



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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## **ACS SECURES \$112K GRANT FROM THE ROBIN HOOD FUND TO HELP EXPAND PRIMARY PREVENTION SERVICES IN HIGH NEED COMMUNITIES IN NYC**

*Funds Will Be Used to Support Family Enrichment Centers By Teaching Families How to Minimize Exposure to Toxic Stress & Support Healthy Brain Development in Young Children*

NEW YORK, NY – Today, Administration for Children's Services (ACS) Commissioner David A. Hansell announced that the agency has been awarded \$112,000 from the Robin Hood Fund for Early Learning (FUEL). The funds will be used to support Family Enrichment Centers (FECs), which serve the communities of East New York, Hunts Point and Highbridge. Specifically, the funds will be used to co-design methods by which parents and caregivers will decide how they would like to teach their neighbors and families how to better manage stress and support healthy brain development in young children.

"At ACS we recognize that primary prevention is critical to building strong communities. We are grateful to the Robin Hood Fund for Early Learning for their continued support and partnership," **said ACS Commissioner, David A. Hansell.** "This investment will expand access to critical tools that will improve outcomes for all children and families in New York City."

"Families wish to provide every opportunity for their children to thrive, and this funding will empower community members to devise their own solutions to the unique challenges that they face," **said Deputy Commissioner Lorelei Vargas.** "This is part of an ongoing effort to disrupt disparity and break down barriers to promote opportunities and establish accessible resources for families— from healthcare, to housing, quality education, and employment."

"Robin Hood's Fund for Early Learning (FUEL) Initiative is delighted to be a seed funder with A.C.S.'s new and innovative Family Enrichment Centers. FUEL's mission is to support parents and caregivers in their pivotal role as first teachers and first brain-builders, which aligns well with the FECs holistic approach to child and family well-being. With its use of a strength-based approach we look forward to what the F.E.C.'s will mean for the thousands of vulnerable families served," **said Emary Aronson, Chief Program Officer, Robin Hood.**

FECs work to build strong relationships and networks that enable families to ask for the support they need to thrive, with the goal of preventing them from ever having to enter the child welfare system. These centers will serve as a vehicle to introduce these community driven solutions to help increase attachment between child and parent, and reduce reports of child abuse and neglect.

While the vision for this initiative is expansive, specific goals include: improved awareness regarding Adverse Child Experiences (ACEs) and resilience brain science among target communities; improved knowledge of parenting and child development among families in target

communities; identifying innovative practices generated from the community itself in addressing ACEs, resilience, and brain science and investments in community-driven solutions to ACEs, resilience, and brain-building in the target communities.

Moreover, the agency aims to support increased nurturing attachment amongst families within these communities and improve child development and well-being outcomes within these communities.

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