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**ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES ANNOUNCES AWARDS
RECOMMENDED FOR NEW "CLINICAL SUPPORT PROGRAM"**

New "Clinical Support Program" Will Strengthen ACS's Ability to Keep Children Safe and Families Strong By Having Licensed Professionals in Mental Health, Intimate Partner Violence and Substance Misuse Work Hand-in-Hand With Families Alongside ACS Child Protective Specialists

The NYC Administration for Children's Services (ACS) today announced their new model of clinical support to frontline child protective specialists, which will strengthen ACS's capacity in its mission to keep children safe and families strong and supported. The new "Clinical Support Program" builds off the current program where licensed professionals support frontline child protective staff with their expertise in mental health, substance use, and intimate partner violence. Through this newly enhanced program, this team of experts will also engage directly with families themselves and offer hands-on support and connections to services specific to each family's needs. This initiative will help meet the unique needs of families and strengthen the agency's ability to keep children safe. The providers recommended for awards include: University Behavioral Associates, Inc. (Bronx), Rising Ground, Inc. (Brooklyn), The Child Center of NY, Inc. (Manhattan), MercyFirst (Queens) and Safe Horizon, Inc. (Staten Island). The program will begin in January.

"Supporting families and protecting children is hands-on, on-the-ground work. Our mission to get it right for every child and family requires that we tailor our approach to support their specific strengths, needs and aspirations. Now, with the new Clinical Support Program, the licensed mental health, intimate partner violence and counseling professionals that we work with will not just provide information to our child protective specialists, they will work alongside them and get to know families directly, helping to inform our safety decision-making and navigate families to the tailored supports that will help them care safely for their children. . We are always looking for additional ways to keep children safe and families supported and look forward to launching this program with the providers recommended for these awards," **said ACS Commissioner Jess Dannhauser.**

The fundamentals of the previous program will remain intact: licensed and/or credentialed mental health and addiction counseling professionals will support front line child protective specialists who are managing concerns related to mental health, substance use, and intimate partner violence. ACS also has existing Medical Consultants who help front line staff when families have medical needs. The new Clinical Support Teams support front line child protective staff in a number of ways:

- They offer years of expertise in clinical work with families on issues the agency frequently encounters: mental health, substance use and intimate partner violence.
- They have strong community connections to providers who offer family support services in these areas and connect families to those programs.
- They offer trainings and coaching to the child protective workforce.

The newly enhanced Clinical Support Program means that Clinical Support Teams will now:

- Engage directly with families whether in person, on the phone, at Child Safety Conferences, in the community and/or in an office.
- Offer narrowly tailored services recommendations that are specific to the presenting concerns rather than the general issues at-hand.
- Offer a warm hand off to the recommended service provider and stay involved until the connection is solid and the next steps are clear.