

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON YOUTH SERVICES

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HELD AT: 250 Broadway Committee Room, 14th Fl

B E F O R E: Mathieu Eugene
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Annabel Palma
Andy King
Laurie A. Cumbo
Darlene Mealy
Margaret S. Chin
David Greenfield

A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

Bill Chong

Commissioner of the Department of Youth and
Community Development

Darryl Rattray

Associate Commissioner of Community Centers and
Strategic Partnerships at DYCD

Andre White

Acting Assistant Commissioner for Youth
Employment

Amy Ellenbogen

Crown Heights Community Mediation Center

Cidra Sebastien

Brotherhood/Sister Sol

Michael Martinez

Students for Protection

CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you very much.

Good morning. My name is Mathieu Eugene, and I'm the Chair of the Council's Youth Services Committee. From the moment that I became a chair of this committee, my most constant leaflet [sic] has always been what can we do to help young New Yorkers? What can we do to help the children? Well, today's topic of addressing the issues of youth violence indicates that something already went seriously wrong for too many young New Yorkers. Children and young adults are not naturally violent. It is just not the way we were created. Therefore, these children and their children have by definition suffered failure, failure that may be from their home environment, their school environment, the lack of ability of inadequate and culturally sensitive mental health support system, or numerous other complex factors impacting their world. We know that youth violence in New York City has been in the front page of local news lately. Actually, far too often for me and for you, so I believe, any of us to be comfortable with. Anywhere observers have noticed also that youth violence is not a one size fits all item [sic]. It can and does take many forms including but hardly limited to fighting,

bullying, threatening behavior, and partnered [sic] in violence. Also, young people can be involved in youth violence as an offender, victim or witness, and the level of violence we often observe on the television makes even the most steady-nerve person cringe from the deep root of violence we see. It is never an easy time to be a young person, but the often harsh realities of today's world, especially for youth mirrored in poverty and dysfunctional family life and failing school exacerbates and supercharges the temptation, the risk and the dangers of growing up these days. I could go on, but I want to spend the committee's time hearing from both the Administration as well as from providers and other people and certainly, anyone who wish to testify as to their own experiences. Do not treat this topic as seriously as we are able mean we fail, not just this but future generations, and that will not occur under our watch, not occur under our watch. Before we call our first panel, I want to recognize, you know, those--we have been joined ourselves by Council Member Chin. Thank you very much, Council Member Chin. And I want to thank the opportunity to thank the wonderful people from the Youth Committee. We

1 have worked hard to make this oversight hearing
2 possible. I want to thank the Committee Counsel
3 Kimberly Williams [sic], thank you very much. Thank
4 you so much. And the Policy Analyst also, Michael
5 Benjamin. And I want to thank also Francisco and all
6 my staff also who have been working together with the
7 Youth Committee to make possible this public hearing.
8 Today, we are here not to point fingers, not to
9 accuse each other, but to try to understand what's
10 going on, because violence in our community has been
11 going too far out of control. We from the City of
12 New York from the City Council and also from the City
13 of New York, we spent so much money trying to prevent
14 violence, to create programs, but still violence has
15 been going too far, and we all know that they're very
16 dedicated people who have been doing a lot already to
17 try to decrease violence, to try to have the young
18 people, the children, but even though, every single
19 day what we are seeing is violence in many forms.
20 Children who are playing in basketball courts get
21 shot. People who are waiting for buses get shot.
22 People inside their houses get killed, and we can go
23 on and on and on. And as I said before, I know and
24 we all know that there are very educated people who
25

are working hard to try to decrease violence and to try to better the community and to try to create safety in our community, but violence doesn't discriminate no one, and we are all exposed to violence. Even those who are engaged in violence, they become victim also. They become victim also. So today we are trying to brainstorm and to reflect on the issue of violence and to understand what else should we do, what is missing, and how we're going to work together as a city, as a community, as a society, as human being, not only to decrease violence, but also to get those young people who are engaged in violence and strengthen [sic] them, and have them become positive and proactive citizen, people who can give back to the community, to the city, to this country, because I'm convinced among them they are very intelligent and brilliant young people. Some of them not because they want to be part of violence, but they are forced to be part of the violence for many reasons. This is what we are going to try to understand today, what it is that we can do to decrease violence, to protect the young people, to protect the children and even to protect the adult too, and to have a safer community. Having

1 said that, now I'm going to call our first--ask the
2 members of the first panel to start, but before I do
3 that I want to thank Commissioner Chong and the
4 Deputy Commissioners and all the wonderful members of
5 your team for everything that you are doing. And we
6 know that DYCD is a very great asset for the
7 community. DYCD has been doing so much for our young
8 people, and I know that you have a wonderful great
9 program to prevent violence and to combat violence
10 and also to ensure safety of the community. But as I
11 said previously, there's no one organization that can
12 do that, that can be, you know, the work alone. The
13 City Council cannot do it. The Police Department
14 cannot do it, and the school cannot do it, but all
15 together, by walking together we'll have a better,
16 deeper, greater impact in our community. Again,
17 Commissioner and all your wonderful staff, thank you
18 very much for the outstanding job that you're doing
19 on behalf of our young people and the families in New
20 York. So now, I want to ask Commissioner Chong to
21 start any time, and we have--we also Darryl Rattray.

22
23 COMMISSIONER CHONG: ready?

24 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Darryl? Yes.

25 COMMISSIONER CHONG: Darryl Rattray.

COMMITTEE ON YOUTH SERVICES

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CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Darryl Rattray, thank you very much [inaudible 00:09:59]. And also Andrea White. Thank you very much. You may start anytime, please.

COMMISSIONER CHONG: Good morning.

CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Sorry. I'm sorry, before you start we got to swear, okay?

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Do you affirm to tell the truth and answer all questions of the committee honestly?

COMMISSIONER CHONG: I do.

CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Okay, Commissioner, if you give me one time, let me get your testimony, please.

COMMISSIONER CHONG: Good morning, Chairman Eugene.

CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: I'm sorry, give me one minute, please. Thank you very much. You can start, Commissioner.

COMMISSIONER CHONG: Good morning, Chairman Eugene and members of the Youth Services Committee. I'm Bill Chong, Commissioner of the Department of Youth and Community Development. I'm joined by Darryl Rattray, Associate Commissioner of

Community Centers and Strategic Partnerships, and Andre White, Acting Assistant Commissioner for Youth Employment. Thank you for inviting us to testify today. If we ask ourselves what we can do as a city to better address the issue of youth violence, we are challenged by not having all the answers on why youth violence happens or what its root causes are.

However, what we do know at the Department of Youth and Community Development is how to build communities that care about youth and give them opportunities.

When Richard Murphy, Mayor Dinkins' Commissioner of the Department of Youth Services, developed a Safe Streets, Safe City program he said, "The idea was to create dozens of small universes in which young people could learn, dream and grow, in the process stay out of trouble." The program kept 37 schools open beyond the regular school day to provide tutoring, exercise classes and other activities. Safe Streets Safe City grew to become our current beacon program which has become a national and international model. As of July 1st, 2015, DYCD's providers will operate in 174 community centers that offer programs and services to youth, families and adults. The 174 centers include 80 school-based beacon centers and 94

cornerstone community centers located in public housing developments. Richard Murphy's words still resonate very strongly with DCYD today. Providing programs and opportunities that engage young people to make positive choices is at the heart at what we and our provider organizations do. DYCD promotes and values positive youth development that supports a young person's growth and transition to adulthood. We use an asset based approach design program that can make connections to the village of peers and caring adults that youth need to grow, develop and succeed. This benefits all youth, but especially those who don't have strong family ties with positive role models in their lives. In addition to the beacon and cornerstone centers, DYCD has various other programs to provide youth with supportive environments for self-expression, skill development, and a chance to explore their interests and talents. Our Compass afterschool programs represents the largest municipal after school system in the nation, and when we embarked on the universal expansion of SONYC middle school afterschool programs we knew that the middle school years were pivotal. It is when young people start to make bad choices. By having a

program at every middle school in the city, we can offer enrichment opportunities to much greater numbers of middle school students. Youth employment is a very powerful way to engage teenagers. A recent study from the University Of Pennsylvania Wharton School Of Business proved that the summer youth employment program reduces incarceration and saves lives by saving youth from external causes of death such as homicide. Economist value each life at nine million dollars. Last year, over 47 youth worked with SYP. Mayor de Blasio has also invested the highest amount of city tax level funding into this program at 33.8 million dollars. We will also the double the number of vulnerable youth served this year from 1,000 to 2,000. We have several programs to assist disconnected youth who are out of school and out of work. Because of the new Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, at least 75 percent of our Federal Youth Force Programs--Youth Workforce funding must support year round employment programs for out of school youth. We are already very close to this threshold. To help young adults aged 16 to 24 with only a high school equivalency degree gain work experience, our Young Adult Internship Program,

YIP, is a 14 week program comprised of job readiness training and a 12 week internship. Beginning July 1st, DYCD will operate a new program similar to YIP, but target it to youth and young adults living at or below 125 [sic] percent of the federal poverty level age 16 to 24. To assist disconnect youth who have been in the criminal justice system, we partner with Youth Represent, a youth defense and advocacy nonprofit that works to ensure that youth from underserved neighborhoods have access to housing, employment and education both during and after involvement with the justice system. Transition to high school and neighborhood development area education support programs encourage and support high school youth to build academic skills, stay in school and attain high school diplomas. This year, we ran a successful literacy pilot with teenage boys from the Pelham Preparatory Academy in the Bronx. Their writings were published in a book entitled "Experience Our Story, Young Men on the Rise." We plan to expand this pilot writing program to more transition to high school programs in the upcoming year. The Teen Action Program fosters leadership by having youth identify community service projects to

work on. In the upcoming year, we are excited to assume the oversight of the Mayor's Youth Leadership Council where youth research a public policy issue, develop recommendations and advise the Mayor on a solution. A new feature will be connecting the central Youth Leadership Council to 10 beacons and cornerstone advisory council so that youth understand the local impact of citywide policy decision. In order to make sure we are serving high need communities, we have layered specific strategies and system wide components to our programs. For example, we have targeted high need communities based on socioeconomic indicators such as youth poverty rates, youth employment rates, number of English language learners in public schools and a number of single parent families with children under 18. Through our annual Step it Up competition we have been promoting an antiviolence theme this year. All the finalists produced antiviolence public service announcements which I will show at the conclusion of my testimony today. To promote healthy dating and relationships, we organized a tweet session on teen dating violence last month. We also worked with the Mayor's Office to combat domestic violence to hold 25 training

1 sessions at beacon and cornerstone centers on the
2 topic of teen dating and healthy relationships. To
3 address trauma, DYCD has worked with the Mental
4 Health Association of New York City, MHA, to develop
5 a six week training series entitled "Tools and Skills
6 for Building Trauma Informed Youth Development
7 Programs." The series help DYCD funded programs
8 built programs to meet the needs of those who have
9 experience trauma use tools and strategies to manage
10 secondary traumatic stress, maintain mental and
11 emotional wellness when faced with job, stress and
12 challenges. We also just held a one-day conference
13 with MHA entitled "Healing the Hurt: Standing
14 Together to Heal the Community Trauma." Which
15 included workshops on addressing racial trauma,
16 creating trauma free environments with LGBTQ youth,
17 listening to victims and survivors of crimes, and
18 techniques for healing and self-care. Over the past
19 few years, DYCD has enhanced services at cornerstone
20 services. DYCDD has a cornerstone mentoring program
21 and is working with one provider to expand that model
22 of LGBTQ youth services together. Together we've
23 worked to host several "Over the Rainbow" panels to
24 raise awareness of LGBTQ youth issues. This can pave
25

the way for more cornerstone services for this population. In the past year we've also organized three youth Glee [sic] summits at cornerstone centers in East Harlem, the Rockaways and Staten Island, which will happen this Thursday. As part of the Mayor's Action Plan for Neighborhood Safety Map, all cornerstone centers will have extended hours again this summer until 11:00 p.m. nightly. We will also offer again 850 SYP jobs maps [sic] 15 targeted NYCHA developments. As you can see, DYCD's programs and strategies promote enrichment that is age appropriate and focuses on a young person's strengths, assets and stage of development. When youth are engaged in positive activities it strongly minimizes the chance to get involved in negative activities that can lead to bad choices such as youth violence. Thank you, again, for the chance to testify today. Before we answer your questions I would like to show "Step it Up Anti-Violence" public service announcements I mentioned in my testimony, and Darryl Rattray will show it. I just wanted to give you a little background on Darryl. Darryl is a product of the Beacon Program. That's how he got involved. He started as a participant in the Beacon Program with--

1 which group? And so he is truly a model of the
2 strategy that Rich Murphy developed to invest in
3 young people when they're young and to keep on a
4 positive path. And so now he's the Associate
5 Commissioner in charge of all the beacons and
6 cornerstones. So it's like coming full circle, but
7 this competition, "Step it Up" which will show what
8 started five years ago with Nike and then Nike
9 dropped out, and then we lost funding, and this year
10 because of the investment that the Mayor's made in
11 youth programming, we're able to carve together
12 funding to do this. So what you'll see, we had the
13 grand finale, 50 teams--100 teams--why don't you talk
14 a little bit?

16 DARRYL RATTRAY: So, Darryl Rattray,
17 Associate Commissioner of Community Centers and
18 Strategic Partnerships. So, the competition that the
19 Commissioner is speaking of is "Step it Up"
20 competition. Historically, imagine for four years we
21 only had 25 to 30 teams activate on this. We created
22 Step it Up to create platform for dancers to actually
23 have a competitive platform in addition to activating
24 them in communities to activate social campaigns.
25 This year's theme is around stopping the violence.

So, our teams, the 10 finalists teams activated around anti-bullying, domestic violence awareness, child abuse and neglect and stopping gun violence, to say a few. But we had 10 teams perform this weekend, this Saturday at the Apollo. It was amazing. Standing room only. All teams did an amazing job. So, I'm anxious to show you guys the PSA's.

COMMISSIONER CHONG: By the way, this is the first time you'll see it. They're going up on YouTube today.

DARRYL RATTRAY: So, yep.

COMMISSIONER CHONG: You're getting a preview.

DARRYL RATTRAY: So, and once we--one more piece. Once we selected the 10 teams--so there was sort of--every dance competition you see on TV, the audition sessions and narrowing down from over 100 teams down to 25 that perform for the semi-finals, and then the top 10, once they activate, they have to activate their social campaign in their neighborhoods. They also create public service announcements which you're about to watch, and they did a really job.

[video presentation 00:21:26-00:27:00]

COMMISSIONER CHONG: It speaks to, I guess, the core values of our agency and of the vision of Richard Murphy is to give young people, to empower young people, to give them a voice, because we know peer pressure is one of the things that works to create bad behavior and bad choices, so peer pressure should be also used to help young people make positive choices and right choices. And so this will go up on YouTube. The Classic Steppers, the one that had the gang violence one, they won the middle school competition. They posted their audition tape on YouTube and it had 1.2 million hits in two weeks. So, it just speaks to the power of young people using social media. So, I think we're trying to do as much as we can, not only with money, but how to engage communities and young people to be part of the messengers to speak out against violence. So, I'll be happy to take your questions now.

CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you very much, Commissioner, and as I said at the very beginning, I know the wonderful job that DYCD is doing, and I know there are many people who have been striving to decrease the violence, and Mr. Derilla [sic] had the opportunity also to teach a spot [sic] in some of the

beacon program in Brooklyn, and as you probably know my past, you know, I created a not for profit organization in the community to help young people and I've been providing many positive activities and opportunities to the young people. And there is one statement that I will never forget from one of the young people who had been part of the basketball program in my organization with the help of many volunteers. We didn't have a lot of money, but what we had, we had the parents, volunteers, people from the community to be part of that, because their children were in the organization. I remember one day I was about to give to present award and the trophies to the winners of the basketball tournament, a young boy stopped me and said, "Dr. Eugene, give me the microphone. I want to say something." And I remember at that time, bope [sic] was in Mighty Mac, former bope [sic] was in a Mighty Mac of Kuwait [sic]. He was the Senator and many of the elected officials were there. Some of them retired. So, the young boy said, "Doctor Eugene, I want to thank you for what you are doing for me and for all of us." He said, "That a trouble kid like me, if I was not in this program I could have been in jail." That is his

own statement, and I still have it in camera, but this is another way to let you know that I do believe that when we give opportunities to the young people, we make a difference, you know, on their lives. I do believe that. And I'm going to read part of your testimony, Commissioner. And you said that if we ask ourselves what we can do as a city to better address the issue of youth violence--this is topic of today's hearing. And you said that we are challenged by not having all the answers and what youth violence offends [sic] or what its root causes are. I wonder what we do know at the Department of Youth and Community Development, DYCD, is hard to build communities that care about youth and give them opportunities. And you said also when we tried the [inaudible 00:30:54] the Mayor Dinkins, Commissioner of the Department of Youth Services, developed the Safe Streets, Safe City Program, he said that the idea was to create dozens of small universes in which young people could learn, dream and grow, and in the process stay out of trouble. And I know that you are doing the effort to achieve this goal or these goals, but the question today is when we see the violence that is going out of control in the community, and I

say that DCYD alone cannot do it. You don't have the resource for that. You don't have the man power. Violence is so complex. It's a very tough and, you know, very, very difficult, you know, situation. It is a crisis, and I believe that should be among our priorities we in government, we as a society. But the question today is, what we didn't do, what we have to do in addition to everything that you have been doing, in addition to everything other people have been doing, in addition that we in the City Council we have been doing, because it is sad to see the parents, they are afraid to let their children go in the street to enjoy the summer, to enjoy the park. Even I mention that, and I know that you know that. There was a young boy, Gama Draville [sp?], he was waiting for a bus on Flatbush Avenue. He got shot in the eye. Just was waiting. He's a good guy. You know, he was waiting, you know, for the bus with his aunt to go to buy something before he go to the church the next day. A young kid, not even four years old, he was playing probably in the back yard of his house. I don't remember the story. He was shot. Young people are playing basketball, you know, being part of the program that we created.

1 Basketball is a great program. Getting the kid of
2 the, you know, out of the street and, you know, give
3 them the opportunity to do something positive. Got
4 shot. So the question today is what else we have to
5 do. I know you don't--you may not have the answer
6 what exactly. Because let me tell you that we just
7 created a taskforce, New York City Taskforce for
8 Youth Empowerment, with the hope that by empowering
9 young people, something that you are doing, we can
10 deter them from the negative path and send them to
11 the road of empowerment and self-development. So, my
12 question is, what is we have to do? What can you
13 tell us in terms of by your experience? You know,
14 every single day I know that this is your passion,
15 this is what you have been doing, you know,
16 strategizing to, you know, to provide program to
17 young people, speaking to the Mayor, speaking to your
18 staff, dealing with organizations. What else you
19 believe that we can do as New Yorkers, as a city?

21 COMMISSIONER CHONG: I think you're
22 absolutely right that it's beyond just what one
23 agency can do. It's the society's challenge. I mean,
24 to quote Hillary Clinton, it truly does take a
25 village to really help raise our young people to make

sure that they stay on the right path. You know, I agree with the example you gave about the parent who got involved, the parent volunteers. I think we need to make sure families are involved in the lives of the young people. That's often one of the big challenges, particularly in middle school. We know that that is when young people make choices for better or for worse. That's when peer pressure really kicks in. When you're changing schools, if you go from a grade school to a middle school and all of a sudden you have a new set of friends, and you have to figure out how to fit in and you fall in with the wrong crowd. That's why the Mayor was very strategic in deciding to invest in middle school. So, last year--this year actually, we will have served probably 111,000 middle school students, more than double we ever did, and that's because of the expansion of the SONYC program. Because we want to keep young people in that age group engaged, involved in positive activities so that they're not tempted by making bad choices. But families are a big part of the solution. School system, obviously, keeping young people engaged in learning and on the path to success. Although, summer jobs program, we're really

working to improve it as well as grow it. So, this year, for example, for the first time in our Ladders for Leaders Program we've gotten corporations involved, and this is just the beginning. AOL has offered 25 paid internships. Companies like Pandora are hiring young people. Model's [sp?], every Model's store except for I think Staten Island has committed, has agreed to be a work site for young people. Because we want to give young people opportunities. But I think, you know, we could always do more, but I think we're on the right path. Can we prevent every act of violence? I don't think that's possible, but I think the more choices, the more positive opportunities we give young people, the greater chance we can succeed. And I think this campaign, we're hoping once it launches this summer along with the extended hours at our community centers, the Cornerstone Centers will be open to 11 o'clock at night. This year, we've had a little bit more time to do planning. We've just gotten a commitment from the Madison Square Garden and New York Liberties to run a basketball camp this summer at all our community centers. So, we'll have a year-round basketball program, one that Nike sponsors from

DARRYL RATTRAY: Over 3,000 young people are involved in--so, over 3,000 young people are involved in our basketball competition, our league. It's over 210 teams. Very similar to the Step it Up initiative, everything that we do as DYCD we want to empower our young people. So if you're on a basketball team within our league, part of it is your performance, but you can't make the playoffs if you don't conduct community service within your neighborhood, within your program. And again, Step it Up, 50 percent of their performance goes to their score. The other 50 percent is how they activate their social campaign. So, in everything we do, we want to integrate leadership and empowerment of young adults and communities that we serve.

CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you very much, Commissioner, and thank you, Mr. Darryl. All those programs that you mentioned they are wonderful, good programs. You know, as I said, I know that you are doing a lot of effort, you know, to address the

1 issues of violence and to help the young people. But
2 so, and you mentioned, and I believe in that also it
3 take a village to raise a child, and we are all
4 members of the village, all of us. But my question
5 is, did we reach out enough young people at risk?
6 Did we serve, you know, enough young people? And
7 because there are so many young people who are not
8 part of any programs that you mention, many. In my
9 community and some of them that came to me, they're
10 asking for program and the parents also, but I don't
11 think we need the parents, because they say like,
12 "There's no program for the young people. Our young
13 people--"you know, probably some of them reach out to
14 you also, because they say, "We have no program for
15 our young people. Our young people, they don't have
16 a place to go to. They're in the street." That I
17 don't think we need because we have a lot of
18 programs.

19
20 COMMISSIONER CHONG: I mean, I think--

21 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: [interposing]

22 Probably we don't do enough to promote those programs
23 to let them know. Probably, I say probably. But the
24 other thing that I would, my question, you know, to
25 try to understand, you know, the amount of outreach

or the way we serve the young people. The question that I wanted to ask you, do we put, as a city, do we put enough resources to serve the young people? Do we put enough resources, enough funding to address the issue of violence? I know we put some money, we put it, but can we put more resources and more funding to address this issue? Because this is a big crisis. That should be among our priorities, and when I say that I know DYCD you are trying to, you at DYCD, you are trying to do everything that you want to do, you would like to do. But my question, do we have enough resources? Do we put enough resources to address this very critical issue? And I wanted to mention that I know that the Mayor is very dedicated to serve youth and to address many different crisis affecting the city of New York, and I say that several time. I know the Mayor personally. We have walked together in term of serving, you know, young people and giving opportunities to the young people, but as I speak, my question is do we put enough resources to do the job that we are supposed to do on behalf of the young people and also on behalf of the parents?

COMMISSIONER CHONG: I can only speak to DYCD, and I can say I have some historical perspective here. Last year, our budget adopted was 579 million. That was a record high. This year, we probably will exceed that. I know negotiation is still underway. So, I think from DYCD we have a lot of resources. The fact that we now serve 111,000 young people in middle school programs, that we have probably have the second most number of young people in summer jobs. I can't speak to other agencies, and that's, you know, that's beyond what my authority is, but certainly I think we have the resources we need at DYCD. We're constantly targeting and doing outreach using social media. We're a small agency, but we have 10,000 followers on social media, because that's how we know to connect with young people. So, we always, you know, I think we can always improve the way we do things, but I think we're headed in the right direction. I don't think we ourselves can solve it. As I said, it does take a village. It takes a collective effort of society and not just government, faith based institutions. Parents have to be involved in this. This is not an easy

situation to try to address. No one can do it on their own.

CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you, Commissioner. And one thing that I wanted to mention also, the young people we are serving, those young people who are at risk, they are children of the hard working people also. The people work hard to contribute to families, to our economy. The people who are working hard, paying taxes for us to have the resources to do everything we are doing in DYCD, everything that we are doing in the City of New York. And I think also they deserve to see that their children are protected, number one. The children are offered opportunities also to become positive and proactive citizen and to be safe. This is our moral obligation, to do everything that we can do to make sure that those children they have the resources to become positive people and to be safe. You know, this is my own opinion. I believe this is a priority for us and government and the City of New York. We have to do more. We have to do everything that we can do to provide to those young people what they need to become the leaders of tomorrow and to be protected also. And last year, we together, we made a good

1 achievement increasing the number of jobs, summer
2 jobs, and we said that several times every year. DYCD
3 receive about 35,000 applications for summer jobs
4 every year, 135, I'm sorry, 135,000. But 135,000
5 young people who are yelling, crying for
6 opportunities to do positive things during the
7 summer, to have a job, and we know how important
8 those jobs for these young people that keep them out
9 of trouble, give them, you know, a sense of
10 discipline and self-esteem. And some of them also,
11 by working during the summer help the families,
12 because they come from families of very low income.
13 Last year, we did a wonderful job together, the City
14 Council, the Speaker, the Mayor. WE increased the
15 summer jobs. We add about 10,700 more. That was
16 wonderful, and we know that in life we should have--
17 we should make progress every single day, do better
18 than yesterday, be better than the-- we should--my
19 father usually say that my son, there's nothing,
20 there's no perfection. Nothing is perfect. No one
21 is perfect. Every single day you got to strive to
22 better yourself and to do better than yesterday. And
23 also, in your testimony, you said that youth
24 employment is a very powerful way to engage
25

1 teenagers. The recent study from the University of
2 Pennsylvania School of Business proved that the
3 Summer Youth Employment Program, SYEP, reduced
4 incarceration and saved lives by saving youth from
5 external causes of death, but we know that this year
6 we will have less summer jobs. This year we'll have
7 less summer job than last year. I cannot understand
8 that. We have the intent. We have the good will to
9 do it. I know that we got the good will, but I don't
10 understand how come instead of getting more jobs or
11 summer job for the young people, this year we are
12 going to have less. And I think that, you know, we
13 were supposed to have more and everything. We were
14 supposed to make the effort to have more jobs for the
15 young people if really we want to achieve the goal
16 that we all hope or expect to reach.

18 COMMISSIONER CHONG: Can I say that I
19 think as I said earlier in my testimony, this
20 Administration has invested more in city tax levy
21 funding for summer jobs than any other
22 Administration. So, last year, the 47,000 was the
23 second most in the history of the program, topped
24 only by the 52,000 in 2009 when the Federal
25 Government woke up and invested money. The missing

partner here is not the City Council, because I know that the Council believes in this passionately. The Mayor and our Administration believes in this passionately. Governor Cuomo supported it. The Federal Government has walked away from this program. Fifty-three years ago, when the summer jobs program started it was entirely funded by the Federal Government, and with the exception of 2009 in the response to the Great Recession, the Federal Government has walked away from this program. So, I think we can do more, but I think we have to make clear that the Federal Government has to step it up because I think we understand that if young people are not engaged in positive opportunities during the summer, there are risks there. So, there's no question about our commitment. I think there's no question about the Council's commitment. I think clearly we have to work together to get the Federal Government to do its fair share.

CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you, Commissioner, but as I said at the very beginning, we are not trying to accuse each other or point fingers. You mention the Federal Government. We know that, a and we know that the Federal Government, I don't say

1 that they give up, but what I'm trying to figure out,
2 we from the City of New York what can we do? How can
3 we work together to fuss [sic] and to make the
4 Federal Government do what they're supposed to do?
5 This is a big crisis. It's a serious issue. This is
6 a serious issue. We do our part, but we are to come
7 together. Even we go to Washington, we--whatever.
8 We call our elected official, the parents, the
9 people. We have to make sure that the Federal
10 Government meet us half way, because those children,
11 they are not only the children of New York City or
12 our children, but they are also the city of the
13 United States America. They are the future. It is
14 not only for the City of New York. It is for this
15 country. I think that we got to come to a plan and
16 we got to strategize together to make sure that the
17 Federal Government to the right thing.

18
19 COMMISSIONER CHONG: I would welcome any
20 opportunity to work with you on getting the message
21 out to the Federal Government.

22 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you very much.
23 I appreciate that. And Commissioner, you know, I
24 want the City Council to work together with DYCD and
25 the Mayor's Office to make sure that the Federal

Government takes its responsibility. This is very important. We have to do it. And after this hearing, my staff will reach out to your office to make sure we start to strategize, because it doesn't make sense. It is not fair to the children. It is not fair to those parents, and we know from the City of New York, the Federal Government takes [sic] of a lot of tax payer's money. Now, I want to recognize Council Member Chin for some questions. Thank you, Commissioner.

COMMISSIONER CHONG: Thank you.

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Thank you, Chair.

Good morning, Commissioner. Glad to hear that the Administration is investing more money in DYCD, which is true. I think in my first term with the last Administration, every year with the budget we'll always have to deal with the cuts and trying to save as many afterschool program as possible and summer youth programs, but this year, I mean, the investment by the Mayor is unprecedented to the middle school students with the afterschool program. I think that's tremendous. And the parents really appreciate that. Because especially at that age, they're never really any kind of after school programs for them. And we

1 need to continue that investment. So, when you say
2 that, you know, DYCD's budget is bigger, it's great.
3 But it needs to continue to grow, because
4 disinvestment in DYCD happen far too long, and I
5 think we still have a lot to catch up, I mean, not
6 just the previous Administration, the Administration
7 before. I think after the Dinkins Administration I
8 think they really have disinvested in our youth. So,
9 we got to continue to make sure that budget continue
10 to grow to meet the needs in our community. So, my
11 question to you is that really a question of
12 interagency working together, right? For example,
13 our school, I mean, like how did DYCD work with the
14 Department of Education? Because DYCD provide a lot
15 of the afterschool program for the elementary school
16 kid, but DOE, I mean, I think they have a
17 responsibility really help with resources to make
18 sure that school space are available, whether they
19 should also pick up some of the cost for afterschool
20 programs. And then the other component is really
21 education of the parents, really having programs for
22 parents to really know about how to help their kids
23 in school, how to access resources for them. So, how
24 does your interaction, even though you keep saying
25

1 that you couldn't talk about other agency, but like
2 you know that it's a whole, you know, picture. It's
3 not just afterschool program or community program,
4 what happened during the school, what happened at
5 home. So, how do DYCD work with the other agency
6 besides DOE, HPD making sure they have a safe place
7 to live, General Welfare? So how did that
8 interagency play happens?
9

10 COMMISSIONER CHONG: So, let me start
11 with the Department of Education. This is where I
12 think I have the benefit of historical perspective
13 having been a Deputy Commissioner at this agency in
14 the previous Administration. We have a great
15 partnership with Department of Education. Chancellor
16 Farina understands the value of after school
17 programs. When we--she was intimately involved in
18 design of the SONYC program so we could figure out
19 what's the best use of the after school hours. She
20 made a--personally reach out to principals to get
21 them involved, because as you know, the success to--
22 the key to a successful afterschool program is a
23 principal buy-in. And so she reached out many times
24 to principals and make sure they understood the value
25 of this program, and that's why we're in so many

schools now. That's why we're serving 111,000 young people. The 111,000, by the way, is not only DYCD programs, but those that are funded by Department of Education. They run a program that's federal funded called 21st Century Programs. So, the 111,000 is a team effort between us and DOE. It's a record number of young people. And then we'll be adding more programs next school year, because we just completed another RFP. And so, on the Department of Education side, they've been a wonderful partner. You know, every summer we relocate schools, because not every school building can be opened. They work closely with us to make sure we keep schools open as close as the original site during the school year. Other partnerships that we're doing--so, one of the first Commissioners I reached out to was Gilbert Taylor at the Department of Homeless Services. And one of the things that stunned me was the number of days that an average family in a family shelter stays, something like 400 and something days they live in a shelter, and you know, it's their home. And so we are crafting a program to provide afterschool programs in family shelters, and DHS has identified specific shelters that have the space and staff capacity to

run afterschool programs. I'm trying to think.

We're working with--any examples you can think about?

DARRYL RATTRAY: So, we also work with HRA who has a team of staff located in our Cornerstone Programs. So there are about 15 Cornerstone Programs that are part of the Mayor's targeted development where we've identified some of the highest crime happening at. So, the HRA team actually provides workshops for residents to connect them to assistance and resources. In addition, we work with the Mayor's Office to combat domestic violence. Since the beginning of the summer, they've provided over 25 workshops for our young people and some cases adults on healthy dating, healthy relationship awareness and things of that nature.

COMMISSIONER CHONG: And some examples on youth employment that Andre will talk about. Introduce yourself.

ANDRE WHITE: Andre White, Active Assistant Commissioner Youth Employment Program. So this year, on the Summer Youth Employment Program side we were challenged to develop private sector placement for young people, private sector jobs. So we're working very closely with the Small Business

Services folks. The Workforce One centers to provide private employment for young people throughout all five boroughs. So far, we have identified over 150 job placements. Young people are actually being interviewed as we speak. They're being matched to employers and we try to connect young people to opportunities that they have interest in to ensure that they have a meaningful summer job experience.

COMMISSIONER CHONG: I mean, the other example I wanted--again, and example of something that happened almost unintended. I had a meeting with the Chief Technology Officer about six weeks ago, and I mentioned, you know, our summer jobs program and our Ladders for Leaders Program, and so Minerva [sic] comes from the tech sector. She got on the phone and we've gotten 50, maybe 100 tech jobs, I mean, AOL, Pandora. What was the other one?

ANDRE WHITE: AOL, Pandora, some small start-ups, a lot of small start-up tech companies.

COMMISSIONER CHONG: So, I'm a big believer in collaboration, and so whenever I meet the Commissioner I can figure out how we can work together. Similarly with ACS, we wanted to provide services in some of their facilities as well, because

we know young people are in different places. The fact that we doubled the number of young people who are getting vulnerable youth jobs, for some reason, employment for vulnerable youth. We strengthen our relationship with both homeless services, probation and ACS, because we know a young person who is foster care who is court involved will need special support during the summer. You just can't send them to a job. So they come, they're referred to us. There is no lottery. So there's a case worker either at ACS or there is a probation officer at probation who works with the provider to make sure that we can build on that six week job experience so that this can be a turning point in their lives. And of course, we work closely with the Housing Authority because we have now transitioned and taken over all 94 community centers and we work closely with them and the resident councils to make sure that the programming meets the needs of that development. There are plenty of other examples, but collaboration is something. I mean, I understand that we can always leverage what we have as a city, and I always look for those opportunities.

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: I hope we do that, because I--you know, Federal Government at this point with all the craziness that's going on in Washington and Albany, we can't count on them, so we got to count on ourselves. So, I'm interested when you were talking about the private sectors jobs, right? So going forward, do you have any projection in terms of targets that you want to work towards next year? Because I think that that is something that we really need to cultivate, and you know, maybe work together with the City Council. Like, if all of us get involved in terms of talking to small business in our community.

COMMISSIONER CHONG: Right.

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: For them to like, you know, create some jobs over the summer, but also create some programs, incentive programs for these employers so they can also think that is worthwhile and support for them so it's not like just, you know, hire kids, but creating a support network for them to get involved, and hopefully that relationship will continue. But we really need to kind of work towards, you know, creating more jobs, and not like last minute. You know, this is like one more week to

the end of June and the kids will be out in the streets, so what is our plan? So going forward, I think we really got to plan ahead.

COMMISSIONER CHONG: So, last year we had about 8,000 work sites, 30 percent of them were in private sector. So we set a modest goal this year because we weren't quite sure. We wanted to add another 100 to 200 jobs. We've added close to 400 new private sector worksites, which represents a five percent increase from last year. As you may have read, the Mayor announced the Center for Youth Employment a few weeks ago. I'm meeting with them in about a few weeks, and they hopefully will engage more employers to bring them into the fold. You know, the Model's opportunity was a result of the Chair of our Citywide Advisory Board, Greg Hamrick [sp?]. He is from Model's, and he got every store, and he's working on Staten Island to be a job site. So, it's 100 young people. So, I think if the Council wants to assist in this effort, we welcome it. You all know small businesses. We're going to sit down with the Chamber of Commerce's because who knows better than young--small businesses the value of hiring kids in the community. One of the success

1 stories from last year's Summer Youth Employment
2 program was a young man, Adrian Gonzales, who was in
3 the Ladders for Leaders Program working with what's
4 called the Network to Teach Entrepreneurship, Nifty
5 [sic]. They had a program called Generation
6 Technology. He came up with an App. It was
7 competition. We paid his wages. He came up with an
8 App called Opus [sic] which is Latin for "work," and
9 the app, we're trying to assist him to find a
10 business metric to develop this app into a business,
11 but the app is very simple. It helps connect young
12 people with part time jobs during the school year and
13 local businesses. So, we're looking always for ways
14 to expand the field. When the Mayor announced the
15 Center for Youth Employment, he said there was a goal
16 over the next five years to eventually get to 100,000
17 jobs, apprenticeships through the Career and
18 Technical Education Schools at DOE, and mentorships.
19 So we do have a clear goal we want to reach, but it's
20 more than DYCD. Obviously, Department of Education
21 has some wonderful career and technical education
22 programs. They're retooling those as well, and the
23 corporate world I think wants to provide mentorships.
24 So, we, as I said, it does take a village. DYCD will

do its piece, but I think we welcome any assistance the Council can provide.

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Okay, thank you.
Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you very much, Council Member Chin. Commissioner, in the topic of jobs, you know, summer youth jobs--and I know that we all know the benefit of the summer youth job in, you know, the life of the young people, but you know that I say that and I want to aim for that, what I said. It is very important that we increase the summer job slot, not decrease. This is unfortunate that he have to have less job for the young people. And I know that the budget is not over. It's not over until it's over, until we vote. So, my hope is for you to continue to have a conversation with the Mayor, and I'm convinced that the Mayor, the hope and the desire of this committee to see more summer job for the young people. And then I will continue to do the same conversation, and we, the members of this committee, will continue the same conversation and also the advocate also they're on the same page. We want more summer jobs for the young people. I know it doesn't depend on you only, but as a city we got

1 to still try to find out how we can create more jobs
2 for the young people. And talking about jobs, we
3 know that giving jobs to the youth during the summer
4 is wonderful, it's great. But I don't believe this
5 is enough. We have to create jobs for the young
6 people during the year, that's the year round job
7 opportunities. And I remember last year, my
8 initiative, each Council Members, you know, how to
9 choose an initiative. My initiative was to create
10 job, year round job for the young people, because we
11 still have during the year young people in the street
12 that are not in school and they're not working. And
13 this is the population of young people more at risk
14 and more prone to go to the negative path. My
15 initiative was to create year round jobs for the
16 young people, but I got to thank the Speaker for
17 putting a couple millions of dollars to create, to
18 get the youth bill back in order to create some job
19 for the young people, you know, throughout the year,
20 that we did that. That was not enough, but that was
21 a big step. And I know I'm still trying to advocate,
22 and I know that the members of the Youth Committee
23 and the many of us on the City Council and the
24 Speaker also, as a matter of fact, made a request of
25

17 million dollars to create job during the year for the young people. This is wonderful, and I think this is--I believe this is a must. We have to create job for the young people during the year, because we got to keep them busy. You know the benefit of providing jobs to the young people, we all know that, but we go to do more to make this happen. The Speaker made a request of 17 million dollars to the Administration to create jobs year round for the young people, and I support that strongly. So my hope is to see that you also from DYCD talk to the Mayor, to the Administration and see what can we do. How can we create more jobs for the young people during the summer? Because this is very, very important. Again, I'm not trying to blame you or to try to make you responsible for that. You are not. But my intent is to then force my position and my belief that all of us we have to work together to do more for the young people. In your testimony, Commissioner, you said that to assist disconnected youth who have been in the criminal justice system, we partner with youth, we present a youth defense and advocacy not for profit that's worked to ensure that youth from underserved neighborhoods have access to

housing, employment and education, both during and after involvement with the justice system. I think this is great. This is a very important, you know, approach and program, because one of the things that we observe in the community, some of the young people that went to trouble one time, that went two times, you know, they get back. After they get released in the street, they go back to the same situation. But what I want to know what you have. Can you give us a detail of what DYCD is doing, what type of program DYCD has in terms of rehabilitation, helping those young people to get back to violence to go back to the justice system, what exactly? Could you give us some details?

COMMISSIONER CHONG: So, Andre will explain the Youth Represent Program.

CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you.

ANDRE WHITE: So, as you mentioned, Council Member, Youth Represent is a public defense and advocacy group that provides service for young people who have been involved in the criminal justice system up to age 24. At DYCD they work primarily for our workforce programs, the Out of School Youth Program, which provide occupational training for

1 young people who are disconnected, which means
2 they're not in school and they are not working, which
3 is for our Workforce Investment type program. And
4 the other program is our Young Adult Internship
5 Program, which provides internship programs for young
6 people who are disconnected. They're a little bit
7 more work ready on the typical young person that was
8 disconnected, and they work with them in a number of
9 ways. On the Out of School Youth Program, these are
10 young people who unfortunately come into our program
11 with the low literacy and numerous levels. A lot of
12 the have significant barriers, and Youth Represent
13 work with them in a number of ways. As I said
14 before, one, for those young people who have warrants
15 and summons. They basically go to court with them to
16 checks on their situations to ensure that they are up
17 to par with what's going on in their life. If they
18 are homeless, they'll work with HPD and they also
19 connect them to NYCHA to ensure that they get them
20 housing if possible and also to DHS. They also work
21 with various community based organizations within
22 that particular young person's community to connect
23 them to whatever services they might need. They also
24 provide workshops for young people about knowing your

rights. You know, if you get stopped by the cop, but you have an I-D, what do you do? What are the questions you're supposed to ask? And we have worked with Youth Represent for the past four years, and we continue to work with them as we recognize our young people and to our programs on, you know, an array of barriers and different challenges on the criminal justice front. We want to make sure that we provide the services that they need.

CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you very much. Again, as I said, this is a wonderful approach, wonderful program. not only we have to provide services and opportunities to the young people to, you know, to keep them in the positive path, but those who have been involved with the justice system, we have to make sure that we have them to stay in the positive and not to be back in the system. That's great, but what is your method of evaluation? What is your method to evaluate? You know, how many people, you know, you have had, you know, you have prevent to get back to the justice system? You have the statistic? Can you tell how many young people--

COMMISSIONER CHONG: [interposing] I don't think we track a negative. I mean, we track

positives, like how many people get jobs, but we don't track how many people go to jail. I mean--

CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: [interposing] You know, that is exactly what I'm asking you. Let's say for example you are serving or you are helping 100 young people who went to the justice system. You are providing programs to them, but how many from the 100--this is an example--from the 100 young people you have been providing services--

COMMISSIONER CHONG: [interposing] Return-

-

CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: to, how many returned? How many didn't return? How many you have been able to help stay in the positive path?

COMMISSIONER CHONG: I don't think we track that information. I would turn your attention to a report that ACS just administered, released about that I think--and don't quote me exactly, but they issued which is interesting that looked at young people who were in the ACS probation system, and most of the resources are consumed by 25 percent of the population. So, I think there is a strategy in the city level, not necessarily at DYCD. If we look at what they call super-users, meaning young

people who are revolving door who go in and come--and either are in the foster care system and probation or the criminal justice system. So I think there is a strategy at the city level. DYCD is not directly involved in it. It's a report that I read about recently that was interesting to understand who were the people who used these services, who were the ones going through the revolving door, because the majority of young people are not, and the question is how do you prevent recidivism and that was an interesting--I reached out to ACS to get a copy of the report, and hopefully we can figure out how we can tap into what their research shows to see how we can better tweak our programs. One of the things that I will say is that we're doing now with the commitment to doubling the number of jobs for vulnerable youth in the Summer Youth Employment Program from 1,000 to 2,000. In the past, it was a one-shot approach. They would do the six week job, and then we would lose touch of them. What we're doing now is actively referring them to our year around programs, whether it's the programs that Andre talked about, Out of School Youth or Young Adult Internship Program. How do we build on the six week

experience to make sure that they stay on a positive path? So, that's certainly part of the strategy, but I don't think we have statistics on recidivism that you're asking for.

CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Commissioner, you know, I appreciate that, you know, that you have a strategy, you know, that strategy, but I think that something is missing. And every time that we're doing something we have to be able to evaluate, to quantify, you know, the success that what we are doing.

COMMISSIONER CHONG: Can I say that--

CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: [interposing] And--

COMMISSIONER CHONG: I think the Wharton [sic] study is probably the best validation of the Summer Youth Employment Program that reduces incarceration and death. So, there is--so I want to point out that we do evaluate our programs. I don't want you to think that we don't evaluate. What you're asking--

CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: [interposing] No, I don't say that, but we have to have a more scientific way to quantify what we are doing. Let's say for example, we have a lot of program. As I said, you

got a wonderful program in DYCD. All of we are trying hard, but at this moment, the reason of this public hearing, what we are looking for, what is it we have to do? What we didn't do? In order to know exactly what we didn't do and what it is we have to do, we have to be able to have the number exactly. Is this program worked properly the way we expect this program to do? What is the expectation? What is the goal? Do you reach out? Well, we got to get the number. For example, if we have 1,000 and young people getting involved in crime and violence, of course we offer services, but we got to know among those 1,000 young people, how many--

COMMISSIONER CHONG: [interposing] I would be--I'm happy to share with you--

CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: [interposing] didn't get back to--

COMMISSIONER CHONG: all the evaluations we have done. I think we can always do more evaluations, but I want, again--

CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: [interposing] Thank you. That's exactly what I'm looking for. We have to do more--

COMMISSIONER CHONG: [interposing] But I
want you--

CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: [interposing]
evaluation.

COMMISSIONER CHONG: to have the false
impression that we don't do any evaluations. We're
constantly doing evaluations. The Summer Youth
Employment Program is constantly being evaluated by
independent evaluators, because the best evaluations
are the ones done by people who don't have a stake in
the process. So we were pleasantly surprised by the
Wharton Business School study which found over a nine
year period. This is not just a one year study.
They looked at data from nine years, and found that
the summer job, that one summer job reduced the death
rate and incarceration rate among young people. We
can always get more data, but you know, I want you to
understand that we clearly are committed to
evaluation, because we don't--we're never satisfied.
We want to make sure that the dollars we invest have
a meaningful impact, rather than just simply run
programs for the sake of running programs. So, we
can send you all our evaluations. We'd be glad to

1 sit down with you and discuss them with you, but we
2 can always do more evaluations.

3
4 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you,
5 Commissioner. We have been joined by Council Member
6 Darlene Mealy and Council Member David Greenfield. I
7 have to step out for a few minutes because I got to
8 go to speak in a public press conference related to
9 youth program, as a matter of fact, and I would like
10 one of my colleagues, Council Member Chin or Darlene
11 Mealy or Greenfield to take over for me for a few
12 minutes. Council Member Chin, thank you very much, is
13 going to take over for me.

14 COMMISSIONER CHONG: Thank you.

15 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: And I want to
16 recognize--we want to recognize Council Member
17 Darlene Mealy for a few questions. Okay, thank you.
18 Council Member Chin, you have it please. Thank you.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Good morning. I
20 know you're doing a great job. I only have two
21 questions. I was thinking about, you say you have a
22 program, the Healing Center New York has a program
23 for teen girls called Daughters of Lotus [sic]. How
24 do you advertise that? Because I just had a film
25

1 festival and this would have been perfect for that
2 film festival I would have known.

3
4 COMMISSIONER CHONG: I'm not familiar
5 with that program. Is that a discretionary program?

6 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Yeah.

7 COMMISSIONER CHONG: Oh, okay. We'll have
8 to get back to you. I don't know. I'm not specific--
9 I mean, we have 3,000 contracts, so I can't give you
10 a specific answer to a specific program, but we'll
11 get back to you.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Okay, then. Then
13 the other question, with the ACS you just said that
14 you track or you don't track people who get
15 incarcerated or get a job. What do you track with
16 the ACU [sic] youth that's aging out of ACU to get
17 into the summer job? Do y'all have a program once
18 they're aging out, instead of them just being on
19 their own now, do you give them a track to go
20 straight into a job?

21 COMMISSIONER CHONG: We're working with
22 ACS to promote our youth employment programs that
23 focus on young people who are--

24 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: [interposing] So it
25 hasn't started yet.

COMMISSIONER CHONG: No, we're redesigning--the Federal Government, I think you missed the testimony, but--

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: [interposing]
Sorry, about that.

COMMISSIONER CHONG: The Federal Government has redesigned the requirements of the Workforce Innovative Opportunity Act. So, they just published the regulations, I believe 2,000 pages in regulations. So we had to comment on that. So, we're going to be issuing a request for proposal later this fall to redesign those programs, and a big part of that will be clearly working with ACS, because many of the young people who are out of school and out of work have a foster care history. And so historically--I'm not sure if you were part of the discussion, that historically DYCD has operated on its own, but I'm a big believer in collaboration. One of the very first Commissioners I met with was Commissioner Taylor from Homeless Services, because I recognized there were a lot of young people who are in his system who don't get the resources that we have available. So we're launching after school programs and family shelters. And so I've had--you

1 know. We hope once we have a clear model that's in
2 line with what the Federal Government says we can do,
3 we hope to work with ACS and other agencies like
4 Department of Probation to help recruit young people
5 who would fit. Because if you're in foster care,
6 under the federal regulations you're automatically
7 eligible for these facilities, for these services.
8 And so but we want to make sure we do it right,
9 because the federal government will obviously monitor
10 and audit and evaluate us, and so I didn't want to
11 get the cart before the horse, but definitely it's on
12 our agenda.
13

14 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: So once that's in
15 place, will y'all have a database to track the
16 statistics of this?

17 COMMISSIONER CHONG: Yes.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: We have to really
19 see if this is working or not to make sure we know
20 how many young people are getting jobs and sustaining
21 those jobs not just for six months or six weeks. We
22 really need to track this.

23 COMMISSIONER CHONG: The workforce
24 programs rely on clear outcomes, and so we're
25 monitored by the US Department of Labor and the New

issue of domestic violence and teen dating violence.

We are strong believers in mobilizing young people,

because they are part of the solution and not part of

the program, and I think we can certainly send you

the link to those--I mean, they're going up on

YouTube at one o'clock something like that. You got

a preview of it, but they're truly amazing. These

are young people from the communities that we serve

speaking out against violence in their communities.

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Alright. You said
a public service announcement.

COMMISSIONER CHONG: Ten of them.

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Ten of them? How
many of them did you did with high schools?

COMMISSIONER CHONG: Five and five, right?
Five high school, five middle school.

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: That's good.

COMMISSIONER CHONG: We had 100 teams,
over a thousand young people competed. The final,
what, 100? Yeah, we had 1,500 people at the Apollo
Theater on Saturday night and the grand finale and
the top winners in middle school. We had some
celebrity judges. We had Maleek Gorba [sp?] is one
of the judges.

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Why I wasn't a judge? Celebrity?

[laughter]

COMMISSIONER CHONG: There's always next year.

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Okay, remember that. Please do. Thank you so much. And I know my school, one of my high schools was in it, I believe, last year. They did a public announcement--

COMMISSIONER CHONG: Right.

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: media. So thank you so much. Please, that's a way to employment also.

COMMISSIONER CHONG: Right.

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Keep those programs going, and keep opening doors to them, all the schools, to make sure that they're a part of that media, you know, big process, because that is jobs also. Thank you.

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Thank you. We've been joined by Council Member King. Commissioner, so I think it would be good if you can send us the link.

COMMISSIONER CHONG: Okay.

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Send it to the Council Members and we can help you publicize it, too.

COMMISSIONER CHONG: We'll send it to Council Finance and they can get it out to all Council Members, but it was--I mean, the young people who didn't get picked were so disappointed. I mean, there could only be one winner. Well, two winners, one middle school and one high school, but I think to have young people have a voice was so important, because young people are so used to being talked to and to give them a voice to speak out on things they care about was really important to us.

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: No, it was very impressive. So we want to make sure that we help we get it out there. So--

COMMISSIONER CHONG: And some of you can be judges next year.

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Well, you have to invite us. We would love to.

COMMISSIONER CHONG: You might have to perform as well, though.

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Hey, we can sing and dance just--

COMMISSIONER CHONG: Impartial, so you
can't vote for the group in your district.

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Okay.

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Never, we know
better.

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Okay. So, thank
you. Thank you to the-- Council Member King, do you
have any question for the Commissioner?

COUNCIL MEMBER KING: Good afternoon, and
good morning. I'm not rushed today. Happy Father's
Day to all our fathers, and thank you for being here
today. Just-- I know I've missed some of the
question and answers. I'm going to try not to repeat.
Hopefully, I don't ask a question that repeats, but I
do have a question in regards to high school
violence. What program or programs are you working
with the DOE to curve, as we say, students who engage
in security risk behaviors, and what programs are we
creating to target them? Because there are a number
of schools in the city who have teams who go to the
schools because they're in gangs and they are
disruptive in those school buildings. So, I wanted
to know, is there any program that exists or any

programs you're going to create to target just those individuals to help to get them back on track?

COMMISSIONER CHONG: We work closely with DOE on a program they have. So, Darryl Rattray will talk about that.

DARRYL RATTRAY: So, there's a number of things that we do to strengthen our programs that we already have. So, we have 174 community centers, Beacon and Cornerstone programs. We work with DOE's gang violence intelligence officer, Norbit Davidson [sic]. He does trainings for our program staff. So, if your young person or a young person in your program is in a gang or a crew, how would you find out, how would you know? What are some the signs to look for? Once you identify that that young person's in a crew or a gang, what do you do from there? What's the conversation to have? So, we ensure that all of our program directors receive that training in addition to how they design their programs on site. So in generally we run high quality programs, but we know some young people aren't the young people that are going to walk in the door automatically. So, one pilot that we did last summer in East Harlem, and this is when community centers are open every day in

1 the summer, seven days a week to 12:30 a.m. We had
2 one program that connected five of our community
3 centers in East Harlem that had street outreach
4 workers who went out and engaged young people that we
5 knew were gang crew affiliated in a very positive
6 youth development way, brought them into the center,
7 started to work with them, and then from there we ran
8 pilot. So, in one conversation at a Center Wagner
9 [sic], young people were having a conversation and
10 dialogue with the police, and these are young people
11 who are crew, gang affiliated talking to the police
12 about what they do, what they're doing, what's
13 happening. That effort, that approach isn't system
14 wide, but again, it takes more training and
15 development that we're working on as we identify what
16 works and best practices.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER KING: How often do you
19 have program that works during day school? Do y'all
20 have programs that work during the day in schools, or
21 are y'all just strictly after?

22 DARRYL RATTRAY: Primarily, we're after
23 school, but as a best practice, some of our program
24 providers speak with the guidance counselors from the
25 day school, speak with assistant principals to ensure

1 that whatever intelligence is happening during the
2 day, what they know about our young people that our
3 after school staff are briefed and prepped and ready
4 for what's coming into the after school program and
5 vice versa. You know, sometimes something may happen
6 in after school that the school needs to be aware of
7 in the morning, and then they'll have that two-way
8 conversation.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER KING: Okay. I'll have
11 another conversation off line, because I presented
12 something to the DOE, and I need for you all to kind
13 of work together on, because we still have a number
14 of young people who go to school because they're
15 required to go to school, but they're in gangs, and
16 they're very disruptive in building. So we have to
17 figure out how do we get their refocus and help them
18 understand the importance of the time spent, because
19 they're still crying out for help because they show
20 up to the school building every day. You know, the
21 true gang banger say, "I'm disconnected. To heck with
22 this," doesn't show up to the school building. So
23 they're still showing up to the school. So, what
24 program can we come to to come together to identify--
25 be; a lot of the schools know them. They know who

1 they're students are who are engaged in it. So what
2 program do we put in place to manage them during the
3 day, so that when they leave the school building
4 their first thought is not to run and engage in the
5 security risk behavior, but doing something
6 different. But we got to grab them while we're in
7 day school, because by the time they come to you
8 sometimes there is no hope once they come to you
9 after school, because the beef that brewed up at 9:30
10 in the morning hits, comes to surface at four o'clock
11 when they all leave the building. So, I'll have that
12 other conversation with you. Also, last year I had a
13 conversation again. I suggested, and I wanted to
14 know when you don't have--when a number of students
15 who do not get selected for summer youth employment,
16 what are we going to do with them? I know last year
17 I suggested that if it's a budget issue, because we
18 just don't have enough money to employ all these
19 young people, how do maybe possibly create a
20 volunteer system that their payment can be some type
21 of school credit come the school term. So during the
22 summer, they're volunteering in a school. They're
23 volunteering in a hospital. They're volunteering in
24 a library, because a lot of them have to do community
25

1 service anyway. How do we help them get that done in
2 the summer time? It keeps their day occupied just as
3 they were working, you know, because if they're not
4 working they're going to be out just in the street
5 all summer doing God knows what. So what can we--

7 COMMISSIONER CHONG: [interposing] Well,
8 let me just say one thing and then Andre can talk
9 about. So, this summer we've had precedent for us.
10 We will have a 174 community centers operating this
11 summer, 80 beacons and 94 cornerstones in public
12 housing, and the public housing centers will be open
13 till 11 o'clock at night. So there'll be plenty of
14 opportunities for high school-aged youth to be
15 involved. Something I mentioned earlier in the
16 testimony, we started a new partnership with the
17 Madison Square Garden and the Liberty to do a
18 basketball tournament this summer, because we have a
19 tournament that runs during the school year with
20 Nike, this will supplement that. But there are other
21 things we offer, because we get a lot of young people
22 who obviously don't get picked for summer jobs, and
23 Andre can talk a little bit about what options we
24 give them.

ANDRE WHITE: Andre White. So, as you know, every year receive over 130,000 applications for SYEP. Last year we served roughly 47,000 young people and unfortunately turned away over 90,000 young people. When a young person applies to SYEP, we work closely with our 98 providers that actually operate the programs within the communities and we train them in terms of informing young people that this is a lottery process, right? And we ask them to come up with their list of alternatives that they could provide to young people if they're not selected for the library. What that simply means, volunteer opportunities within their communities. Are there job programs within their communities? You know, if you want to shadow someone at a job, if you have an interest in finance, how can we make that possible? Also, from DYCD's end, we operate a youth connect which is a information line for young people to find out about programs and resources we have at DYCD. And what we do a good job, when we find out internship opportunities, other job opportunities, volunteer opportunities, we also put that on our Facebook page. We tweet it out, and it's also on our Instagram page, right mark [sic]. So again, we

understand that, you know, because of competing parties, we're not going to be able to provide every young person a job, but we ensure that there are alternatives that are presented to each young person when they apply to the program.

COUNCIL MEMBER KING: So you believe this plan will touch 97, 96, 46, 76 of our youth?

COMMISSIONER CHONG: Well, you know, earlier in the testimony I mentioned that the Mayor a few months ago announced the creation of the Center of Youth Employment, and there is a goal to over the next five years to add 100,000 jobs, internships, apprenticeships through the career technical education programs at DOE and mentorship opportunities over the next five years. So there is a bigger plan beyond just DYCD. I want to just--we will do our share, but obviously the city's very committed to providing opportunities to young people during the summer, and there is a plan that was announced, and hopefully with the center, with the help of the Center for Youth Employment we reach that goal over the next few years.

COUNCIL MEMBER KING: Okay. One final question, Chair. I don't know if this question was

asked or if I missed it. When you were selecting young people to work this summer, was there any consideration or is there a consideration to communities that are really in poverty or high crime, or is it just spread out equally across the city? You know, some neighborhoods are doing really well and their children can get a job without coming through the Summer Youth Program. We know somebody on 149th and 3rd Avenue that family needs that child to be in a job.

ANDRE WHITE: So, during the RFP process, we are very intentional around how we write our RFP's, and some of the things that we ensure that's a part of the process is we take into account the youth unemployment rate and also communities that have low poverty, right? I'm sorry, high poverty. So most of our providers currently, we have 98 providers, they are all within communities unfortunately where poverty is very high, and youth unemployment rates are very high. So, I will tell you that the majority of our applicants and participants come from those communities. Again, I'll have to go back and slice and dice the data for you, but I'm pretty confident.

COUNCIL MEMBER KING: Please.

ANDRE WHITE: But I'm pretty confident. I could tell you last year over 75 percent of our applicants and participants qualified for the school food program and also qualified for tiny [sic] funding. So, that shows you that the majority of them do come from areas where these services and jobs are needed.

COUNCIL MEMBER KING: Okay, thank--well, there looks like there's hope for a better future and a better summer. Thank you again for your time. I appreciate it. Thank you Madam Chair, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you much. Thank you very much Council Member Chin. Thank you so much for kindness. So, I'm back. Next panel--but before we call the next panel, I want to thank again, Commissioner Chong and also the members of the panel. Remember that we are all on the same team, so we all want better program and, you know, a better city for all of us parents who live in and be able to raise our children, and we want the children to be the future leaders of--the future leaders of the city and also this country. So, we got to continue to work together, but one thing that you said, and I love it, Commissioner, and I'll inform today or tomorrow we

1 start meeting to strategize how we can force the
2 Federal Government to do the right thing. This is
3 something, and I mentioned it before, we want all the
4 youth provider services, the parent, the children,
5 DYCD, the Administration, the Mayor, the City Council
6 Member, we got to come together to make sure the
7 Federal Government, you know, does exactly what, you
8 know, it's supposed to do. Again, having said that,
9 thank you very much to all of you.

11 COMMISSIONER CHONG: Thank you.

12 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: And let's continue to
13 do, you know, the teamwork, the work of the children
14 of, you know, in the City of New York, the work of
15 the parents. Thank you very much.

16 COMMISSIONER CHONG: Thank you.

17 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you much. [off
18 mic] Thank you much, Council Member, thank you. How
19 many people for? Sebastien Cidra [off mic] Yes, now
20 we're going to call the next panel. We call Gregory
21 Brendan [sp?], will you please--okay. And Sebastien
22 Cidra, thank you. And Amy Ellenbogen, thank you.
23 Sorry if I mispronounced your name. And also Michael
24 Martinez. Thank you very much for being here. Thank
25 you to testify, and I just want to let you know that

we have another public hearing right after this one. We may have to time you off to make sure that we finish before 12, because the other one is at 12 o'clock. We're very sorry about that. But now we have to swear--okay, very good. Good for you. Okay, so you may start any time. Please start by stating your names, okay, for the record.

AMY ELLENBOGEN: Good morning. My name is Amy Ellenbogen. I'm from the Crown Heights Community Mediation Center and the Center for Court Innovation.

CIDRA SEBASTIEN: Cidra Sebastien Associate Executive Director of the Brotherhood Sister Sol.

MICHAEL MARTINEZ: My name is Michel Martinez, and I am the Executive Director of Students for Protection.

CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Okay, who's going to start first?

AMY ELLENBOGEN: Again, my name is Amy Ellenbogen. I'm the Director of the Crown Heights Community Mediation Center. I'm in your--I serve many of your constituents, Council Member. As you know, the center is an independent not for profit

organization that works with the courts, government and communities to create a more effective and humane justice system. Thank you for the opportunity to speak today. The center is dedicated to eradicating the scourge of gun violence in New York City communities. As part of the city's anti-gun violence initiative, the center operates SOS, Save Our Streets, a replication of the Cure Violence anti-gun violence model in four communities in the Bronx and Brooklyn. An evaluation of Save Our Streets in Crown Heights found statistically significant impact on gun violence trends in Crown Heights when compared to three similar precincts in Brooklyn. At a moment when so much public attention nationwide is focused on the question of how to reduce gun violence and the challenges of legislative solutions, the success of SOS Crown Heights suggests that ground level prevention efforts can be an effective response to violent crime. We are proud to be part of the citywide anti-violence movement. We are also working in other key areas that we believe are vital to adjusting youth violence in our communities. For example, in Crown Heights we have expanded our programming to focus on the tangible effects of

witnessing or experiencing violence on young men of color in the community. Traditional victim services, which are often located in the prosecutor's office or in community based agencies and shelters, often focus on the victimization experienced by women and children. Recognizing the cultural stigma around young men of color identifying as victimized and the lack of services that target their specific needs, the Crown Heights Mediation Center added a trauma informed component to its programming. Make it Happen provides supportive services to young men of color age 16 to 21 who are dealing with trauma and yet are not in the position to acknowledge and process their trauma. Make it Happen is a trauma-informed and culturally competent program that provides mentorship, intensive case management, clinical interventions, and supportive services. We challenge our participants to think about how their definition of manhood is intertwined in trauma and gender roles. Make it Happen is also charged with attempting to engage traditional victim service providers on the needs of male crime victims and to make victim service compensation available to young men of color who've been victims of crime. We believe that more

programs like this that acknowledge and respond to the trauma experienced by young men exposed to violence is an important step the city can take to address youth violence. Youth empowerment is another key issue. We believe that young people themselves are the most powerful voice against youth violence. Because of this, the center runs programs throughout New York City that engage young people in speaking out against violence. In the SOS, the youth mobilization arm of SOS Crown Heights, young people are trained to become peer educators and community organizers around issues of violence, trauma and conflict mediation. Our Brownsville Anti-Violence Project engages at-risk and court involved young adults in anti-violence messaging while encouraging their civic leadership skills and their growth as a positive change agents within the community. And in Staten Island and Queens, our newly formed Neighborhood Youth Justice Councils based on our youth justice model will bring the historically under-represented voice of young people into discussions about public policies that affect their lives, including focusing on how to improve trust between police and teenagers so that they can be

partners and allies in the fight against violence.

Finally, we are excited about the potential--

CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you very much.
Very sorry about that. I would like you also to
reduce your talking, your statement.

AMY ELLENBOGEN: Sure. There's two
paragraphs left. I'll just say that--

CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: [interposing] I'm
sorry, are you going to testify also?

AMY ELLENBOGEN: the last thing is about
restorative justice.

CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: You going to speak
also?

AMY ELLENBOGEN: Yeah, they're separate.

CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Both of you? Okay,
yeah. Alright, thank you very much.

CIDRA SEBASTIEN: Thank you and good
morning. Again, my name is Cidra Sebastien. I'm from
the Brotherhood/Sister Sol, and the
Brotherhood/Sister Sol has been doing our work in
youth development for the past 20 years building
programs that provide a network of support and
guidance for young people who face a range of
challenges and pressures each day. We have created

evidence-based model that is recognized throughout the country, and we have been recognized due to our statistical outcomes. Right now in Harlem teenage pregnancy is at a rate of 15 percent for our young people. It's less than two percent. In the city, those graduating from high school is at a rate of about 61 percent, whereas 88 percent of our alumni members graduate from high school, and when you include those who receive their GED that's at 94 percent. In Harlem, 30 percent of youth ages eight to 25 years old are working full time or are in college, and for our alumni that is at 95 percent. And after 20 years of doing this work, none of our young people are incarcerated, and less than one percent are on probation. BROSIS [sic] has citywide reach and has displayed this in our work with the Council, recently being asked to participate in the taskforce to combat gun violence. We've been sought to decrease gun violence in New York City and resulted in receiving funding to do anti-violence work in Brooklyn, Manhattan, the Bronx, and in Queens. In addition, BROSIS has partnered with the Manhattan District Attorney General's Office on non-violence in--a non-violence initiative in Central

Harlem, and with SYVANCE [sic] believes that we can continue to spread this model throughout the city. We're also partnering with the Department of Education providing professional development for providers at 40 schools, and most recently this year partnering with three schools, three new schools, two in Queens and one in Brooklyn, to incorporate our model of youth development and expect to expand that program this coming fall. We facilitate programs and activities that are culturally relevant, foster connections with our families, our schools, and are rooted in our 10 curriculum focus issues, some that include leadership development, exploring sexism and misogyny, looking at the impacts of drug and substance abuse, conflict resolution and bias reduction, political education and social justice, and educational achievement. Throughout BROSIS programs, members can learn about total wellness of the mind, body and spirit, receive support to experience wellness and thrive, and by honing their critical and creative thinking skills, their help to analyze to solve personal and social problems. They develop habits that ensure good emotional, mental and physical health. They learn about connecting to

their inner cells and connecting to others.

Ultimately, we seek to help our members identify inner strengths and belief systems to become healthy and whole individuals. We create an opposing pressure to do what is right and to turn towards a lifestyle that truly has a future. So the question of the day is, are youth violence prevention programs adequately serving the needs of New York City's most vulnerable populations? And I would answer yes, and also answer that the city needs to mirror our efforts on a citywide level to ensure that there are policies in place and the enforcement of those policies for youth to receive what they deserve to have lives free of violence.

CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you very much.
Thank you. I'm sorry for that.

CIDRA SEBASTIEN: I still have seconds.
Can I use those? These policies must include reaching them in their schools, providing them with guidance counselors and career counselors, making sure that they're not criminalized, ensuring that no young person is on Rikers Island, not one, not for any crime, and also to make sure that we are reaching

CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you so much.
Thank you for your collaboration. Thank you. The
next one, please?

MICHAEL MARTINEZ: Hi, my name is Michael Martinez and I am the Executive Director for Students for Protection. We are a New York based youth start-up advocacy project that my friends and I started since last year. Our work, we believe in collaboration with City Council Members and with different schools. So, we have different recommendations, and I'll be very brief on it, about four points. One is for self-defense. Students need to learn self-defense not only to protect themselves against violent individuals but also to promote good health and to also promote cultural appreciation. Second, our schools need mentorships and life coaches. It allows not only just for cou--excuse me, guidance counselors to be involved but also mentors to teach life lessons. We also need to keep record of bullying and youth violence within our communities and in our schools. So that way we can know how much social programs are needed in our neighborhoods. And

1
2 lastly, I just want to say that co-located schools
3 and schools within distance of each other could be at
4 risk for bullying incidents within their school
5 committee. So we believe that principals,
6 administrators and etcetera should unite to make sure
7 our neighborhoods are safe, that we our school
8 communities are safe. Thank you.

9 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you very much
10 to all of you. Thank you so much, but I'm very sorry
11 that we have to rush, because we have another public
12 hearing. I'm one of the Co-Chairs of the next hearing
13 also. So, I'm going to ask the question anyone can
14 jump in and answer. Number one, I want to commend
15 you and thank you for the wonderful job that you are
16 doing. As the Commissioner said this morning and we
17 all say that we are part of the team; its teamwork.
18 No one organization can resolve the problem of
19 violence, but all of us, we are doing a wonderful
20 job, but we still have to do more. So the question
21 that I want to--before I ask the question, I like
22 your comment Mr. Martinez saying that the young
23 people should practice self-defense. I've got a
24 special reason for that. I'm not going to say why.
25 But truly, the self-defense will help young people,

1 and I had the experience, you know, of providing
2 self-defense to the young people. That makes a
3 difference, because that gives them self-confidence
4 and self-esteem that prevent them to go to conflict.
5 So, we want to leave it there. So, my question to
6 all three of you, anyone can answer. We have been
7 providing a lot of good services to the young people.
8 So based on your experiences, what works, what
9 doesn't work? What else we can do to better address
10 on the issue of violence? Is there anything that we
11 didn't do? Because I know that you have been
12 providing good services, but every single day we see
13 that the violence is going out of control. What else
14 you can tell us? Anything that we can do in addition
15 to what we have been doing.

17 CIDRA SEBASTIEN: I think one of the
18 things that works is collaboration and integrity for
19 agencies and families to come together to really
20 support young people and to do their part. And
21 again, the city can play a major role in ways that
22 individual agencies and all of us here do really work
23 for the young people that we connect with, but really
24 thinking about how we collaborate in a way that
25 honors what people knows works in those communities

and brings together a range of different agencies to support young people and their families as well.

CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you very much. Anybody else? Anything else? Very short, very quick.

AMY ELLENBOGEN: Yeah. I think what we know works is working with trusted adults. Young people connect well to adults who have a degree of credibility to them and are trusted and well-trained. I think what we can do more is something that you said, Council Member, is healing those who have become victims of crime. That's an area of growth for us. Sometimes we take care of their physical wounds and we gather around them in the moment of immediate crisis, but we need long term deeper work with them.

CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you very much. And we have been joined by Council Member Jumaane. I think that he has some question too. Very briefly, he's going to ask you some questions, because I got to go to the next public hearing. But, yeah, I'm sorry.

MICHAEL MARTINEZ: Well, I could--

CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: [interposing] You can respond when Council Member Jumaane ask the question. Thank you.

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you for your testimony. Thank you for having a hearing on this important topic. My hope is that there'll be other ones like it. I'm sorry I came late, and I'm sorry I missed the Commissioner's testimony. I'm glad that she brought up thanking the Safe Streets Safe City, which I think was a--Mayor Giuliani took a lot of credit for work that Dinkins had already started, whether it was additional police officers or opening up the beacon schools. I think those things worked together, and obviously this is a complicated question. And we're in the middle of budget discussion now, and my hope is that whatever monies are spent on additional officers, there are equal or exceeding amounts spent particularly on youth jobs, directed particularly in those communities that are having the high crime areas. THE question I wanted--and thank you so much for the work that you're doing, of course the work that SOS is doing in Crown Heights is phenomenal. But I have been trying to figure out whether the violence is in

fact overall increasing, not year to year, but just in general, or do we have more social media now that projects it out? Because I remember when I was growing up in junior high school and high school there were pretty bad violent acts amongst young people and people got jumped and these things happened. Social media wasn't there. This is not to say it's not severe and we have to find a way to address it that does not just include police, because that is a spiraling thing that is problematic, but I'm just really trying to get a feeling of what you think. Is it actually increasing or is it intensified now due to social media?

MICHAEL MARTINEZ: Personally, for me, I believe its gradually increasing, but it's over time. You know, from my generation, I think as an 18 year old that a lot of bullying and a lot of violence has occurred mostly on social media, on--I'm sorry, social networks such as cyber bullying. That's what I believe that now in this age more than just physical violence.

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: I meant actually the physical violence. I know the cyber bullying is out of control. We didn't really have that. I just

meant actually physical violence. Just wanted to get the feelings of what you thought.

MICHAEL MARTINEZ: I believe so. I personally think just out of experience, I believe so.

CIDRA SEBASTIEN: Yeah, and I definitely agree that violence has increased among young people. Thinking about experiences that I've seen at the Brotherhood/Sister Sol, but also that the access to media is just a tool. It's not necessarily causing what we're seeing, but it's allowing for what is happening to be perpetuated to be seen across millions. I think about the incident that happened earlier in the year in the McDonald's with the group of young people in Brooklyn. It was seen in a way that could not have been seen 10, 15, 20 years ago, but there's a growing amount of physical violent acts that are taking place among our young people, and we have to think about creative and sustainable ways to make sure that it stops.

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Thank you. I think it's definitely a crisis. I just get care--I just try to be careful when we do the hysteria. I think you're right. I'm just not--I mean, if we

compare crime in the 90's to crime now, it has dropped considerably, and so it's hard for me to believe necessarily that it's--I think it's more magnified in social media. I'm not sure if the numbers are there. That's what I'm trying to figure out, but I thank you very much for your testimony.

CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you very much, Council Member Jumaane, and thank you very much to all of you, and I wanted to mention that we have been joined by Council Member Laurie Cumbo who is also a strong advocate for youth. Unfortunately, we have to close the public hearing, but I know Council Member combo has a lot of questions. And especially I know that she working diligently to figure out how we can use art, because she's a championer [sic], and in term of art how we can use art to decrease violence and also to help our young people. Council Member Cumbo, thank you very much, and thank you to all of you. The meeting is adjourned. Thank you.

[gavel]

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COMMITTEE ON YOUTH SERVICES

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C E R T I F I C A T E

World Wide Dictation certifies that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. We further certify that there is no relation to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that there is interest in the outcome of this matter.



Date June 29, 2015