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NYC ACS RELEASES 2016 YEAR-END FOSTER CARE STRATEGIC BLUEPRINT STATUS REPORT

This past year, ACS increased the number of children adopted by 5% and the number of children exiting foster care to kinship guardianship by 25%

New York, NY – The New York City Administration for Children’s Services today announced the release of the *2016 Year-End Foster Care Strategic Blueprint Status Report*. This year-end report highlights the significant progress that ACS made to improve case practice and outcomes for children and families in the foster care system.

The *Foster Care Blueprint* identifies ACS’ key priorities and strategies pertaining to family reunification, kinship placement, adoption, and supporting older youth. This focus— combined with an unprecedented investment by the de Blasio administration of \$122 million in new funding to strengthen child welfare— is yielding promising results.

“We know that children fare best when raised in families,” **said Administration for Children’s Services Deputy Commissioner for Family Permanency Services Julie Farber**. “This past year, more than 2,500 children in foster care were reunified with their families of origin, and 1,052 New York City kids were adopted. Furthermore, the number of kids placed permanently with relatives has increased 25%. Our comprehensive strategies are producing results for kids and families.”

The improvements highlighted in the report are, among them:

- **Significant Increases in Adoption and Kinship Guardianship:** From FY2015 to FY2016, ACS and its foster care providers increased the number of children achieving permanency through kinship guardianship (KinGAP) by 25% and adoption by 5%, even as the overall numbers of children in foster care continued to decline.
- **Safe Reunification with Family:** 2,500 children were reunified with their families of origin in FY2016; and the proportion of children who re-entered foster care post-reunification decreased from FY2015 to FY2016.
- **Declining Foster Care Census:** Fewer than 10,000 children are in foster care due to better child protective investigations, more preventive services and improvements in foster care case practice.
- **Historically Low Foster Care Caseloads:** Foster care caseworker caseloads are at an historic low, averaging 10-12 children per worker.
- **Cutting Edge Training:** The new ACS Workforce Institute has trained more than 5,000 ACS child protection and provider agency foster care and preventive services staff a new Open Adoption initiative engaged more than 600 foster care agency staff, legal advocates and the

courts; and a new training on Family Time was provided to more than 1,450 foster care agency staff.

- **Evidence-Based Services:** ACS is scaling the evidence-based initiatives that were launched in 2015. Foster care agencies are using a nationally recognized screening tool to assess trauma, and proven interventions are being delivered to help children, parents, and families cope with trauma.
- **Increased ACS Support to Strengthen Foster Care Agency Case Practice:** ACS has an intensive provider oversight system that includes but is not limited to monthly safety checks; monthly and quarterly reports on numerous key safety, permanency and well-being indicators; statistically representative intensive case reviews; annual scorecards; and corrective action plans. In 2015 and 2016, ACS implemented new quality improvement strategies, increased case consultation resources for foster care agencies and added a new ACS unit providing technical assistance to foster care agencies on best practices, business process improvements and performance management strategies.
- **Better Pathways to Adulthood for Youth in Foster Care:** ACS partnered with the City University of New York, the New York City Department of Youth and Community Development, the Workplace Center at Columbia University School of Social Work, among others, and launched multiple initiatives to improve education and employment outcomes for youth in foster care. More than 400 youth in foster care are attending college.

To read the entire 2016 Year-End Foster Care Strategic Blueprint Status Report, please visit: www.nyc.gov/acs/fostercareblueprint.

The Administration for Children's Services (ACS) protects and promotes safety and well-being of New York City's children and families by providing child welfare, juvenile justice, and early care and education services. In child welfare, ACS contracts with private nonprofit organizations to support and stabilize families at risk of a crisis through preventive services, and provides foster care services for children not able to safely remain at home. In juvenile justice, ACS manages and funds services including detention and placement, intensive community-based alternatives for youth, and support services for families. In early care and education, ACS coordinates and funds programs and vouchers for close to 100,000 children eligible for subsidized care.

For more information, please visit www.nyc.gov/acs