



Office of Children and Family Services

ANDREW M. CUOMO
Governor

SHEILA J. POOLE
Acting Commissioner

March 7, 2019

Darlene Ward
Welfare Research Inc.
14 Columbia Circle, Suite 104
Albany, NY 12203

Dear Ms. *Darlene* Ward:

The New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) is pleased to see that the Citizen Review Panels continue to recommend the investment in home visiting programs to support children and families in New York State. OCFS, as you know, oversees the Healthy Families New York program and can attest to its impact on strengthening families and preventing child abuse and maltreatment. Healthy Families New York currently operates 44 programs statewide. In 2018, a total of 5,806 families were served and 72,966 home visits were completed.

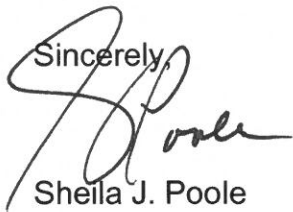
In 2018, OCFS, through the Public Private Partnership request for proposals, provided funding for two additional home visiting models, Parents as Teachers and Parent Child Home programs. This included expansion of the Parent Child Home program to do home visiting in family day care settings and provide information to parents using the day care provider as the conduit. In total four additional home visiting programs were funded. In addition, there is currently another funding opportunity available through the Hoyt Trust Funds request for proposals that can support home visiting programs.

I would also like to note that OCFS has been working on improving the engagement and retention of families by providing trainings, best practice, and tools to assist programs in their engagement of families. OCFS is working with the Department of Health (DOH) on centralized intake pilots in various parts of the state to promote that there is no wrong door for families to become engaged in some type of home visiting program. OCFS will be doing a worker study to look at worker qualities and characteristics that may assist in reducing home visitor turnover, because we know that when a worker stays that the family has developed a relationship with, the family is more likely to continue to be engaged. OCFS is also working at engaging more fathers as we know that they have tremendous influence on the mother's engagement in services.

OCFS expects to receive the findings of the 15-year follow-up study that will be completed by year's end. The findings will assist OCFS in making improvements or enhancements to the HFNY model to better support families and improve overall service delivery.

As noted in our response last year, OCFS fully supports the Panel's recommendation and will continue to look for funding opportunities to expand HFNY, as well as other home visiting programs that enable families to safely care for their children.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Poole', written over the word 'Sincerely,'.

Sheila J. Poole
Acting Commissioner