

SUPPORT THE GOVERNOR'S PROPOSAL TO FUND YDDP, SDPP & RHYA AS PROPOSED; CHILDREN'S CABINET MUST EXAMINE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT AND PREVENTION

The Youth Bureau system needs to be kept intact for all of New York's youth, including hundreds of thousands of high-risk youth. Over the past 2 years, the Youth Development and Delinquency Prevention Program (YDDP) and Special Delinquency Prevention Program (SDPP), and the Runaway and Homeless Youth Program (RHYA) have suffered nearly a 30% reduction in funding. Due to the manner in which these funding streams are allocated, they have been reduced by their annual allocations, therefore at times taking a full annualized hit due to past Aids to Localities reductions.



The Governor responded to a recent US Department of Justice investigation of 4 New York State operated facilities by appointing a Task Force of Juvenile Justice experts to identify reforms. The Task Force report, "Charting a New Course: A Blueprint for Transforming Juvenile Justice in New York State" was issued in December 2009. The report includes numerous strategies and recommendations and the most compelling recommendation was to keep more kids at home and shift to community based services. All the more reason to invest in Youth Development.

The youth bureau system embodies the definition of youth development as an ongoing process in which children and adolescents seek ways to meet their personal and social needs, build life skills and competencies that allow them to be successful and learn how to function effectively in their daily lives in the community. Positive youth development services include, but are not limited to programs that build skills to prepare New York's youth for graduation, work, and civic responsibilities and to prevent them from entering or re-entering the juvenile justice and child welfare systems. Youth Bureaus and their providers offer school drop-out prevention programs, worker readiness and summer jobs, mentors, supports for runaway and homeless youth, pregnant and parenting teens and youth involved with drugs and gangs and leadership training for civic engagement.

LEGISLATIVE ACTION: ANYSYB respectfully recommends the following to assist over 2 million kids in maintaining a quality youth prevention and development system in New York State.

Support the Article VII Bill – The Executive Budget recommendation to fund:

- The Youth Development and Delinquency Prevention Program (YDDP) and Special Delinquency Prevention Program (SDPP), at \$28,243,400, an increase of \$784,567 from SFY 2009-10 and the Runaway Homeless and Youth Program at \$4,711,600, an increase of \$130,933 from SFY 2009-10.



In addition:

- Require the NYS Governor's Children's Cabinet to: examine the current youth development, prevention and intervention system and make recommendations for a system that cost-effectively serves the best interest and needs of the 2 million youth engaged; establishes statewide quality indicators; assures that such funding streams reaches youth in all counties and cities, towns and villages in New York State and formalizes a statewide Youth Development Agenda that can be more formidably linked with other systems of care.
- Upholds the responsibility of the New York State Office of Children and Families Services (OCFS) for system accountability; approval of local plans and mergers; guiding cost/benefit methods and calculations; providing technical assistance, training and capacity building; developing statewide indicators and performance measurement outcomes and conducting resource development work to leverage the state's youth development investment.



RESTORE ALTERNATIVES TO DETENTION/PLACEMENT AND COMMUNITY REINVESTMENT WITH STATE FUNDS; UTILIZE EVIDENCE-BASED ALTERNATIVES

A recent US Department of Justice investigation of four New York State operated juvenile justice facilities resulted in Governor Paterson appointing a Task Force of Juvenile Justice experts to identify recommendations for improving conditions within placement and alternatives to detention. The Task Force report entitled, "Charting a New Course: A Blueprint for Transforming Juvenile Justice Reform in New York" was released in December 2009. The report included recommendations and strategies, including reducing the use of institutional placements. But how can we keep more kids at home and in the community and offer alternatives to detention/ placement to elected judges without ensuring community safety and expert services? In an environment in which over \$10 million in funding for alternatives to detention/ placement is proposed to be cut from the state budget in 2010-11, we cannot.

The ability to link youth and their families with a full range of community based supports and youth development requires the partnership of state and local government with community providers. The Task Force recommends development and expansion of community based alternatives and the redirection of cost savings achieved by reducing reliance on placement into the neighborhoods where the highest numbers of youth in placement live. Yet despite these recommendations, the Governor's budget adds \$18.2 million to fund remediation of the state's OCFS operated facilities, achieves \$3 million in savings by downsizing the state system by 180 beds, but does not expand funding for evidenced based alternatives to detention/ placement. In fact the budget recommends reduction of more than \$15 million in funding of existing alternatives to detention/ placement and Community Reinvestment services.

SERVICE ARRAY: The techniques that have been found to be most effective for youth with conduct disorder, violent acting out and substance abuse problems are also the programs and services that represent the backbone of alternative to detention/ placement programs. The best of these techniques include:

- **Functional Family Therapy and Multisystemic Therapy** – these are two well documented and highly successful family intervention programs for at-risk youth ages 11-18 and their families. For a cost of approximately \$2500-\$5,000 per youth, the interventions can be applied in either clinic or in-home sessions;
- **Day Placement and Day Supervision** – as an alternative to out-of-home placement, youth and families can be offered day placement that include access to outpatient substance abuse treatment and mental health services such as FFT and MST.
- **Positive Youth Development Framework** – any services that are offered as alternatives to detention/ placement must be applied according to positive youth development principles that build upon or enhance the youth and/or family strengths and competencies; this is an essential component of alternative to detention/ placement programs.



FUNDING MODELS: Nationally, the most effective financing models of alternative to detention/ placement programs include Illinois and 222, where the state provides 65% reimbursement for alternatives to detention/ placement services and local governments must provide 35% of the cost.

RECOMMENDATION:

Given the budget crisis in New York, the \$3 million in state savings estimated by the 180 bed closings should be used as the state's 65% contribution in 2010 and should be increased by a minimum of \$7 million, or the equivalent of 65% of the state savings achieved through reduction in state operated costs and the state share of secure and non-secure placements. This methodology allows reinvestment of state funding into alternatives to detention/ placement. **Reinvestment eligible services should include evidence-based alternatives. Allocations should be provided to communities proportionately by the number of out-of-home youth placements.**



RESTORE TANF FUNDING FOR SUMMER YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

Thousands of New York State teens are positively impacted each year with the help of a summer job. Data shows that a summer job not only generates income for local communities as spending is invested back into the community, but the work experience gives summer youth workers an alternative to street corners where crime and drugs are often prevalent. Moreover, because of the worsening economic environment, a summer job provides help to households where, in many cases, a family is receiving public assistance. The problem is especially alarming in low-income, minority communities where the jobless rate for high school students is hovering near 90 percent.

According to an analysis released by Andrew Sum, director of Northeastern University's Center for Labor Market Studies, employment rates among teenagers have dropped nearly four times faster than the rate among adults since 2000. According to the study, it is especially bleak for low-income black students; only 4 in 100 found work this past fall.

This issue is vital in African American communities where underemployment and high unemployment is often the most severe. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, overall teen unemployment has now climbed to 22.7 percent and, in fact, the

unemployment rate for teenagers is currently the highest rate since the country began keeping records (just after World War II).

The lack of jobs for our young people puts them at risk in multiple ways. Adolescents and young adults that have difficulty finding employment become discouraged, and many will stop trying. Those that give up are then unable to develop important job skills, which makes it likely that they will remain unemployed (or underemployed) well into their adult years. In addition, studies show that individuals that are unable to find jobs in their early years have higher rates of dropping out of school and are more likely to commit crimes. These risks paint a bleak future for our youth if summer employment funding is eliminated. An investment in teen summer jobs is an investment in our country's future.



RECOMMENDATION:

We urge you to support Summer Youth Employment through the continuation of state funding and restoration in TANF funding. The removal of over \$200 million in TANF funds from critical community based programs to close the current budget gap is unacceptable to the most needy of children and families. We specifically seek the restoration of \$35 million in Summer Youth Employment.

RESTORE TANF FUNDING FOR ADVANTAGE AFTER SCHOOL

Advantage After School, which is administered by the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS), is a high-quality program that provides critical services to New York's children and families especially during these tough economic times. The SFY 2009-10 appropriation, as reduced in the 2009 Deficit Reduction Plan (DRP) was \$28,166,937, funded from State and TANF funds. The SFY 2010-11 recommendation is to completely fund the program with State funds totaling \$17,255,300. This would result in a decrease of \$11 million from the revised SFY 2009-10 appropriation. TANF Federal funds have been eliminated in SFY 2010-11 to support this program.

During the 2008-2009 school year, Advantage served almost 24,000 students state-wide through 271 programs and provided employment for up to 2,000 people. Demand in New York for these programs already outstrips supply. This summer, the Advantage After School Request for Proposal only awarded 78 contracts from a pool of more than 250 applicants, with many winning proposals receiving far less than they requested. And, according to a recent report by the Afterschool Alliance, 46% (1,114,924) of all New York children not in after-school would be likely to participate if an after-school program were available in the community, regardless of their current care arrangement.

As a result of this proposed loss in funding, we anticipate that after-school programs will be forced to reduce the number of kids served, the number of staff employed at these sites and will ultimately close. Parents who depended on a high-quality, daily programming will no longer have a safe place for their children to go while they are working.

As you know, after-school programs provide a safe and supervised environment for New York's children and support the needs of working parents especially in tough economic times. These programs also provide much-needed employment opportunities for community members.

Please remember the following statistics as you enter budget negotiations:

- **After-school programs reduce the high school dropout rate.** Kids who attend high quality elementary and middle school after-school programs are less likely to drop out of high school than non-participants.
- **After-school programs help prevent crime, drug use, and teen pregnancy.** Violent juvenile crime triples during the hours from 3:00 to 8:00 PM, and it is during these same hours that children face the most serious danger of becoming victims of crime. Law enforcement organizations endorse high-quality afterschool programs because they help reduce violence, theft, vandalism, gang activity, and other adolescent crimes.
- **After-school programs reduce risk behaviors.** Consistent participation in quality after-school programs helps reduce youth experimentation with alcohol and other dangerous drugs, and reduces the risk of teen pregnancy. A survey of New York teenagers conducted by Fight Crime: Invest in Kids found that teens unsupervised afterschool were four times as likely to have smoked cigarettes, three times as likely to have had sex, and four times as likely to have used drugs than teens who were supervised.
- **After-school programs are cost-effective.** Every dollar invested in high-quality afterschool programs saves taxpayers roughly \$3, according to a study by the Rose Institute at Claremont McKenna College. Factoring in benefits from crime reduction raises that savings to \$8-\$12 for every dollar invested in an at-risk child.

RECOMMENDATION:

We urge you to support Advantage Afterschool through the continuation of state funding and restoration of TANF funding. The removal of over \$200 million in TANF funds from critical community-based programs to close the current budget gap is unacceptable to the most needy of children and families. We specifically seek continuation of state funding and the restoration of \$11 million in Advantage Afterschool.

