



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

February 26, 2024

Contact: mediainquiry@acs.nyc.gov

ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES RECOMMENDS NINE AWARDS FOR NEXT PHASE OF NEW YORK CITY'S FAMILY ENRICHMENT EXPANSION

Family Enrichment Centers Are Family-Friendly, Welcoming Spaces Run By Community-Based Orgs & Co-Designed With Community Members

Fourth Phase of Expansion Includes New Centers in: Kingsbridge/Bedford Park, Williamsbridge/Baychester, Sunset Park, Coney Island, Flatbush/Midwood, Lower East Side/Chinatown, Morningside Heights/Hamilton Heights, Astoria & Flushing South/Briarwood

NEW YORK – New York City Administration for Children's Services (ACS) Commissioner Jess Dannhauser today announced the nine awards recommended for the fourth phase of New York City's "Family Enrichment Center" (FEC) expansion. FECs are welcoming 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. Over the last several years, ACS has been expanding FECs. ACS began with just three sites in 2017 and with today's awards, will reach 29 sites citywide. The new centers are 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.

Today, ACS announced the nine awards selected to run the fourth phase of the FEC expansion:

- The Kingsbridge Heights Community Center (Kingsbridge/Bedford Park)
- Bronxworks, Inc. (Williamsbridge/Baychester)
- Center for Family Life in Sunset Park, Inc. (Sunset Park)
- Brooklyn Bureau of Community Service (Coney Island)
- Ohel Children's Home and Family Service (Flatbush/Midwood)
- Real Dads Network (Lower East Side/Chinatown)
- America Works for New York, Inc. (Morningside Heights/Hamilton Heights)
- Jacob A. Riis Neighborhood Settlement (Astoria)
- Samuel Field YM & YWHA, Inc. (Flushing South/Briarwood)

"It is a privilege to partner with organizations with such strong ties to their communities so that more New Yorkers can have easy access to the supports and resources Family Enrichment Centers (FECs) provide," **said ACS Commissioner Jess Dannhauser**. "Key to the FEC model, community members play a central role in each Center's unique design to meet the wants and needs of local children and families. Expanding FECs has been a top priority for ACS, and we're thrilled to see the continued positive impact they have had on New Yorkers of all ages."

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 environments, open to all, where neighbors can connect and participate in or lead offerings designed to foster protective factors that we all need to navigate life's challenges and opportunities – these protective factors include social connectedness, access to concrete needs, and parental resiliency. Alongside

FEC staff, FEC's have community advisory councils that help shape each Center's vision and direction along with other community members. Each FEC is as unique as the community in which it operates.

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; and parent cafes that facilitate peer-to-peer conversations about parenting.

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 – work that has continued past the pandemic. A 2020 evaluation of the FECs showed that the first three Centers had 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.

For a full list of FECs in New York City, click here: <https://www.nyc.gov/site/acs/about/fec.page>