



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES LAUNCHES FOSTER CARE INTERAGENCY TASK FORCE

The twenty-one member Task Force includes twelve appointees; six from the Administration and six from the New York City Council

New York, NY – The New York City Administration for Children's Services (ACS) launched the **Foster Care Interagency Task Force** to enhance interagency collaboration, to identify key strategies, and to improve outcomes for youth in the foster care system.

The Task Force was created following the enactment of Local Law 144 of 2016, signed by Mayor Bill de Blasio on November 16, 2016. It includes leadership and representatives from the Administration for Children's Services (ACS), the City Council, the Public Advocate, the Department of Social Services (DSS/HRA/DHS), the Department of Education (DOE), the Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD), the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH), the City Housing Authority (NYCHA), youth and parents involved with the foster care system, foster care agency providers and advocates.

The 21 (twenty one) member Task Force includes 12 (twelve) appointees: 6 (six) appointees from the Administration, and 6 (six) appointees from the New York City Council.

The Foster Care Task Force will build upon the work of ACS' [Foster Care Strategic Blueprint](#), which is focused on improving outcomes for children in foster care. The Blueprint identifies key priorities and strategies for improving results across the foster care system – from family reunification to kinship placement to adoption to supporting older youth.

ACS Commissioner David Hansell hosted and chaired the first Foster Care Interagency Task Force meeting on June 26, 2017.

“The implementation of the Foster Care Interagency Task Force is a testament to the unprecedented commitment from this administration to build on our continued success with youth in foster care. We have made great strides in safely reducing the number of young people in foster care in New York City to the lowest in decades, but we recognize that we have further to go to ensure the best outcomes for every one of them,” said **ACS Commissioner David Hansell**. “I thank Council Member Steve Levin for introducing this important legislation, and I look forward to a productive partnership.”



“As we work to turn the tide on homelessness, addressing the needs of young people facing hard times is crucial,” said **Department of Social Services Commissioner Steven Banks**. “Under this Administration, we have tripled the total number of youth beds, opened the first-ever LGBTQI shelter dedicated to serving gender-non-conforming young people as they get back on their feet, and have enhanced collaboration with partner agencies with a focus on preventing youth from having to enter shelter, including by providing help with rental assistance—but there is more to be done. The Foster Care Interagency Task Force will bring experts and stakeholders to the table to improve delivery of services to young New Yorkers and deepen the citywide progress we have made as we focus on helping more and more young people transition back into permanent housing or avoid homelessness altogether.”

“When it comes to the wellbeing of our City’s young people, we must continue to push forward on effective, innovative practices,” said **Council Member Stephen Levin, General Welfare Committee Chair**. “Through this taskforce, experts from all throughout the foster care system – City agencies, foster care providers, advocates, and foster youth – will come together with the common goal of improving outcomes for our City’s youth. This is how we move forward – hand in hand, with the interests of the next generation foremost in our minds.”

“We must do all we can to ensure our children in foster care are safe, protected, and provided for,” said **Public Advocate Letitia James**. “The newly formed Foster Care Interagency Task Force will be an important tool as we work to fix a system that has been broken for too long. We must use every resource possible as we work to ensure that our most vulnerable children go on to live a life of opportunity.”

The Task Force includes:

Commissioner David Hansell	NYC Administration for Children’s Services (Chair)
Council Member Stephen Levin	New York City Council
Commissioner Steven Banks	Department of Social Services
Chancellor Carmen Fariña	Department of Education
Commissioner Bill Chong	Department of Youth and Community Development
Commissioner Mary Travis Bassett	Department of Health & Mental Hygiene
Chair & CEO Shola Olatoye	New York City Housing Authority
Melissa Mark-Viverito	Speaker of the City Council
Letitia James	Public Advocate



Council Appointees:

Kurt Dawiec	Youth Representative
Milcah Slater	Youth Representative
Alondra Castillo	Youth Representative
Joyce McMillan	Parent Representative
Jeremy Kohomban	Foster Care Provider – Children's Village
Georgia Boothe	Advocacy Organization – Children's Aid Society

Mayoral Appointees:

Brieanna Hayes	Youth Representative
Patrick Brown	Youth Representative
Anthony Trotter	Youth Representative
Jeanette Vega	Parent Representative
Jess Dannhauser	Foster Care Provider – Graham Windham
Jennifer March	Advocacy Organization – Citizen's Committee for Children

The Task Force will submit recommendations to the Administration and the City Council by early 2018 regarding improving education, housing, health, mental health, employment and permanency outcomes for youth in and aging out of foster care. Follow-up reports regarding implementation of the recommendations will follow.

About the New York City Administration for Children's Services:

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. ACS is aggressively implementing a [Foster Care Strategic Blueprint](#) to improve outcomes for children in foster care. The most recent status report indicates a 25% increase of children achieving permanency through kinship guardianship and a 5% increase in children adopted from FY 2015 to FY 2016, even as the overall number of children in foster care continued to decline, among other significant progress made to improve case practice and outcomes for children and families in the foster care system. 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

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