



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

December 17, 2019

Contact: mediainquiry@acs.nyc.gov

ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES ANNOUNCES SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENTS IN NYC'S FOSTER CARE SYSTEM IN JUST THE LAST THREE YEARS; FEWER NYC CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE THAN EVER BEFORE AND MANY IN FOSTER CARE ARE LIVING WITH RELATIVES & FRIENDS

New Data Shows the "ACS Foster Care Blueprint" is Working; NYC's Foster Care Population is At a Historic Low & 39 Percent Live With Relatives or Friends

New York, NY – The NYC Administration for Children's Services (ACS) Commissioner David A. Hansell today released the "Foster Care Blueprint 3-Year Progress Report," which shows significant improvements in New York City's foster care system. Through a series of targeted reforms, ACS has reduced the number of children in foster care to a historic low. In addition, a larger proportion of youth in care than ever before are now in safe placements with relatives or others close to them. The full report, which can be found [here](#), outlines these results and the many other ways in which ACS has strengthened the foster care system and improved outcomes for children.

"We continue to make strides in our work to strengthen and support families and keep families together whenever safely possible. When children must be placed in foster care for their own safety, we work hard to place children with people they already know, such as family and close friends." **said ACS Commissioner Hansell.** "This just-released report shows that New York City continues to move the needle in the right direction by strengthening the foster care system, keeping children safely in their homes when we can, and improving the lives of children who must be in foster care. I want to thank ACS staff, foster care agencies, the Family Court and advocates for their tireless efforts and, most importantly, the children and families who inform our work."

ACS strives to keep families together by providing prevention services and additional support; however, when a child must be removed from a home due to safety reasons, ACS works hard to place the child in a high-quality foster home that is with a relative or family friend, whenever possible. Three years ago, ACS announced its "Foster Care Strategic Blueprint," which outlines the agency's key priorities and strategies to strengthen the foster care system and improve outcomes for children in care.

The just-released "Foster Care Blueprint 3-Year Progress Report" summarizes the agency's work and the progress made. Key highlights include:

- **Fewer children in foster care:** The number of New York City children in foster care at the end of FY19 reached an all-time low of 8,300—down from 9,900 just three years ago. Today's foster care population is significantly lower than it was just a decade ago. In 2007, the number of New York City children in foster care was 17,000. In 1992, approximately 50,000 New York City children were in foster care.

- **Reduced length of stay in foster care:** The number of children in foster care for two years or more dropped by 22% from FY17 to FY19. An independent evaluation by Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago released in 2019 found that ACS and its foster care agencies have reduced length of stay in foster care by 9 percent (an average of 50 days per child).
- **More children in foster care live with relatives/friends than ever before:** Research shows that children fare best with kin (relatives, close family friends, or other people who are already in a child's life). From FY17 to FY19, ACS and its foster care agency partners increased the proportion of children in foster care placed with kin from 31% to 39%.
- **Increased foster home recruitment:** ACS increased the number of new foster homes recruited by 50% from FY 2017 to FY 2019, turning around a previous six-year decline in the number of new foster homes recruited. ACS redesigned foster parent recruitment and support by utilizing best practice strategies, conducting targeted data and business process analysis and providing intensive workshops, trainings and technical assistance to support the foster care agencies' work.
- **Expanded programming for older youth:** During the last three years, ACS significantly increased specialized education and employment programming for older youth through our dedicated Office of Education and Employment Initiatives and partnerships with DYCD, DOE, CUNY, Columbia University, FirstStar, multiple foundations and other partners. Youth are participating in mentored internships, summer youth employment, career clubs, college readiness programs the CUNY dorm program and more.

###