



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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**ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES ANNOUNCES EIGHT AWARDS  
SELECTED FOR SECOND PHASE OF NEW YORK CITY'S FAMILY ENRICHMENT CENTER  
EXPANSION PLAN**

*Family Enrichment Centers Are Family-Friendly, Home-Like Spaces Run by Local Community-Based Orgs & Co-Designed With Community Members*

*Second Phase of Expansion Will Include New Centers in: Bushwick, East Flatbush, Morrisania, Fordham, Washington Heights, Jackson Heights, Elmhurst & Ozone Park*

**NEW YORK** – New York City Administration for Children's Services (ACS) Commissioner Jess Dannhauser today announced the eight awards selected for the second phase of New York City's "Family Enrichment Center" (FEC) expansion plan. Launched in 2017, FECs are welcoming, home-like walk-in centers that are co-designed with community members. At the centers, families and children can connect with neighbors, volunteer their time, and access resources and supports they feel they need to thrive. ACS is currently undergoing an expansion of the FECs from three existing sites to thirty sites over the next two years. The new centers will be located in the neighborhoods identified by the city's Taskforce on Racial Inclusion and Equity (TRIE) based on their equity burdens and the impact of COVID-19. Plans for the first phase of the expansion, which includes nine additional sites, were announced last year; those sites will be opening soon and have already begun engaging their respective communities.

Today, ACS announced the eight awards selected to run the second phase of the FEC expansion:

- Coalition for Hispanic Family Services in Bushwick
- Rising Ground Inc. in East Flatbush
- Lutheran Social Services of Metropolitan New York Inc. in Morrisania/Crotona/Belmont/East Tremont
- Catholic Guardian Services in Fordham/University Heights
- Children's Arts & Science Workshops Inc. in Washington Heights/Inwood
- Queens Community House, Inc. in Jackson Heights
- Community Mediation Services, Inc. in Elmhurst/Corona

- Martin De Porres in Ozone Park/Woodhaven/ South Ozone Park/Howard Beach

"Family Enrichment Centers (FECs) offer an inviting community-designed space and provide a range of supports, including food assistance, technology assistance, financial counseling, and a supportive environment to build community with others," said **Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services Anne Williams Isom**. "The Administration is adding eight new FECs across the city — building toward thirty over the next two years —which is an important new step in supporting families. Thank you to ACS and our partners for advancing this work across New York City."

"We are proud to partner with these community-based organizations to bring eight more Family Enrichment Centers to communities across New York City," said **ACS Commissioner Jess Dannhauser**. "Each neighborhood is unique, and that's why it is so important that community members lead the design and offerings of each FEC, so it best suits the community's particular interests. Family Enrichment Centers offer the community a welcoming place to build strong relationships, grow as leaders, and access resources and concrete support—things we all need to thrive and weather difficult moments. We look forward to fully implementing the FEC expansion plan and we're confident that it will benefit thousands of families and their children across New York City

FECs are built on trust, positive relationships and making real the dreams held by community members for their future. They are welcoming, safe, and accessible home-like environments, open to all, where neighbors can connect, contribute and access the information they feel they need. ACS entrusts provider agency staff with co-designing experiences with the community, that help deepen child and family well-being and parental resiliency, build new connections and develop lifelong bonds. Alongside FEC staff, community members may join advisory groups and help to build inclusive FEC experiences that are as unique as the communities in which FECs operate. Members may include individuals whose experiences with community resources or public systems, make them well positioned to support their neighbors.

ACS is committed to ensuring that community members are equal partners in the design and implementation of FEC offerings. Examples of past and current FEC offerings include: movie nights (for families to meet in a safe space and allow children to make new friends); a therapist-led Healing Through the Arts offering for families recovering from community violence; cultural activities; Café con Amiga (Coffee with Friends) facilitated by Spanish speaking parent leaders to provide support to parents and caregivers, and a host of engaging virtual offerings made popular during the pandemic.

In particular, the FECs proved crucial during the COVID-19 pandemic by providing critical supports to families in need, including food, clothing, and technology, as well as social supports to parents and caregivers. A 2020 evaluation of the FECs showed that the first three Centers are having a positive impact on families. FEC members reported that the FECs were enhancing their social supports (from family, friends and neighbors), family functioning, emotional connection with their children, and outlook on life. Additionally, those surveyed reported significant increases in their access to advice and resources in addressing several life challenges, including parenting, financial issues, relationships, food and nutrition issues, and stress management. The report also said that FECs were having a positive effect on members'

access to concrete supports, which can help families better cope with stress, particularly in times of crisis.

The three existing FECs are: The C.R.I.B. in East New York; Circle of Dreams in Highbridge and; O.U.R. Place in Hunts Point/Longwood. The first phase of the expansion includes sites in Jamaica/Hollis/Queens Village, Rockaway, Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brownsville, Mott Haven, Soundview/Parkchester, Central Harlem, East Harlem & St. George/Stapleton. These centers will be opening soon and like all FECs, are free and don't involve record keeping or case management.

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