



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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**AS PART OF 'NATIONAL FOSTER CARE MONTH,' NYC ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES RECOGNIZES FOSTER PARENTS, FAMILY MEMBERS, CHILD WELFARE PROFESSIONALS & ALL COMMUNITY MEMBERS WHO SUPPORT CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE**

*New Yorkers Interested In Learning More About Becoming a Foster Parent Can Call 311 Or The WISH Line at (877-676-WISH)*

**NEW YORK, NY** – As part of May's "National Foster Care Month," the NYC Administration for Children Services (ACS) recognizes and celebrates foster parents, family members, child welfare professionals and other members of the community who care for children in need, support parents so that they can safely reunify with their children, and help children find permanent homes and connections.

ACS Commissioner Jess Dannhauser reminded New Yorkers that foster parents provide a safe, nurturing and loving home environment for children in need and encouraged New Yorkers who can open their heart and home to consider becoming a foster parent.

"I want to express my gratitude to all of the staff and foster parents who work diligently and tirelessly to ensure that our City's children and young people are cared for in a safe, nurturing environment; they are truly an inspiration to us all," said **ACS Commissioner Jess Dannhauser**. "Foster parents play a critical role in caring for children and youth who have experienced trauma, partner with parents as they work towards reunifying with their children, and sometimes become permanent family when children are not able to return to their parents."

"National Foster Care Month recognizes all those who have opened their hearts and homes to children in need," said **Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services Anne Williams-Isom**. "Thank you to all the families, staff, and partner organizations that work together to support children and young people at every step along the way."

ACS strives to keep families together by providing a full range of prevention services; however, when a child must be removed from a home due to safety reasons, ACS works to ensure that children receive high-quality care and that children and families receive needed services. Most children in foster care return home safely to their families. For those who cannot, ACS works to find loving, stable families for children through adoption or kinship guardianship.

Over the past several years, significant work has been done to improve outcomes for children and families in New York City's foster care system:

- ACS has dramatically reduced the number of children in foster care to a historic low of fewer than 7,000 children in care, down from 13,000 in care a decade ago.
- More and more, children in New York City's foster care system are placed with kin (relatives, close family friends, or other people who are already in a child's life). From 2017 to present, ACS and its foster care agency partners increased the proportion of children in foster care placed with kin from 31% to 44%. Additionally, the number of children placed with kin upon entry into foster care is over 50%. Research shows that children fare best with kin.
- ACS has significantly expanded education and career development services for children and youth in foster care. Most recently, ACS expanded its Fair Futures program to include youth in foster care up to age 26 and youth involved in the juvenile justice system. Since 2019, the Fair Futures program has provided dedicated coaches, tutors, and education, employment, and housing specialists for thousands of youth in foster care. In 2022, ACS launched College Choice, a program that helps cover the cost of college expenses for youth in foster care.

To ensure that children in foster care receive the care and nurturing they need, foster parents are provided with support and specialized training regarding meeting children's needs and working with parents who are working towards reunification.

New Yorkers interested in becoming a foster parent can call 311 for more information. The greatest need is for foster parents who can care for sibling groups and children with special needs. Prospective foster parents can also contact the ACS WISH line at 877-676-WISH (9474) or visit: <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/acs/child-welfare/become-foster-adoptive-parent.page>

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