



*New York City Family Services Coordinator Ron Richter delivers opening remarks at DJJ's 2008 Parental Engagement Forum.*

## **DJJ Hosts Parental Engagement Forum**

On Monday, November 10, 2008, the Department of Juvenile Justice hosted a forum on “Supporting the Transition Home: Increasing Parental Engagement and Participation in Programming for At-Risk and Court-Involved Youth.” The event, which drew an audience of nearly 100 juvenile justice professionals, was held in the Saval Auditorium at St. John’s University. Ronald Richter, New York City’s Family Services Coordinator, provided opening remarks.

The forum panel consisted of Charles Berrios of Good Shepherd Services, Camille J. Cooper, Child Study Center, Angela Moses, Family Life Development Center, and Karen Winston, CAMBA Broadway House Women’s Shelter. Nina Aledort, DJJ’s Assistant Commissioner for Program Services, moderated the event.

In an auditorium filled with criminal justice and juvenile professionals, advocates and human service providers, the panelists stressed the importance of engaging parents to make service systems more responsive to client’s needs. An overarching theme of the forum was that by regularly bringing together community based organizations and individuals committed to helping our City’s youth, the success realized by juvenile justice reforms during the past two years can be sustained.

“Parents are the most effective advocates that children have,” DJJ Director of Intergovernmental Affairs Nicole Halsey said. “Strengthening programming for parents, and increasing the participation of parents in programs for at-risk and court-involved youth is important and will have positive results for youth and families.”

