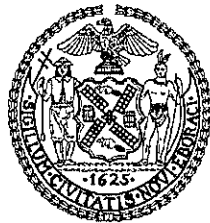


**NYC**<sup>TM</sup>  
**Administration for  
Children's Services**



**The New York City Council,  
Committee on Juvenile Justice  
February 12, 2019**

*“Oversight – Runaway and Homeless Youth (RHY) and the Juvenile Justice System”*

**Testimony by  
New York City Administration for Children's Services**

**Felipe Franco, Deputy Commissioner  
Division of Youth and Family Justice**

**Sara Hemmeter, Associate Commissioner  
Division of Youth and Family Justice**

Good afternoon Chair King and Chair Rose, and members of the Committee on Juvenile Justice and the Committee on Youth Services. I am Felipe Franco, Deputy Commissioner for the Division of Youth and Family Justice (DYFJ) within the Administration for Children's Services (ACS). With me today is Sara Hemmeter, Associate Commissioner for Community Based Alternatives and Close to Home, and Randy Scott, Assistant Commissioner for the Vulnerable & Special Need Youth Division within the Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD). Thank you for the opportunity to discuss the interventions that DYFJ, our sister City agency, and our non-profit partners provide to help strengthen families and support youth in the community.

Youth who have challenging relationships with their families are vulnerable, leaving them at risk of foster care, homelessness, sexual exploitation or in some cases juvenile justice involvement. Much of ACS's work across all of our program areas focuses on efforts to strengthen family relationships and communication whenever it is safe to do so. We know that for most young people the best way to promote positive youth outcomes is to support the whole family unit, and we have invested heavily in providing intensive family supports to families and youth to prevent delinquency, truancy, chronic running away and homelessness.

Because we know that supporting families is so important and effective, we are extremely disappointed and concerned that the State Executive Budget for State Fiscal Year 2019-2020 proposes to eliminate the ability to keep youth safe by eliminating the capacity to place them in foster care—increasing their risk of homelessness and/or juvenile justice system involvement. In addition, the State's proposed budget would eliminate all State reimbursement for ACS's Community Based Alternatives that help divert these same youth from foster care by helping these families stay together.

This is on the heels of last year's State Budget which eliminated all state support for Close to Home and failed to fund Raise the Age implementation in New York City. We again need the City Council's advocacy at the State on behalf of New York City's youth and families.

In the ACS Division of Youth and Family Justice we have a continuum of services, including Community Based Alternatives for youth and their families, detention services for youth who are arrested and awaiting court resolution, and residential services through Close to Home for youth who are adjudicated by the Family Court. An important part of this continuum is specifically targeted at strengthening family relationships in families where parents are seeking help for their youth who are engaged in status offenses—meaning activities that are not crimes, such as truancy, running away and missing curfew. If not addressed, these youth are at risk of homelessness or justice system involvement. ACS's Family Assessment Program (FAP) works with these families through what is statutorily referred to as Persons in Need of Supervision (PINS), providing the families with diversion services and foster care for the youth when necessary.

As we all remember, adolescence can be a complicated, and oftentimes challenging, time for young people and their families. These challenges can be compounded when substance abuse, mental illness or other complicating factors are present. Our experience with court-involved adolescents in the juvenile justice system, PINS, and child welfare systems has taught us that many of the issues that contribute to difficult youth behavior, as well as more serious criminal behavior, either arise or are compounded when family relationships are strained, and parents feel that they cannot cope. Many of the interventions that ACS and DYCD offer provide youth and their parents with the tools they need to work through their challenges and build their relationships.

## Community Based Alternatives

Overall admissions to juvenile detention and placement, as well as foster care placements, have decreased significantly year over year because of the intensive prevention services that New York City has made available. ACS has intentionally invested in programs and services that are specifically aimed at working with youth, but that also engage the whole family unit to improve family functioning rather than merely looking at youth behavior.

### Family Assessment Program

DYFJ's Family Assessment Program (FAP) is available to families with youth up to age 18 to help avoid involvement in the foster care and juvenile justice systems. FAP prioritizes therapeutic preventive services that help families address difficult teenage behaviors—like truancy, using drugs, running away from home, and/or struggles with mental illness—as the best way to improve family dynamics and outcomes for youth, and prevent running away and homelessness.

To obtain assistance with a challenging adolescent, parents often go to Family Court to file a PINS petition. Parents and guardians are looking desperately for support through court supervision, placement of their child in foster care, respite, or quick access to services. Parents who seek a PINS petition in Family Court are required, by statute, to participate in diversion services before a PINS petition can be filed. Prior to a petition being filed, FAP MSWs meet with families and conduct an assessment of the caregivers and youth and determine which of the 3 levels of services in our continuum meet their needs.

- **Level I: Family Stabilization:** An intensive crisis team visits the family's home, conducts an assessment and then helps to identify community-based supportive services. Over a period of no longer than 90 days, the worker will support the family members in supporting the connection to community services.

- Level II: Functional Family Therapy (FFT): FFT consists of a small team of highly trained therapists, with a maximum caseload of 10, who provide therapy in the home over an intensive 4-month period including 30 one-hour therapeutic sessions.
- Level IIA: Multidimensional Family Therapy (MDFT): MDFT is a family-based treatment approach for adolescents with substance abuse and associated mental health and behavioral problems. A small team of trained therapists delivers MDFT, either at home, in school, or in clinic sessions over the course of two to five months.
- Level III: Multi-Systemic Therapy and Adaptations (MST): MST is a therapeutic intervention where trained therapists carry a maximum of six cases. The team provides therapy to an entire family over a period of four months. Therapists visit the home multiple times a week and are available by phone 24 hours a day. We also have an adaptation of this model specifically for families where there is substance use/abuse by the youth.
- Juvenile Justice Respite Program: ACS also provides a 21-day non-mandated respite program for youth most at risk of foster care placement or detention. Respite allows for the family and youth to work at de-escalating conflicts and improving family functioning while the youth is temporarily residing in a respite placement.

FAP serves over 5,000 families annually throughout the 5 boroughs and is able to prevent over 90% of parents from filing a PINS petition in court against their child. Currently, there are only 104 New York City youth in foster care on PINS petition, which demonstrates the effectiveness of our diversion programs.

Again, as I mentioned in my opening, all of these services are at risk in the State's proposed FY2019-2020 budget. ACS respectfully asks the City Council to join us in our effort to prevent these budget actions from proceeding, both so that the foster care system can still serve youth who

are a danger to themselves or others, and so that the state maintains its \$13 million of support for PINS diversion services.

### Juvenile Justice Initiative

DYFJ also runs the Juvenile Justice Initiative (JJI) in partnership with the Department of Probation. JJI serves youth who have been adjudicated in Family Court and provides intensive home-based interventions to keep young people who do not need to be confined safely in the community with necessary services and supports. JJI has played a key role in reducing the City's use of residential placements in juvenile delinquency cases, without compromising public safety.

With Raise the Age, we have expanded our array of preventive programs to meet the needs of older youth, and we have invested in new evidence-based programs, including MultiSystemic Therapy (MST)-EA, which will work with emerging adults who are homeless or on their own and need help to achieve independence. Among other goals, MST-EA will target housing and independent living skills, as well as education and career goals for participating adolescents.

### Crossover Youth

The vast majority of young people in the juvenile justice system—as high as 90%, regardless of gender—have experienced some sort of trauma. We know that there is a close correlation between child maltreatment and future delinquency, and so we have partnered with multiple stakeholders to support children who have experienced abuse and neglect with the goal of preventing their entry into the justice system.

The term “crossover youth” describes a young person who enters the justice system while involved in the child welfare system. ACS is committed to investing in work that focuses specifically on dually-involved youth, such as the Crossover Youth Practice Model. The Crossover Youth Practice Model, developed by the Center for Juvenile Justice Reform at Georgetown University, is a multi-agency, cross-systems approach that seeks to improve outcomes for young

people who are involved in both systems. Many of these youth are at serious risk of homelessness: they tend to be adolescents who have either a long history of child neglect, and/or PINS-type behavior. The Crossover Youth Practice Model has brought together numerous City agencies working with the youth<sup>1</sup> to share information<sup>2</sup>, collaborate on solutions, and involve the youth and their family in order to prevent further involvement in either system.

### Close to Home

If a Family Court judge finds that a young person committed an offense and at Disposition finds that the youth needs rehabilitative services, the judge may order the youth to be placed in a residential placement program for a period of time, generally 12 or 18 months. Before Close to Home these youth were placed in large institutions two or more hours away from their families, leading to family disengagement. Before 2011 and the enactment of Close to Home many youth lingered in the system for years because of lack of permanency. Now with Close to Home, youth are placed in small group home-style residences throughout the City where they receive intensive and therapeutic residential programming, followed by aftercare support for the remainder of their placement period. Close to Home providers encourage family visits and, if needed, transport families to the residences for visitation, meetings and other activities.

The ACS Permanency and Placement Specialist (PPS) assigned to each youth and the Close to Home provider work together to ensure that the youth's needs are being addressed through appropriate services, both in residential placement and in the community on aftercare, creating a tighter network of supervision. The goal of Close to Home aftercare is to build on the skills of youth and the family, and to develop a network of support that will allow them to succeed in the community.

---

<sup>1</sup> ACS, the Department of Probation, the NYC Law Department, among others

<sup>2</sup> With the consent of the youth and their parent/guardian

## **Other Supports for Youth & Families**

As a City it is imperative that we all work to ensure that every youth has the tools and the supports they need to become successful adults, and DYFJ is committed to supporting youth, families and communities to achieve this goal.

### **LGBTQ Youth**

When we talk about runaway and homeless youth and the connection to the juvenile justice system, we must acknowledge that some youth are without family support because they are not accepted for who they are and are either put out of their homes or cannot tolerate living with emotionally or physically abusive parents. Some of these youth also identify as LGBTQ. ACS has long made affirming and supporting our youth a priority. The evidence-based services available throughout DYFJ's continuum can often be a catalyst for family acceptance and reunification for LGBTQ youth, and we have served many of these families through FAP and JJI. We also commend our sister agency, DYCD, for dedicating significant resources and programming to meet the unique needs of these youth.

For the last two years we have been working with Vera Institute of Justice to develop a gender-responsive program that is inclusive and sensitive to the needs of our LGBTQ girls. The program will serve girls who are at risk of involvement in the juvenile justice system, as an alternative to placement or an aftercare program. Services will be tailored to meet the individual needs of each girl and we are working with providers that have expertise in meeting the unique needs of our LGBTQ youth.

### **CSEC Survivors**

Commercial sexual exploitation of children, or CSEC, is a form of child abuse experienced by many justice-involved youth. ACS has made supporting this population a priority and at DYFJ we have partnered with Girls Educational Mentoring Services (GEMS), a



nationally recognized organization that works with sexually exploited young women and girls. GEMS utilizes survivor leadership and transformational relationships to work with young women in our secure detention and Close to Home facilities to educate young people about CSEC and encourage survivors to seek help.

In August 2018 Commissioner Hansell announced the launch of the NYC Child Tattoo Eradication Project, a new pilot program at ACS that provides free tattoo removal services to trafficked, gang-affiliated and other at risk-youth in New York City. Trafficked and gang-involved youth are often branded with exploiter or gang symbols. ACS has partnered with medical providers who offer pro-bono tattoo removal services to youth affiliated with ACS whose brandings have hindered their ability to positively move on with their lives. We are thankful to the medical professionals who have offered pro-bono services to help some of the most vulnerable children in New York City.

#### Family Support Center

In June of 2017 ACS opened a Family Support Center in the South Bronx, which provides a multi-service, one-stop space for youth and their families. I would like to thank Chair King and members of the Juvenile Justice Committee for visiting the Center last summer and learning about the array of programs and services we offer there. As we discussed during the Committee's visit, the Bronx Family Support Center houses FAP, JJI and Close to Home staff and enables families with justice system involvement to have many of their service needs met in one centralized location. However, services offered at the Bronx Family Support Center are not limited to families with justice system involvement and are open to anyone in the community. DYFJ partners with Community Connections for Youth to provide workforce development, parenting groups, housing assistance, and education workshops. The space is designed to be shared with the whole community, welcoming everyone—including those whose children aren't at risk or court-involved.

The Bronx location is presently the only Family Support Center in the City, and we are planning to open a Queens Center in 2020.

**Closing**

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss the supports that ACS and our partners provide to support youth and families in the community. New York City's multiagency focus on strengthening families and building competencies and supports for youth is commendable and often emulated by other cities and jurisdictions across the state and the nation. Now more than ever we need the City Council's support in advocating on behalf of New York City's youth to ensure that Albany does not cut our services to youth and families. We are happy to take your questions.



Testimony of

Gisele Castro  
Executive Director

RE: Oversight - Runaway and Homeless Youth (RHY) and the Juvenile Justice System.

Before the  
New York City Council  
Committee on Youth Services

February 12, 2019

*Testimony before the Committee on Youth Services held jointly with the Juvenile Justice Committee, New York City Council*

Good Afternoon, Chair of the Juvenile Justice Committee, Andy King and Council Member, Deborah Rose, good afternoon and thank you for the opportunity to speak on Runaway and Homeless Youth (RHY) and the Juvenile Justice System.

My name is Gisele Castro. I am the Executive Director of Exalt Youth (*exalt*), a non-profit organization that engages court-involved youth from all five boroughs ages 15-19, to pursue freedom and opportunities on a voluntary basis (rather than compliance) by offering life changing experiences through our proprietary curriculum, individualized planning, and paid internship placements.

I want to begin by thanking the Council Members for your advocacy on behalf of our young people and for hosting this hearing today. I would also like to thank the City agencies and partnering agencies for investing in comprehensive programming and ensuring that youth are offered meaningful opportunities that positively impact their life trajectories.

**exalt Ensuring Effective Services for Youth Impacted by Homelessness**

Designed to address three key factors: criminal justice avoidance, educational attainment and employability, *exalt* was founded in 2006, and it is modeled on an award winning, best-practice designated program developed in 1997 at CASES, New York's oldest alternative-to-incarceration agency. Originally incubated at the Blue Ridge Foundation, *exalt* has made significant strides to fulfill our mission to elevate expectations for New York City's court-involved youth.

Our outcomes show that when young people are given the individual agency to participate in their future and choose their path toward success, our schools and communities become empowered and safer.

According to the city's most recent Homeless Youth Count data, there are more than 7,000 youth impacted by homelessness in NYC. *exalt* has been designed to address one of the root causes of homelessness and housing instability for NYC's youth: incarceration. The fees and fines associated with incarceration and court-involvement, as well as the stigma that can be attached to a criminal record conviction, can have a devastating economic as well as social impact on a young person. Through our powerful model, we intervene to support young people so that they can begin to reverse cycles of poverty that are inextricably linked to justice-system involvement. Our results have proven that our approach is effective toward getting young people on the path to stability and success. After participating in our model, less than 8% of our young people are reconvicted of a crime and are able to move forward in life without felony or misdemeanors convictions on their record. More than 95% remain enrolled in high school and on track to graduate by age 20. Moreover, our model has resonated over the last decade within the courts, where over 70% of youth with eligible cases are given sentence reductions. These results have wide implications in ensuring that youth impacted by the system have easier access to housing, employment and for those interested in going to college to ensure that they can be eligible for financial aid.

### **Supporting our Youth**

Today, *exalt's* Deputy Director of Programs, Brian Lewis, accompanies me. He and the *exalt* team have been working hard to scale our impact. *exalt* is currently growing to serve the increasing demands of under-resourced, high need youth. We are adding staff, moving to a new location and strengthening our curriculum and model so that we can continue to strive to make an impact to reduce the number of the court-involved in youth in this city, which we believe in turn will reduce the number of runaway and homeless youth as well.

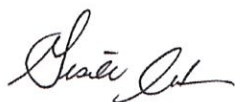
### **exalt's Intersectional Work**

At *exalt*, our work is intersectional – we have over 400 referral partners, including schools, legal service organizations, and other city agencies, Judges, and court officers. As a result, our stakeholders are as diverse as the needs of our young people. Our referral partners support our efforts in assisting our youth achieve their educational goals and resolve/comply with their legal obligations. We provide weekly progress notes to our referral partners to keep them updated and to plan accordingly with the young person that they referred to *exalt*. Some of our referral sources are: Administration for Children Services, Division of Youth Family Justice; Center for Community Solutions; Legal Aid Society; Kings County District Attorneys Office; Manhattan District Attorneys Office; New York Department of Probation; Redhook Justice Community Center; Graduates who refer friends.

Furthermore, we partner with various businesses and nonprofit organizations to develop internships that require varying and increasing degrees of planning, as well as provide a web of new networks to help our youth reach longer-term goals on their own after program completion. *exalt* prepares youth to access and leverage internship opportunities to develop personally and professionally. Our active internship partners are in the arts; law and community activism; small businesses/entrepreneurship; educational institutions like museums, tutoring and cultural centers; environmentalism; government; medical/ health; restaurants/ culinary; media/ movie production; foundation; social work.

I want to once again thank Juvenile Justice Chair Andy King and Chair Deborah Rose and the committee for holding this hearing, and I look forward to continuing to work with our colleagues, the City Council, and city agencies, and the citizens of this great city to ensure that youth have the access to comprehensive services to elevate them toward lifelong success.

Respectfully submitted,



Gisele Castro  
Executive Director



FOR THE RECORD

**TESTIMONY OF:**

**Brooklyn Defender Services**

**Presented before:**

**The New York City Council**

**Committee on Juvenile Justice and Committee on Youth Services**

**Oversight hearing on Runaway and Homeless Youth and the Juvenile Justice System**

February 12, 2019

Brooklyn Defender Services (BDS) provides multi-disciplinary and client-centered criminal, family, and immigration defense, as well as civil legal services, social work support and advocacy, for over 35,000 clients in Brooklyn every year. We thank the Committee on Juvenile Justice, the Committee on Youth Services, and Chairpersons Andy King and Deborah Rose for this opportunity to testify about young people's experience with homelessness and the criminal legal system.

BDS is fortunate to have the support of the City Council to supplement the services we provide as a public defense office in Brooklyn. We have a specialized Adolescent Representation Team comprised of committed attorneys, social workers, and youth advocates dedicated to providing legal representation, advocacy, and social work services to court-involved clients age 21 and under. Our team represents over two thousand adolescents ages 13-21 annually. We are grateful for the opportunity to submit testimony about the ways in which runaway and homeless youth (RHY) interact with the juvenile criminal legal system.

**Background**

Last year, BDS represented over 270 homeless clients under the age of 25. As we testified to before the Council on General Welfare earlier this month, poor New Yorkers—people seeking support or benefits, people in crisis, people experiencing financial and emotional hardship—are

frequently subject to mistreatment, harassment, and arrest when at their most vulnerable.<sup>1</sup> Navigating the available social safety nets in the city is challenging for our adult clients, even when accompanied by case workers, social workers, or attorneys. For unaccompanied homeless young people, gaining access to RHY support after a fight with family or a night in jail may feel intimidating or impossible.

Without a stable place to stay, homeless young people are exposed to surveillance and policing at high rates. Homeless youth are more likely than their peers to be arrested, engage in criminal activity to meet their survival needs, or engage in unsafe sexual relationships or the commercial sex trade because they need a place to sleep. They may be stopped by police simply for being outside or arrested for being in a park after closing, sleeping on the subway, or public urination.

In New York City, an estimated 3,800 young people experience homelessness each day.<sup>2</sup> This number likely fails to capture many youth without stable housing who, not served by the City's RHY services, couch surf, sleep on trains, or trade sex for a place to stay. RHY populations represent the most vulnerable youth in our communities. Young people experiencing homelessness have high rates of mental illness, substance use and abuse, and histories of trauma.<sup>3</sup> Black, Latinx, and LGBTQ youth are disproportionately represented. While LGBTQ youth are estimated to make up only 5-7% of the population, they make up approximately 40% of the City's homeless youth population.<sup>4</sup> Similarly, nearly 90 percent of NYC shelter residents are Black or Latinx.<sup>5</sup> More than half of RHY have been arrested or had some criminal justice involvement. Conflict with parents, abuse, and neglect are the main reasons RHY report leaving home.<sup>6</sup> Troublingly, for the youth we serve, a court issued Order of Protection following arrest is often the driving factor for homelessness.

Each year, we represent at least 100 young people who are made homeless by the criminal legal system. Nearly every case involves a fight between a teenager and a parent or sibling that results in a call to police and an arrest. As a matter of practice in Brooklyn, prosecutors ask for and judges issue a full order of protection in these "domestic violence" cases. Full orders of protection, in effect, render our young clients homeless; they are unable to return home, go near, or speak to the named family member. While our attorneys treat these instances as emergencies

<sup>1</sup> Please see our previous testimonies before the City Council, available on the Brooklyn Defender Services website at [www.bds.org/#policy](http://www.bds.org/#policy)

<sup>2</sup> Root Cause, *New York State Report: Education and youth Development, Improving Outcomes for Homeless Youth*, September 2012, available online <http://www.rootcause.org/docs/Resources/Research/Improving-Outcomes-for-Homeless-Youth/Improving%20Outcomes%20for%20Homeless%20Youth-%20New%20York.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> National Network for Youth. NN4Y Issue Brief. Consequences of Youth Homelessness. Available at: [https://www.nn4youth.org/wp-content/uploads/IssueBrief\\_Youth\\_Homelessness.pdf](https://www.nn4youth.org/wp-content/uploads/IssueBrief_Youth_Homelessness.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Nico Sifra Quintana, Josh Rosenthal & Jeff Krehely, *On the Streets: The Federal Response to Gay and Transgender Homeless Youth*, June 2010, available at

<https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/lgbt/reports/2010/06/21/7983/on-the-streets/>

<sup>5</sup> Coalition for the Homeless, *New York City Homelessness: The Basic Facts*, September 2018, available at <http://www.coalitionforthehomeless.org/basic-facts-about-homelessness-new-york-city/>

<sup>6</sup> Lance Freeman and Darrick Hamilton, *A Count of Unaccompanied Homeless Youth in New York City*, New York City Coalition on the Continuum of Care, 2013, available at <https://shnny.org/images/uploads/Youth-Count-Results.pdf>

and attempt to remove orders of protection, our clients are routinely made homeless for a few nights, if not weeks or months while the case proceeds.

### **Recommendations**

Too often young people are caught in the criminal legal system for engaging in typical adolescent behavior or acting out in response to a traumatic situation. Harm committed by youth is often a product of intergenerational trauma and poverty. Often times the most accessible “resource” for family members is a call the police when a young person is acting up, which we know may result in a protective order that prevents the young person from returning home. In effort to better serve these youth, we recommend increased support for youth and families to support positive mental and behavioral health, promote parent/teen communication, mediate family conflict, and provide an alternative to criminal legal or ACS involvement.

#### ***Provide more safe shelter space and respite centers for RHY youth in Brooklyn***

We applaud the City’s commitment to expand current RHY housing to 753 beds this year. We recommend a continued investment in crisis shelter beds, in addition to Transitional Independent Living. We estimate that Kings County would need at least 300 crisis shelter beds to ensure that no Brooklyn youth was forced to sleep on the street, sleep on the train, couch surf, or trade sex for shelter. Currently, we are aware of only 28 beds for LGBTQ youth in Brooklyn and no beds for youth who do not identify as LGBTQ.

The vast majority of runaway and homeless youth must seek crisis shelter beds in Manhattan, where they are too often turned away for lack of beds. Runaway and homeless youth have been made homeless by failures of the education system, juvenile and adult criminal legal systems, the family court and foster care systems, and adults who have failed to properly care for them. The City can and must address the youth homelessness crisis by opening youth crisis shelters in Brooklyn, the Bronx, Staten Island, and Queens.

#### ***Create respite centers for families in crisis***

Young people and their families could be invaluablely served if youth had a safe place to stay while both sides had time to cool off after a disagreement. Many of our clients would not have become court involved or homeless if they and their families had a neutral, safe place to go to mediate their differences, figure out a family member that the youth could stay with, or collaborate with a case manager about long-term placement options. Adolescent Respite Centers provide parents and youth with a safe place for the youth to stay while both parties cool off.

Adolescent Respite Centers exist in other states, proving a safe alternative to calling police during family disputes. Models of these programs include the Haven Community Respite Center in Jersey City and Wind Youth Services in Sacramento, California. New York State legislators have previously called for the creation of respite centers to reduce the impact of the criminal legal system on young people.<sup>7</sup> We encourage the Council to work with your colleagues at the State Legislature, RHY providers, and other stakeholders to establish and fund respite centers

---

<sup>7</sup> Andrew Hevesi and Joseph Lentol, *Opinion: Respite Centers Would Keep Teens Off Streets, Out of Prison*, City & State New York, July 2015, Available at <https://cityandstateny.com/articles/policy/centers-would-keep-teens-off-the-street%2C-out-of-prison.html>



that would be available to provide support to families in crisis—both families that are already court-involved and those who are at risk of becoming so involved.

***Expand funding for specialized adolescent services in public defender offices***

Adolescent attorneys and social workers in public defender offices go beyond the traditional role of defense teams to provide wraparound, age appropriate services for clients in the juvenile justice and adult criminal legal systems. At BDS, our continued goal is to eliminate or reduce any and all interaction young people have with the criminal legal system. Our Adolescent Representation Team maintains contact with our clients during and after their case. Our social workers fill gaps that are not met by other service providers. Each BDS client under the age of 21 is guaranteed to receive social work intervention, such as direct advocacy, advice, and referrals.

BDS' Adolescent Representation Team helps our clients not only resolve their criminal cases, but re-enroll in school, apply for college, find work, secure housing, and connect with social service providers. Increased capacity for specialized adolescent defense would prevent more youth from slipping through the cracks of society and into the criminal legal system.

**Conclusion**

We thank the City Council for the continued attention to the challenges court involved young people face in New York City. Thank you for your time and consideration of this important issue.

If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to Kathleen McKenna, Policy Social Worker, 718-254-0700 ext. 210 or [kmckenna@bds.org](mailto:kmckenna@bds.org).

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 2-12-19

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Sara Hemmeter, Associate Commissioner

Address: 150 William St. NY, NY

I represent: NYC Administration for Children's Services

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 2-12-19

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Felipe Franco, Deputy Commissioner

Address: 150 William St NY, NY

I represent: NYC Administration for Children's Services

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 2-12-19

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Randy Scott

Address: ASST Commissioner for Vulnerable + Special

I represent: Needs Youth

Address: Dept of Youth + Community Development

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 2/12/19

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Hip Hop Artist / Casanova

Address: 411 Broadway, 58th Floor

I represent: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 2/12/19

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Gisela Cuyler

Address: 175 Remsen Street

I represent: Exalt

Address: 175 Remsen Street

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 2-12-19

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Louis Watts Assistant Commissioner

Address: 150 William St., NY, NY

I represent: NYC Administration for Children's Services

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms