



Childcare Enhancement Initiative Implemented

On Sunday morning, March 25th, the staff assigned to the Department's three directly-operated group homes in The Bronx and Manhattan had their workday reduced from 12 to 8 hours without a loss in pay.

The initiative was facilitated by the graduation of fourteen new Congregate Care Specialists on Friday, March 23rd, which included re-deployed staff from the Administration for Children's Services. The Department had executed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Mayor's Office of Labor Relations, DC 37 and ACS.

Given the importance of the initiative to enhance the quality of childcare and bolster morale, various members of DJJ's senior and management staff were on hand to usher in the initiative.

Stephanie Prussack, Assistant Commissioner of the Non-Secure Detention group home system named SEEDS and staff member of the Department since its inception in 1979, said, "Since my first day of work as a Juvenile Counselor, the Department's NSD staff have performed 12-hour days, and I am proud to have brought about this historic childcare enhancement for the benefit of youth and staff alike."

Commissioner Prussack went on to say, "It was an equally rewarding experience to see the veteran staff have this day arrive as much as the new staff commence their careers at DJJ."

The sentiment of the staff towards the Department's management team was epitomized in the words of staff member John Barlow who noted, "On behalf of all former Houseparents, now Congregate Care Specialists, I would like to take this time to extend our deepest appreciation and gratitude for all of the hard work you and your cabinet have put forth in making the 40-hour work week a reality. We all know and understand that this would not have been possible without your understanding, compassion and concern for the welfare of your employees. This is definitely a historic moment for the Department and none of this would have been possible without you. Thank you."

