

**Testimony  
Of  
Jacqueline A. Negri, Executive Director  
Association of New York State Youth Bureaus**

**February 16, 2011**

**Before  
The Joint Fiscal Committees of the NYS Legislature  
on the 2011-2012 Executive Budget**

**John A. DeFrancisco, Chairman, Senate Finance  
Committee**

**and**

**Herman D. Farrell, Jr., Chairman, Assembly Ways and  
Means Committee**



Good morning honorable chairman and other distinguished members of the Legislature. My name is Jackie Negri and I am the Executive Director of the Association of New York State Youth Bureaus (ANYSYB).

ANYSYB represents New York's Youth Bureau Systems which is comprised of 109 county and municipal youth bureaus providing quality youth development, prevention, intervention services to over 2 million youth, from rural towns and villages, to small cities and urban centers since 1945. The youth bureau system embodies the definition of youth development as an ongoing process in which children and adolescents seek ways to meet their personal and social needs while building life skills and competencies that allow them to be successful and learn how to function effectively in their daily lives. Positive youth development and prevention services include, but are not limited to programs that build skills to prepare New York's youth for graduation, work, and civic responsibilities and to prevent them from entering the juvenile justice and child welfare systems. Youth Bureaus and their providers offer school drop-out prevention programs, worker readiness and summer jobs, mentors, obesity prevention, literacy, supports for runaway and homeless youth, pregnant and parenting teens and youth involved with drugs and gangs and leadership training for civic engagement.

**For over 60 years, New York State's Youth Bureau system has provided youth prevention, intervention and development services and programs to more than 2 million young people under the age of 21 throughout the state – nearly half of the youth population.**

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Understanding the troubling fiscal and economic climate in New York State, there is no doubt that tough decisions need to be made however, crisis brings opportunity. And we believe there is an opportunity for youth prevention, intervention and development services in New York State without dismantling the current system. Unfortunately, the SFY 2011-2012 Executive's Proposed Budget does just that – dismantles the current effective, cost-efficient long standing youth bureau service system in New York State which provides youth development and prevention services to over two million youth to age 21.

### **Proposed Primary Prevention Incentive Program**

*The proposed Primary Prevention Incentive Program (PPIP) dismantles the youth bureau system by eliminating long standing youth development and prevention funding sources - Youth Development Delinquency Prevention (YDDP); Special Delinquency Prevention Program (SDPP) and Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA). In addition, it goes on to slash these allocations by 50% and then creates a funding mechanism for a competitive bidding process requiring counties to access reimbursement through the 62% state /38% local match.*

**First, the competitive distribution of the PPIP will eliminate funding to many counties and allows for the loss of local planning and control; thereby promoting inequities in prevention and positive youth development services across the State. For example, a county with lower residential placement s or child protective rates may have solid community supports and primary prevention programs that are currently funded by Youth Development Delinquency Prevention (YDDP), Special Delinquency Prevention Programs (SDPP), and Runaway and Homeless Youth (RHYA). Once stripped of funding, due to the competitive distribution of the proposal, these counties' placements and rates will skyrocket, creating greater residential need and child protection at higher costs to the State. The long-term, youth development allocations throughout New York State serve as a foundation to support other areas of services, such as integration to the community, lower recidivism and placement rates. Conversely, if this allocation is altered, or becomes ever-changing, this will de-stabilize a broader health and human services**

network. Though Youth Development is not Child Welfare, nor Juvenile Justice, these supports can and do play a critical role.

**Second, the severity and disproportionate 50% proposed reduction in youth funding, in addition to a 30% reduction in YDDP, SDPP and RHYA over the past three years, is a factor for concern for youth and families in our communities.** Funding, albeit less than in the past, for Youth Development and Prevention Services must continue to be provided through a fair and equitable formula-driven allocation through municipal structures that ensure appropriate monitoring, evaluation and accountability as prescribed in Executive Law 410, 19A. Also, if a county does not receive State Aid currently provided through Executive Law 420, 19A, they stand to lose other local, state, federal and private funding. The youth bureau system is the impetus to garner local funding (through match requirements) and used to leverage a tremendous amount of other public and private support, well beyond the current allocation. And, the youth bureau system under the Executive Law has allowed for a base of support and the ability to be competitive in securing federal (such as AmeriCorps, SAMSHA, U.S. Health and Human Services, etc.) and private sector funding. Clearly, if this threshold of funding diminishes or fluctuates year to year (as it has the potential to do under this proposed PPIP); it will have a negative impact on other health and human services well beyond the current allocation and, in fact, can be the cause for community-based services to close.

**Third, we believe that the July 1, 2011 effective date will leave many youth bureaus and programs uncertain of funding and of their existence.** If funding is eliminated and services are no longer available in July, we will leave runaway and homeless youth, high-risk kids and their families, as well as many others without their network of services and supports. Transformation of the system, coupled with cost savings, is certainly something to consider during this economic climate however, *dismantling a cost-effective youth bureau system has many unintended consequences for the safety and well-being of all youth, including mostly high-risk youth.*

**Lastly, youth funding distributions should be held to universal standards related to accountability, monitoring and evaluation to attain successful outcome performance and tangible results.** In addition, youth funding should be guided by national evidence-based practices in youth development, such as *Ready by 21* or *Touchstones*, as currently administered by youth bureaus — not to the best grant writer. The New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) invest considerable resources in the Quality Youth Development (QYDS), utilized by county Youth Bureaus. QYDS tracks outcomes for initiatives and provides evidence that a documented youth development framework, that includes the features of positive youth development settings, will improve outcomes for all youth, including high-risk. This system provides a concrete way to identify common outcomes for state funded programs and a system of monitoring and accountability for Youth Bureaus and their contractors. Therefore, accountability is key for successful youth development, not competitive bidding.

## **PROPOSAL TO ELIMINATE SUMMER YOUTH EMPLOYMENT**

Thousands of New York State teens are positively impacted each year with the help of a summer job. Data shows that a summer job not only generates income for local communities as spending is invested back into the community, but the work experience gives summer youth workers positive experience resulting in quality outcomes. Teens who have a summer job are more likely to complete and graduate high school and have higher earnings during their adult working years. According to an analysis released by the Northeastern University's Center for Labor Market Studies, employment rates among teenagers have dropped nearly four times faster than the rate among adults since 2000. According to the study, it is especially bleak for low-income black students; only 4 in 100 found work. This issue is vital in African American and Latino communities where underemployment and high unemployment is often the most severe. The lack of jobs for our young people puts them at risk in multiple ways. Adolescents and young adults that have difficulty finding employment become discouraged, and many will stop trying. Those that give up are then unable to develop important job skills, which makes it likely that they will remain unemployed (or underemployed) well

into their adult years. In addition, studies show that individuals that are unable to find jobs in their early years have higher rates of dropping out of school and are more likely to commit crimes. These risks paint a bleak future for our youth if summer employment funding is eliminated.

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**New York faces unprecedented fiscal times. No doubt, these times call for leadership and change. To be fiscally prudent, efforts should not be made to dismantle the Youth Bureau structure nor determine positive youth development and prevention funding by a competitive bidding process. Rather, the focus should be on how the state's current investments can coalesce toward a common goal for prevention services and the positive development of all youth, albeit a more cost-effective one.**

ANYSYB needs the Legislature's assistance and leadership in keeping this system intact, for all of New York's youth, including hundreds of thousands of high-risk youth. ANYSYB respectfully asks your consideration to assist over 2 million kids in maintaining a youth prevention and development system through the youth bureau structure by:

- **Uphold the State's formula driven youth funding appropriations, as outlined in Executive Law 410 Article 19a, (and RHYA) to maintain effective positive youth development and primary prevention services to ensure that all counties, cities, towns and villages have the opportunity to lower residential placements, lower recidivism, lower child protective rates and prevent delinquency;**
- **DO NOT ACCEPT THE PROPOSED PRIMARY PREVENTION INCENTIVE PROGRAM (PIIP). Ensure that all counties receive equitable funding and accountability is defined locally through monitoring, evaluation and performance based outcomes, not by a competitive bid which rewards the best grant writer;**
- **Restore appropriations to YDDP, SDPP an RHYA, albeit with proportionate reductions and keep these funding streams intact so they may continue to reach all youth in all counties, cities, towns and villages in New York State;**
- **Support community juvenile justice prevention, intervention and re-entry by assisting municipalities in reducing their placements and recidivism and to increase permanency through the current cost-effective youth bureau structure ;**
- **Uphold the responsibility of the NYS Office of Children and Families Services (OCFS) in the implementation of the Quality Youth Development System (QYDS), in which significant resources have already been invested, to promote accountability, monitoring, evaluation and outcome performance measurements for all youth development funding.**
- **Restore \$15.5 million in funding, if needed with a proportionate reductions, to the Summer Youth Employment Program.**

On behalf of the 2 million youth being served by positive youth development, prevention and intervention services I thank you for this opportunity and offer my assistance and that of the Association of NYS Youth Bureaus on issues, data or questions of concern regarding New York's Positive Youth Development and Prevention System.

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**TESTIMONY OF THE NEW YORK STATE  
CATHOLIC CONFERENCE**

**REGARDING THE 2011-2012  
HUMAN SERVICES BUDGET**

**PRESENTED ON BEHALF OF  
THE COUNCIL OF CATHOLIC CHARITIES  
DIRECTORS**

**BY  
EARL EICHELBERGER  
DIRECTOR FOR CATHOLIC CHARITIES  
NEW YORK STATE  
CATHOLIC CONFERENCE**

**Albany, New York  
February 16, 2011**

## Introduction

Good morning! My name is Earl Eichelberger and I serve as the Director for Catholic Charities at the New York State Catholic Conference and Executive Secretary to the New York State Council of Catholic Charities Directors. The New York State Catholic Conference represents the Bishops of the eight dioceses of New York State in matters of public policy. In the human service arena, the expertise, experience and advice of the Council of Catholic Charities Directors guides the Conference. The Catholic Church is the largest non-profit provider of education, health care and human services in the state. Catholic Charities programs exist in all eight dioceses to provide services to people in need. Our Catholic tradition compels us to be active participants in the civic life of our community, to fashion a more just world that upholds the dignity of every individual and to serve those in need. The needs of the poor and vulnerable must not be ignored. A key measure of any society is how the most vulnerable members are cared for; those with the greatest need are due special attention. There is a long history in New York State of government and not-for-profit providers collaborating to deliver services in a cost-effective manner. This public/private partnership in support of the poor and vulnerable must be maintained.

I am here on behalf of a "special interest." I am unapologetically here to speak on behalf of the poor and vulnerable. Catholic social teaching requires me to do so. The Old Testament tells me to "Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy." (Proverbs 31:8-9) The New Testament tells me we will be judged by what we do for the poor and the vulnerable when the Lord said "Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for these least brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." (Matthew 25:40) The U.S. Catholic Bishops wrote, "As Christians, we are called to respond to the needs of all our brothers and sisters, but those with the greatest need require the greatest response." (*Economic Justice for All, A Pastoral Letter 1986*) And Pope Benedict XVI, in his first encyclical, reminded us, "The Church cannot and must not take upon herself the political battle to bring about the most just society possible. She cannot and must not replace the State. Yet at the same time she cannot and must not remain on the sidelines in the fight for justice. She has to play her part through rational argument and she has to reawaken the spiritual energy without which justice, which always demands sacrifice, cannot prevail and prosper." (*God Is Love, 2005*) It is in that context that I come before you today.

## Background

In 1917, recognizing the significant role of the Catholic Church's charitable efforts to serve the poor in our State, the New York State Legislature passed a Special Act formally incorporating Catholic Charities agencies in each of the eight Dioceses in New York State. In 2009 Catholic Charities in New York State provided total services valued at more than \$1.7 billion. We provided approximately 1.3 million services to more than 1 million persons of all faiths and all age categories. We provide services in each of the state's 62 counties, and have a long-term commitment to both inner-city and rural communities. Catholic Charities employs more than 22,000 people, and utilizes the services of more than 18,000 volunteers. Clearly Catholic Charities' presence in New York State is not only extensive but indispensable.

As the charitable human services arm of the Catholic Church, Catholic Charities works closely with the 1,500 parishes (with some 7.3 million parishioners) located in every community throughout the state. Parish communities are important resources in the delivery of emergency and community-building services. New Yorkers in need regularly come to Catholic parishes with requests for assistance when they feel they have no place else to turn, and the parishes are serving as the true safety net for these individuals and families.

In 2006, Catholic Charities USA developed and produced a policy paper entitled "Poverty in America: A Threat to the Common Good". That paper opens with the following statement: "Poverty in the United States is a moral and social wound in the soul of our country. It is an ongoing disaster that threatens the health and well-being of our nation. We have the resources, experience, and knowledge to virtually eliminate poverty, especially long-term poverty, but we do not yet have the political will." That document sets a goal of steadily decreasing poverty to at least cut it in half by the year 2020. The NYS Council of Catholic Charities Directors supports this initiative and provided the impetus for the national campaign by encouraging the Roman Catholic Bishops of New York State to issue a pastoral letter on society's responsibility to the poor and vulnerable entitled "Restoring the Covenant" in 2005. In that document the Bishops' pointed out "that in fiscally difficult times sacrifices must be made by all and not unfairly borne by those most in need". They also state that "we understand that to honor this Covenant will require both reallocation and enhancement of public and private resources." With that as a backdrop we encourage all to work together to create a more just society.

## **Current Fiscal Situation**

The New York State Council of Catholic Charities Directors wishes to express our understanding for and acknowledgement of the difficult decisions that you and your partners in government face as we move into the future. At the same time, we urge you to continue to seek strategies that do the least harm possible to our most vulnerable citizens. Many factors have brought us to the present moment of deep economic distress. It is a fact that during the years of "plenty," the gap between the working poor and the rest of society only widened. One need look no further than around our own state to see the rise in poverty levels in urban and rural communities. In short, the poor did not benefit previously and should not be negatively impacted currently. Social policies and budgetary cuts which further deteriorate the quality of life of our most vulnerable citizens will only increase the cost to our state and the neighborhoods and communities encompassed therein.

Prior to the current economic crisis, our agencies have expended considerable voluntary dollars in meeting the needs of the poor, including the subsidization of a variety of state and local funding initiatives. The last two years have seen a significant spike in requests for assistance, particularly in the areas of basic necessities, housing and employment. While we will continue to do our best, we know that we will not be able to fill the gap that will be created by a further sharp decline in state support. We respectfully urge all parties to proceed cautiously and to keep in mind that our state has a legal, moral and ethical obligation to care for the poor and vulnerable. As Article XVII Section 1 of the New York State Constitution states, "The aid, care, and support of the needy are public concerns and shall be provided by the state..." We also continue to see many New Yorkers who require the assistance of government to move toward self sufficiency. In difficult economic times the needs for services increase. We are concerned that the poor and vulnerable populations, who are so often voiceless in the halls of government, have the supports that are necessary to live a life of dignity.

## **Proposed Executive Budget**

The Executive Budget that was presented by Governor Andrew M. Cuomo on February 1, 2011 was described as "a plan that reduces our state's current year deficit without raising taxes. The budget outlines a broad effort to redesign and reinvent our state government with the goal of producing long term cost savings and better services to our people." We hope these goals can be achieved, but are concerned about some of the proposals presented. Of course there are many ideas that we believe are worthy of support and in some instances long overdue.



Winston Churchill described Russia as "a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma." The same might be said of the Executive Budget. There is much that is not clear or is put off for later decisions. The proposal calls for a reduction of \$2.85 billion for Medicaid spending. How that reduction is to be achieved is left up to the Medicaid Redesign Task Force to determine. In the area of behavioral health and developmental disabilities services, some of the options that we understand are on the table for consideration make a lot of sense. Other options raise concern about the impact they would have on services currently being delivered.

We recognize that there is a significant deficit that must be addressed. These are difficult times and tough choices have to be made. However, we strongly feel that those who are currently underserved can't be asked to give even more. The basic public assistance grant that had not been increased for 18 years until 2009 is slated for delay. We find that unacceptable. The third year of incremental increases was scheduled for July 1, 2011, and the delay would move the implementation back to July 1, 2012, saving a reported \$29.3 million. The increase has to be looked at in context. The scheduled increase was making up for the extended period that the public assistance grant was kept flat. With the scheduled increase, the adjustment would amount to a modest increase of less than 1.5 percent per year over a twenty year period.

The implementation of full family sanctions is also of concern. Currently a household where an adult is non-compliant with work requirements receives a reduced level of benefits. The proposed change would mean that a family with an adult who was non-compliant with work requirements on two or more occasions would lose all benefits. It is our belief that a number of children will require placement at an increased cost to the state if this proposal is implemented.

We are also concerned about cuts to many programs that have previously been supported by TANF dollars in the Office of Temporary and Disabilities proposed budget. Approximately \$70 million in funding for programs last year have been eliminated in this year's proposed budget. These cuts will seriously erode the quality of life for our sisters and brothers who find themselves at risk of homelessness, who are seeking help with providing for their families and who are struggling to ensure quality care for their children so that they can work.

Cuts to housing programs that were supported with TANF funds, such as the Supportive Housing for Families and Young Adults, Homeless Prevention, Emergency Homeless and the Supplemental Homeless Intervention Program, will end up costing our local and state governments more in emergency shelter costs. This is on top of cuts already absorbed by these programs in recent years.

The funding for the Single Room Occupancy, Homeless Intervention Program, Homeless Prevention Program and Support for AIDS Housing are combined into a Housing Assistance appropriation. All four programs provide valuable services and could use additional funding. It is not clear how the agency will determine priorities across and among these programs with \$1 million less to spend.

The proposed redesign of Neighborhood and Rural Preservation Program funding raises a number of questions beyond the reduced level of funding. We believe these programs continue to provide a valuable resource in both urban and rural communities. The integrity of these not-for-profit programs needs to be protected and existing providers who are doing good work should be allowed to continue providing housing counseling and preservation services. The proposed reduction in funding is also on top of additional cuts that have been imposed in recent years. There does appear to be some recognition of a continuing need for affordable housing and that is appreciated.

The elimination of state funding for NYC Work Advantage Program and reduced funding for the NYC Adult Homeless Shelter System would appear to be shifting responsibility for funding these programs to New York City at a time when they may be ill prepared to take on this added responsibility.

We also are concerned by the elimination of funding for Advantage Schools and the Summer Youth Employment Program. The Advantage Schools program serves students statewide and is critical to connecting youth development to academic improvement and to providing a safe and nurturing environment for children and teenagers after school. The Summer Youth Employment program keeps youth constructively occupied and learning employment skills during the break from school in July and August. We must continue to make these investments in our children, in our future.

We are concerned about the elimination of TANF funding for Transitional Jobs and Wheels to Work programs. These programs make it possible for employers to hire individuals who need training to fully perform the required tasks and for employees to get to locations where employment may be available. Funding for the Refugee Resettlement Assistance Program is also eliminated. These programs assist refugees and asylees with services leading to the attainment of citizenship status and developing self sufficiency skills. The list goes on and there are no easy answers. But we must do better.

Juvenile justice reform is needed and is a priority agenda item for the Council of Catholic Charities Directors and the NYS Catholic Conference during the current year. As with most things "the devil is in the details." The state's current juvenile justice system serves neither the offender nor the society well and must

be reformed. Prevention programs for at-risk and court involved youth are critical and we must recommit funds for them, to better serve both the youth and to prevent crimes before they occur. Quality rehabilitative services for youth in juvenile justice facilities need to be developed to prevent recidivism. This saves money and lives and improves the quality of life for the entire community. A cut in child welfare funding seems to run counter to these objectives. Eliminating funding for contract programs, including Home Visiting and Community Optional Preventive Services, and utilizing half of the savings to create a Primary Prevention Incentive Program will reduce preventive services. Likewise, reducing the state share of the Adoption Subsidy may reduce the number of difficult-to-place youth going into permanent homes and staying out of the juvenile justice system. The elimination of funding for the Maternity and Early Childhood Foundation raises similar concerns. This program, which has a 27-year history of assisting young, low-income mothers deliver healthy babies and learn how to care for them, represents quality prevention services at an even earlier stage. The elimination of funding for a Safe Harbour for sexually exploited youth is also difficult to comprehend. It took many years to get funding established and before it gets off the ground funding is eliminated.

One of the few revenue enhancers in the proposed budget is an increase in the fee for child abuse and maltreatment background checks. The current fee of \$5 would rise to \$60. This added cost in most cases would have to be borne by not-for-profit agencies. We agree the background checks should be performed, but their cost should be reimbursed by the state and not absorbed by service providers.

In the areas of alcohol and substance abuse treatment, the available treatment options will not keep pace with the existing need for services. The same is true for mental health services. People are struggling and are in need of assistance. We as a state cannot abandon them. We support the concept of performance- and evidenced-based contracting. However, quality programming cannot be done on the cheap.

Many of the direct care human services employees who would have benefited from 1.2 percent Cost of Living Adjustment that has been again postponed are among the working poor. This supplement has been delayed too long as is and in most cases would go right back into the economy at a time that it is much needed. The desired goal of "shared sacrifice" sounds equitable, but it is clear that not everyone has the same capacity to contribute to the effort. In the same way, many of the service cuts appear to be "penny wise and pound foolish." The short term savings ultimately result in greater long term cost.

The state agency mergers that are included in the Executive Budget are believed to be just the tip of the iceberg. The merger of the Department of Correctional Services and the Division of Parole is purported to have a goal of seamless assessment and service delivery within the criminal justice system. We will work with the new Department of Corrections and Community Supervision to address factors essential to successful community re-entry. The closing of facilities will be difficult, but necessary to reduce excess capacity. The taskforce to recommend the specific facilities to be closed must look toward maximizing rehabilitative services at a reduced cost.

The Spending and Government Efficiency (SAGE) Commission is tasked with identifying other rightsizing opportunities to reduce agencies, authorities and commissions by 20 percent. Other mergers as they are proposed will need to achieve the efficiencies and cost savings laid out in the Executive Budget while having a dual focus of maintaining quality and reducing cost. Not an easy chore, but necessary and possible.

It appears that there is a desire on just about everyone's part to reduce unnecessary mandates, redundant reporting and duplicative reviews that add cost to the human services system without improving services. Such an effort should produce many benefits in both efficiency and quality. We need to treat this crisis as an opportunity, and if done properly, all parties benefit. The recipient of services and the taxpayers that pay for them (not mutually exclusive categories) can both end up in a better place.

Catholic's from across the state will be visiting the Capitol en masse on Tuesday, March 8, for the NYS Catholic Conference's Public Policy Forum; and we will be advocating for funding for these programs that provide necessary services for the poor and vulnerable. If we can be helpful in making clear the impact the absence of these programs will have, we stand ready to do so.

### **Conclusion**

It is our hope that humane and wise decisions will be made to deal with the current crisis, decisions that do not add further stress and hopelessness to those already struggling with great burdens. The State Legislature has a history of identifying services that are essential to their constituents and finding a way to address those needs. We can and must find a way to arrive at a balanced budget that does not further jeopardize the poor and vulnerable members of our society, a budget that affirms the dignity of all our state's people. We stand ready to work with you in achieving this laudable goal.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our thoughts and concerns as the Legislature reviews the difficult choices that are ahead.

**Early Care & Learning Council  
Testimony on Child Care in the State Budget**

**Marsha Bashe  
Executive Director**

**February 16, 2011**

Good morning and thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony and input on Governor Cuomo's proposed budget for New York State. My name is Marsha Basloe and I am the Executive Director of the Early Care & Learning Council, which is a statewide, not-for-profit organization, whose mission is to promote excellence in early care and education with equal access for all families. We do this primarily through the support of, and in partnership with, a strong network of community-based organizations that provide Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) services. We work in collaboration with other early care and education professionals and organizations towards the establishment of a comprehensive system that responds to the needs of all families regardless of income, cultural background or family composition; adequately prepares and compensates the early childhood workforce; and involves all segments of the state and local community in the planning process. The Council provides training, technical assistance, data collection, information and public education services to organizations, state and local government, businesses and concerned individuals across the state. We support Governor Cuomo's continued investment in the work of the CCR&R network statewide.

I am also testifying today on behalf of Winning Beginning NY, the statewide coalition of more than 60 organizations and individuals committed to quality early learning opportunities for all children, beginning at birth. Winning Beginning NY works to inform policymakers and the public about the many benefits of early learning to children, families and society and to build broad-based support for making investment in quality early care and education a top priority in New York State. The coalition is co-convened by the Early Care & Learning Council, the

Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy, the New York State Association for the Education of Young and the Center for Children's Initiatives.

The Early Care & Learning Council and *Winning Beginning NY* support Governor Cuomo's continued investment in universal pre-kindergarten. However, we urge the Legislature to address a number of issues that were not included in the Executive Budget. Specifically, we ask you to:

- Maintain funding for child care subsidies;
- Maintain funding for enhanced Infant and Toddler Resource Centers;
- Restore funding for the home visiting programs;
- Build on the progress made in establishing QUALITYstarsNY.

### **Child Care Subsidies**

Child care is an infrastructure support for children, for families and for communities. Parents need affordable care that supports their ability to work. According to a U.S. Census Bureau and American Community Survey, 36.4% of New York State families with children four years old or younger live at less than 185% of the poverty level. Many of these low-income families need child care. A recent report by the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (NACCRRRA) cites the cost of child care in New York as among the highest in the nation. Yet, New York State does not provide sufficient financial support to parents who cannot easily afford child care. While funding for child care subsidies in NYS was at \$929 million in FY 2004-05, it has dropped to \$905 million seven years later, despite the economic hardships families are facing and the increasing rate of inflation. The state's Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) includes federal child

care block grant funding and the TANF funding earmarked for child care. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) stimulus funding was able to provide a temporary reprieve from the increasing demands on the subsidy system as wages were falling and more families were seeking financial assistance. The loss of the ARRA funding this year will result in a loss of \$48 million to New York State. Of that, \$42 million was allocated to localities for child care subsidies. The effect of the loss of ARRA funds could reduce capacity for full-time year-round care for more than 6,000 children whose parents are working and contributing to the stability of New York State's economy. In addition, the remaining \$6 million represented important investments in quality improvements. This decrease and continued lack of investment in child care will continue to impact the ability of low-income families to access care and remain in the workforce.

Child care can account for up to 50% of the family budget, outpacing even rent or mortgage. New York State continues to fall short in meeting the need for financial assistance with child care, with tens of thousands of income-eligible families on the waiting list for subsidies. In the last fiscal year, local counties were facing increasing demand for care and with limited resources were forced to continue to further reduce eligibility and raise fees, placing even greater pressure on working families across the state.

The 2011 Executive Budget also proposes eliminating \$7 million earmarked TANF funding for child care. This will eliminate funding for the child care demonstration projects that provide subsidies to working families. It will also greatly reduce funding for SUNY/CUNY child care, which support low-income students enrolled in a two-year college program. In addition, New York must absorb



a reduction in the federal child care block grant of \$6.3 million. These cuts place additional pressure on the ability of the state to support both quality initiatives and subsidies to families.

We ask that New York State restore the \$55M lost through the elimination of ARRA funding and the reduction in TANF allocations for child care.

In addition to this budget request, we ask that the state establish consistent child care subsidy eligibility rules. Eligibility and parent fees should not be determined county by county. Statewide standards would provide equity for all New York State children and families.

### **Infant and Toddler Regional Centers**

The reduction in the quality dollars will greatly reduce funding for the Infant and Toddler Resource Centers and Infant and Toddler Quality Initiatives. Research clearly documents the importance of the first three years of life in shaping the emotional, social, and cognitive development of children. Our future prosperity depends on the health, education, and workforce productivity of our citizens and the foundation for all of those is laid in the infant and toddler years when brains are developing rapidly.

With approximately 55% of all young children in New York in child care, there is a compelling need to focus specific resources on our very youngest learners. The seven Regional Infant Toddler (IT) Resource Centers serve every county in the state by promoting excellence in IT services in all settings. The IT Centers offer

direct services to the early care and education community including intensive technical assistance, training, coaching, resource information, and linkages to other social and community supports. They also serve as a best practice information center for parents, the regional Office of Children and Family Services licensing offices, and other professionals working with this age group. The Early Care & Learning Council has supported and guided best practices in each of the Regional IT Centers, mentored and trained the IT specialists, and helped set statewide goals and guidelines for further development.

Every \$1 spent on early care and education in New York State creates a \$1.86 return on investment that goes back into local economies creating jobs and supporting working parents. It is for this reason that the Early Care & Learning Council requests support for the maintenance of the 2010 \$2 million allocation in funding for the Infant and Toddler Project in the Office of Children and Family Services Budget. In 2010, we were able to maximize the impact of investments from the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA) by building upon the existing network of the regional Infant Toddler Resource Centers previously funded at \$1.1 million. The Governor's Executive Budget includes \$1.1 million and will not support the continued employment of newly trained Infant Toddler Specialists across the State. In 2010, an expanded network of Infant Toddler Specialists was trained, developed and coordinated by the Early Care & Learning Council, Regional IT Resource Centers and our CCR&R network.

The development of a standardized evaluation system for infant toddler centers with highly qualified evaluation staff, expansion of qualified infant toddler specialists across the state and a social emotional consultation project were just

begun – efforts that are crucial to having a true Infant Toddler System in New York State! Together these resources provide a framework that has proven invaluable for design, implementation, evaluation and future replication of best practices related to care and well being of infants, toddlers and their families. The Infant Toddler Project at the Early Care & Learning Council is building capacity for services in New York State by providing the development of a system for NYS Infants and Toddlers to improve early education in our state.

We do not think that core infrastructure components needed to support quality service delivery to a very under-served vulnerable population should be cut simply because they were ARRA-funded and do not have the same history as other programs. It is easier to cut this service because it is framed as ARRA, rather than taking a more thoughtful approach to the question of how to handle shrinkage of system components that are difficult to build back up and replace. We ask that you look at maintaining investments to our system components to provide services to our most vulnerable population, our infants and toddlers, the future generation. We can either pay now to build a solid foundation for our children or pay much more later to fix problems in health, learning, and criminal behavior.

### **Home Visiting Programs**

Home visiting relies on home visitors—either nurses or other trained personnel—to provide regular home visits to educate expectant and new parents about prenatal care, infant care, child development and parenting skills. Research shows that home visiting decreases infant mortality rates, helps prevent child abuse, and increases school readiness. The Healthy Families New York (HFNY) home

visiting program is in danger of elimination because of its inclusion in the Primary Prevention Incentive Program (PPIP) proposed in the 2011 Executive Budget.

In addition, funding streams that support the Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP) and The Parent-Child Home Program (PCHP)—Community Optional Preventive Services (COPS) and the Hoyt Family Trust, respectively—are included in the PPIP and face elimination. The establishment of the PPIP, intended to prevent unnecessary foster care placements and other more costly supports, will have the opposite impact. It will create a domino effect. Children and families will go unserved because the PPIP will only reinvest 50% of the savings from restructuring, pit programs that serve different populations against each other, and require a 38% match from counties that they do not have. This will dismantle the state system, which is essential to localities providing services. Families in need that go unserved in the earliest years will end up needing costly remediation services later on.

Any reduction in funding for home visiting will also disqualify New York State from applying for millions in federal aid by not meeting Maintenance of Effort (MOE) requirements. We cannot pass up these much-needed resources, which would help us expand and improve our existing system.

New York State is a leader for home visiting in the U.S. It has taken us nearly 20 years to build this system of home visiting supports and services. Once the infrastructure (including research, training, and central administration) has been destroyed, it will take years to rebuild. We urge you to rethink the PPIP and fully restore funding for home visiting programs—including Healthy Families New

York (\$23M), Community Optional Preventive Services (\$4.3M), and the Hoyt Family Trust (\$1.2M).

### **QUALITYstarsNY**

In New York State, we are working to fully implement a QUALITYstarsNY five-star rating system. In FY 2010-2011 the state invested ARRA funding and leveraged private funding which allowed for a field test the program at 200 locations in 13 communities across the state. With this system, child care providers get a “star rating,” much like those used for restaurants or hotels. Such a system looks to support providers as they work to raise the standard of care. Twenty-four other states already have such a system underway.

A modest investment of \$3 million in FY2011-2012 will allow QSNY to more than double participation—reaching close to 500 programs and providers. Federal benchmarks for states’ QRIS are forthcoming. An investment from New York State will ensure that the state will be eligible for federal funding and will leverage private support to QSNY.

We ask New York State to increase its current investment to \$3 million to build on the success of the first year field test. We are extremely committed to the future of our State’s children and would like to see this investment come to fruition as QUALITYstarsNY enters the next phase towards full implementation.

We appreciate the opportunity to come before you today to present testimony on the Executive Budget and look forward to working with you to ensure that all of New York’s children have a Winning Beginning.

We understand the troubling fiscal and economic climate in New York State. There is no doubt that tough decisions need to be made that will have an impact on all New Yorkers. However, crisis brings opportunity. I believe there is an opportunity for New York State to take better advantage of their partnerships with community based organizations such as CCR&Rs in order to continue to deliver essential programs and services to children and families, while avoiding continued deficits. Thank you for the opportunity to provide our comments to you.



*Formerly the New York City AIDS Housing Network (NYCAHN)*

**Testimony by VOCAL New York (Voices Of Community Activists & Leaders)**

**Submitted for the Joint Legislative Budget Hearing: Human Services**

**February 16, 2011**

***For more information, contact Jaron Benjamin - [jaron@vocal-ny.org](mailto:jaron@vocal-ny.org) or (718) 864-3932.***

VOCAL New York supports including language in the budget that will prevent homelessness for thousands of low-income New Yorkers living with HIV/AIDS and their families who rely on public rental subsidies. Specifically, we support language that would enact the 30 percent rent cap (formerly S2664/A2565) that as approved by the Senate with strong bipartisan support twice in 2009 and 2010 and the Assembly in 2010.

The past bill language we are referring to is:

AN ACT to amend the social services law, in relation to limiting the percentage of income payable towards shelter costs by persons with HIV or AIDS:

**The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:**

- 1 Section 1. Section 131-a of the social services law is amended by
- 2 adding a new subdivision 14 to read as follows:
- 3 **14. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, each person living**
- 4 **with clinical/symptomatic HIV illness or AIDS who is receiving shelter**
- 5 **assistance or an emergency shelter allowance and who resides in a house-**
- 6 **hold that receives unearned and/or earned income shall not be required**
- 7 **to pay more than thirty percent of the household's monthly unearned**
- 8 **and/or earned income towards shelter costs including rent and utilities,**
- 9 **with the remainder paid by public assistance, less any federal funds**
- 10 **which are being used by the localities to pay for housing accommo-**
- 11 **dations.**

This budget language would ensure low-income New Yorkers living with HIV/AIDS and their families who already receive state-funded rental assistance pay no more than 30 percent of their household's monthly income (in most cases disability or veteran's benefits) towards their rent. It would fix an existing rental assistance program, *not* create a new entitlement or expand eligibility, for clients of the HIV/AIDS Services Administration (HASA) who are permanently disabled HIV/AIDS.

About 10,000 New Yorkers permanently disabled by HIV/AIDS and their families are at risk for



***Formerly the New York City AIDS Housing Network (NYCAHN)***

homelessness, and nearly 2,000 more are currently in the shelter system, because of HASAS's current rent budget policy. HASA, a division of the Human Resources Administration (HRA), administers a state-funded rental assistance program for low-income people living with HIV/AIDS, but requires them to pay upwards of 70 percent or more of their federal disability income towards their rent. Each HASA client in the program is budgeted to retain a mere \$359 or less per month for all other expenses regardless of their disability income. This is the only low-income or disability housing assistance program in the state that does not cap the tenant's rent contribution at 30 percent of their income.

The current policy forces tenants to literally choose between paying their rent and other essential needs like visiting the doctor, buying groceries and covering co-payments. Those are difficult choices for any New Yorker to make, but especially low-income people living with HIV/AIDS managing a complex and expensive chronic illness. At least one-quarter of clients in the program fall into arrears every year and one in nine become homeless.

Stable and affordable housing is the foundation for effective HIV/AIDS treatment, care and prevention. Compared with people living with HIV/AIDS who are homeless, those who have stable housing are twice as likely to have an undetectable HIV viral load, indicating better health and a lower risk for transmitting the virus, and one-third less likely to visit the emergency room. One recent study found an 80% drop in mortality among homeless people living with HIV/AIDS who obtained stable and affordable housing compared with those who remain homeless.

Including the 30 percent rent cap affordable housing protection in the budget would produce immediate and direct cost savings by making New York's rental assistance program for people with HIV/AIDS more efficient. The reality is that HASA's current policy results in unnecessary State and City costs by forcing too many clients into expensive emergency housing and arrears. By preventing housing loss, and redirecting spending from emergency housing to ongoing rental assistance, this bill can actually save New York money during a period of fiscal crisis. The increased housing stability produced through this legislation would reduce rent arrears payments and costly evictions, and keep more people with HIV/AIDS in independent housing instead of expensive, substandard commercial SROs (i.e. welfare hotels).

This legislation presents a rare opportunity to save lives by ensuring stable and affordable housing for some of our most vulnerable fellow New Yorkers and save New York City and State money by making our HIV/AIDS rental assistance program more efficient.

Thank you.



**TESTIMONY OF THE NEW YORK STATE  
CATHOLIC CONFERENCE**

**REGARDING THE 2011-2012  
HUMAN SERVICES BUDGET**

**PRESENTED ON BEHALF OF  
THE COUNCIL OF CATHOLIC CHARITIES  
DIRECTORS**

**BY  
EARL EICHELBERGER  
DIRECTOR FOR CATHOLIC CHARITIES  
NEW YORK STATE  
CATHOLIC CONFERENCE**

**Albany, New York  
February 16, 2011**

## Introduction

Good morning! My name is Earl Eichelberger and I serve as the Director for Catholic Charities at the New York State Catholic Conference and Executive Secretary to the New York State Council of Catholic Charities Directors. The New York State Catholic Conference represents the Bishops of the eight dioceses of New York State in matters of public policy. In the human service arena, the expertise, experience and advice of the Council of Catholic Charities Directors guides the Conference. The Catholic Church is the largest non-profit provider of education, health care and human services in the state. Catholic Charities programs exist in all eight dioceses to provide services to people in need. Our Catholic tradition compels us to be active participants in the civic life of our community, to fashion a more just world that upholds the dignity of every individual and to serve those in need. The needs of the poor and vulnerable must not be ignored. A key measure of any society is how the most vulnerable members are cared for; those with the greatest need are due special attention. There is a long history in New York State of government and not-for-profit providers collaborating to deliver services in a cost-effective manner. This public/private partnership in support of the poor and vulnerable must be maintained.

I am here on behalf of a "special interest." I am unapologetically here to speak on behalf of the poor and vulnerable. Catholic social teaching requires me to do so. The Old Testament tells me to "Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy." (Proverbs 31:8-9) The New Testament tells me we will be judged by what we do for the poor and the vulnerable when the Lord said "Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for these least brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." (Matthew 25:40) The U.S. Catholic Bishops wrote, "As Christians, we are called to respond to the needs of all our brothers and sisters, but those with the greatest need require the greatest response." (*Economic Justice for All, A Pastoral Letter 1986*) And Pope Benedict XVI, in his first encyclical, reminded us, "The Church cannot and must not take upon herself the political battle to bring about the most just society possible. She cannot and must not replace the State. Yet at the same time she cannot and must not remain on the sidelines in the fight for justice. She has to play her part through rational argument and she has to reawaken the spiritual energy without which justice, which always demands sacrifice, cannot prevail and prosper." (*God Is Love, 2005*) It is in that context that I come before you today.

## Background

In 1917, recognizing the significant role of the Catholic Church's charitable efforts to serve the poor in our State, the New York State Legislature passed a Special Act formally incorporating Catholic Charities agencies in each of the eight Dioceses in New York State. In 2009 Catholic Charities in New York State provided total services valued at more than \$1.7 billion. We provided approximately 1.3 million services to more than 1 million persons of all faiths and all age categories. We provide services in each of the state's 62 counties, and have a long-term commitment to both inner-city and rural communities. Catholic Charities employs more than 22,000 people, and utilizes the services of more than 18,000 volunteers. Clearly Catholic Charities' presence in New York State is not only extensive but indispensable.

As the charitable human services arm of the Catholic Church, Catholic Charities works closely with the 1,500 parishes (with some 7.3 million parishioners) located in every community throughout the state. Parish communities are important resources in the delivery of emergency and community-building services. New Yorkers in need regularly come to Catholic parishes with requests for assistance when they feel they have no place else to turn, and the parishes are serving as the true safety net for these individuals and families.

In 2006, Catholic Charities USA developed and produced a policy paper entitled "Poverty in America: A Threat to the Common Good". That paper opens with the following statement: "Poverty in the United States is a moral and social wound in the soul of our country. It is an ongoing disaster that threatens the health and well-being of our nation. We have the resources, experience, and knowledge to virtually eliminate poverty, especially long-term poverty, but we do not yet have the political will." That document sets a goal of steadily decreasing poverty to at least cut it in half by the year 2020. The NYS Council of Catholic Charities Directors supports this initiative and provided the impetus for the national campaign by encouraging the Roman Catholic Bishops of New York State to issue a pastoral letter on society's responsibility to the poor and vulnerable entitled "Restoring the Covenant" in 2005. In that document the Bishops' pointed out "that in fiscally difficult times sacrifices must be made by all and not unfairly borne by those most in need". They also state that "we understand that to honor this Covenant will require both reallocation and enhancement of public and private resources." With that as a backdrop we encourage all to work together to create a more just society.

## **Current Fiscal Situation**

The New York State Council of Catholic Charities Directors wishes to express our understanding for and acknowledgement of the difficult decisions that you and your partners in government face as we move into the future. At the same time, we urge you to continue to seek strategies that do the least harm possible to our most vulnerable citizens. Many factors have brought us to the present moment of deep economic distress. It is a fact that during the years of "plenty," the gap between the working poor and the rest of society only widened. One need look no further than around our own state to see the rise in poverty levels in urban and rural communities. In short, the poor did not benefit previously and should not be negatively impacted currently. Social policies and budgetary cuts which further deteriorate the quality of life of our most vulnerable citizens will only increase the cost to our state and the neighborhoods and communities encompassed therein.

Prior to the current economic crisis, our agencies have expended considerable voluntary dollars in meeting the needs of the poor, including the subsidization of a variety of state and local funding initiatives. The last two years have seen a significant spike in requests for assistance, particularly in the areas of basic necessities, housing and employment. While we will continue to do our best, we know that we will not be able to fill the gap that will be created by a further sharp decline in state support. We respectfully urge all parties to proceed cautiously and to keep in mind that our state has a legal, moral and ethical obligation to care for the poor and vulnerable. As Article XVII Section 1 of the New York State Constitution states, "The aid, care, and support of the needy are public concerns and shall be provided by the state..." We also continue to see many New Yorkers who require the assistance of government to move toward self sufficiency. In difficult economic times the needs for services increase. We are concerned that the poor and vulnerable populations, who are so often voiceless in the halls of government, have the supports that are necessary to live a life of dignity.

## **Proposed Executive Budget**

The Executive Budget that was presented by Governor Andrew M. Cuomo on February 1, 2011 was described as "a plan that reduces our state's current year deficit without raising taxes. The budget outlines a broad effort to redesign and reinvent our state government with the goal of producing long term cost savings and better services to our people." We hope these goals can be achieved, but are concerned about some of the proposals presented. Of course there are many ideas that we believe are worthy of support and in some instances long overdue.

Winston Churchill described Russia as “a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma.” The same might be said of the Executive Budget. There is much that is not clear or is put off for later decisions. The proposal calls for a reduction of \$2.85 billion for Medicaid spending. How that reduction is to be achieved is left up to the Medicaid Redesign Task Force to determine. In the area of behavioral health and developmental disabilities services, some of the options that we understand are on the table for consideration make a lot of sense. Other options raise concern about the impact they would have on services currently being delivered.

We recognize that there is a significant deficit that must be addressed. These are difficult times and tough choices have to be made. However, we strongly feel that those who are currently underserved can't be asked to give even more. The basic public assistance grant that had not been increased for 18 years until 2009 is slated for delay. We find that unacceptable. The third year of incremental increases was scheduled for July 1, 2011, and the delay would move the implementation back to July 1, 2012, saving a reported \$29.3 million. The increase has to be looked at in context. The scheduled increase was making up for the extended period that the public assistance grant was kept flat. With the scheduled increase, the adjustment would amount to a modest increase of less than 1.5 percent per year over a twenty year period.

The implementation of full family sanctions is also of concern. Currently a household where an adult is non-compliant with work requirements receives a reduced level of benefits. The proposed change would mean that a family with an adult who was non-compliant with work requirements on two or more occasions would lose all benefits. It is our belief that a number of children will require placement at an increased cost to the state if this proposal is implemented.

We are also concerned about cuts to many programs that have previously been supported by TANF dollars in the Office of Temporary and Disabilities proposed budget. Approximately \$70 million in funding for programs last year have been eliminated in this year's proposed budget. These cuts will seriously erode the quality of life for our sisters and brothers who find themselves at risk of homelessness, who are seeking help with providing for their families and who are struggling to ensure quality care for their children so that they can work.

Cuts to housing programs that were supported with TANF funds, such as the Supportive Housing for Families and Young Adults, Homeless Prevention, Emergency Homeless and the Supplemental Homeless Intervention Program, will end up costing our local and state governments more in emergency shelter costs. This is on top of cuts already absorbed by these programs in recent years.

The funding for the Single Room Occupancy, Homeless Intervention Program, Homeless Prevention Program and Support for AIDS Housing are combined into a Housing Assistance appropriation. All four programs provide valuable services and could use additional funding. It is not clear how the agency will determine priorities across and among these programs with \$1 million less to spend.

The proposed redesign of Neighborhood and Rural Preservation Program funding raises a number of questions beyond the reduced level of funding. We believe these programs continue to provide a valuable resource in both urban and rural communities. The integrity of these not-for-profit programs needs to be protected and existing providers who are doing good work should be allowed to continue providing housing counseling and preservation services. The proposed reduction in funding is also on top of additional cuts that have been imposed in recent years. There does appear to be some recognition of a continuing need for affordable housing and that is appreciated.

The elimination of state funding for NYC Work Advantage Program and reduced funding for the NYC Adult Homeless Shelter System would appear to be shifting responsibility for funding these programs to New York City at a time when they may be ill prepared to take on this added responsibility.

We also are concerned by the elimination of funding for Advantage Schools and the Summer Youth Employment Program. The Advantage Schools program serves students statewide and is critical to connecting youth development to academic improvement and to providing a safe and nurturing environment for children and teenagers after school. The Summer Youth Employment program keeps youth constructively occupied and learning employment skills during the break from school in July and August. We must continue to make these investments in our children, in our future.

We are concerned about the elimination of TANF funding for Transitional Jobs and Wheels to Work programs. These programs make it possible for employers to hire individuals who need training to fully perform the required tasks and for employees to get to locations where employment may be available. Funding for the Refugee Resettlement Assistance Program is also eliminated. These programs assist refugees and asylees with services leading to the attainment of citizenship status and developing self sufficiency skills. The list goes on and there are no easy answers. But we must do better.

Juvenile justice reform is needed and is a priority agenda item for the Council of Catholic Charities Directors and the NYS Catholic Conference during the current year. As with most things "the devil is in the details." The state's current juvenile justice system serves neither the offender nor the society well and must

be reformed. Prevention programs for at-risk and court involved youth are critical and we must recommit funds for them, to better serve both the youth and to prevent crimes before they occur. Quality rehabilitative services for youth in juvenile justice facilities need to be developed to prevent recidivism. This saves money and lives and improves the quality of life for the entire community. A cut in child welfare funding seems to run counter to these objectives. Eliminating funding for contract programs, including Home Visiting and Community Optional Preventive Services, and utilizing half of the savings to create a Primary Prevention Incentive Program will reduce preventive services. Likewise, reducing the state share of the Adoption Subsidy may reduce the number of difficult-to-place youth going into permanent homes and staying out of the juvenile justice system. The elimination of funding for the Maternity and Early Childhood Foundation raises similar concerns. This program, which has a 27-year history of assisting young, low-income mothers deliver healthy babies and learn how to care for them, represents quality prevention services at an even earlier stage. The elimination of funding for a Safe Harbour for sexually exploited youth is also difficult to comprehend. It took many years to get funding established and before it gets off the ground funding is eliminated.

One of the few revenue enhancers in the proposed budget is an increase in the fee for child abuse and maltreatment background checks. The current fee of \$5 would rise to \$60. This added cost in most cases would have to be borne by not-for-profit agencies. We agree the background checks should be performed, but their cost should be reimbursed by the state and not absorbed by service providers.

In the areas of alcohol and substance abuse treatment, the available treatment options will not keep pace with the existing need for services. The same is true for mental health services. People are struggling and are in need of assistance. We as a state cannot abandon them. We support the concept of performance- and evidenced-based contracting. However, quality programming cannot be done on the cheap.

Many of the direct care human services employees who would have benefited from 1.2 percent Cost of Living Adjustment that has been again postponed are among the working poor. This supplement has been delayed too long as is and in most cases would go right back into the economy at a time that it is much needed. The desired goal of "shared sacrifice" sounds equitable, but it is clear that not everyone has the same capacity to contribute to the effort. In the same way, many of the service cuts appear to be "penny wise and pound foolish." The short term savings ultimately result in greater long term cost.

The state agency mergers that are included in the Executive Budget are believed to be just the tip of the iceberg. The merger of the Department of Correctional Services and the Division of Parole is purported to have a goal of seamless assessment and service delivery within the criminal justice system. We will work with the new Department of Corrections and Community Supervision to address factors essential to successful community re-entry. The closing of facilities will be difficult, but necessary to reduce excess capacity. The taskforce to recommend the specific facilities to be closed must look toward maximizing rehabilitative services at a reduced cost.

The Spending and Government Efficiency (SAGE) Commission is tasked with identifying other rightsizing opportunities to reduce agencies, authorities and commissions by 20 percent. Other mergers as they are proposed will need to achieve the efficiencies and cost savings laid out in the Executive Budget while having a dual focus of maintaining quality and reducing cost. Not an easy chore, but necessary and possible.

It appears that there is a desire on just about everyone's part to reduce unnecessary mandates, redundant reporting and duplicative reviews that add cost to the human services system without improving services. Such an effort should produce many benefits in both efficiency and quality. We need to treat this crisis as an opportunity, and if done properly, all parties benefit. The recipient of services and the taxpayers that pay for them (not mutually exclusive categories) can both end up in a better place.

Catholic's from across the state will be visiting the Capitol en masse on Tuesday, March 8, for the NYS Catholic Conference's Public Policy Forum; and we will be advocating for funding for these programs that provide necessary services for the poor and vulnerable. If we can be helpful in making clear the impact the absence of these programs will have, we stand ready to do so.

## **Conclusion**

It is our hope that humane and wise decisions will be made to deal with the current crisis, decisions that do not add further stress and hopelessness to those already struggling with great burdens. The State Legislature has a history of identifying services that are essential to their constituents and finding a way to address those needs. We can and must find a way to arrive at a balanced budget that does not further jeopardize the poor and vulnerable members of our society, a budget that affirms the dignity of all our state's people. We stand ready to work with you in achieving this laudable goal.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our thoughts and concerns as the Legislature reviews the difficult choices that are ahead.





TESTIMONY

BEFORE

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS  
AND  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

HEARING

ON

THE STATE FISCAL YEAR 2011-2012  
EXECUTIVE BUDGET PROPOSAL

PRESENTED BY  
JEANNE B. MULLGRAV  
COMMISSIONER

NEW YORK CITY  
DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2011

Thank you for this opportunity to present written testimony on the State Fiscal Year 2011-2012 Executive Budget Proposal to the members of the Senate Committee on Finance and Assembly Committee on Ways and Means. I am Jeanne B. Mullgrav, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD).

The City of New York understands that in this challenging economic climate, difficult budget decisions are required. However, the tough choices must be equitable and rational, without unduly shifting the fiscal responsibilities to localities, or disproportionately impacting our young people and the most vulnerable.

### **Impact of State Budget on Social Services**

The Executive Budget proposes a net cut of almost \$400 million in Social Services. Many of these proposals are not simply budget cuts to the programs, but rather a cost shift of spending from the State's budget to the City's. For example, the Governor's budget proposes a \$31 million reduction in support for homeless shelters for single adults in our city; a \$45 million cut in subsidies for children in adoptive homes; and the elimination of \$53 million to cover residential costs of educating severely disabled children. While these reductions are not direct cuts to the programs, they are all State and Federal mandates that the City will have to meet with or without State funding support.

Of particular concern to DYCD are the budget recommendations pertaining to summer jobs funding and the proposed Primary Prevention Incentive Program (PPIP).

### **Summer Youth Employment Program**

As you also heard during Mayor Bloomberg's testimony recently, the City stands to lose almost \$8.5 million in summer jobs funding that would eliminate approximately 5,500 jobs for young people this summer. We understand the current fiscal realities will not enable a \$35 million appropriation, the amount contributed by the State in fiscal years prior to last. As the Legislature did last year, we ask that the State re-affirm its commitment to summer jobs this year to, at minimum, \$15.5 million. As it currently stands, without a commitment of State and Federal support, DYCD will only be able to serve 18,000 young people in the summer of 2011. Consider how dismal this number is compared with meeting the actual needs of young people when over 143,000 applied for a summer job last year.

We were in complete agreement with the Governor's Urban Agenda – The New NY Agenda, that he released last year, before becoming governor, where he highlighted the importance of SYEP and emphasized the critical role of youth employment in building the workforces of tomorrow.

For many youth, a summer job is their first exposure to the real world of work. Early work experience helps teenagers transition into the labor market, which leads to more job opportunities, and a lifetime of higher earning potential. It is also associated with high school completion.

Unfortunately, job prospects for our young people are declining. In New York City, the youth unemployment rate of 36.2% for 16 – 19 year olds is almost four times the adult rate of 9.5%. The unemployment rates for Latino and Black teens are even higher. Without desperately needed subsidized summer jobs, the employment prospects for young people will remain grim.

While providing much-needed employment experience, SYEP also helps to stimulate the economy, with the City's SYEP participants earning \$36.4 million in wages in the summer of 2010. These wages are spent at neighborhood businesses and helps needy families make ends meet.

SYEP is also critical for the nonprofit community, which depends on SYEP participants to staff their summer day camps. These summer camps, in turn, are a crucial resource for thousands of working parents.

We cannot dismiss the current and future employment challenges our young people face if we are sincerely committed to rebuilding a stronger and better New York.

### **Youth Development and Preventive Services**

Equally as disappointing is the Governor's budget proposal of a new Primary Prevention Incentive Program (PPIP), which consolidates a wide variety of child welfare, juvenile justice, and youth development programs into one competitive block grant. This proposal eliminates \$85 million in existing youth and family services to create the new PPIP block grant to be funded at \$35 million. In addition to the reduction, tremendous uncertainty is unnecessarily introduced by the creation of a grant that will be allocated to local social services districts on a competitive basis. This proposal will have a detrimental impact on the delivery of vital and unique high quality services to young people and their families in cities and counties across the State. Specifically, this proposal will:

1. Eliminate formula-based allocation
  - a. The PPIP block grant will eliminate objective formula-based allocations to counties based on youth demographics and poverty indicators.
  - b. Allocation to local social services districts on a competitive basis will place jurisdictions across the state at risk of losing youth development and delinquency prevention funding altogether.
  - c. This will dismantle the Youth Bureau system, an infrastructure that enables counties and municipalities to quickly allocate, administer, coordinate and facilitate youth and family services that meet local needs.
2. Impose a disproportionate cut in youth services funding
  - a. The Executive Budget recommends eliminating \$85 million in youth and family services and replacing that cut with \$35 million into the PPIP block grant. This represents nearly a 60% budget cut, the highest percentage reduction of any social services programs.



5. Undermine the efforts of the City and State in being national leaders in addressing the needs of runaway, homeless and sexually exploited youth.

Eliminating funding for runaway, homeless and sexually exploited youth services undermine the progress New York State and its localities have made in this area. Services for runaway and homeless youth are essential in the City of New York, where estimates of the homeless youth population range as high as 20,000, while our crisis shelter beds are full each night.

Thank you for this opportunity to share our concerns. We are proud of the work we have done to earn our reputation as leaders in the field of youth services. In addition to our efforts to support runaway and homeless youth, the Summer Youth Employment Program is a national model of excellence and efficiency, while the Out-of-School Time Program has been recognized as a high-quality, effective afterschool program which meets the needs of young people and parents, keeps students on track to graduate, encourages lifelong learning, prepares them for the world of work and promotes positive social interactions. As the budget process advances, we look forward to working with the State Legislature to develop sound solutions to continue these investments we have already made in our young people.

We urge you and your colleagues to once again demonstrate your commitment to our young people and make them a priority in the SFY 2011-12 Budget. Specifically, we ask you to:

1. Restore funding for summer jobs at a minimum of \$15.5 million, the partial restoration allocated last year.
2. Oppose the new Primary Prevention Incentive Program and the disproportionate funding cut to youth and family services. Instead, continue to provide dedicated funding to youth bureaus across the state to meet the various needs of young people while yielding greater cost efficiencies than the PPIP proposal.



**TESTIMONY**

submitted by

**Lilliam Barrios-Paoli**

**Commissioner**

at a hearing on

*the FY 11-12 Executive Budget Proposal for Human Services*

before the

**New York State Assembly Ways and Means and Senate Finance Committees**

on

Wednesday, February 16, 2011

9:30AM

Legislation Office Building  
181 State Street, Hearing Room B

Albany, NY

My name is Lilliam Barrios-Paoli and I am the Commissioner of the New York City Department for the Aging (DFTA). I am pleased to submit this testimony in response to the FY 2011-12 New York State Executive Budget. I would like to thank Chairmen Farrell and DeFrancisco and the members of the Assembly Ways and Means Committee and Senate Finance Committee for holding this hearing.

The Department for the Aging provides services to a diverse and rapidly growing population of older adults—a number expected to increase by close to 50 percent in New York City by 2030. Our seniors are living longer than ever before but also are growing poorer. Between 1990 and 2005, poverty among older New Yorkers increased by 23%. The City's Center for Economic Opportunity estimates that 32% of seniors in New York City live in poverty—the majority of whom are women. In light of the challenges presented by our growing senior population, the Department's primary goal and focus under my direction has been to provide senior services that are competently and compassionately delivered while also being efficient and cost effective.

DFTA fully understands that the Governor and the Legislature are facing an unprecedented deficit and will need to make many painful choices in order to close the vast budget gap. For FY 10-11, the State Office for the Aging (SOFA) was subject to a cut of \$5 million to its core services including: \$2 million to EISEP (Expanded In-Home Services for the Elderly Program); \$2 million to SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program); and \$1 million to CSE (Community Services for the Elderly). In addition, the Department received a funding loss of about \$400K, representing a 1% reduction in reimbursement. The funding loss to DFTA this year is about \$2.5 million, of which \$2 million will be carried over into the next State Fiscal Year. In the FY 11-12 Executive budget, funding for several initiatives that serve the elderly in our State are eliminated, including caregiver respite programs; the Congregate Services Initiative (impact of more than \$300,000 to DFTA); Elder Abuse Education and Outreach Programs; Social Adult Day Services; and Foster Grandparent programs (impact of \$34,000 to DFTA), among others. In light of DFTA's relatively small overall budget in comparison with other city agencies, these reductions will have a real impact on our service providers, who already are struggling to stay afloat in today's fiscal climate. However difficult these cuts may be, we view them as an appropriate response to the State's fiscal troubles and proportionate to the modest size of aging services budgets in the State. I echo Mayor Bloomberg's stance that we are willing to do our share to help reduce spending in New York State, as long as we are treated equitably and appropriately in comparison to the overall size of our budget.

Now, I would like to discuss a proposed reduction to the Department for the Aging's budget which lacks the same equity or appropriateness. The loss of the discretionary portion of Title XX funding would devastate senior services in New York City. New York State receives about \$103 million in Title XX (Social Service Block Grant) funding. In turn, the City's Human Resources Administration receives approximately \$65 million of these funds through the State Office of Children and Family Services—nearly \$40 million of which is used to provide mandated services. The remainder, nearly \$25 million, is discretionary funding for social services that the City has traditionally allocated to DFTA to fund senior centers. The State has proposed to shift the discretionary Title XX funding to Child Welfare. In-function, this supplanting eliminates the discretionary portion of Title XX funding to the City and would result in a loss of \$25 million to

City by the World Health Organization and we continue to work hard to live up to this honor. However, the loss of the Title XX funding will decimate aging services. We are willing to stand with the State and shoulder our share of the reductions that we know are required during this most difficult period. However, the loss of Title XX discretionary funding for aging services in New York City does not represent an equitable cut but a complete evisceration of a system that has been in place for nearly 40 years. We ask the members of the Legislature to remember these facts as you are negotiating the budget and to work with the Governor to adopt a budget that is tough but fair and that leaves a safety net for some of our State's most vulnerable residents. Thank you for your attention to these matters.



**Joint Legislative Public Hearing: Human Services  
2011-2012 Executive Budget Proposal  
Wednesday, February 16th, 2011**

**Written Testimony Submitted by John B. Mattingly,  
Commissioner, NYC Children's Services**

**NYC** Administration for  
Children's Services



I am John B. Mattingly, Commissioner of New York City's Administration for Children's Services (ACS). I would like to submit for the record this written testimony on behalf of the agency. Children's Services is New York City's child welfare agency, committed to protecting children, strengthening families and providing child care and Head Start services. In 2010, Children's Services merged with New York City's Department of Juvenile Justice. We are now responsible for operating the City's juvenile detention system and continuing to develop and implement a continuum of community based alternatives to detention and placement. Our agency touches the lives of many New Yorkers. Just as an example, we conduct about 60,000 investigations of child abuse and neglect annually, and at any point in time, provide preventive services to almost 23,000 children and their families, protective services to approximately 10,000 children and their families, and foster care services to 15,000 children.

We appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony today on the proposed 2011-2012 Executive Budget. From the outset, I must state our serious concerns about the social service proposals contained within this Budget. On behalf of the vulnerable children and families that our agency serves, I ask you today for your leadership and advocacy in protecting New York City's children from the harm that these proposals would undoubtedly inflict. I must also mention that these cuts and cost shifts will harm localities across the State, whether they are large cities like ours or small counties.

The Governor's proposals which directly impact Children's Services must be considered in the larger context of the proposed human services Budget. The Executive Budget proposes a net cut of over \$370 million in Social Services in City fiscal years 11 and 12 combined. Much of this is a cost shift of spending from the State's budget to the City's. For example, the budget proposes the elimination of \$53 million to cover residential costs of educating severely handicapped children, a \$31 million reduction in support for homeless shelters for single adults in our city; and a \$45 million cut in subsidies for children in adoptive homes. These services are all mandated by the state and federal governments – and the City will have no recourse but to fulfill them, State cuts or not. While we understand the State's difficult financial situation, we cannot in good conscience stand back while these costs are passed on to localities.

The cuts and cost shifts contained in the proposed Executive Budget come at a time when Children's Services has already had to eliminate or reduce a number of programs and staff over the past three years in response to the current fiscal climate. Since Fiscal Year 2009, we have had to reduce our budget a total of \$336.9 million. This translates to the loss of 1,835 budgeted positions and multiple other cuts in programs and services. These were painful decisions that we would not have chosen had we alternatives. We have always attempted to propose cost savings that limit what we are able to accomplish but do not threaten our primary responsibilities. Should the proposals in the Executive Budget be enacted, we will be moving into precarious territory. Services to children and families in New York City will be unquestionably compromised, and the impact that this could have on the safety and well-being of our youngest citizens should not be understated.

I will now briefly outline some of the key social service proposals in the Executive Budget and discuss the projected impact on Children's Services.

### **Child Welfare**

**Adoption Subsidy:** Governor Cuomo's budget proposes to dramatically downsize its support for adoption subsidies – subsidies already committed to parents who have adopted or will adopt a child from foster care. The reduction of the state's support from 72.3% to 62% is an unheard of act of irresponsibility on the State's part. The projected impact of this cost shift for New York City is a loss of \$29 million for City Fiscal Year 2012 and \$15 million for the last quarter of City Fiscal Year 2011. For current adoptive parents, we will have to fulfill this unfunded mandate and find the savings elsewhere in our Budget. For future adoptive parents, we may have to decrease the amount of the adoption subsidy, making it that much more of a challenge for loving parents to adopt a child from the Foster Care system.

**Committee on Special Education:** The Executive Budget proposes to end the State's Support for room and board costs of Committee on Special Education Residential Placements. This is a cost that NYC Children's Services will have to bear even though these are children who are not actually involved in the child welfare system. Due to provisions in the Education Law, New York City must pay for the room and board of these children. Currently, the State pays .38 of every dollar that the City spends on these placements. The proposal to eliminate the State's share forces us to pay for these placements out of 100% City Tax Levy. The projected impact to the City of this cost shift is \$35 million for City Fiscal Year 2012 and \$18 million for the last quarter of City Fiscal Year 2011. Both the population of children served and the costs of their care are increasing, and now ACS will have to make up for the State's cost shift.

**Preventive Services:** The Executive Budget proposes the creation of a Primary Preventive Incentive Fund, which cuts state funding in half and requires localities to compete for funds and participate in a 62% state-38% local match. This means that a number of programs will be competing for less money. This will negatively impact multiple programs that prevent children from entering the foster care and juvenile justice systems. Some of these programs are not operated directly through Children's Services but in many cases, serve to prevent vulnerable children from entering foster care. Just one example is the Nurse Family Partnership, which is operated by the City's Department of Health and provides an essential service to families who may otherwise not be able to keep their children at home. As we all know, reducing prevention dollars – especially for programs with proven outcomes - is a strategy that costs us more in the long run.

**Kinship Guardianship Assistance Program:** We are concerned that the Executive Budget Proposal did not address state and local funding for the Kinship Guardianship Assistance Program, which goes into effect on April 1, 2011. If no language is adopted, then this will become a very expensive unfunded mandate for New York City and other localities. We believe that kinship guardianship should be considered as an option along with the other permanency options for young people in foster care, like adoption, and that

funding should reflect this as well. Funding for kinship guardianship should be a shared cost between the State and localities, with the State paying 75% of the subsidy, as it currently does for the Adoption Subsidy program. Foster Care Block Grant funds must not be used to subsidize this program, because this is not a proper use of this limited resource and because the State long ago stopped paying its share of foster care costs. If the State is not able to adequately fund this program this year, then we urge a phased in approach so that New York City and other localities not be faced with an untenable cost burden. We believe that from both a programmatic and fiscal perspective, it would be reasonable to phase in this program by adopting a more limited approach for next year – perhaps offering this as an option for youth age 14 years or older, and/or for youth who have already been in foster care for 5 years or more.

**Positive Proposals in Child Welfare:** We were encouraged that the Executive Budget maintained open-ended uncapped state reimbursement for child welfare services at 62%, and that the Budget proposed to maintain the Bridges to Health Home and Community-Based Medicaid Waiver Program (B2H) slots, which provide services to foster children with multiple needs so that institutional placements can be avoided. We were also glad to see that funding for NYNYIII, a supportive housing program for youth aging out of care, was maintained.

### **Child Care**

**State General Fund for Child Care:** The Executive Budget recommends \$144.4 million in State General Funds for child care. These funds are insufficient to address the increased costs for child care program operations including the rising costs of rent, utilities, pensions, health insurance and potential increases in the market rate. Since Fiscal Year 2005, NYC's tax levy investment in child care has increased 13.4% but we have not been able to absorb the rate of rising costs in addition to the decrease in NYC's allocation of the NYS Child Care Block Grant of \$11.65 M for FY 2011.

In the past few years, NYC has had to eliminate child care services for a number of deserving populations, and the service reductions are regrettably only going to get worse. We continue to face a shortfall in our budget for child care services because our system is not funded to support the rising costs of the existing infrastructure and increasing demand. As costs continue to rise and Federal stimulus funding disappears, the City's subsidized child care system is facing a significant deficit. We urge the State to increase its funding for Child Care. The Proposed Executive Budget for SFY 2011-12 states that the appropriation authority is \$64.5 M above the actual estimate of the CCDF award in the event of increased federal funding. We urge that any increases in federal funding be allocated to the local districts. In addition, we urge you to help us advocate against the proposed reductions for the current federal fiscal year of \$39 million for the Child Care Block Grant and \$1.083 million for Head Start as put forth in the House of Representatives last week as part of HR 1 and support the White House proposals to increase funding for these programs in the Fiscal Year 2012 budget.

In addition, we hope that the State considers the mandate relief proposals that the City is putting forth and that could help sustain our Child Care system. For example, we are currently required to provide six months notice before closing a Child Care center in addition to Children's Services' extensive procedure to ensure timely and accurate notification to parents about program service changes and to help provide assistance in finding alternative options. This mandate has already cost ACS \$2.3 million since it was passed last year. We urge the State to repeal this provision this year so that our under resourced system is not further burdened by this unfunded mandate.

Finally, we urge the State this year to submit a plan to the Federal government that would allow Food Stamp Employment Training funds to be utilized for Child Care reimbursement. Waivers such as this are necessary to address our difficult budget situation, and the State has a critical role to play in allowing us to access additional funding.

**SCR Clearance Fees:** The Executive Budget increases the cost of State Central Registry (SCR) Clearance Fees for providers, which we fear may serve as a disincentive to providers to become licensed. We have determined that there are approximately 10,500 providers and employees in Head Start and child care contract agencies who are required every two years to obtain an SCR clearance which will now increase from \$5 to \$60. The burden of this 1,200% increase will fall upon all workers and volunteers in our Child Care and Head Start programs including assistant teachers, administrative and maintenance employees, and parent volunteers.

### **Juvenile Justice**

**Juvenile Justice Reform:** While we applaud the Governor's proposal to close some of the State's expensive, under- utilized, and ineffective juvenile facilities, this proposal does not go far enough. In fact, because of a rate formula that charges localities more for sending less youth into state placements, we will not see any savings despite the fact that NYC has sent 62% fewer youth to Office of Children and Family placements since 2002. We urge Albany to pass legislation this session that allows for local control of our Juvenile Justice system and reforms the rate structure in order to free up resources for local placements and community-based interventions.

**Funding for Detention Services:** The Executive Budget proposes to end open ended funding for detention services and replace it with fixed block grant funding beginning July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2011. Our projected loss is \$15 Million in City Fiscal Year 2012, assuming that we receive a proportionate share of the new block grant. New York City has worked very hard to reduce its population of low-risk youth admitted to detention by investing in alternatives. Even so, there will always be some youth who need to be detained and with the loss of this critical funding, tough choices will have to be made and it may impact our ability to continue to develop a robust continuum of alternative juvenile justice programming. This proposal and the accelerated timeframe places all the risk onto localities for dynamics that they do not control.

**Supervision and Treatment Services for Juveniles:** The Executive Budget proposes a new block grant requiring a 38% match for prevention, intervention and reentry. While funding for alternatives is a step in the right direction, New York City will have to compete for limited funds to use for both detention and placement alternatives. Because the State still requires us to pay 50% of open-ended costs for kids in OCFS, our ability to find resources for the match is constrained. Further, a serious commitment to alternatives should provide open-ended funding, just as the child welfare reimbursement stream does.

In addition, the Executive Budget proposes to eliminate the option of detention for PINS youth. While we agree with this proposal in principle, we are concerned that this change will increase pressure on other parts of the child welfare and juvenile justice systems, without any additional funding or resources to accommodate this policy shift.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, New York City cannot accommodate these types of unfunded mandates and still meet its obligation to provide quality services to children and families in need. We urge the State to cooperate with Mayor Bloomberg's proposals for Mandate Relief, and ask you as our state lawmakers to consider the severe impact that these proposed social service cuts would have on your constituents should they be enacted.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony today, and I look forward to working in partnership with you to craft a pragmatic Budget that reflects both the financial realities of the State and City, and the need to protect our most vulnerable citizens. I encourage you to reach out to me with any questions or ideas about how we can work together towards this goal.



**FEDERATION OF PROTESTANT WELFARE AGENCIES**

**Statement Prepared for the February 16, 2011 Hearing**

**of the**

**Assembly Ways And Means Committee**

**and**

**Senate Finance Committee**

**on the**

**2011 - 12 Executive Budget Proposal for Human Services**

**Prepared By**

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## **About FPWA**

FPWA is a membership organization with a network of human service organizations and churches that operate over 1,100 programs throughout the New York City metro area. Together we serve over 1.5 million low-income New Yorkers of all ages, ethnicities and denominations each year. Our work with member agencies and church-based human service programs puts us in direct contact with every level of the social service system. This gives us a comprehensive view of the complex social problems that face human service organizations today, and allows us to identify common ground among our members so that we can have a greater impact as we advocate for them.

Though we understand the challenges faced by the state in these difficult economic times, these are also the times when people are without jobs, have lost or are on the verge of losing their homes and must turn to essential human services to feed and clothe their families, pay for heat, medicine and other social service needs.

FPWA is deeply concerned about the Governor's proposed elimination of all funding for TANF Initiatives and urges the full restoration of this important funding. The TANF Initiative programs provide New York's poorest residents with essential services in this time of economic hardship. We urge you to support these programs through the restoration of \$212 million in TANF funding which would bring it to SFY 2009-10 levels. FPWA is also very concerned with the Governor's proposed elimination of Aid and Incentives to Municipalities (AIM) assistance to New York City and urges the Legislature to reverse this cut which would severely impact upon essential human services in the city.

This written testimony will address the Governor's budget proposals in the areas of:

- Child Welfare
- Early Childhood Education
- Income Security
- Workforce Development
- Youth Services



## I. Child Welfare

### **Restore vital preventive services funding streams that were cut.**

**Cost-Effectiveness:** Preventive services are a cost-effective component of the child welfare system – each slot costs about \$9,500 and serves an entire family; whereas foster care costs about \$36,000 per child.

FPWA urges the Governor and the legislature to restore vital preventive service funding streams that have been eliminated or reduced in the proposed FY 2011-2012 Executive Budget. Preventive service programs are an integral component of child welfare that seeks to prevent costly out-of-home placements by strengthening families and keeping children safe.

By combining funding streams and reducing overall funding by \$50 million through the creation of the Primary Prevention Incentive Program (PIIP), crucial programs are jeopardized. For example, the Community Optional Preventive Services (COPS) program is eliminated as a result of the PIIP. COPS programs are designed to serve children or youth who are considered at general risk of future foster care or crisis by virtue of one or more identified characteristics. The PIIP proposal will also deliver a punishing blow in that it proposes to eliminate critical Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA) funding which currently supports transitional/independent living shelter beds for runaway/homeless youth.

In addition, we are concerned that combining programs that serve vastly different young people could lead to inadequate services for certain populations, such as young people in kinship living situations. Furthermore, the PIIP requires local districts to provide a 32% match, which strains local districts and could further impact the number of young people served. Block grants have typically been problematic – they are not an effective or efficient mechanism to provide services.

The FY2011-2012 budget also proposes to completely eliminate \$6 million for TANF funded Preventive Service contracts, which will result in the elimination of these programs upon the end of the contract. Prevention initiatives allocate funds to not-for-profit agencies for the development of services to prevent out-of-home placement. TANF Prevention

Services focus upon the delivery of prevention of foster care services which enhance overall case practice and case outcomes. These are crucial services that families rely upon to strengthen families and protect children.

**Support the Governor's proposed extension of the 65/35 open-ended child welfare services funding stream for three years.**

It is essential that New York State maximizes its match to local districts for the total cost of providing protective, preventive, aftercare, post-adoption, and independent living services (after applying federal funds). Thus, it is imperative that the State match for open-ended child welfare services at the least be maintained at 62%. This funding encourages counties to invest in high-quality services that strengthen families, improve child safety, decrease the use of costly foster care, and save the State money in the long run.

**Add revenue through the TANF contingency funding stream to create pilot program for a state-funded higher education scholarship program for older and former foster care youth.**

Unlike their peers, foster care youth who age out of the system have few supports and little to no adult or family guidance. They experience higher rates of mental health illness, criminal activity, homelessness, and unemployment.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, the expense of attending college is out of reach for most foster care youth. In New York's public university system, tuition, fees, and living expenses at SUNY's four-year baccalaureate program add up to over \$18,000 per school year.<sup>2</sup> Foster care youth with any hope of affording a post-secondary education are forced to piece together numerous grants and take on loans, a process that can be extremely daunting without family help, guidance counselors, or the many other supports upon which non-foster youth rely. Even the maximum award amounts under tuition assistance programs like New York State's TAP, the Federal Pell Grant, the Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant, and Federal Education and Training Vouchers (ETVs) are insufficient to cover tuition, fees, and living expenses in

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<sup>1</sup> Mark Courtney, "Youth Aging Out of Foster Care," Network on Transitions to Adulthood: Policy Brief, Issue 19, April 2005. Available at <http://www.transad.pop.upenn.edu/downloads/courtney--foster%20care.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> "2008-09 Typical Expenses for Undergraduate Students at a SUNY College," The State University of New York. Living expenses include room and board (assumes SUNY student lives on campus), books and supplies, transportation, and personal expenses. Available at [http://www.suny.edu/Student/paying\\_tuition.cfm](http://www.suny.edu/Student/paying_tuition.cfm).

a degree-granting program. For instance, ETVs, which are available specifically for foster care youth, only provide *up to* \$5,000 per youth.

FPWA urges New York to create a State-sponsored higher education scholarship program A.4428 (Scarborough) which would help older and former foster care youth meet the total costs of attending an in-state undergraduate or vocational training program. In these difficult economic times, we encourage the State to enact S.0371 (Montgomery), a pilot version of the higher education scholarship program, which targets a smaller group of foster care youth and has strong links to support services. A smaller pilot program would be less costly to the State, offer increased flexibility to design a more comprehensive model, and provide an opportunity for this type of assistance to be evaluated.

**We urge the state to make the choice to invest in subsidized kinship guardianship as an alternate permanency option for youth in foster care.**

In light of new federal legislation, the *Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008* (P.L. 110-351), which would provide federal funding, FPWA strongly encourages the State to implement subsidized kinship guardianship in New York. Even with medical, educational, and housing assistance, independent living for youth who age out is extremely difficult given the absence of family support. Subsidized kinship guardianship allows children in long-term care, for whom reunification with their parents or adoption is not possible, to exit the child welfare system into secure living situations.

Adoption does not work for every family, and this is an important alternative for youth who might otherwise age out and relatives who are willing to provide stable care, but who are uncomfortable with legally dissolving the ties between parent and child. Furthermore, although kinship guardians would receive assistance payments, subsidized kinship guardianship would likely generate savings given that the closing of corresponding foster care cases would eliminate some administrative costs.<sup>3</sup> Most importantly, kinship guardianship would provide foster youth with the chance to build a strong, supportive relationship with an adult caregiver.

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<sup>3</sup> Jacobs, et al, *supra* note 10.

## II. Early Childhood Education

**Cost-Effectiveness:** There is substantial evidence that high quality early childhood education has great benefit to individual families and society at large. A 2004 report by Legal Momentum and the MIT Workplace Center, "Early Childhood Education for All: A Wise Investment," found that every dollar invested in early childhood programs saves taxpayers \$13 in future costs. A few benefits of making high quality programs available to all children include: reduced costs for remedial education, increased school performance, and a foundation that sets young students on the path to earning higher income levels as adults.

A 2010 study done by America's Edge, a business leader sponsored organization, "Strengthening New York's Businesses by Investing in Early Care and Education" found that every \$1 spent in local early childhood programs generates \$1.86 in additional spending locally.

Along with our partners in Winning Beginning New York, FPWA believes New York State should strengthen its commitment to providing quality child care and early education programs to low-income families by investing in quality early care and education programs. During these difficult economic times, subsidized early childhood education programs are even more vital in helping families to find and maintain employment.

**Maintain the \$956.8 million spent on child care by restoring the \$55 million reduction in funding for early childhood education in the Governor's budget in order to stabilize the subsidized child care system in New York State.**

Child care subsidies need to be preserved for children's educational and social development and to support parents' ability to maintain their jobs. Hundreds of low-income families across the state have lost critically needed subsidies that serve as a linch pin in parents' ability to secure and maintain jobs. A loss of \$55 million could result in a loss of capacity to serve 6,000 children, deeply cut SUNY/CUNY child care, and zero out funding for demonstration projects. These cuts will continue eroding the capacity and quality of New York State's early care and education infrastructure.

One cost-saving option is to provide an optional temporary waiver of welfare work requirements for single parents of infants, toddlers and below school-age children. This would enable the state to continue subsidized child care for working poor families while allowing single parents on welfare to provide child care for their own infants and children in their homes.

**Increase flexibility for districts utilizing Universal Pre-Kindergarten funding to better meet community needs.**

Provide school districts greater flexibility to spend UPK funds on related needs, such as full day pre-kindergarten options that better fit the schedules of working parents and transportation. Districts will have the ability to implement and expand UPK in ways that best meet the unique needs of the children and families they serve.

**Cap child care co-payments at 10% of gross family income and eliminate co-pays for families living under the federal poverty level.**

FPWA supports A.3612 (Titus), which caps the co-payment at 10% of the gross family income and eliminates co-payments for households with incomes below the federal poverty line. The legislation also addresses county-by-county disparities in child care co-pays and creates a statewide co-payment system that is affordable and equitable.

**Invest \$3 million in the Qualitystars NY, New York's Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS).**

FPWA believes the State should invest \$3 million in QualityStars NY by providing financial supports and incentives for providers who implement quality improvements under the program. This modest investment would allow Quality Stars to reach 500 programs and build on the success of the community field test. In addition to evaluation and certification, programmatic and facility improvements require a significant commitment of time and resources on the part of child care programs, and financial support is crucial to helping programs sustain advancements in quality.

### **III. Income Security**

#### **FPWA urges strong opposition to the Governor's proposal to impose full family sanctions on poor families.**

FPWA finds the full family sanctions proposal to be misguided, punitive and harmful -- and will not lead to the desired goal of increased compliance. Full family sanctions create an immediate family crisis and put the welfare and safety of the children and the basic stability of families at risk. Sanctioning children in poor families makes them two to five times more likely to suffer: stunted growth, lead poisoning, low birth weight, repeat of a grade, iron deficiency, expulsion from school, serious disabilities or to drop out of school. Full family sanctions also disproportionately affect parents who have one or more barriers to employment. Full family sanctions are not worth the risk because they are often misapplied, causing tremendous harm to families who are in fact, in compliance with program requirements. Proponents of full family sanctions argue that they are intended to encourage compliance with program requirements and eventually transition recipients off welfare. However, studies have shown that sanctioned families are less likely to be employed than non-sanctioned families, are more likely to return to the welfare system.<sup>4</sup>

The devastation suffered by families who lose partial or full income can not be minimized. A July 2010 report cites a study of six cities (Baltimore, Little Rock, Boston, Los Angeles, Minneapolis and Washington, DC) on the impact of sanctions on children whose caregivers were seeking emergency room care for them. The study found that compared to children whose families also are receiving welfare but were in non-sanctioned households, 30% had a greater risk of being previously hospitalized, a 50% greater risk of food insecurity, at a 90% greater chance of a hospital admittance after a visit to the emergency room.<sup>5</sup>

FPWA supports A.3423 (Wright) to address the pervasive case sanctioning practice that keeps eligible very low-income households from receiving critical cash assistance. The bill ends durational sanctions and strengthens recipients' protections from wrongful sanctions.

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<sup>4</sup> Empire Justice Center, "Full Family Sanctions are not the Solution," April 2004.

<sup>5</sup> Tim Casey, Legal Momentum, "The Sanctions Epidemic in the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families Program," August 2010. Available at (<http://www.legalmomentum.org/assets/pdfs/sanction-epidemic-in-tanf.pdf>)

**Reverse the Governor's proposal to delay the welfare grant increase so that full implementation can be achieved within the initially enacted time frame.**

After 19 years of stagnant welfare grant levels that dropped families more deeply beneath the poverty level each year, we applauded the much needed increase. This very modest, long overdue increase should not be deferred. Even with the increase, the maximum allowable grant falls at approximately 50% below the federal poverty level at \$8,652 per year for a family of 3 in New York City. This is to meet all essential needs including: rents, utilities, clothing, school supplies, personal hygiene products, laundry, books, toys, and food. Households desperately need the assistance now.

Providing cash assistance to households with very low incomes is a core mission of TANF funding and should be prioritized. Much like Food Stamps, cash benefits to households have a direct positive impact on the local economy as the funds are spent quickly on basic necessities.

**Restore funding for TANF-funded initiatives eliminated in the Governor's budget.**

FPWA urges you to restore funding for all of the TANF programs currently slated for complete elimination. This Great Recession has caused many New Yorkers to lose their jobs, homes, and health insurance. The TANF programs that are slated to be zeroed out are just the type of programs these families need, for example, job training and education, domestic violence services and homeless prevention. We urge you to support these programs through the restoration of TANF funding for these critical programs.

**Eliminate the 185% of Standard of Need (SON) income eligibility requirement for Public Assistance and Increase the Earned Income Disregard (EID) (A.3425); Extend EID to all households, including those without dependent children.**

The current State Social Services Law makes families ineligible for public assistance once their income reaches 185% of the Standard of Need (SON) for their household size and county of residence. Since this measure now falls below the federal poverty level in all counties, families are disqualified for public assistance even before they earn up to the federal poverty level. Although the federal poverty is a severely inadequate measure, it is adjusted upward every year to reflect the rise in inflation. The gap between the income eligibility level (fixed at 185% of SON) and the poverty level increases each year. This

means that each year families need to fall more deeply into poverty before they are eligible for public assistance.

The Earned Income Disregard (EID) allows welfare recipients who begin a job but earn low wages to increase their income by not counting each dollar earned against the benefits they receive. This enables low wage earners to retain some of their cash assistance and provides a more sustainable income level.

We support A.3425 (Wright), which would eliminate the 185% SON and increase the EID to 67% as a step in the right direction. However, the State should ultimately increase the EID to 100% of wages below FPL to stabilize economic security for families as they increase their earnings to rise out of poverty. The state should also extend the EID to all households receiving public assistance including those without dependent children.



**Weigh treating practitioner's opinion in the welfare agencies' determination of applicants' or recipients' work limitations or disabilities.**

FPWA strongly supports A2957/S1326 (Wright and Dilan). The bill would change Social Service law to weigh the treating practitioner's assessment in the determination of disability or limitations when there is disagreement with the agencies' medical assessment.

The current law does not require the agencies evaluating practitioner to give any weight to the opinion of the applicant's or recipient's treating physician. The agency has full discretion and could choose to completely disregard the treating physician's medical opinion. Given the cursory nature of the agencies' medical exams, it is important to require a more inclusive picture of a person's medical condition. Inappropriate referral to welfare work requirements for people with disabilities or work limitations means that applicants are subject to work requirements that they will be unable to meet and therefore denied assistance.

**Reduce the welfare application time frame for Safety Net applicants from 45 to 30 days, bringing it in line with Family Assistance requirements (A.4840).**

FPWA supports A. 4840 (Wright) to equalize the application time line for Family Assistance and Safety Net applicants. The current law provides that districts can not provide assistance to Safety Net applicants until the 45th day after submission of an application regardless of need. Family Assistance applicants' benefits must be determined and provided by the 30th day after the submission of an application. We believe that households of varying sizes and composition applying for welfare are often in deep crisis and need assistance as quickly and consistently.

#### **IV. Workforce Development**

**Restore \$2M to the Green Jobs Corps Program**

In times of economic recession, it becomes more important than ever to coordinate sustainable economic development strategies with policies aimed at permanently lifting families out of poverty through education and training opportunities and job creation. Moreover, in the midst of simultaneous economic, environmental, and energy problems

facing our State, it is essential that our workforce development plan to improve the State's energy efficiency create "Green Pathways" out of poverty. Funding for the Green Jobs Corps program has been eliminated in the 2011-2012 Executive budget. The Green Jobs Corps program is an excellent opportunity to utilize a consortium model to provide training and subsidized employment in the green sector. Low-income communities are hit hardest by both financial hardship and environmental hazards. Families in these areas often face a double burden of limited educational and employment opportunities. Communities of color and low-income communities are also disproportionately likely to live and work in toxic environments. Therefore, now is the ideal moment to craft a workforce development policy plan that achieves economic, social, and environmental justice goals for families in poverty.

### **Create a Young Worker Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)**

The State EITC is a valuable support for working poor families. For childless workers age 25 and over, the combined maximum federal and state EITC provides up to approximately \$594 for Tax Year 2010. Yet, there are many young low-income workers between the ages of 16 and 24 who are not eligible for the EITC, simply because of their age and that they are not parents. While New York recently established a State-funded EITC for non-custodial parents who are current in their child support payments, the young adult working population without children remains excluded from eligibility for any federal or state EITC. Accordingly, FPWA urges the State to create an EITC for working young adults between ages 17-24 who are established as an independent household and do not have children equal to 1.3 times the amount of the federal EITC for childless workers (equal to State + Federal EITC that childless workers over age 25 currently receive). The young worker EITC can help young people who are working in entry-level or low-wage jobs stay in New York.

### **Restore TANF funding that has been completely eliminated for crucial workforce development programs.**

It is critical to expand opportunities for low-income populations to acquire English literacy, mathematics, science, and technology skills, along with the GED certificate and post-secondary degree demanded by employers. Specifically, we strongly urge the Governor

and the Legislature to restore TANF funding for the following programs which are so important to help people build skills and earn credentials needed to obtain living wage employment and make subsequent earnings gains:

- ACCESS – Welfare-to-Careers - \$250 million
- BRIDGE - \$1 million
- Career Pathways - \$5 million
- Transitional jobs - \$5 million
- Wheels for Work - \$409,000

## **V. Youth Services**

### **Strongly support a funding restoration for the Summer Youth Employment Program.**

FPWA is concerned that the Governor has proposed eliminating \$15.5 million in TANF funding for the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) in the Executive Budget. SYEP provides youth between the ages of 14 and 21 with summer employment and educational experiences that build on their individual strengths and incorporate youth development principles. Employment opportunities such as those offered by SYEP are critical for youth. Of the nearly 900,000 young adults 16 to 24 years of age in New York City, almost 25 percent live below the federal poverty line, compared to 19 percent of all New Yorkers regardless of age. For the summer of 2010 in New York City, over 34,000 teens worked in the SYEP which was over 18,000 fewer jobs from the previous summer. In addition, over 143,000 youth applied for the program in 2010 which has made the demand for the program the highest ever. The current budget proposal would eliminate 5,594 jobs for New York City teens. New York State needs to invest in SYEP now more than ever. We urge the legislature to restore this critical funding so teens may continue to have these important employment opportunities.

**Strongly support a funding restoration for the Advantage Program.**

**Cost-Effectiveness:** After School programs can help save money over the long-term because of increased student retention and special education placements. As referenced in "Safe and Smart: Making After-School Hours Work for Kids," a publication developed by the U.S. Department of Education in 1998, preventing a youth from lifelong involvement in the criminal justice system saves \$1.3 million-\$1.5 million.

We are also greatly concerned that the Governor has proposed reducing funding for the Advantage After-School Program (AASP) from \$22.6 million down to \$17.2 million. AASP provides quality youth development opportunities to school-age children and youth for three hours directly after school. These programs offer a broad range of educational, recreational and culturally age-appropriate activities that integrate school day experiences. Investing in after-school programs can help school districts save money over the long-term because of increased student retention and decreased special education placements. We strongly urge the legislature to restore this essential funding so programs may remain intact and continue to operate.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this testimony.

**Early Care & Learning Council  
Testimony on Child Care in the State Budget**

**Marsha Bashe  
Executive Director**

**February 16, 2011**

Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy, the New York State Association for the Education of Young and the Center for Children's Initiatives.

The Early Care & Learning Council and *Winning Beginning NY* support Governor Cuomo's continued investment in universal pre-kindergarten. However, we urge the Legislature to address a number of issues that were not included in the Executive Budget. Specifically, we ask you to:

- Maintain funding for child care subsidies;
- Maintain funding for enhanced Infant and Toddler Resource Centers;
- Restore funding for the home visiting programs;
- Build on the progress made in establishing QUALITYstarsNY.

### **Child Care Subsidies**

Child care is an infrastructure support for children, for families and for communities. Parents need affordable care that supports their ability to work. According to a U.S. Census Bureau and American Community Survey, 36.4% of New York State families with children four years old or younger live at less than 185% of the poverty level. Many of these low-income families need child care. A recent report by the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (NACCRRA) cites the cost of child care in New York as among the highest in the nation. Yet, New York State does not provide sufficient financial support to parents who cannot easily afford child care. While funding for child care subsidies in NYS was at \$929 million in FY 2004-05, it has dropped to \$905 million seven years later, despite the economic hardships families are facing and the increasing rate of inflation. The state's Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) includes federal child

Good morning and thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony and input on Governor Cuomo's proposed budget for New York State. My name is Marsha Basloe and I am the Executive Director of the Early Care & Learning Council, which is a statewide, not-for-profit organization, whose mission is to promote excellence in early care and education with equal access for all families. We do this primarily through the support of, and in partnership with, a strong network of community-based organizations that provide Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) services. We work in collaboration with other early care and education professionals and organizations towards the establishment of a comprehensive system that responds to the needs of all families regardless of income, cultural background or family composition; adequately prepares and compensates the early childhood workforce; and involves all segments of the state and local community in the planning process. The Council provides training, technical assistance, data collection, information and public education services to organizations, state and local government, businesses and concerned individuals across the state. We support Governor Cuomo's continued investment in the work of the CCR&R network statewide.

I am also testifying today on behalf of Winning Beginning NY, the statewide coalition of more than 60 organizations and individuals committed to quality early learning opportunities for all children, beginning at birth. Winning Beginning NY works to inform policymakers and the public about the many benefits of early learning to children, families and society and to build broad-based support for making investment in quality early care and education a top priority in New York State. The coalition is co-convened by the Early Care & Learning Council, the

care block grant funding and the TANF funding earmarked for child care. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) stimulus funding was able to provide a temporary reprieve from the increasing demands on the subsidy system as wages were falling and more families were seeking financial assistance. The loss of the ARRA funding this year will result in a loss of \$48 million to New York State. Of that, \$42 million was allocated to localities for child care subsidies. The effect of the loss of ARRA funds could reduce capacity for full-time year-round care for more than 6,000 children whose parents are working and contributing to the stability of New York State's economy. In addition, the remaining \$6 million represented important investments in quality improvements. This decrease and continued lack of investment in child care will continue to impact the ability of low-income families to access care and remain in the workforce.

Child care can account for up to 50% of the family budget, outpacing even rent or mortgage. New York State continues to fall short in meeting the need for financial assistance with child care, with tens of thousands of income-eligible families on the waiting list for subsidies. In the last fiscal year, local counties were facing increasing demand for care and with limited resources were forced to continue to further reduce eligibility and raise fees, placing even greater pressure on working families across the state.

The 2011 Executive Budget also proposes eliminating \$7 million earmarked TANF funding for child care. This will eliminate funding for the child care demonstration projects that provide subsidies to working families. It will also greatly reduce funding for SUNY/CUNY child care, which support low-income students enrolled in a two-year college program. In addition, New York must absorb



a reduction in the federal child care block grant of \$6.3 million. These cuts place additional pressure on the ability of the state to support both quality initiatives and subsidies to families.

We ask that New York State restore the \$55M lost through the elimination of ARRA funding and the reduction in TANF allocations for child care.

In addition to this budget request, we ask that the state establish consistent child care subsidy eligibility rules. Eligibility and parent fees should not be determined county by county. Statewide standards would provide equity for all New York State children and families.

### **Infant and Toddler Regional Centers**

The reduction in the quality dollars will greatly reduce funding for the Infant and Toddler Resource Centers and Infant and Toddler Quality Initiatives. Research clearly documents the importance of the first three years of life in shaping the emotional, social, and cognitive development of children. Our future prosperity depends on the health, education, and workforce productivity of our citizens and the foundation for all of those is laid in the infant and toddler years when brains are developing rapidly.

With approximately 55% of all young children in New York in child care, there is a compelling need to focus specific resources on our very youngest learners. The seven Regional Infant Toddler (IT) Resource Centers serve every county in the state by promoting excellence in IT services in all settings. The IT Centers offer

direct services to the early care and education community including intensive technical assistance, training, coaching, resource information, and linkages to other social and community supports. They also serve as a best practice information center for parents, the regional Office of Children and Family Services licensing offices, and other professionals working with this age group. The Early Care & Learning Council has supported and guided best practices in each of the Regional IT Centers, mentored and trained the IT specialists, and helped set statewide goals and guidelines for further development.

Every \$1 spent on early care and education in New York State creates a \$1.86 return on investment that goes back into local economies creating jobs and supporting working parents. It is for this reason that the Early Care & Learning Council requests support for the maintenance of the 2010 \$2 million allocation in funding for the Infant and Toddler Project in the Office of Children and Family Services Budget. In 2010, we were able to maximize the impact of investments from the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA) by building upon the existing network of the regional Infant Toddler Resource Centers previously funded at \$1.1 million. The Governor's Executive Budget includes \$1.1 million and will not support the continued employment of newly trained Infant Toddler Specialists across the State. In 2010, an expanded network of Infant Toddler Specialists was trained, developed and coordinated by the Early Care & Learning Council, Regional IT Resource Centers and our CCR&R network.

The development of a standardized evaluation system for infant toddler centers with highly qualified evaluation staff, expansion of qualified infant toddler specialists across the state and a social emotional consultation project were just

begun – efforts that are crucial to having a true Infant Toddler System in New York State! Together these resources provide a framework that has proven invaluable for design, implementation, evaluation and future replication of best practices related to care and well being of infants, toddlers and their families. The Infant Toddler Project at the Early Care & Learning Council is building capacity for services in New York State by providing the development of a system for NYS Infants and Toddlers to improve early education in our state.

We do not think that core infrastructure components needed to support quality service delivery to a very under-served vulnerable population should be cut simply because they were ARRA-funded and do not have the same history as other programs. It is easier to cut this service because it is framed as ARRA, rather than taking a more thoughtful approach to the question of how to handle shrinkage of system components that are difficult to build back up and replace. We ask that you look at maintaining investments to our system components to provide services to our most vulnerable population, our infants and toddlers, the future generation. We can either pay now to build a solid foundation for our children or pay much more later to fix problems in health, learning, and criminal behavior.

### **Home Visiting Programs**

Home visiting relies on home visitors—either nurses or other trained personnel—to provide regular home visits to educate expectant and new parents about prenatal care, infant care, child development and parenting skills. Research shows that home visiting decreases infant mortality rates, helps prevent child abuse, and increases school readiness. The Healthy Families New York (HFNY) home

visiting program is in danger of elimination because of its inclusion in the Primary Prevention Incentive Program (PPIP) proposed in the 2011 Executive Budget.

In addition, funding streams that support the Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP) and The Parent-Child Home Program (PCHP)—Community Optional Preventive Services (COPS) and the Hoyt Family Trust, respectively—are included in the PPIP and face elimination. The establishment of the PPIP, intended to prevent unnecessary foster care placements and other more costly supports, will have the opposite impact. It will create a domino effect. Children and families will go unserved because the PPIP will only reinvest 50% of the savings from restructuring, pit programs that serve different populations against each other, and require a 38% match from counties that they do not have. This will dismantle the state system, which is essential to localities providing services. Families in need that go unserved in the earliest years will end up needing costly remediation services later on.

Any reduction in funding for home visiting will also disqualify New York State from applying for millions in federal aid by not meeting Maintenance of Effort (MOE) requirements. We cannot pass up these much-needed resources, which would help us expand and improve our existing system.

New York State is a leader for home visiting in the U.S. It has taken us nearly 20 years to build this system of home visiting supports and services. Once the infrastructure (including research, training, and central administration) has been destroyed, it will take years to rebuild. We urge you to rethink the PPIP and fully restore funding for home visiting programs—including Healthy Families New

York (\$23M), Community Optional Preventive Services (\$4.3M), and the Hoyt Family Trust (\$1.2M).

### **QUALITYstarsNY**

In New York State, we are working to fully implement a QUALITYstarsNY five-star rating system. In FY 2010-2011 the state invested ARRA funding and leveraged private funding which allowed for a field test the program at 200 locations in 13 communities across the state. With this system, child care providers get a “star rating,” much like those used for restaurants or hotels. Such a system looks to support providers as they work to raise the standard of care. Twenty-four other states already have such a system underway.

A modest investment of \$3 million in FY2011-2012 will allow QSNY to more than double participation—reaching close to 500 programs and providers. Federal benchmarks for states’ QRIS are forthcoming. An investment from New York State will ensure that the state will be eligible for federal funding and will leverage private support to QSNY.

We ask New York State to increase its current investment to \$3 million to build on the success of the first year field test. We are extremely committed to the future of our State’s children and would like to see this investment come to fruition as QUALITYstarsNY enters the next phase towards full implementation.

We appreciate the opportunity to come before you today to present testimony on the Executive Budget and look forward to working with you to ensure that all of New York’s children have a Winning Beginning.

We understand the troubling fiscal and economic climate in New York State. There is no doubt that tough decisions need to be made that will have an impact on all New Yorkers. However, crisis brings opportunity. I believe there is an opportunity for New York State to take better advantage of their partnerships with community based organizations such as CCR&Rs in order to continue to deliver essential programs and services to children and families, while avoiding continued deficits. Thank you for the opportunity to provide our comments to you.

**Testimony  
Of  
Jacqueline A. Negri, Executive Director  
Association of New York State Youth Bureaus**

**February 16, 2011**

**Before  
The Joint Fiscal Committees of the NYS Legislature  
on the 2011-2012 Executive Budget**

**John A. DeFrancisco, Chairman, Senate Finance  
Committee**

**and**

**Herman D. Farrell, Jr., Chairman, Assembly Ways and  
Means Committee**



Good morning honorable chairman and other distinguished members of the Legislature. My name is Jackie Negri and I am the Executive Director of the Association of New York State Youth Bureaus (ANYSYB).

ANSYB represents New York's Youth Bureau Systems which is comprised of 109 county and municipal youth bureaus providing quality youth development, prevention, intervention services to over 2 million youth, from rural towns and villages, to small cities and urban centers since 1945. The youth bureau system embodies the definition of youth development as an ongoing process in which children and adolescents seek ways to meet their personal and social needs while building life skills and competencies that allow them to be successful and learn how to function effectively in their daily lives. Positive youth development and prevention services include, but are not limited to programs that build skills to prepare New York's youth for graduation, work, and civic responsibilities and to prevent them from entering the juvenile justice and child welfare systems. Youth Bureaus and their providers offer school drop-out prevention programs, worker readiness and summer jobs, mentors, obesity prevention, literacy, supports for runaway and homeless youth, pregnant and parenting teens and youth involved with drugs and gangs and leadership training for civic engagement.

**For over 60 years, New York State's Youth Bureau system has provided youth prevention, intervention and development services and programs to more than 2 million young people under the age of 21 throughout the state – nearly half of the youth population.**

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Understanding the troubling fiscal and economic climate in New York State, there is no doubt that tough decisions need to be made however, crisis brings opportunity. And we believe there is an opportunity for youth prevention, intervention and development services in New York State without dismantling the current system. Unfortunately, the SFY 2011-2012 Executive's Proposed Budget does just that – dismantles the current effective, cost-efficient long standing youth bureau service system in New York State which provides youth development and prevention services to over two million youth to age 21.

### **Proposed Primary Prevention Incentive Program**

*The proposed Primary Prevention Incentive Program (PPIP) dismantles the youth bureau system by eliminating long standing youth development and prevention funding sources - Youth Development Delinquency Prevention (YDDP); Special Delinquency Prevention Program (SDPP) and Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA). In addition, it goes on to slash these allocations by 50% and then creates a funding mechanism for a competitive bidding process requiring counties to access reimbursement through the 62% state /38% local match.*

**First, the competitive distribution of the PPIP will eliminate funding to many counties and allows for the loss of local planning and control; thereby promoting inequities in prevention and positive youth development services across the State.** For example, a county with lower residential placements or child protective rates may have solid community supports and primary prevention programs that are currently funded by Youth Development Delinquency Prevention (YDDP), Special Delinquency Prevention Programs (SDPP), and Runaway and Homeless Youth (RHYA). Once stripped of funding, due to the competitive distribution of the proposal, these counties' placements and rates will skyrocket, creating greater residential need and child protection at higher costs to the State. The long-term, youth development allocations throughout New York State serve as a foundation to support other areas of services, such as integration to the community, lower recidivism and placement rates. Conversely, if this allocation is altered, or becomes ever-changing, this will de-stabilize a broader health and human services



network. Though Youth Development is not Child Welfare, nor Juvenile Justice, these supports can and do play a critical role.

**Second, the severity and disproportionate 50% proposed reduction in youth funding, in addition to a 30% reduction in YDDP, SDPP and RHYA over the past three years, is a factor for concern for youth and families in our communities.** Funding, albeit less than in the past, for Youth Development and Prevention Services must continue to be provided through a fair and equitable formula-driven allocation through municipal structures that ensure appropriate monitoring, evaluation and accountability as prescribed in Executive Law 410, 19A. Also, if a county does not receive State Aid currently provided through Executive Law 420, 19A, they stand to lose other local, state, federal and private funding. The youth bureau system is the impetus to garner local funding (through match requirements) and used to leverage a tremendous amount of other public and private support, well beyond the current allocation. And, the youth bureau system under the Executive Law has allowed for a base of support and the ability to be competitive in securing federal (such as AmeriCorps, SAMSHA, U.S. Health and Human Services, etc.) and private sector funding. Clearly, if this threshold of funding diminishes or fluctuates year to year (as it has the potential to do under this proposed PPIP); it will have a negative impact on other health and human services well beyond the current allocation and, in fact, can be the cause for community-based services to close.

**Third, we believe that the July 1, 2011 effective date will leave many youth bureaus and programs uncertain of funding and of their existence.** If funding is eliminated and services are no longer available in July, we will leave runaway and homeless youth, high-risk kids and their families, as well as many others without their network of services and supports. Transformation of the system, coupled with cost savings, is certainly something to consider during this economic climate however, *dismantling a cost-effective youth bureau system has many unintended consequences for the safety and well-being of all youth, including mostly high-risk youth.*

**Lastly, youth funding distributions should be held to universal standards related to accountability, monitoring and evaluation to attain successful outcome performance and tangible results. In addition, youth funding should be guided by national evidence-based practices in youth development, such as Ready by 21 or Touchstones, as currently administered by youth bureaus --- not to the best grant writer.** The New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) invest considerable resources in the Quality Youth Development (QYDS), utilized by county Youth Bureaus. QYDS tracks outcomes for initiatives and provides evidence that a documented youth development framework, that includes the features of positive youth development settings, will improve outcomes for all youth, including high-risk. This system provides a concrete way to identify common outcomes for state funded programs and a system of monitoring and accountability for Youth Bureaus and their contractors. Therefore, accountability is key for successful youth development, not competitive bidding.

## **PROPOSAL TO ELIMINATE SUMMER YOUTH EMPLOYMENT**

Thousands of New York State teens are positively impacted each year with the help of a summer job. Data shows that a summer job not only generates income for local communities as spending is invested back into the community, but the work experience gives summer youth workers positive experience resulting in quality outcomes. Teens who have a summer job are more likely to complete and graduate high school and have higher earnings during their adult working years. According to an analysis released by the Northeastern University's Center for Labor Market Studies, employment rates among teenagers have dropped nearly four times faster than the rate among adults since 2000. According to the study, it is especially bleak for low-income black students; only 4 in 100 found work. This issue is vital in African American and Latino communities where underemployment and high unemployment is often the most severe. The lack of jobs for our young people puts them at risk in multiple ways. Adolescents and young adults that have difficulty finding employment become discouraged, and many will stop trying. Those that give up are then unable to develop important job skills, which makes it likely that they will remain unemployed (or underemployed) well

into their adult years. In addition, studies show that individuals that are unable to find jobs in their early years have higher rates of dropping out of school and are more likely to commit crimes. These risks paint a bleak future for our youth if summer employment funding is eliminated.

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**New York faces unprecedented fiscal times. No doubt, these times call for leadership and change. To be fiscally prudent, efforts should not be made to dismantle the Youth Bureau structure nor determine positive youth development and prevention funding by a competitive bidding process. Rather, the focus should be on how the state's current investments can coalesce toward a common goal for prevention services and the positive development of all youth, albeit a more cost-effective one.**

ANYSYB needs the Legislature's assistance and leadership in keeping this system intact, for all of New York's youth, including hundreds of thousands of high-risk youth. ANYSYB respectfully asks your consideration to assist over 2 million kids in maintaining a youth prevention and development system through the youth bureau structure by:

- **Uphold the State's formula driven youth funding appropriations, as outlined in Executive Law 410 Article 19a, (and RHYA) to maintain effective positive youth development and primary prevention services to ensure that all counties, cities, towns and villages have the opportunity to lower residential placements, lower recidivism, lower child protective rates and prevent delinquency;**
- **DO NOT ACCEPT THE PROPOSED PRIMARY PREVENTION INCENTIVE PROGRAM (PIIP). Ensure that all counties receive equitable funding and accountability is defined locally through monitoring, evaluation and performance based outcomes, not by a competitive bid which rewards the best grant writer;**
- **Restore appropriations to YDDP, SDPP an RHYA, albeit with proportionate reductions and keep these funding streams intact so they may continue to reach all youth in all counties, cities, towns and villages in New York State;**
- **Support community juvenile justice prevention, intervention and re-entry by assisting municipalities in reducing their placements and recidivism and to increase permanency through the current cost-effective youth bureau structure ;**
- **Uphold the responsibility of the NYS Office of Children and Families Services (OCFS) in the implementation of the Quality Youth Development System (QYDS), in which significant resources have already been invested, to promote accountability, monitoring, evaluation and outcome performance measurements for all youth development funding.**
- **Restore \$15.5 million in funding, if needed with a proportionate reductions, to the Summer Youth Employment Program.**

On behalf of the 2 million youth being served by positive youth development, prevention and intervention services I thank you for this opportunity and offer my assistance and that of the Association of NYS Youth Bureaus on issues, data or questions of concern regarding New York's Positive Youth Development and Prevention System.

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**Testimony for the  
Joint Legislative Hearing  
on the  
Human Services Budget**

**February 16, 2011  
Albany, New York**

**Christine S. Deyss, Executive Director  
Prevent Child Abuse New York, Inc.**



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Prevent Child Abuse New York's single mission is to prevent child abuse, focusing on community programs and public policies that prioritize prevention right from the start, so child abuse and neglect never occurs. We work with and represent a Prevention Network of more than 80 community-based organizations dedicated to the healthy development and prosperity of New York's children, families and communities.

We are deeply concerned about Executive Budget cuts to prevention services that are bad for vulnerable young children and bad for the state's economy, most significantly the Healthy Families New York home visiting program. The most stringent research shows the program improves children's health, safety and learning. Eliminating it sets the state up for additional costs in health, child welfare, education and juvenile justice.

Healthy Families serves at-risk pregnant women and new parents in 38 of our State's highest need communities. Local health and child-and-family service agencies deliver services, and a statewide system of staff training, site support, information management and evaluation assures the program's quality and effectiveness.

**Healthy Families New York is nationally recognized** as one of the country's most effective prevention programs. RAND's Promising Practices Network (PPN) on Children, Families and Communities has designated it a "Proven Program," indicating it has demonstrated effectiveness using extremely rigorous scientific standards.

PPN staff and researchers review hundreds of program evaluations from throughout the country. HFNY is one of only four programs Proven to prevent child abuse. It is one of only three programs Proven to prevent low birth weight. (A copy of RAND's letter to NYS OCFS Commissioner Carrion is attached.)

**Leading economists advise that investments in young children are the best way to stimulate economic growth**, maximizing returns and preventing lifelong public expenses. Our state has invested for the past 16 years in building the Healthy Families New York program, and has achieved astonishing results. Cost savings begin immediately, with healthier babies delivered, and continue for years as children do better in school. The seven-year randomized control trial evaluation shows:

### **Healthy Families New York Prevents Child Maltreatment**

- Parents' physical abuse of their children is reduced.
- Parents use more non-violent discipline and positive parenting skills.
- Parents at highest risk of child abuse, families with prior child protective involvement, have fewer confirmed cases of abuse and neglect.

Children cannot wait to be protected until after they have been maltreated. Nor can the State afford to wait. Federal, state, and local expenditures on child welfare services in New York exceed \$2.7 billion. The average cost to provide HFNY Services to a family is about \$4,600. The average annual cost for one child in foster care is more than \$24,000.

### **Healthy Families New York Improves Birth Outcomes and Health Care**

- Low birth weight deliveries were reduced by 50%, saving an estimated \$2.4 million in one year.
- Immunization, lead blood screening and needed medical care increased.
- Parental depression, alcohol, cigarette and drug use decreased.

New York can't afford to wait to ensure healthy births and healthy children. Babies who are born at a low birth weight face long-term difficulties. As teenagers, they have more problems with motor skills, thinking, learning and memory. In the first year of life, alone, additional medical costs range from \$25,000 to \$90,000.

### **Healthy Families New York Improves Education Outcomes**

- Children are less likely to receive special education services.
- They are less likely to repeat a grade.
- They are more likely to participate in a gifted program.

Special education services more than double the cost of a child's education. Children cannot wait until they enter school to be prepared for educational success. Those who start school ready to learn have greater success right through high school and adulthood, and being ready depends on receiving appropriate care and nurture as infants and toddlers.

**Cost savings are important. Children's wellbeing is even more important.** I would like to share a statement that Melanie Daniel had hoped to present to you in person. Melanie is a technician with the Red Cross in Rochester, and a member of Prevent Child Abuse New York's board of directors.

I was born to an alcoholic, mentally ill father and a mentally ill, sexually abused mother. Neither of my parents had family near by. Statistically, both were at a high risk to become abusive parents, but they weren't offered preventive services. I started kindergarten at age four, barely able to speak. When my sister was born, things got harder, and while I had communication problems, she showed signs of mental illness at a very young age. My father was abusive to my mother and needed absolute control of my sister and me.

When I was seven years old, my father brought me into his bedroom, loaded a gun in front of me, put it to my head and pulled the trigger, as punishment for some mistake I have long since forgot. From that day forward, I lived knowing that the people who were supposed to love me were completely willing and able to kill me at a moment's notice. It was the complete antithesis of the love and nurture parents are supposed to provide their children.

As I got older, my mother became more and more mentally compromised. Since we were less of a threat to her survival than my father was, my sister and I were constant victims of her overwhelming anger and cruelty; there was no limit to the intensity of psychological abuse she could dole out. As I got older, I was subjected to years of sexual abuse, first by my father and later by his cousin.

I didn't have any friends until I was in junior high. In high school, relationships with boys my own age were a real mess- I was afraid of males, but at the same time I was attracted to them. The idea of asking a boy to use a condom was beyond my grasp- nothing in my experience had ever led me to believe that males would listen to a request like that. And I thought getting pregnant would be a way out for me- a way out of my home, and a way out of the meaningless, agonizing adulthood my

way out of my home, and a way out of the meaningless, agonizing adulthood my parents had convinced me was my birth right.

When I was 16 or 17, my father talked with me about his plan to kill my mother. I didn't tell my mother about it. Partly, I was afraid of what would happen to me if my father found out I couldn't keep his confidence, and partly because I thought my lot in life might marginally improve without her.

So before I was old enough to vote, I was poised to become both a mother and an accomplice to murder. Thankfully, through no wisdom of my own, I became neither. I made it to college, and had four years to grow, heal, and brace myself for adulthood.

Never, at any point in my life, have I wondered how my parents could do the things to me that they did. When I was a child they said they did whatever they did because I deserved it, and like all children I believed what my parents told me. As I grew older and learned about the causes of child abuse, I came to believe they did what they did because of their own mental illnesses and scars. It is not hard for me to understand how the most broken among us can break the most fragile. But what I cannot wrap my mind around is how the most powerful among us, the people who are sitting in this room right now, can know this fact, tolerate and condone it. Choosing to eliminate services that are known, indisputably, to prevent child abuse is doing exactly that. Eliminating funding for Healthy Families is putting New York's seal of approval on the abuse, neglect, mistreatment and preventable harm of at least four thousand children.

**I ask you only to use your conscience this budget cycle and choose not to make decisions that will hurt children.**

Prevent Child Abuse New York strongly urges you to fully restore \$23.28 million in funding for Healthy Families New York.



February 7, 2011

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TEL 310 393 0411  
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Commissioner Gladys Carrión, Esq.  
NYS Office of Children and Family Services  
52 Washington Street  
Room 300 South  
Rensselaer, NY 12144

Dear Commissioner Carrión:

I am writing to report that the Promising Practices Network (PPN) on Children, Families and Communities ([www.promisingpractices.net](http://www.promisingpractices.net)) will post an updated description of the Healthy Families New York program next week based on the most recently published findings from the program's evaluation. This program is being designated a "Proven Program" by PPN, indicating the program has demonstrated effectiveness using extremely rigorous scientific standards.

PPN is a web-based resource that provides easy-to-understand descriptions and reliable information on services, activities, approaches, and policies that have been shown to achieve positive results for children and their families. The Network was founded by a consortium of four state organizations and is operated by the RAND Corporation. In addition to the four original founding partners of PPN—the Foundation Consortium for California's Children and Youth; the Colorado Foundation for Families and Children; the Family Connection Partnership (Georgia); and the Family and Community Trust (Missouri)—the Network now also includes other statewide organizations and national organizations that all share the mission of improving the well-being of children and families. In addition to overseeing their state or organization's portion of the PPN site, Network members serve on the PPN Board of Advisors, providing overall strategic guidance for the project. The New York State Office of Children & Family Services currently represents New York. I have attached materials that provide more background information on PPN.

In the last several years funding for home visiting programs has grown considerably in individual states as well as at the federal level, and funders increasingly require that funded programs demonstrate their effectiveness through rigorous evaluations. The Healthy Families America model is one of the most replicated home visiting programs in the country. At the same time, evidence of the effectiveness of this model is thin, primarily due the lack of methodologically sound evaluations. Hence, the results from the rigorous evaluation of Healthy Families New York are important not only for New York, but also for social service providers across the country. Due to the significance of this research, we will feature the updated information on Healthy Families New York on the home page of PPN and in next week's e-mail newsletter. The PPN site gets over 7,500 unique visitors a month, and more than 5,000 individuals subscribe to the newsletter.

We have reviewed hundreds of program evaluations, and Healthy Families New York is only one of four programs that we have listed as "Proven" for the indicator "Children not experiencing physical, psychological or emotional abuse" and one of three programs that we have listed as "Proven" for the indicator "Babies born weighing more than 5.5 pounds and improving outcomes for low birth weight babies." The evidence we used to designate Healthy Families New York a "Proven Program" and our description of the program have been reviewed by PPN staff,

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EDUCATION  
ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT  
HEALTH AND HEALTH CARE  
INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS  
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anonymous peer reviewers, as well as contacts from the Healthy Families New York program. Congratulations on this designation, and thank you for your state's contribution to our nation's knowledge regarding what works to improve outcomes for children and families. If I can be of further assistance regarding this matter, please let me know.

Sincerely,

*M. Rebecca Kilburn*

M. Rebecca Kilburn, Ph.D.

Director

Promising Practices Network on Children, Families and Communities

Attachments



# NEW YORK **SHAKEN BABY**

*prevention program*

---

"Saving lives, one family at a time."

**Mark S. Dias, MD, FAAP**  
Pediatric Neurosurgery  
mdias@hmc.psu.edu

**Kim Smith, RN**  
**Kathy deGuehery, RN**  
Program Nurse Coordinators  
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## Testimony to the Joint Legislative Hearing on the Human Services Budget

February 16, 2011

**Mark S. Dias, MD, FAAP**  
Principal Investigator

**Kim Smith, RN**  
**Kathleen deGuehery, RN**  
Nurse Coordinators

Distinguished Assemblypersons and Senators, thank you for the opportunity to share our perspective on the state budget. Our names are Kim Smith, RN and Kathy deGuehery, RN; we are the Nurse Coordinators for the New York Shaken Baby Prevention Program, which has brought the issue of shaken baby syndrome to the forefront at the local, state and national levels.

The Upstate New York Shaken Baby Syndrome Education Program was begun in December 1998 by Mark S. Dias, MD a neurosurgeon at Women's and Children's Hospital of Buffalo of Kaleida Health. Its purpose was to educate both parents of all infants born in an eight-county region of Western New York, before discharge from the hospital, about the dangers of shaking infants violently. Women's and Children's Hospital of Buffalo has enlisted the participation of all 18 hospitals that delivery maternity care in the region. This program is funded by Kaleida Health and a grant from the William B.Hoyt Children and Family Trust Fund. Your proposed budget includes the **elimination** of the William B. Hoyt Children and Family Trust Fund. Without new funding **we will not** be able to keep the New York Shaken Baby Prevention Program going.

**Shaken Baby Syndrome (SBS) represents the most severe form of child abuse** and accounts for the majority of severe head injuries in children less than 1 year of age, with 15-35% mortality and half of survivors suffering permanent neurological damage leading to blindness, seizures, developmental delays, and spasticity. It is estimated that 1,400 children die of abusive injuries in the United States each year, and most deaths are attributed to severe head injuries. Violent infant shaking is most commonly a

caregiver's response to persistent infant crying: nearly three-quarters of perpetrators are parents, and 60% are males.

The premise of the program is that parents need to be *reminded at the correct time (upon the birth of a child)* about SBS, and that educated parents would be effective advocates by disseminating this information to all who care for their child. Under this creative community-focused program, parents receive both written and, in many cases, video materials about SBS before leaving the hospital. Both parents are then asked to voluntarily sign a commitment statement affirming their receipt and understanding of this material; these commitments statements are returned and tracked by the investigators. This is a very simple educational intervention; however, it is the first program to actually track cases to document its effectiveness. This is a community-wide educational program that actively involves parents in preventing injury to infants and young children. This will ultimately improve the health status of our most precious resource -- our children.

The program is unique in many respects:

- It is universal in application, involving all hospitals providing maternity care in the entire State of New York. This means that parents realize they are not being singled out due to socio-economic or ethnic status or suspect for some other reason, but because all parents need help in such moments.
- It provides information consistently to all parents at a time when they are most receptive to information about how to best care for their child.

- Although it targets both parents, it actively and specifically seeks out fathers and father figures for education; parents and their partners account for 75% of shaken babies, while fathers or father figures alone account for 60% of shaken babies.
- This innovative community-wide approach engages parents and requires their active participation by asking them to voluntarily sign commitment statements that reaffirm their receipt and understanding of the information.
- It tracks the dissemination of the program to parents through the return of the commitment statements.
- It documents success.

Women's and Children's Hospital of Buffalo has been tracking the incidence of SBS in the eight-county region since December 1998, and comparing it with historical SBS incidence figures from the six preceding years. The reach of the program was expanded into 12 hospitals in the nine counties of the Finger Lakes Region. We have demonstrated a sustained and consistent **50% reduction** in incidence in these counties since the inception of the program now for **over 10 years!** In the last two years we have expanded the current prevention program to 48 counties in Upstate New York also in conjunction with the Hudson Valley SBS Initiative who are educating the rest of the downstate and NYC regions. We now educate approximately **44,000 families** per year!

Another phase in the SBS Prevention Program is a collaboration with community physicians in WNY and FLR. This involves a 'booster shot' in the form of additional

educational materials provided at the doctor's office on the first visit. The goal is to reinforce the message provided at birth. Additionally, Women's and Children's Hospital has developed an educational card to help parents cope with a crying infant, and these crying cards are shared with all parents at the baby's first visit to their pediatrician.

The total cost savings to society by preventing even one infant from violent shaking could well exceed several million dollars. The societal costs of lifelong care for head-injured children is not well established, but the initial hospital costs alone (excluding physicians' fees) can average \$30,000-\$70,000. and the medical costs for one case can exceed \$1 million. Its impact on public resources is significant, as well – from the near-term cost of law enforcement and incarceration for domestic violence, to the long-term impact of child abuse on victims' success in school and life. **The costs of an effective primary prevention program could easily be regained from the medical and monetary savings to the community.**

Most important, a prevention campaign designed to raise public awareness and educate parents and others about the dangers of violent infant shaking and abuse could potentially save the lives of many children and improve the lives of many others. There has never been a more clarion call for public education and awareness about the dangers of violence against infants. Our program is the first to have demonstrated that a parent education program can have a documented impact in eliminating this scourge.

The success of this program is made possible by the many partnerships working together for the good of the community. The program is robust, ongoing, and sustained.

With the support of the William B. Hoyt Children and Family Trust Fund and Women's

and Children's Hospital of Buffalo of Kaleida Health has no doubt that we will continue to show the nation and the world that together we can reduce SBS.

***We urge you to invest wisely in prevention and work with your legislative colleagues to provide the funding needed to keep the trust fund going and keep programs that are making a difference in our State alive !***

February 15, 2011

The Honorable Dean G. Skelos  
NYS Senate  
Room 909 Legislative Office Building  
Albany, NY 12247

Dear Mr. Skelos,

DO YOU WANT TO SAVE MONEY (now do I have your attention)? Then you absolutely must FUND THE CHILDREN AND FAMILY TRUST FUND - it is not only the right thing to do, it also SAVES MONEY. How?

The New York Shaken Baby Syndrome/Abusive Head Trauma Prevention Program, which I began in Buffalo and which eventually has been extended to the entire state of New York, is funded by the Trust Fund. This program mandates that all parents of newborn infants receive information about violent infant shaking before the infant leaves the hospital. ***This program has, for the past 12 years, consistently reduced the incidence of Shaken Baby Syndrome/Abusive Head Trauma by 50% among the 17 counties of Upstate NY!!!!***

This program saves both lives and money! The initial medical costs alone for each case of SBS/AHT involve tens of thousands of dollars, and there are reported cases costing in excess of \$1,000,000 *EACH* for total medical care. This doesn't include the legal costs of trying and incarcerating the perpetrator, and the lifelong costs of child care, therapies, and loss of tax revenue for a child with major disabilities. The majority of these costs are paid by *NYS Medicaid*; in other words, New York State is ***already paying for this condition***. The cost savings for preventing these cases far outstrips the costs of prevention – in short, an ounce of prevention is truly worth a pound of cure! Please consider restoring funding to this valuable program and to the NYS Trust Fund.

Sincerely,

Mark S. Dias, MD, FAANS, FAAP  
Professor and Vice-Chair of Neurosurgery  
Milton S. Hershey Medical Center  
Director, NY and PA Shaken Baby Syndrome Prevention Program



## What are the costs of SBS?

The following costs are based upon unpublished case costs from three different sources (published costs for SBS in peer reviewed journals are not available).

1) Initial costs for victims of SBS in Missouri (Lori Frasier, MD, unpublished data):

\$32,500 per case

<u>Breakdown</u>	<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Dollar Amount</u>
Medical costs	58%	\$18,840
Family Services	28%	\$9,100
Mental Health Services	14.5%	\$4,713

2) University of Utah (D Corwin, unpublished data)

*Initial costs for medical care for in-patient hospitalization only (excluding physician's fees) averaged \$28,000 per case.*

3) Showers (Showers J, published by the special projects office, Pueblo, CO)

*Initial medical costs for hospitalization average \$70,000*

*Costs for the first 5 years for survivors of abusive head injury are estimated at \$300,000*

We can then construct the following medical costs based upon models 1-3:

	<u>Frasier</u>	<u>Showers</u>	<u>Corwin</u>
Costs/case	\$32,500	\$75,000	\$18,000
# of cases	7.83/yr	7.83/yr	7.83/yr
<b>Total Costs/yr</b>	<b>\$254,475</b>	<b>\$587,250</b>	<b>\$140,940</b>

Reduction in # of cases

<u>from Prevention</u>	54%	54%	54%
<b>Savings</b>	<b>\$137,417</b>	<b>\$317,115</b>	<b>\$76,108</b>

**Average medical savings to be expected from a prevention program: \$176,880**

By contrast, the costs of the program are as follows:

Costs of funding Upstate NY SBS Prevention Program: \$161,247

**Average minimal savings by funding prevention:** \$15,633

**Average minimal savings per \$1 spent:** \$1.09

Remember that this data includes **ONLY** initial medical costs; the costs of chronic and ongoing services (medical, therapy, educational, caregiving) for survivors are much more difficult to compile and analyze, but are many times the costs of initial medical care. One documented case describes management costs for a single case that **exceed \$1 million** (Proceedings of the Second National Conference on Shaken Baby Syndrome, Salt Lake City, Utah, 1998, p. 52). The total cost savings of a prevention program are almost certainly many times greater for insurers.

The bottom line:

**It saves lives**

**It saves money**

**It deserves your support**





New York State  
Office of  
Children & Family  
Services

George E. Pataki  
Governor

John A. Johnson  
Commissioner

April 12, 2005

Cheryl Klass, President  
Women and Children's Hospital of Buffalo  
219 Bryant Street  
Buffalo, New York 14222

Dear Ms. Klass:

I would like to formally congratulate the *Upstate New York Shaken Baby Syndrome Education Program* on receiving the 2005 Commissioner's Award from the federal Administration on Children, Youth and Families (ACYF) for its outstanding achievement in the field of child abuse and neglect. ACYF asked each state to nominate an individual or individuals who have made significant contributions to prevent child abuse and neglect. This national award recognizes the impact of this public education effort on preventing serious and often fatal injuries to infants and young children. I want to applaud the vision and leadership of Dr. Mark Dias, pediatric neurosurgeon and founder of the program, and the Nurse Coordinators, Kim Smith and Kathy deGuehery, for their exceptional efforts in bringing the issue of shaken baby syndrome to the forefront at the local, state and national levels.

The documented success of this primary prevention effort underscores the issue of shaken baby syndrome as totally preventable and emphasizes the role of parents, caregivers, and the community in advocating for the safety and well being of New York's children. The program spurred the passage of legislation requiring all hospitals to share information about shaken baby syndrome and put New York in the forefront in addressing this devastating and costly injury both in human and financial terms. The educational program is now being delivered statewide, and, with the support of the Office of Children and Family Services and the Children and Family Trust Fund, has now extended its evaluation efforts by reaching out to the local pediatricians in the Western New York and Finger Lakes regions where the project operates.

I am also impressed with efforts to secure financial support from the insurance companies and the national attention afforded this program both in the New York Times and the National Association of Children's Hospitals and Related Institutions (NACHRI) that profiled the program as a successful strategy in the prevention of child abuse and neglect. The fact

Capital View Office Park

52 Washington Street  
Rensselaer, NY 12144-2796



that this simple, straight-forward model is now being replicated in whole or in part in many other states across the country is commendable.

I am pleased that Dr. Dias, Ms. Smith and Ms. deGuehery will be present at the 15<sup>th</sup> National Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect to accept this award. New York can be truly proud of the contributions made by the program creators and more importantly by the nurses and pediatricians dedicated to this endeavor. The Upstate New York Shaken Baby Syndrome Education Program has truly made a difference and is most worthy of this award. Congratulations and thank you for your efforts on behalf of New York's children and families.

Sincerely,



John A. Johnson

cc: Michael Weiner



*Kim M. Smith, RN, and Kathleen A. deGuebery, BSN, RN*

# Shaken Baby Syndrome Education Program: *Nurses Making a Difference*

## **Abstract**

This article describes the nursing role in the Upstate New York Shaken Baby Syndrome (SBS) Education Program, an effort to educate parents of all hospital-born infants in the eight-county region of Western New York about the dangers of violent infant shaking. This program has now been expanded to include hospitals in 17 counties in Upstate New York. The major intervention is an educational program administered by nurses. These nurses describe the challenges and opportunities they faced in implementing a large community health program.

**Key Words:** Baby; Education; Nurse; Shaken Baby Syndrome.

**A**mong infants, abusive head injuries represent one of the most serious forms of child abuse. Newton and Vandeven (2004) estimated that 1,200 to 1,400 children are subjected to violent shaking every year, with 25% to 30% of these children dying from their injuries. What is commonly referred to as "shaken baby syndrome" (SBS) is also called "inflicted brain trauma" and was first described in 1972 by Caffey, who described a set of symptoms associated with "whiplash-shaking and jerking" an infant as whiplash shaken infant syndrome (Caffey, 1972; Newton & Vandeven, 2004). SBS is often a consequence of caregiver frustration and/or reaction to persistent infant crying (Carbaugh & Gracey, 2004; Purdy, 2000). Research by Starling, Patel, Burke, Sirotnak, Stronks, and Rosquist (2004) has shown in a sample of 171 cases that the father was the perpetrator in 56% of cases, boyfriends in 16% of cases, the mother in 15% of cases, and babysitters or other providers of care in 14% of cases. In 91% of the cases they studied, symptoms appeared immediately after the abuse.

Because infants have weak neck muscles and disproportionately large heads, serious injuries can occur when an infant or young child is violently shaken. The underdeveloped brain rocks back and forth within the skull, and several possible injuries can occur including blindness or eye damage, developmental delay, seizures, spinal cord damage, brain injury, or even death. The majority of victims reported are under 1 year of age (Dias et al., 2005). According to The National Center on Shaken Baby Syndrome (NCSBS), symptoms of SBS that might be seen in children include the following:

- Lethargy
- Decreased muscle tone
- Poor feeding
- Vomiting
- Lack of smiling or vocalizing
- Rigid posture
- Dyspnea
- Seizures
- Bulging fontanels
- Unequal pupils
- Lack of ability to focus eyes
- Inability to lift head (www.dontshake.com)

## SBS Prevention Programs

Because this problem is so devastating to the health of infants and young children, efforts have been made at preven-

tion of SBS. One of the first SBS prevention initiatives originated in 1989 (Walls, 2006). That campaign reached 15,708 parents in one Ohio County and was called *Don't Shake the Baby* (Showers, 1992). It was conducted in six maternity units during a 12-month period, and parents were given printed material on how to cope with crying infants and information about the dangers of shaking. When the program was evaluated, more than three fourths of the respondents said that the information was helpful and should be provided to other parents. In addition, 98% of the respondents selected the correct response, "*Shaking can cause brain damage or kill a baby*" (Gutierrez, Clements, & Averill, 2004).

In the 1990s, the Junior League of St. Paul and the Midwest Children's Resource Center at Children's Health Care formed a program called *Awareness, Advice and Advocacy*:

*This comprehensive, regional, hospital-based program was designed to educate parents of all newborns before discharge from the hospital about the dangers of violent infant shaking.*

*The Child Abuse Project.* The goal of this initiative was to reduce the incidence of SBS through increased public awareness and community education. The public awareness component was accomplished through the use of public service announcements, brochures, transit stop posters, restroom advertisements, and other creative approaches targeting the general public. The community education component consisted of a curriculum that included parenting classes for high school students, teen parents, inmates, day-care providers, and other community organizations. There was also a sixth-grade curriculum called *Fragile: Handle With Care* that taught school age children and potential babysitters about child development and the responsibilities of caring for infants. A prime focus of the Minnesota project was that all caregivers hear the message of SBS prevention (Swenson & Levitt, 1997).

In addition to these local or regional programs, The NCSBS has developed several education programs that target new and future parents. One example of these programs is *Dads 101*, and it is aimed at men in the military,

prisons, and halfway houses and also at fathers in hospital prenatal courses, reflecting the fact that some research had shown that men are often the perpetrators in SBS (Gutierrez et al., 2004). The educational material used in this program was aimed at increasing mens' skills and confidence as nurturing parents. The NCSBS programs for junior high and high school students are designed to educate them about the medical aspects of SBS and the injuries seen in its victims. It also teaches child care and anger management skills and offers the video, *Elijah's Story*, a documentary about a child who was shaken to death by his father. NCSBS' program called *The Period of PURPLE Crying* describes normal infant behavioral characteristics that can induce frustration on the part of parents and caregivers, including crying peaks, unexpected crying that resists soothing effects by caregivers, and crying that lasts for 30 minutes or longer. This program seeks to decrease parents' frustration and stress that can lead to shaking an infant (Walls, 2006).

Although not specifically related to SBS, there are several programs that both assess high-risk families and educate them. A study conducted in New York showed that home care visits by a healthcare provider resulted in improved parent-child relationships and fewer mandated reports to child protective services (Leventhal, 2001). Similarly, a home visitation program in Memphis noted a decrease in health problems associated with children's injuries when family homes were visited by a healthcare professional (Nagler, 2002).

Our program in Western New York was evaluated formally, and the results, which demonstrated a dramatic decrease in the incidence of SBS, were previously published (Dias et al., 2005). The purpose of this article is to inform the reader about the educational interventions we used and to underscore the importance of the nurses' role in the success of the program.

## The Western New York Shaken Baby Syndrome Education Program

Our program was founded in 1998 by Mark S. Dias, a pediatric neurosurgeon who had witnessed the devastating effects of SBS on children and their families. The program was funded by the William B. Hoyt Memorial Children & Family Trust Fund, a program of the New York State Office of Children & Family Services.

He enlisted an interdisciplinary team to develop and implement a comprehensive, regional, hospital-based parent education program to educate parents of all infants born in hospitals in the eight-county region of Western New York (before discharge to home) about the dangers of violent infant shaking. The premise was that parents who were taught about SBS upon the birth of a child could be effective

## Figure 1. Key Elements of the Shaken Baby Syndrome (SBS) Prevention Program

American Academy of Pediatrics information brochure on SBS
SBS prevention poster
<i>Portrait of Promise</i> video
Commitment statement

advocates in disseminating this information to all those who might be in the position of caring for their child (Coles & Kemp, 2003).

Nurses were designated as the professionals who would provide all the education to the parents about this important new program. The perinatal nurse is in an ideal position to provide parents with this information (Cole, 2005; Reid, 2003), for it has long been known that new parents are eager to learn as much as possible about the care of their baby and that nurses are the most trusted, honest, and ethical professionals (Gallup.com, 2007).

## The Program Begins

Once the program components were developed, it was initiated as a pilot study at all the 16 hospitals that provide maternity care in the eight counties of the region. Dr. Dias initially began by educating all the nurse managers of these hospitals at a regional perinatal outreach conference. The nurse managers, in turn, were then responsible for training the nursing staff to educate all families of newborns about the dangers of infant shaking. Written and video components of the program were provided to all the nurse managers, and included an informational brochure about abusive head injuries (*Prevent Shaken Baby Syndrome*) published by the American Academy of Pediatrics, which discussed the dangers of violent infant shaking and gave alternative behavioral responses to infant crying. In addition, an 11-minute video, *Portrait of Promise: Preventing Shaken Baby Syndrome* (Midwest Children's Resource Center, St. Paul, MN), was provided; it featured three families whose lives have been devastated by SBS. Educational posters (*Never, Never, Never, Never Shake a Baby* developed by SBS Prevention Plus, Pueblo, CO) were also given to each hospital for display in the hallways of the maternity units (Figure 1). The nurse managers were encouraged to ask staff nurses to provide this SBS education to parents before

*Keeping a large program of parent education operational over a period of years requires specific skills in open communication and encouraging change.*

hospital discharge, and at a separate time from other postpartum teaching in order to emphasize its importance.

The program entailed a nurse providing educational materials to the parents, discussing SBS with them, and showing the video (after the pilot period was completed, additional grant funding was obtained to purchase TV/VCR units and rolling carts for each participating hospital so that nurses could show the video to the parents). Finally, nurses asked parents to voluntarily sign a commitment statement that acknowledged their receipt and understanding of this information. These commitment statements were returned and tracked for evaluation of the program (Figure 1).

### **Nurse Coordinators Expand the Program**

After a period of pilot testing, the program was awarded a 4-year grant from the same foundation to allow for continuation of the initial program in Western New York and expansion into the nine additional counties. Two nurse coordinators (the authors of this article) were hired to manage the existing program and to expand the program throughout the region.

Our first priority was to contact all the nurse managers of the perinatal units, review the status of the program in each hospital, and begin the essential development of personal working relationships with each manager. We found that face-to-face meetings and then continual contact with the nurse managers of the maternity units was most effective in keeping the program moving forward, because we could be the resource nurses for the nurse managers and provide them with updated information monthly. Our ongoing meetings with the managers determined how well the program was being implemented. In a few hospitals where program components seemed to be missing, we spent time teaching the staff nurses about the program and SBS, which was a very valuable strategy.

The importance of the nurse managers' role in the success of this nurse-driven program cannot be overemphasized, for they assumed the day-to-day oversight for the delivery of the program components for all new parents. It is clear that without their support, this program could never

have achieved such success. Of the 16 regional hospitals providing maternity care, 13 participated fully during the entire 66-month study period.

As the program moved into new hospitals in the extended geographical region, the same pattern of personal contact with nurse managers and staff nurses was implemented, following the framework described by Curtis and White (2002) for implementing change in organizations. In-service education about the program was offered to all new staff when required, and the combined work of the nurse coordinators and nurse managers provided the energy and drive necessary to keep the program on track. Staff nurses were constantly encouraged to provide the necessary education to their patients, and were cooperative and motivated to do so, despite the fact that they were often overworked and stressed (Kirkley & Stein, 2004). Some of the most effective methods we used to ensure implementation of this successful program are shown in Figure 2.

### **Clinical Implications**

A nurse-implemented, hospital-based, parent education program aimed at preventing SBS of all infants born in a large geographic area of New York State was successful, demonstrating a significant reduction in the incidence of abusive head injury among children under 3 years of age (Dias et al., 2005). Throughout the 66-month study period, the program demonstrated a sustained 50% reduction in the incidence of abusive head injuries in the region (Dias et al., 2005). Nursing played an essential role in this program, because it was nurses who educated all the parents and it was nurses who traveled throughout the region to ensure that the program was being implemented at all 17 sites. Although we had challenges in implementing such a large program, because we were nurses we were able to overcome the barriers and attain a successful outcome. Barriers faced during program implementation included the following:

- Uncertainty about buy-in by nurse managers.
- Initial staff resistance to additional work.
- Difficulty in maintaining momentum to keep the program going.



## Figure 2. Successful Strategies for Implementation of the SBS Prevention Program.

Establish good working relationships with nurse managers and staff through:

Initial face-to-face contact
Monthly phone/e-mail follow-up
Monitoring monthly commitment statement return rate
Notifying nurse manager of any changes and follow-up with response
Posting reminders on unit where staff will see
In-service education for new staff as needed
Keeping staff interested with frequent program updates
Quarterly newsletter
Media coverage (print, radio, and TV)

Steps to overcome these barriers centered on establishing good working relationships with the nurse managers and nursing staff through the following steps:

- Closely monitoring monthly commitment statement return rates and communicating results to nurse managers.
- Surveying nurse managers to determine their needs to better implement the program (one example of direct response to their needs was the purchase of the TV/VCR cart units to assist staff showing the video to parents).
- Keeping staff interested in program with frequent program updates and quarterly newsletters to the hospitals demonstrating the success of the program due to the diligence of their staff.

Because of the success of this program and the strong support of regional advocates, a bill was signed in November 2004 by the Governor of the state of New York, mandating that all hospitals and birth centers offer parents the opportunity to view the video about SBS prior to discharge. The legislation serves to enhance the efforts of existing programs to edu-

cate all parents in the state of New York about the dangers of infant shaking. The next step is to build on the success in the upstate region and to implement The Upstate New York SBS Education Program in hospitals statewide. The program, delivered by nurses, has truly made a difference in the community.

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