funding for the proven, primary prevention program of home visiting.**

There is always room for improvement in the work of preventing child abuse, and fully funding successful prevention programs is a crucial step. Prevention programs that have proven their effectiveness need funding to reach all of those families with meaningful support. Increased home visiting across the state has the potential to strengthen families, protect children, and save the state a significant amount of money.

"Studies have shown that preventive programs (like home visiting) produce better outcomes for children. By addressing problems at an early stage, preventive programs are able to reduce far more expensive options such as foster care."²⁵



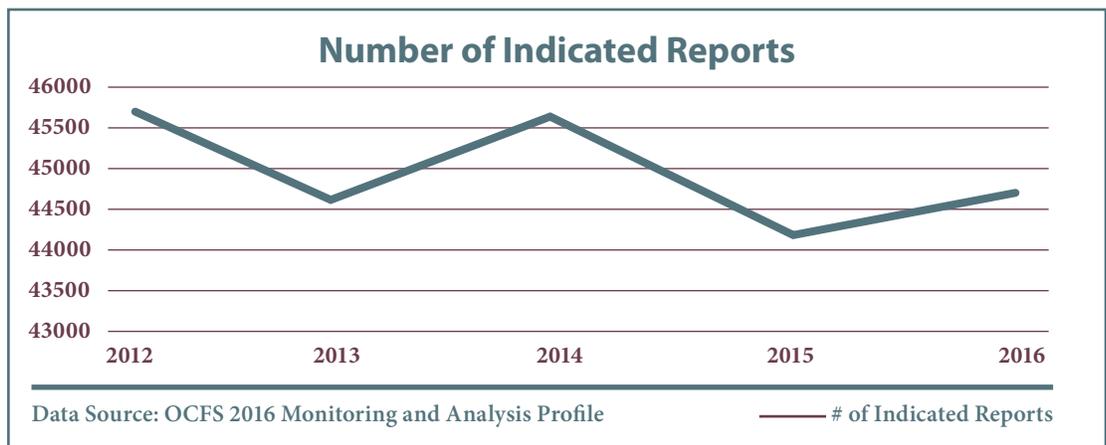
Estimates show that only approximately 5% of potentially eligible families in NYS are currently enrolled in a home visiting program.⁶ This is particularly alarming as the number of indicated reports of child maltreatment in New York trended upward with a 3.4% increase between 2015 and 2016.⁷

In 2016 alone, there were approximately 44,700 indicated reports.⁸ Data has consistently shown that the youngest children are the most vulnerable to maltreatment.⁹ Not all of these reports involved children who would have been eligible for home visiting, but supports provided to many of these families could have prevented later abuse.

Programs can engage with at-risk families prior to contact with the child welfare system, thereby reducing the need for more costly and drastic child welfare interventions. Fully-funded, statewide home visiting could help the state realize a significant level of reduction in child abuse. New York State must do better.

Home Visiting Strengthens Families

Home visiting is a proven strategy for strengthening families with newborn and young children, improving outcomes in the areas of child welfare, health, education, and economic security. Home visiting services are provided primarily by meeting with families in their homes, but may be delivered in other environments such as homeless shelters, based on the program model and a family’s current needs. Home visiting programs target services to lower



income pregnant or new parents and their young child(ren), typically ages zero to five, when they are most in need of and receptive to services. Programs directly provide or connect families with parenting coaching, and health, mental health, or other services, depending on the family's unique needs.

All home visiting programs are voluntary, requiring buy-in and active participation from the family being served, but can differ by purpose, type of service delivery professional, or the duration and frequency of the home visits.¹⁰ Most home visiting programs are currently concentrated in areas with denser populations, leaving many rural and semi-rural areas of the state underserved.¹¹ New York is home to several evidence-based and evidence-informed home visiting programs, each serving different populations and providing a valuable impact.

These programs include:

- Early Head Start (EHS)
- Healthy Families New York (HFNY)
- Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPIY)
- Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP)
- Parents as Teachers (PAT)
- Parent Child Home Program (PCHP)

In addition, some localities have developed community-based customized visiting programs.

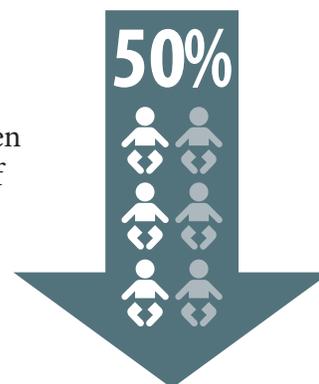
For a comprehensive overview of these programs including program descriptions, refer to the Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy's "Overview of Select Evidence-Based and Evidence-Informed Home Visiting Programs."¹²

Home Visiting Programs Have a Proven Impact

Researchers have conducted multiple rigorous studies on the effectiveness of various home visiting programs. The home visiting models most robustly supported by state funding, Healthy Families New York and Nurse-Family Partnership, are evidence-based, and additional models have been shown to be evidence-based or evidence-informed. Research shows home visiting programs make a positive impact on various short and long term outcomes for both children and parents including preventing or reducing the frequency or severity of child abuse and neglect.¹³ In fact, the home visiting program most prevalent throughout the state, Healthy Families New York, has been shown to reduce child maltreatment (abuse and neglect) by up to 50%¹⁴, avoiding the longterm costs of the trauma associated from maltreatment and potential foster care placement.

Evidence-based programs have been shown to be effective through rigorous, peer-reviewed study, while evidence-informed programs use the best available research to inform the program model.²⁶

Reduction in
child maltreatment through
Healthy Families New York program



With the help of a Nurse-Family Partnership, one mother writes: “During my pregnancy, I learned about what to eat and what not to eat while pregnant, what labor and delivery would be like, how to care for my baby girl after she was born, and how to decrease my anxiety and stress.”²⁷

The evidence-based program Healthy Families New York reduces child abuse and neglect by:

- Encouraging healthy prenatal behaviors and parenting attitudes;
- Engaging infants in play, encouraging healthy development;
- Modeling an appropriate parent-child relationship;
- Promoting self-sufficiency of the parents; and
- Providing assessments and links to needed services.¹⁵

Additional research has determined other positive outcomes for families receiving home visiting services, including:¹⁶

- Reducing the number of low birthweight babies;
- Increasing time between pregnancies to benefit the health of the mother;
- Improving school performance, reducing behavioral problems, and increasing graduation rates;
- Increasing family economic security and employment of parents; and
- Reducing dependence on Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and other government supports.

While the Panels agree that all of these potential outcomes are beneficial and important to strengthening children and families in New York, the Panels are primarily focused on preventing child abuse and neglect and view home visiting as a very effective tool to do so.

Home Visiting is Currently Underfunded

The funding structure for home visiting programs in New York is complex, woven together from many different sources including federal, state, local, and private dollars.¹⁷ Funding sources can vary based on such factors as:

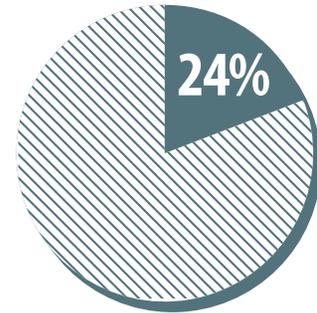
- The agency or administration providing oversight of the program (e.g., NYS Department of Health, OCFS, or the federal Administration for Children and Families);
- The agency or organization from which the program originated (e.g., Healthy Families New York is a program exclusive to New York and receives state funding);
- The specific services offered through the program model; or
- The specific target population of the program.

One significant federal funding stream, the Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program, will provide NYS with approximately \$9 million¹⁸ in resources for home visiting. The federal MIECHV funding stream is currently up for reauthorization.

Home visiting programs receive the majority of State funding through three state agencies' budgets: OCFS, Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA), and the Department of Health (DOH). The 2017-2018 NYS Aid to Localities Budget Bill [S2003D/A3003D] allocated the following amounts of money over the state fiscal year through those three state agency budgets: \$23.3 million to OCFS for HFNY, \$3 million to OTDA for NFP and \$425, 000 to DOH for NFP.

Approximately 24% of children under the age of six in NYS are living under the federal poverty level.

The state, localities, and private funders distribute additional dollars to home visiting programs through a number of means such as grants and trusts. Yet despite the various funding sources available to NYS, cost-effective home visiting programs remain drastically underfunded.

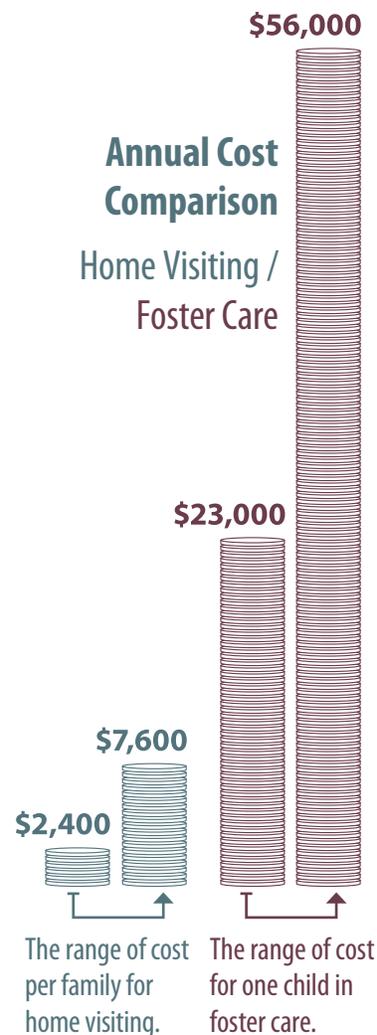


Harness the Power of Home Visiting

Childhood poverty is among the best predictors of child abuse and neglect, and also a common eligibility requirement for participating in home visiting services. Although not all children living in poverty experience maltreatment, the stress factors associated with living in poverty can place a tremendous physical and emotional burden on a family, leading to potential maltreatment.¹⁹ Children under the age of six have the highest rates of victimization, with most physical abuse and neglect occurring when the child is under the age of two.²⁰

According to the most recent census data, approximately 24% of children under the age of six in NYS are living beneath the federal poverty level, currently defined as a yearly income of \$28,290 for a family of four.²¹ This means that there are an estimated **279,600 children in New York who could benefit from a home visiting program**. Currently, there are only an **estimated 12,560 funded slots**²², so only about 5% of potentially eligible children are receiving home visiting services.

Effective initial intervention through home visiting services yields future savings on money spent on government services, not only for the parent but also throughout the child's lifespan. "Cost-benefit analyses show that high quality home visiting programs offer returns on investment ranging from \$1.75 to \$5.70 for every dollar spent due to reduced costs of child protection, K-12 special education and grade retention, and criminal justice expenses."²³

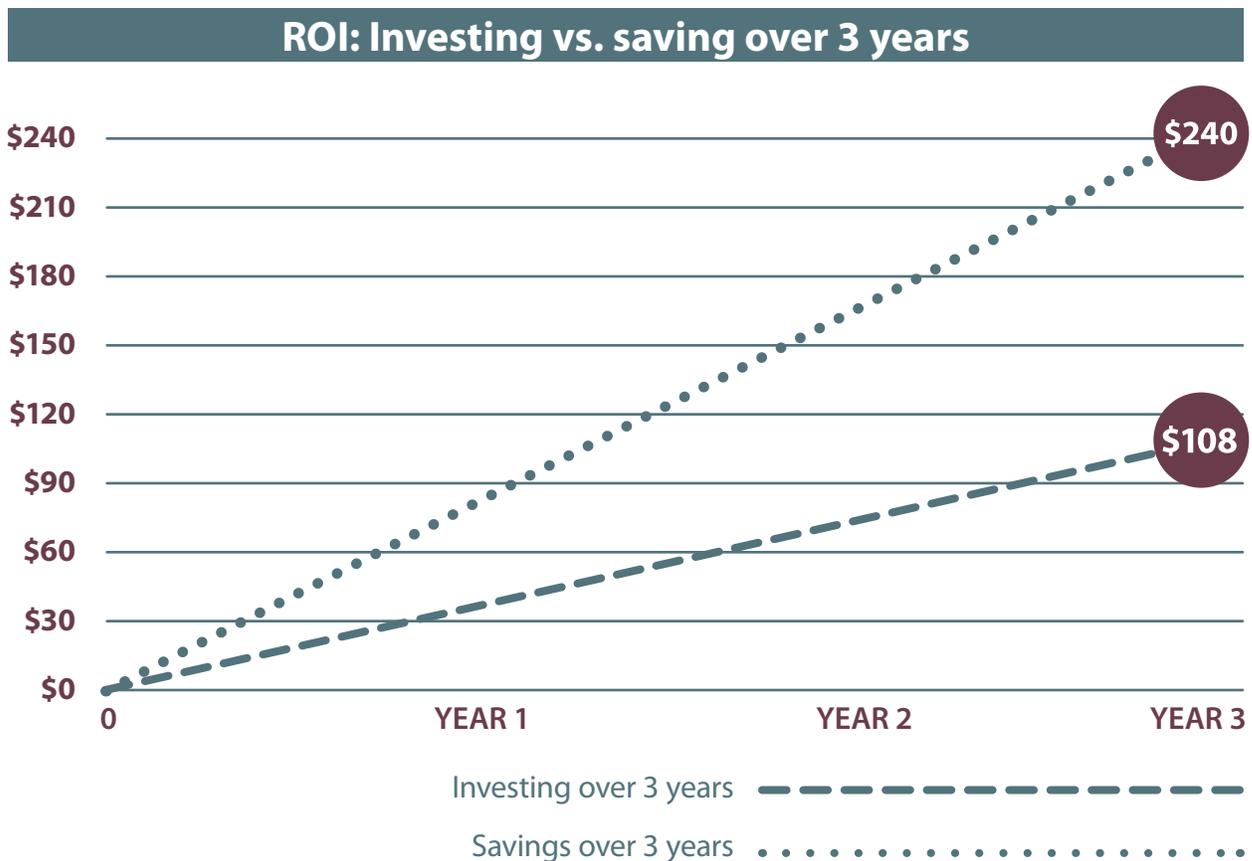


One participating mother said her home visitor “came into my house every week and helped me, guided me, taught me. I felt more independent because of the program. It helped me grow as a person... I was still able to have my child and be a great mother and still move on with a career of my dreams.”²⁸

The potential savings on child welfare services is readily apparent. The average annual cost per family for home visiting services varies from \$2,400 to \$7,600, depending on the particular home visiting program. The average annual cost for one child in foster care ranges from \$23,000 to \$56,000, depending on the service needs of the child.²⁴ Thus costs for home visiting for a family are between 10% and 14% of the cost of placing one child from that family in foster care for one year.

While universal access to home visiting services for families with low income is the ultimate goal, the NYS Citizen Review Panels for Child Protective Services strongly recommend a significant, **additional investment of \$108 million in federal, state, and local dollars over the next three years** (\$20 million in the first year (FY 2018-19), \$35 million in the second year, and \$53 million in the third) to provide home visiting to increase capacity and serve an additional 24,000 potentially eligible families. An additional 24,000 slots would cost around \$108 million (average cost of \$4,500 per family per year) and **produce an estimated savings of at least \$240 million in future service costs.**

The outcomes for children and families receiving home visiting services have proven to strengthen New York’s families. The Panels urge New York State to make a smart investment in our children and families and **HARNESS THE POWER OF HOME VISITING!**



Appendices



Summary of Panel Activities

New York City Panel Meetings

December 6, 2016

Stephanie Gendell, Esq., Associative Executive Director at Citizens' Committee for Children of New York, joined the meeting to discuss bills recently passed by the New York City council related to foster care, including a homeless youth housing bill. Dr. Stuart Gitlow presented on the impact of the opioid epidemic on child welfare in New York City. Lisa Gordon, Director of the Bureau of Program and Community Development at OCFS, updated Panel members on initiatives at OCFS. Panel Chair Wayne Ho debriefed panel members on a meeting with the NYS Division of Budget regarding the panels' recommendations. WRI provided updates.

March 3, 2017

Julie Farber, Deputy Commissioner; Brian Clapier, Associate Commissioner; and David Nish, Associate Commissioner at ACS provided updates on ACS initiatives including the Foster Care Strategic Blueprint, predictive analytics, and training. Panel Chair Wayne Ho debriefed Panel members on meetings with OCFS Executive Staff and state legislators regarding the recommendations in the CRP 2016 Annual Report. Lisa Gordon, OCFS, updated Panel members on initiatives at OCFS. Jennifer Goldman, CRP Coordinator, provided updates from WRI. David Lansner was elected Panel Chair and Stanley Capela was elected Panel Co-Chair.

May 2, 2017

Brian Clapier, ACS Associate Commissioner, returned to further discuss the use of predictive analytics. Dr. Angel Mendoza, incoming ACS Medical Director, talked about issues related to tracking health indicators for children in foster care. Tamara Steckler, Legal Aid Society; Stacy Charland, Neighborhood Defender Services; and Eric Brettschneider, First Deputy Commissioner at ACS discussed ongoing lawsuits and work done through advocacy workgroups. Amy Papandrea, OCFS, updated Panel members on initiatives at OCFS. Jennifer Goldman, CRP Coordinator, provided updates from WRI.

September 19, 2017

David Lansner and Stanley Capela provided a summary of the August meeting with OCFS executive staff. David Hansell, ACS Commissioner, joined the meeting to introduce himself and discuss current challenges and initiatives in NYC including a NYC workload study, increased training efforts, case coaching, expanding home visiting, and increased work with advocates and parents. Eric Brettschneider, First Deputy Commissioner; Raymond Toomer, Associate Commissioner; Derrick Hinds, Assistant Commissioner; Kathleen Hoskins, Assistant Commissioner; and Jaime Madden, Assistant Commissioner at ACS joined the meeting to discuss the ongoing work of the Advocates Workgroups, including efforts of the education sub-committee to improve educational stability for children in foster care.

Amy Papandrea, OCFS, provided updates from OCFS. Jennifer Goldman, CRP Coordinator, provided updates from WRI. The Panel discussed the recruitment of new members.

Eastern Panel Meetings

December 9, 2016

Davin Robinson, Deputy Commissioner of the NYS Justice Center for the Protection of People with Special Needs, discussed the Center's responsibilities, jurisdiction, and types of investigations. Ryan Johnson, Program Development and Education Specialist at the NYS Kinship Navigator Program, presented information on NYS Kinship Navigator Program including resources available to kinship caregivers in NYS. Jeanette Feingold, Director of Child Protective Services at Nassau County Department of Social Services, provided an update on the outcome data from blind removals. Lisa Gordon, OCFS, provided updates on initiatives at OCFS. WRI provided additional updates.

March 10, 2017

Kari Siddiqui, Senior Policy Analyst at Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy; Stephanie Gendell, Esq. Associate Executive Director at the Citizens' Committee for Children of New York; and Kathleen Brady-Stepien, Associate Executive Director at the Council of Family and Child Caring Agencies, joined the meeting to provide information on the budgetary and legislative advocacy focuses for 2017. Panel Chair Edward Blatt debriefed Panel members on meetings with OCFS Executive Staff and state legislators. Jennifer Goldman, CRP Coordinator, provided updates from WRI. Lisa Gordon, OCFS, provided updates on initiatives at OCFS. Mary McCarthy was elected Panel Co-Chair.

May 5, 2017

John Befus, Deputy Commissioner for the Westchester County Department of Social Services, provided an overview of the state of child welfare in Westchester County including county planning, budget, caseload, and workforce. Lisa Gordon, OCFS, provided updates on initiatives at OCFS. Jennifer Goldman, CRP Coordinator, provided updates from WRI.

Allison Behan, OCFS, provided an update on the implementation of health homes. Greg Owens and Barbara Green-Flood from OCFS provided updates on race equity initiatives.

September 22, 2017

Panel Chair Edward Blatt provided a summary of the August meeting with OCFS executive staff. Theresa Beaudoin, Commissioner for the Rensselaer County Department of Social Services, and Tammy DeLorme, Commissioner for the Washington County Department of Social Services, joined the meeting to share challenges and solutions in their particular counties. Sharon Kollar, National Child Welfare Workforce Institute, joined the meeting to share the Institute's work on racial equity in the child welfare workforce. Amy Papandrea, OCFS, provided updates from OCFS. Bridget Walsh and Kari Siddiqui, Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy, joined the meeting to provide updates on federal legislation in the areas of health care, home visiting and services for children of immigrants. Jennifer Goldman, CRP Coordinator, provided updates from WRI.

Western Panel Meetings

December 16, 2016

Al Dirschberger, Commissioner at Erie County Department of Social Services, provided an overview of Erie County's work to reduce disproportionate minority representation in the child welfare system. Lee Lounsbury, Executive Director at WRI, provided updates from WRI. Lisa Gordon, OCFS, provided updates on initiatives at OCFS.

March 17, 2017

Tim Hathaway, Executive Director of Prevent Child Abuse New York, joined the meeting to describe the current work of the organization including a community-based initiative to reduce sexual abuse. Panel Chair, Ellen Kennedy, debriefed Panel members on meetings with OCFS Executive Staff and state legislators. Sharon Rochelle, 1st Deputy Commissioner of Erie County Department of Social Services, reviewed key initiatives in Erie County including reduction of disproportionate minority representation,

court improvement, and workforce development. Lisa Gordon, OCFS, provided updates on initiatives at OCFS. Jennifer Goldman, CRP Coordinator, provided updates from WRI.

May 12, 2017

Allison Behan, OCFS, provided an update on home health implementation. Carol Henderson, Niagara County Department of Social Services, discussed current initiatives and issues in the county including addressing opioid abuse, reducing time to permanency, and improving cross systems work with other agencies such as the police department. Lisa Gordon, OCFS, provided updates on OCFS initiatives. Jennifer Goldman, CRP Coordinator, provided updates from WRI.

September 29, 2017

Panel Chair Ellen Kennedy provided a summary of the August meeting with OCFS Executive Staff. Ellen Kennedy; Sarlyn Tate, Panel Co-Chair; and Linda C. Brown provided a summary of the meeting with the Buffalo Region Directors of Service. Panel discussed engaging more with opioid epidemic work and the recruitment of new members. Jennifer Goldman, CRP Coordinator, provided updates from WRI. Sarlyn Tate was re-elected Panel Co-Chair. Sharon Kollar, National Child Welfare Workforce Institute, joined the meeting to share the Institute's work on racial equity in the child welfare workforce. Lisa Gordon, OCFS, provided updates from OCFS.

Joint Panel Meetings

June 8, 2017

OCFS Deputy Commissioner Laura Velez provided information on OCFS initiatives including OCFS' strategic plan for outcomes and goals, influenced by results from the federal Child and Family Service Review. Deputy Commissioner Velez described OCFS' work with local districts to develop county-level performance improvement plans. Other OCFS updates included the revision of the delivery of core caseworker training, home visiting and the status of the NYC ACS monitor. Each Panel chair then summarized work at the regional Panel level. With participation from partner groups,

Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy and Citizens' Committee for Children, the Panels began planning for 2017 Recommendations. The Panel members then heard, via phone, from the New York Initiative for Children of Incarcerated Parents. Jennifer Goldman, CRP Coordinator, provided additional updates from WRI.

October 30, 2017

OCFS Acting Commissioner Sheila Poole and OCFS Deputy Commissioner Laura Velez provided current information on OCFS initiatives including expansion of Healthy Families New York, Child and Family Service Review Program Improvement Plan implementation, Raise the Age implementation, and follow-up from a recently held Stakeholder Roundtable on Statewide Workload Recommendations among other updates. Panel members discussed and then voted on recommendations for the 2017 Annual Report. Facilitated by Darlene Ward, WRI Executive Director, Panel members discussed Panel operations and recruitment of new members. Jennifer Goldman, CRP Coordinator, provided additional updates from WRI.

Citizen Review Panel Members 2017

Eastern Panel Members

Edward Blatt, PhD, Panel Chair
Content Marketing Manager
IBM Watson Health
Appointed by the Governor's Office

Mary McCarthy, Panel Co-Chair
Director, Social Work
Education Consortium
School of Social Welfare
SUNY Albany
Appointed by the Senate

Nadia Allen
Executive Director
Mental Health Association in
Orange County, Inc.
Appointed by the Assembly

Angela Baris
Program Coordinator (retired)
Northeast Parent and
Child Society
Appointed by the Governor's Office

Sharon M. Chesna
Executive Director
Mothers & Babies Perinatal Network
of South Central New York, Inc.
Appointed by the Governor's Office

Kathleen Thornton Halas
Executive Director
Child Care Council of
Westchester, Inc.
Appointed by the Assembly

Maureen McLoughlin, Esq.
Attorney; Adjunct Professor
Hofstra University
Appointed by the Governor's Office

JoAnn Merriman, MS, PA-C
Physician Assistant
CapitalCare Developmental
Behavioral Pediatrics
Appointed by the Governor's Office

Erin Christopher-Sisk, PhD
Clinical Director
ECS Psychological Services
Appointed by the Senate

Carrie Jefferson Smith
Director
School of Social Work
Syracuse University
Appointed by the Governor's Office

New York City Panel Members

David J. Lansner, Esq., Panel Chair
Partner
Lansner & Kubitschek
Appointed by the Assembly

Stanley Capela, Panel Co-Chair
Corporate Compliance Officer
Vice President for Quality
Management
HeartShare Human Services
of New York
Appointed by the Senate

Dr. Jocelyn Brown
Director
Child Advocacy
Center at Columbia Presbyterian
Medical Center
Appointed by the Governor's Office

Wayne Ho
President/CEO
Chinese-American Planning
Council
Appointed by the Governor's Office

Sania Andrea Metzger, Esq.
Director of Policy
Casey Family Services
Appointed by the Assembly

Mathea C. Rubin
Parent
New York City
Appointed by the Senate

Jorge Saenz de Viteri
Chief Executive Officer
ECE Management NY, Inc.
Appointed by the Governor's Office

Marion White
Senior Program Director
New York Foundling
Child Abuse Prevention
Program (CAPP)
Appointed by the Governor's Office

Western Panel Members

Ellen T. Kennedy, Panel Chair
Associate Professor of Social Work,
Emerita
Buffalo State College
Appointed by the Governor's Office

Sarlyn Tate, Panel Co-Chair
Social Worker
Buffalo Psychiatric Center
Appointed by the Governor's Office

Linda C. Brown, CSW (retired)
Former Assistant Commissioner
New York State Office of Children
and Family Services
Appointed by the Assembly

Melissa A. Cavagnaro, Esq.
Partner
Mattingly Cavagnaro LLP,
Matrimonial & Family Law
Appointed by the Senate

Paula Mazur, MD
Associate Professor of
Clinical Pediatrics, Pediatric
Emergency Medicine, and
Child Abuse Pediatrics
Children's Hospital of Buffalo
Appointed by the Governor's Office

Stefan Perkowski
Program Director
Child & Adolescent Treatment
Services
Appointed by the Governor's Office

Danny Sklarski
Auditor; Legislator
NYS Parks and Recreation
Niagara County
Appointed by the Senate

Dennis Walczyk
Chief Executive Officer
Catholic Charities of Buffalo
Appointed by the Assembly

Karl L. Wiggins
Vice President of Youth and
Family Services
Gustavus Adolphus Child and
Family Services
Appointed by the Senate

Mary Whittier (resigned June 2017)
Founding Executive Director
Bivona Child Advocacy Center
Appointed by the Assembly

Endnotes

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- 18 Health and Human Services Administration. (2017). *Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program FY 2017 Formula Funding Awards*. Accessed at <https://mchb.hrsa.gov/maternal-child-health-initiatives/home-visiting/fy17-home-visiting-awards>.
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Federal law and the Citizen Review Panels

The 1996 amendments to the federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) mandate that states receiving federal funding under that legislation create volunteer Citizen Review Panels. The purpose of these Panels is to assess whether state and local agencies are effectively carrying out their child protection responsibilities. The federal statute broadly defines the work of the Citizen Review Panels.

The Panels must meet not fewer than once every three months and produce an annual public report containing a summary of their activities and recommendations to improve the child protection system at the state and local levels. They must evaluate the extent to which the state is fulfilling its child protective responsibilities under its CAPTA State Plan by:

- Examining the policies, procedures, and practices of state and local agencies;
- Reviewing specific cases, when warranted; and
- Reviewing other matters the Panel may consider important to child protection, consistent with Section 106(c) (A) (iii) of CAPTA.

Following the order of federal CAPTA Amendments of 1996, the New York State Legislature passed Chapter 136 of the Laws of 1999, establishing no less than three Citizen Review Panels, with at least one in New York City. The other Panels were established to serve Eastern and Western New York.

For further information, please visit the Panels' website at www.citizenreviewpanelsny.org or contact:

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