

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON YOUTH SERVICES JOINTLY WITH  
COMMITTEE ON JUVENILE JUSTICE

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November 13, 2018  
Start: 1:14 p.m.  
Recess: 3:24 p.m.

HELD AT: Committee Room - City Hall

B E F O R E: DEBORAH L. ROSE  
Chairperson

ANDY L. KING  
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Justin L. Brannan  
Margaret S. Chin  
Mathieu Eugene  
Andy L. King  
Inez D. Barron  
Mark Gjonaj  
Robert F. Holden  
Mark Levine  
Bill Perkins  
Jumaane D. Williams

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

Felipe Franco, Deputy Commissioner of Division of Youth and Family, Administration for Children Services, ACS

Charles Barrios Associate Commissioner, Juvenile Justice Programs and Services, Division of Youth and Family Justice, DYFJ

Sara Hemmeter, Associate Commissioner for Community Based Alternatives and Close to Home, Administration for Children's Services, ACS

Tracy Caldron, Deputy Director at NYC Department of Youth & Community Development, DYCD

Daphne Montanez, Assistant Commissioner for Workforce Connect, NYC Department of Youth & Community Development, DYCD

Gisele Castro, Executive Director, Exalt Youth

Geoffrey Golia, Associate Executive Director Getting Out and Staying Out, GOSO

Nancy Ginsburg Director, Adolescent Intervention and Diversion Project, Criminal Practice, Legal Aid

Legal Fellow at Youth Represent (NAME NOT GIVEN)

Alyssa Perrone, Staff Attorney School Justice Project, Advocates for Children

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2 [sound check] [gavel]

3 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: This meeting is now  
4 called to order. We are going to have the vote on  
5 Intro 376-B. Good-good afternoon. Thank you all for  
6 being here. My name is Council Member Debi Rose, and  
7 I'm the Chair of the Committee on Youth Services.  
8 Today, before our joint oversight hearing with  
9 Juvenile Justice, the Committee on Youth Services  
10 will be holding a vote on Intro No. 376-B. This bill  
11 was previously heard on April 26, 2018 by the  
12 Committee on Youth Services in order to receive  
13 valuable feedback from providers, advocates and  
14 youth. After amending the bill, we believe that this  
15 piece of legislation will serve an important function  
16 in helping bullied youth get the resources and  
17 services they truly need. Intro No. 376-B, which was  
18 introduced by Council Member Ritchie Torres, is a Local  
19 Law in relation to educational outreach and materials  
20 regarding bullying prevention, awareness and  
21 resources. This bill would require DYCD to conduct  
22 outreach, informing as many youth as practicable  
23 about the availability of bullying awareness and  
24 prevention resources including those that provide  
25 counseling, mental health resources, mobile texting

3 or Internet chat function-functionality, and  
4 referrals. This outreach is so crucial and vitally  
5 needed that many youth are left disconnected and  
6 unaware that help that they could receive is  
7 available. Outreach-outreach would include DYCD  
8 dissemination resource materials through existing  
9 DYCD programs as well as posting information on  
10 DYCD's website and on other city agency's websites.  
11 In addition, the bill would require that DOE is to  
12 give students information regarding any existing  
13 online portal that is operated by DOE through which  
14 students or parents can report bullying, harassment,  
15 intimidation or discrimination. It is blatant that  
16 New York City strives to be a city where no kid is  
17 bullied. Though we have a ways to go to make this a  
18 reality, Intro 376-B is step in the right direction,  
19 and I urge my fellow Council Members to vote yes on  
20 this bill, and we will begin the vote now

21 CLERK: Matthew DiStefano, Committee  
22 Clerk, Committee on Youth Services. Roll call on  
23 Intro No, 376-B, Chair Rose.

24 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Aye.

25 CLERK: Chin.

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3 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: [off mic] Aye. [on  
4 mic] I vote aye, and can you add me on as a co-  
5 sponsor?

6 CLERK: King.

7 CHAIRPERSON KING: I vote aye.

8 CLERK: By a vote 3 in the affirmative, 0  
9 in the negative and no abstentions, the bill has been  
10 adopted.

11 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Thank you. We will  
12 keep the vote open for about 20 minutes for the other  
13 members to come and vote, and I now turn this over to  
14 Council Member/Chair King.

15 CHAIRPERSON KING: Good afternoon  
16 everyone. I'm Council Member Andy King, Chair of the  
17 Juvenile Justice Committee. Today we're having an  
18 oversight hearing we're holding jointly with Council  
19 Member Debi Rose, who is the chair of the Committee  
20 of Youth and Services. We'll be examining the city's  
21 Reentry Programs for formerly incarcerated and  
22 justice-involved youth. I want to thank everyone who  
23 is here today from the Administration as more  
24 importantly our Council Members who are here today.  
25 We are joined by Council Member Holden, Council  
Member Williams, Council Member Chin, Council Member

3 Rose and Council Member King. One substantial  
4 challenge faced by those operating our Juvenile  
5 Justice System is how to best ensure that young  
6 people are provided with the services and support  
7 necessary to avoid the reoccurrence of anti-social  
8 and unlawful behavior upon their release from  
9 detention and reentry back into society. Because  
10 juveniles are so often vulnerable to stress and peer  
11 pressure, and unless they are equipped with adequate  
12 and support networks, it is relatively easy for them  
13 to lapse back into the same old habits that resulted  
14 in their original arrest. Lack of proper follow-up,  
15 care, support, planning through their re-integration  
16 process generally, greatly increases the likelihood  
17 of youth returning to the problematic behavior that  
18 resulted in their justice involved in the first  
19 place. Thus, it makes it both the juvenile-excuse  
20 me. Thus, it makes sense for both the juvenile and  
21 for society to put in time, resources and genuine  
22 commitment into the rehabilitation process.

23 Aftercare prop-grams for juveniles have been  
24 recognized as essential component to the Juvenile  
25 Justice System's effort to reduce recidivism and  
maintain rehabilitative progress after youth are

3 released from detention. A comprehensive aftercare  
4 program ideally begins during incarceration, and  
5 includes providing evaluation, counseling, education,  
6 therapy and services to prepare or detain or place a  
7 juvenile for successful reintegration into his or her  
8 community. It is critical to long lasting success  
9 that juveniles are then likened to organize within  
10 their own communities for continued intervention and  
11 supervision lasting well after release from the  
12 detention. Today, we look forward to learning in  
13 greater detail about the reentry planning and the  
14 therapy continuing aftercare programs that DYFJ is  
15 providing to young people detained and placed in  
16 their custody as well as how the Close-how the Close  
17 to Home Initiative has brought about more seamless  
18 reentry progress and better aftercare services for  
19 youth following the intention and placement. We  
20 believe that these services are essential, and are  
21 eager to hear how the Administration is assuming and  
22 ensuring the best continuum of care is provided to  
23 justice involve youth particularly as that population  
24 has increased with Raise the Age being implemented  
25 last month. Additionally, as to day we are joined by  
the Committee of Youth Services. We look forward to

3 hearing related programs provided by the city,  
4 Department of Youth and Community Development. With  
5 that being said, I'd like to thank all my staff and all  
6 of the staff of the City Council for putting this  
7 hearing together, and thank you to Council Members,  
8 all of you who are in attendance today. We look  
9 forward to hearing testimony from representatives  
10 from DYFJ, DYCD as well as advocates and non-profits  
11 that have signed up to testify. I will now ask  
12 kindly that the representatives of the Administration  
13 please state their names for the record so that  
14 Committee Counsel can administer the oath.

15 FELIPE FRANCO: Felipe Franco.

16 CHAIRPERSON KING: I'm going to ask you  
17 to pause just for a second. Forgive me because my  
18 co-chair does have a statement she'd like to read for  
19 the record before you take the oath and tell us all  
20 the truthful testimony, all the truthful testimony,  
21 all the truthful testimony that you will deliver  
22 today.

23 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: [laughs] All the  
24 truthful testimony. No, I'm only kidding.  
25 [laughter] Good afternoon. I want to again thank  
you for being here. My name is Council Member Debi

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3 Rose and I'm the Chair of the Committee on Youth  
4 Services. Today, we are conducting an oversight  
5 hearing on reentry programs for formerly incarcerated  
6 youth, and with the Committee on—with the Committee  
7 on Juvenile Justice chaired by my esteemed colleague  
8 Council Member King. I would first like to thank  
9 Speaker Corey Johnson for his commitment to the youth  
10 in New York City. I would also like to thank all of  
11 the young people, the advocates, program providers,  
12 and all those who came to testify today for showing  
13 up to this important hearing. Finally, I would like  
14 to acknowledge my co-chair Council Member King as  
15 well as my colleagues who have joined us today, and  
16 Council Member King already mentioned who they are.  
17 As Council Member King discussed in his opening  
18 statement, formerly incarcerated youth are one of the  
19 most vulnerable populations within the city and  
20 across the nation. Aside from traversing—traversing  
21 the challenges of being a young person, these youth  
22 need to also transition from being incarcerated to  
23 being and active and functional member of society.  
24 Formerly incarcerated youth undergo a sort of dual  
25 transition process with the first being transitioning  
from facility to community, and the second being the

3 transition from adolescents to young adulthood.

4 Thank about those challenges. We all remember when

5 we were young transitioning into adulthood and how

6 scary and hard this time was. Now, think about this

7 in the position of a young person who has been

8 incarcerated and is reentering society. Things can

9 be exponentially tougher for this individual to

10 adequately adapt to regular life. Challenges that

11 Formerly incarcerated youth have when reentering

12 society can include finding employment with a

13 criminal record, health issues including depression,

14 anxiety, behavioral disorders, suicidal ideation, et

15 cetera, and redefining their roles within their

16 families. Many of these youth have not had to

17 interact with people in a professional or courteous

18 manner, and so they need to assimilate back into this

19 mindset, which often is a daunting task. On top of

20 this, they are dealing with the challenges of

21 becoming an adult and growing up emotionally,

22 hormones, peer pressure and all of the rest. Thus,

23 this is the impetus for our hearing today to identify

24 and analyze the available programs that are out there

25 for these youth who are formerly incarcerated or

reentering society. Of particular importance to me

3 is what DYCD is offering this population as well as  
4 the intersection of DYCD within the Juvenile Justice  
5 system. We do know that DYCD generally takes a more  
6 holistic approach to developing a young person or  
7 community by offering programs that include family  
8 support, literacy services, and workforce development  
9 among others. Essentially, when dealing with those  
10 youth that have been incarcerated, these programs can  
11 be categorized as after-care services of which we  
12 look-at which we look to successfully integrate youth  
13 into the surrounding communities. Notably, DYCD  
14 programs include those that are geared towards youth  
15 between the ages of 16 and 24 years who are out of  
16 school and out of work or OSOW who are generally at a  
17 higher risk of incarceration. To serve this  
18 population, DYCD offer and Earn and Intern and Earn.  
19 In addition to these programs, DYCD's young adult  
20 literacy program and the Fatherhood Initiative all  
21 provide the programming and services many youth who  
22 are formerly incarcerated need. During this hearing,  
23 I want to hear what is happening currently within  
24 DYCD, what programs are being funded as well as being  
25 developed to ensure that these youth who are trying  
to start anew have the necessary resources to do so.

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3 I look forward to hearing from those invited to  
4 testify, and would like to thank my staff, Lena  
5 Martin, and the Committee staff Paul Senegal, Kevin  
6 Kotowski, and Michelle Peregrine. Thank you, Chair.

7 LEGAL COUNSEL: Yeah, go ahead and--

8 DEPUTY FRANCO: Felipe Franco.

9 CHAIRPERSON KING: Yeah, ACS.

10 ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER BARRIOS: Charles  
11 Barrios, ACS.

12 ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER HEMMETER: Sarah  
13 Hemmeter, ACS.

14 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER CALDRON: Tracy  
15 Caldron, DYCD.

16 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MONTANEZ: Daphne  
17 Montanez, DYCD.

18 DEPUTY FRANCO: Yes.

19 PANEL MEMBERS: [in unison] Yes.

20 LEGAL COUNSEL: Thank you.

21 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: Good  
22 afternoon, Chair King, Chair Rose and Members of the  
23 Committee on Juvenile Justice and the Committee on  
24 Youth Services. I am Felipe Franco, Deputy  
25 Commissioner for the Division of Youth and Family  
Justice within the Administration for Children's

3 Services. With me today is Charles Barrios,  
4 Associate Commissioner for Juvenile Justice Programs  
5 and Services, and Sara Hemmeter, Associate  
6 Commissioner for Community Based Alternatives and  
7 Close to Home. Thanks for the opportunity to discuss  
8 services and supports that Division of Youth and  
9 Family Justice, our sister agency—sister agencies and  
10 our not-for-profit partners provide for youth and  
11 their transition back to their home communities for  
12 Juvenile Justice facilities. I commend the City  
13 Council as this joint Committee hearing exemplifies  
14 New York City's focus on our national leadership and  
15 integrate in a positive youth development within our  
16 Juvenile Justice System and practices. The Division  
17 of Youth and Family Justice administers a continuum  
18 of Juvenile Justice services, which includes  
19 community based preventive and alternative services  
20 for youth and their families, detention services for  
21 youth who are arrested and awaiting court resolution  
22 and receive extra services through Close to Home for  
23 youth who are adjudicated by the Family Court. Close  
24 to Home placements include residential care and  
25 supervision upon their return to the community on  
aftercare. Admissions to juvenile detention and

1 Close to Home have decreased significantly year after  
2 year. The overall population in detention has  
3 decreased steadily for many years, and declined an  
4 additional 29% from 119 in Fiscal Year 2017 to 85 in  
5 Fiscal Year 2018. Likewise, the number of young  
6 people entering Close to Home placement declined 40%  
7 from 207–227 in Fiscal Year 2017 to only 136 in  
8 Fiscal Year 2018. These decreases are due in large  
9 part to the declining juvenile crime, the used of  
10 evidence based risk assessment instruments, and the  
11 increase in the community based services to help  
12 prevent at-risk youth from ever entering the Juvenile  
13 Justice System. ACS at work in close collaboration  
14 with the Department of Probation, the Mayor's Office  
15 of Criminal Justice and the courts to increase the  
16 use of the Alternative to Detention Programs and we  
17 have worked in partnership with the Department of  
18 Probation to develop Alternative to Placement  
19 Programs to keep young people who do not need to be  
20 in confined, saving their community with the  
21 necessary accountability services and support. Raise  
22 the Age has now given us the opportunity to extend  
23 our entire continuum to older adolescents, and to  
24 continue building on the tremendous work that has  
25

3 been done to transform the Juvenile Justice System in  
4 New York City. I will now turn to Associate  
5 Commissioner Barrios to discuss some of the work done  
6 in our detention facilities to help prepare youth for  
7 discharge successfully back to the community.

8 ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER BARRIOS: Good  
9 afternoon. I am Charles Barrios, Associate  
10 Commissioner for Juvenile Justice Programs and  
11 Services in DYFJ. ACS operates two secure detention  
12 facilities, Crossroads and Horizon, and oversees a  
13 network of smaller non-profit provider operated non-  
14 secure detention residences throughout the city. As  
15 Deputy Commissioner Franco noted, the average length  
16 of stay for most youth in detention is very short,  
17 and the timing of each youth's release is  
18 unpredictable, up to the Family Court or Youth part.  
19 So DYFJ has deliberately developed a robust menu of  
20 services and programming for our young people that is  
21 designed not only to enrich their experience in care  
22 by helping the build skills and competencies, but to  
23 also expose them to interests and opportunities that  
24 they may wish to pursue when the court discharges  
25 them from ACS custody. All youth in detention receive  
education, healthcare, mental health services,

3 recreational activities and case management for the  
4 duration of their stay. An important part of the  
5 case manager's job is parent engagement. This  
6 includes establishing contact with family such as  
7 parents and guardians. At intake arranging visits,  
8 confirming the youth's authorized call list and  
9 keeping parents informed about their child's  
10 wellbeing during detention. Case managers assist in  
11 facilitating youth's contact with their attorneys.  
12 Case managers also collaborate with Close to Home  
13 Permanency Planning Specialists and Friends of the  
14 Island Academy mentors to support the transition  
15 planning as well as aftercare efforts. These efforts  
16 help prepare both the family and the young person for  
17 the youth's return to the community, and his or her  
18 family. The New York City Department of Education's  
19 District 79 Passages Academy operates a full time  
20 educational program across our entire Juvenile  
21 Justice residential continuum with schools for youth  
22 in detention and Close to Home. We worked closely  
23 with DOE to develop internships, new career  
24 certificate programs and better access to vocational  
25 schools. DOE has invested in transition specialists  
typically social workers and counselors who

3 participated in the development of a comprehensive  
4 discharge plan prior to release and support youth in  
5 their transition back to the right community school.  
6 Transition Specialists develop transition plans with  
7 students including short-term goals and most  
8 importantly, their immediate next step after leaving  
9 Passages Academy. The specialists engage with  
10 students and their families about the key decision to  
11 either return to their previous school or to transfer  
12 to a different school. ACS has opened our detention  
13 facilities to a variety of community based  
14 organizations, faith based groups and mentors to help  
15 connect our youth to supports and networks in the  
16 community before their released from our care. DYFJ  
17 and the Department of Youth and Community Development  
18 collaborate with an extensive array of partners to  
19 provide a range of recreational programs and services  
20 to justice involved youth in our facilities. Through  
21 positive activities and strong roll models, we hope  
22 to develop the skills young people need to redirect  
23 their lives in a positive direction when they leave  
24 our care. We have vastly expanded our portfolio of  
25 programming and services including our arts and  
enrichment programs, and vocational options to better

3 address the interests of all youth in our system  
4 including the older adolescents. We have partnered  
5 with Friends of the Island Academy to provide  
6 programming and reentry services for young people  
7 housed at Horizon and Crossroads as—as well as with  
8 Center for Community Alternatives to provide  
9 additional programming for youth at Crossroads.  
10 Earlier this year ACS announced that we've expanded  
11 our partnership with Health and Hospitals by building  
12 on the success of the work we've been doing with  
13 Bellevue Hospital Center, and thoughtfully planning  
14 and collaborating with correctional health services  
15 to help manage contracted health services at  
16 Crossroads and Horizon. This ensures that young  
17 people in detention continue to receive high quality  
18 healthcare and serves as an important step toward  
19 ensuring continuity of care for young people  
20 throughout the Juvenile Justice System from detention  
21 through placement and aftercare and beyond and as  
22 needed post-release. I will now turn to my colleague  
23 Associate Commissioner Hemmeter to discuss Close to  
24 Home and the aftercare services both of which prepare  
25 youth to return to their community.

3 ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER HEMMETER: Good

4 afternoon. I am Sara Hemmeter, Associate  
5 Commissioner for Community Based Alternatives and  
6 Close to Home at ACS. If a Family Court judge finds  
7 that a young person committed an—and offense, and at  
8 his disposition finds that the youth needs  
9 rehabilitative services, the judge may order the  
10 youth to be placed in a residential placement program  
11 for a period of time generally 12 or 18 months.  
12 Youth are initially placed in small group home style  
13 set residences throughout the city that are run by  
14 our non-profit provider partners referred to as Close  
15 to Home. There, the youth receive approximately six  
16 to nine months of intensive and therapeutic  
17 programming based on their length of placement as  
18 ordered by the Family Court, and their individualized  
19 needs before returning to the community on aftercare  
20 for the remainder of their placement period. Youth's  
21 behavior, level of participation and personal growth  
22 while in placement are key factors in determining  
23 their date for their stepdown to aftercare. In  
24 addition, youth participate in community passes and  
25 home visits while in residential placement allowing  
DYFJ and provider staff to observe and assess the

3 youth's and their family's readiness for  
4 reunification. DYFJ understands the importance of  
5 empowering families. So, Close to Home uses the ACS  
6 practice of family team conferencing to plan for  
7 youth and—and to ensure that ACS and our providers  
8 respond appropriately to youth's behaviors and  
9 circumstances. Conference Facilitation Specialists  
10 convene planning and support meetings at all critical  
11 program transition points for youth, and when youth  
12 are not following established expectations. The CFS  
13 also ensures that the youth, their families and all  
14 other relevant stakeholders are present at each  
15 meeting. Planning for reentry to the community  
16 begins on the very first day of a young person's  
17 placement in Close to Home, and continues for the  
18 entire duration of the youth's residential placement  
19 and as they transition to aftercare in the community.  
20 Once the Family Court places a young person in Close  
21 to Home, a DYFJ Place-Placement and Permanency  
22 Specialist, or PPS is assigned—immediately assigned  
23 to the youth and maintains regular contact with the  
24 youth throughout the entire duration of the placement  
25 period. To promote continuity of care, each ACS  
Close to Home provider is assigned to a specific

3 youth, and also remains with that youth throughout  
4 the duration of the youth's placement including their  
5 time on aftercare. The PPS and the Close to Home  
6 provider work together to ensure that the youth's  
7 needs are being addressed through appropriate  
8 services both in residential placement and in the  
9 community on aftercare, creating a tighter network of  
10 supervision and ensuring that youth are held  
11 accountable for their actions. After residential  
12 placement most young people return to their home  
13 communities on aftercare for the remainder of the  
14 placement period. The goal of Close to Home  
15 aftercare is to build on the skills youth-youth  
16 acquire while in placement and help develop a network  
17 of supports that will allow them to succeed in the  
18 community. On aftercare, youth and their families  
19 receive individually determined aftercare services  
20 and continue to receive intensive supervision by the  
21 provider agency with support from the assigned PPS.  
22 We partnered with the Department of Probation to  
23 conduct a training for ACS and Close to Home provider  
24 frontline and supervisory staff on best practice  
25 community supervision strategies for youth. In  
addition, youth participate in employment programs in

3 partnership with the New York City Department of  
4 Youth and Community Development, as well as Targeted  
5 Gang Prevention Services through the Cure Violence  
6 Initiative made possible through funding from the New  
7 York City Council. Under the Cure Violence  
8 adaptation for Close to Home, providers connect with  
9 youth who have a history of gun possession or gang  
10 participation. They engage youth in residential  
11 placement through workshops and individualized  
12 meetings, and support youth as they reenter the  
13 community. Cure Violence staff challenges youth's  
14 thinking and serve as positive, credible role models  
15 providing youth with an alternative to a violent  
16 and/or gang involved life. To improve youth outcomes  
17 and public safety, Close to Home has worked closely  
18 with the Department of Probation to implement the  
19 needs, Risk Responsivity framework, or an R&R  
20 Framework, a best practice in Juvenile Justice. R&R  
21 uses a validated risk and needs assessment to drive  
22 case planning and ensure that services are based on  
23 the youth's assessed needs. Close to Home providers  
24 create individually designed service plans for each  
25 youth to target behaviors that are likely to result  
in subsequent offenses. For example, youth with

3 negative peer relationships or who struggle  
4 appropriately, struggle—structure the leisure time,  
5 may be connected to community based organizations  
6 such as a YMCA where they can participate in  
7 constructive youth development activities with  
8 positive peers. Similarly, youth with family  
9 relationship or parenting—parenting needs may be  
10 connected to evidence based services and youth with  
11 education or with—or vocational needs will receive  
12 services specifically tailored to support their  
13 success in school or work. As a city, it is  
14 imperative that we all work to ensure our youth have  
15 the tools and supports they need to become successful  
16 adults, and DYJ is committed to supporting youth,  
17 families and communities to achieve this goal. In  
18 the summer of 2018, DYJ announced contract awards for  
19 the Mentoring and Advocacy Program, MAP, to four  
20 providers in Brooklyn, Manhattan, Queens and the  
21 Bronx. MAP is a new community based program that is  
22 designed to support youth by providing them with  
23 mentors and advocates with a focus on school  
24 engagement, education and workforce assistance.  
25 Services began on November 1<sup>st</sup> and are available to  
any youth with Justice System involvement including

3 those who are no longer in the system. I June of  
4 2017, ACS opened a Family Support Center in the South  
5 Bronx, which provides a multi-service one-stop space  
6 for youth and their families. I would like to thank  
7 Chair King and the members of the Juvenile Justice  
8 Committee for visiting the center over the summer,  
9 and learning about the array of programs and services  
10 we offer there. As we discussed during the  
11 committee's visit, the Bronx Family Support Center  
12 houses—houses DYFJ's Family Assessment Program, the  
13 Juvenile Justice Initiative, and the Close to Home  
14 Initiative, and enables families with Justice System  
15 involvement to have many of their service needs met  
16 in one centralized location. However, services at  
17 the Bronx Family Support Center are not limited to  
18 families with Justice System involvement, and are  
19 open to anyone in the community. DYFJ partners with  
20 Community Connections for Youth to provide Workforce  
21 Development, parenting groups, housing assistance,  
22 and education workshops, and plans to add Yoga  
23 classes to the public in the future. The space is  
24 designed to be shared with the whole community  
25 welcoming everyone including those whose children are  
not at risk or court involved. The Bronx location is

3 presently the only family support center in the city,  
4 and we are planning to open a Queens Center in 2020.  
5 Thank you for the opportunity to discuss the supports  
6 that ACS, our provide partners and our sister  
7 agencies provide for youth and their families in the  
8 community. New York City's multi-agency focus on  
9 building competencies and supports for youth is  
10 commendable, and often emulated by other cities and  
11 jurisdictions across the state and the nation. As  
12 always, we are happy to work with the committee in  
13 our continuing efforts to improve the system and  
14 services for the city's Justice involved youth, and  
15 we are happy to take your questions.

16 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Thank you. Before we  
17 go on, I'd like to resume the—the vote.

18 CLERK: Committee on Youth Services.  
19 Continuation of roll call on Intro 376-B. Council  
20 Member Eugene.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: I vote aye.

22 CLERK: Council Member Brannan.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNAN: Aye.

24 CLERK: The final vote on this item 5 in  
25 the affirmative, 0 in the negative and no  
abstentions.

3 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Thank you, and I am  
4 now going to close the vote for Intro 347-B.

5 [background comments] What? I'm sorry. 376-B.

6 [gavel] Okay.

7 CHAIRPERSON KING: I'd like to thank the  
8 Administration. [background comments] DYCD. Well,  
9 you were at the party. You're here. So what's up?

10 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER CALDRON: We're here.  
11 We're ready.

12 CHAIRPERSON KING: You all want to share  
13 something before with us before we go to questions.

14 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER CALDRON: I want to  
15 share something first.

16 CHAIRPERSON KING: Oh, you have  
17 testimony?

18 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER CALDRON: Yes, we do.

19 CHAIRPERSON KING: Alright, we're all  
20 ears.

21 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER CALDRON: Alrighty.

22 [laughter] Good afternoon, Chair Rose and Chair King  
23 and members of the Committees of Youth Services and  
24 Juvenile Justice. I am Tracy Caldron, Assistant  
25 Commissioner for COMPASS after school programs at the  
New York City Department of Youth and Community

3 Development, and I'm joined by Daphne Montanez,  
4 Assistant Commissioner for Workforce Connect. Thank  
5 you for inviting DYCD to testify today on reentry  
6 programs for Youth. DYCD supports New York City  
7 youth and their families by funding a wide range of  
8 high quality youth and community development  
9 programs. We strive to meet the needs of New York  
10 City's youth in our programs, and that includes youth  
11 who are or have been involved in the Juvenile of  
12 Criminal Justice systems. DYCD currently funds three  
13 after school programs for youth in secure and non-  
14 secure detention facilities. Two—two of these  
15 operate in the Department of Education's District 79  
16 Alternative Schools: Bronx Hope and Belmont, and  
17 serves 65 youth in non-secure detention and placement  
18 and overseen by the Administration for Children's  
19 Services. The third program operates at Crossroads  
20 secure detention, which serves 60 youth including  
21 some who have been transferred from the Horizon  
22 facility in the Bronx. These three programs are  
23 provided by Center for Community Alternatives and  
24 Sheltering Arms. Our programs served 2,627 youth in  
25 physical years 2016 through 2018. The youth served  
range in ages from 11 to 22 although more than half

3 are ages 16 and 17. The programs in District 79 and  
4 in Secure Detention include enrichment activities  
5 such as Creative and Visual Arts, STEM, Literacy and  
6 Leadership Development, which teaches you social  
7 responsible behaviors. The programs also include  
8 physical activity and healthy living such as sports,  
9 dance and Yoga. They work with expert consultants  
10 and subcontractors including Theater of the  
11 Oppressed, the Good Dog Foundation, Better Youth  
12 Fitness, and the Community Connections for Youth  
13 Mentoring. The programs are offered 12 hours per  
14 week, over a 36-week school year. Many of these  
15 programs have developed methods to connect with  
16 participants after their departure, their shared  
17 information about internship opportunities, supported  
18 participants through court appearances and hosted  
19 activities promoting career development. Overall the  
20 comprehensive model is intended to help develop life  
21 skills in a targeted way to youth involved in the  
22 Justice System. Daphne Montanez, Assistant  
23 Commissioner for Workforce Connect will now discuss  
24 DYCD's Youth Workforce Development Programs.

25 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER MONTANEZ: Good  
afternoon. DYCD's employment programs help youth

3 between the ages of 14 and 24 gain work experience  
4 and further their education. Our programs are  
5 designed to consider barriers to employment faced by  
6 youth, including involvement in the Justice System.  
7 The Summer Youth Employment Program, which served  
8 75,000 youth in 2018, allocates most of its jobs  
9 through a lottery system. However, the SYEP  
10 Vulnerable youth option provides slots outside of the  
11 lottery system that are reserved for youth who are  
12 justice-involved, homeless or have run away from home  
13 or who are in foster care or ACS preventative  
14 programs. We work closely with ACS, the Department  
15 of Probation, and the Department of Homeless Services  
16 to recruit youth for this option. In summer 2018,  
17 SYEP provided jobs to 1,527 justice-involved youth  
18 through the vulnerable youth option, and an  
19 additional 256 who enrolled through the lottery, and  
20 identified themselves as having involvement in the  
21 Justice System. The Intern and Earn Program formerly  
22 known as the Young Adult Internship Program or YIP,  
23 is a Workforce Development Program targeting young  
24 adults between the ages of 16 and 24 who are not  
25 working and not in school, and includes a combination  
of counseling, professional development workshops and

short-term paid internships of up to 300 hours. It operates in three 12-week long cohorts per year. In Fiscal Year 2016 through 2018, the program served 353 court involved youth or about 7% of participants. The Intern and Learn Plus Program now entering its third year is an initiative specifically for youth who are currently or formerly receiving foster care of Juvenile Justice Services through ACS. This specialized program includes intensive case management with smaller case load providing more time to coordinate services with other partners. Each participant's progress is shared with ACS case workers and may be used to advocate for closure of that participant's legal case. In the two years the program has operated, it has served 53 youth who were referred from the Juvenile Justice System. They comprise about 25% of the participants in Intern and Earn Plus. The federally funded program Train and Earn formerly known as the Out of School Youth Program are OSY is also aimed at youth between the ages of 16 to 24 who are not in school and now working. The program includes occupational skills training in high demand industry sectors including healthcare, food service, construction, information

1 technology and retail, work readiness training and  
2 career exploration, high school equivalency  
3 preparation and basic skills instruction, employment  
4 and college placement assistance and work experience  
5 including paid and unpaid internships and on-the-job  
6 training and job shadowing. Participants receive  
7 comprehensive supportive services including case  
8 management, assistance with housing, childcare,  
9 healthcare and legal challenges as well as life  
10 skills training such as financial literacy, health  
11 and nutrition awareness, healthy relationships and  
12 parenting skills. The program also includes 12  
13 months of follow-up services after completion. In  
14 the last five years, 103 youth disclosed at the point  
15 of enrollment that they were considered offenders  
16 according to the federal definition for this program,  
17 which includes adults and juveniles who have been  
18 subject to any stage of the Criminal Justice System  
19 and who require assistance in overcoming barriers to  
20 employment resulting from a record of arrests or  
21 conviction. Because these participants require  
22 additional assistance in entering or re-entering the  
23 workforce, DYCD has contracted with Youth Represent,  
24 an organization that provides both individual legal  
25

3 services and Know Your Rights workshops to Train and  
4 Earn participants. Youth Represent assists  
5 participants in researching and correcting their  
6 criminal history information in their records so that  
7 potential employers do not receive misinformation.  
8 They advise participants on employment discrimination  
9 as well as other legal areas that can affect a  
10 participant's ability to maintain employment such  
11 eviction and family court matters. Collectively,  
12 this representation minimizes the barriers to jobs,  
13 education, housing and family stability that  
14 participant's may face. Youth Represent also  
15 provides technical assistance training to staff at  
16 contracted provider organizations. Our main service  
17 areas for justice-involved youth are COMPASS and  
18 Workforce Connect, but our other program areas also  
19 strive to meet the needs of participant youth who  
20 have involvement with the Justice System. The Young  
21 Adult Literacy Program or YALP, is aimed at  
22 disconnected youth who lack the reading, writing  
23 and/or mathematic skills to be ready to enroll in a  
24 high school equivalency test preparation program.  
25 YALP is designed for youth who are not working and  
not in school ages 16 through 24 and who are reading

1 at the 4<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> Grade level? In addition to  
2 basic literacy skills instruction, participants  
3 receive comprehensive case management services. Last  
4 year more than 100 participants in YALP identified  
5 themselves as Court-Involved Youth. About half of  
6 these youth were served through a contract at the  
7 Fortune Society, and organization whose mission is to  
8 support successful reentry from incarceration and  
9 promote alternatives to incarceration through an  
10 array of services that include education, employment,  
11 substance use treatment and benefit application  
12 assistance. DYCD funds services for Runaway and  
13 Homeless Youth that includes comprehensive case  
14 management. DYCD providers operate drop-in centers  
15 and residential programs. Participants develop  
16 individualized service plans that consider their  
17 particular needs. Programs also include life skills  
18 components to assist participants in transitioning to  
19 independence. DYCD's Fatherhood Program includes an  
20 option that is specifically aimed at fathers with  
21 prior involvement in the court system. Programs help  
22 non-custodial father address six core areas:  
23 Parenting Skills Development; Effective Co-Parenting;  
24 Employment and Education; Child Support; Child's  
25

3 Education and Wellbeing; and Visitation and  
4 Placement. The programs served more than 1,000  
5 fathers last year, and it's successful in helping  
6 increase parental engagement and financial  
7 responsibility for their children. Last year, 43% of  
8 participants in the Fatherhood program reported some  
9 prior involvement with the court system. In addition  
10 to services provided to youth, DYCD engages with  
11 other government agencies and relevant stakeholders.  
12 DYCD is the home of the Interagency Coordinating  
13 Council on Youth or ICC an interagency body that  
14 includes city agencies that work with young people  
15 including ACS, the New York City Police Department,  
16 the New York Public Library, the Department of Parks  
17 and Recreation and many others. The ICC hosts a work  
18 group on court involved youth that meets regularly to  
19 discuss the particular needs of this population.  
20 Last year the Worker published a resource directory  
21 entitled *Coming Home: Transitioning Back Into the*  
22 *Community*. It was designed with the input of young  
23 people and includes information about resources for  
24 youth leaving detention, including housing, practical  
25 assistance, legal rights, drug and alcohol treatment  
and job searches. The Guide has been circulated to

3 youth in the custody of ACS and their parents, in  
4 public libraries and through the Law Department,  
5 Department of Cultural Affairs, and the Human  
6 Resources Administration. The document is available  
7 for download on DYCD's website. Thank you for  
8 inviting DYCD to discuss our commitment to serving  
9 youth involved in the criminal and Juvenile Justice  
10 Systems. We will be happy to answer the committee's  
11 questions.

12 CHAIRPERSON KING: Thank you all for your  
13 testimony this afternoon. We've been joined by  
14 Council Member Mark Levine and Council Member Mark  
15 Gjonaj, part of the Juvenile Justice Committee.  
16 Thank you for joining us today, and—and Council  
17 Member Perkins from Manhattan. Harlem in the house.  
18 I want to say thank you all for coming to today's  
19 committee hearing, and we're going to have a  
20 conversation here with a few questions, and again, I  
21 started saying—taking the oath of truthful. So,  
22 let's just jump into it. You know, one thing I will  
23 say, I thank you all because every time you have to  
24 testify it sounds really great. The gravy is good on  
25 the potatoes. Love the way in here it sound on our  
ears, but I want to dive into some questions to get

3 an opportunity to find out what's really-what's real.  
4 We've been through-we've walked down this road  
5 before. I say it from a perspective of sitting  
6 before a number of people in hearings and asking  
7 questions, getting answers only to find out they  
8 weren't totally accurate. So, I want to jump in and  
9 find out what's really happening. You know, the  
10 white and black sounds good, but I want to know how  
11 is all this stuff working? We have young people in  
12 the system who are relying on us to help them get it  
13 right. So, while we have programs in place, the  
14 first thing I'd like to know it would be nice in the  
15 future when we have these hearings that we actually  
16 have someone who is experiencing all the programs  
17 that you say you're delivering because we only truly  
18 know the effectiveness if the person is-is working  
19 for me. You know, the adults can put this on a piece  
20 of paper, but the 16-year-old, 17-year-old sitting in  
21 the room trying to understand whose reading at-as  
22 your testimony says, you have 14 and 16-year-olds who  
23 are reading at third-grade level. What do we do with  
24 those individuals who are not reading up to par? How  
25 do they digest the programs and the materials that  
you're giving to them if they're not reading at a-at

3 a fourth—an eleventh grade level and they're 16 and  
4 17 years old? How does the information, how are  
5 those programs actually being effective dealing with  
6 that individual is my first question. The second  
7 thing: What other challenges are you having in  
8 delivering these projects—these programs? Third  
9 question is how are the people who are receiving  
10 these programs telling you whether or not it's  
11 working for them or it's not working for them? The  
12 fourth question I have to you is that when you're  
13 reaching out to young people who are interacting—  
14 getting ready to go back into society, are they going  
15 back into the same communities that they came out of?  
16 You said in your testimony that they would be going  
17 back and probably the gang is still there. The bad  
18 elements are still there. The story has not changed  
19 from the time they left and they came back into—into  
20 the system. What kind of outreach are we engaged  
21 with people that you know that are going to go back  
22 and back into having communications what I'm dealing  
23 with? How are we interacting with the outside world  
24 that they have to go back in before they go into the  
25 outside world? I'm going to stop right there because

3 I think that's enough for right now. [pause] Anyone?

4 [pause]

5 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: You had four  
6 questions. Let me see if I got them. The first one  
7 has to do with literacy and how young people can be  
8 prepared to manage when they're reading at the lower  
9 grade level. The second one has to be the challenges  
10 of delivering services for these populations. The  
11 third one how we plan for return to the community,  
12 and I didn't get the fourth one.

13 CHAIRPERSON KING: The fourth one is how  
14 are you engaged with the community before they go  
15 back into the community? Because if Maleek has to go  
16 back in the same environment where gangs are--

17 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO:  
18 [interposing] Yes.

19 CHAIRPERSON KING: --do we go into the  
20 streets to find out what's going on in the streets?

21 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: Uh-hm.

22 CHAIRPERSON KING: I mean it's actually  
23 being on the ground and not just being inside the  
24 system because the system has got to extend into the  
25 community.

3 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: So, I'm  
4 going—I'm going to begin with the fourth one because  
5 that's what—we do in aftercare. I think it's  
6 important to keep in mind that New York City is  
7 unique nationally, that actually young people are  
8 actually close to home. So, while most of the  
9 jurisdiction have to actually kind of prepare a young  
10 person to return home three hours away. Like, you're  
11 in Chicago, you would go to one of the facilities  
12 three hours away from the city. In New York City as  
13 Hemmeter mentioned, young people actually are earning  
14 right to get home, and they actually do that through  
15 a series of family-in conferencing, and actually by  
16 the ability of being able to go home for home visits  
17 where they actually have to come back, and  
18 demonstrate that they actually are setting up a new  
19 network of peer relationships, and places to go to  
20 that are positive as you were speaking. One of the  
21 things that actually we have in New York City that is  
22 actually to it, is that because of the City Council  
23 we got funding to develop an adaptation of Cure  
24 Violence. So, we actually have credible messengers  
25 that work with young people in detention and in close  
to home helping them navigate before they get home

3 how to deal with the negative influence of gun  
4 affiliation and gun violence. So those things are  
5 actually something really unique to us in New York  
6 City where young people can actually be practicing  
7 their behavior before they're finally discharged and  
8 then getting home. And I think it's to your point we  
9 need to make sure that it is not just about what we  
10 do in the facility, it's how we prepared in the  
11 network of support when they get home and back to  
12 their community.

13 CHAIRPERSON KING: Okay, that's and it's  
14 the fourth and we'll go through 1, 2 and 3 now.

15 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: Yes. I mean  
16 I think the folks from DYCD could answer better on  
17 literacy and service than I can.

18 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER MONTANEZ: So, as  
19 I mentioned in the testimony, we administer the Young  
20 Adult Literacy Program targeting young people 16 to  
21 24 years of age with low literacy and numeracy skills  
22 between the 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade reading level.

23 Additionally through a federally funded program our  
24 Train and Earn Program. We also provide young people  
25 with basic skills instruction and high school  
equivalency preparation there as well, and throughout

3 all of our Workforce Development Programs, there's a  
4 strong element of case management, and support  
5 services that are provided to young people. So, if  
6 additional supports are needed either through  
7 literacy or to help to stabilize them, whether it be  
8 an issue an issue with housing, childcare, or even  
9 mental health services, our providers are equipped to  
10 do those assessments and work closely with our  
11 participants in connecting them to the services that  
12 they need the most.

13 CHAIRPERSON KING: Okay. So, let me—I'm—  
14 I'm going to throw a question back at all of you  
15 again. When it comes to literacy, and you've said a  
16 lot, and the only thing I want to know is—you can  
17 answer this. How many young people come through you  
18 who have literacy problems, and how have we been—what  
19 kind of success rate have we had? Because we didn't  
20 offer a whole host of things, but if my literacy  
21 level doesn't encourage my confidence because I don't  
22 still know how to read, all these other programs  
23 means absolutely nothing to me. I'm still not—I'm  
24 still in the land of frustration. So, I need to know  
25 what kind of success rate that we're having with all

3 these programs especially with our young people who  
4 have literacy problems.

5 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER MONTANEZ:

6 Alright, so through the Young Adult Literacy Program  
7 in Fiscal Year 18, we served over 500 young people  
8 and 75% of the students enrolled saw some-  
9 demonstrated educational gains. I'm sorry. 75% of  
10 enrolled students were post-tested, and 55% of those  
11 post-tested demonstrated an educational gain of at  
12 least one grade level at both reading and math.

13 CHAIRPERSON KING: I'm 16 and I got one  
14 grade level. So, if I'm third grade I moved up  
15 fourth grade. Okay. Am I-am I-am I assessing that  
16 right what you just-am I-is that my-is my conclusion  
17 right? What would you assess that?

18 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER MONTANEZ: So,  
19 what I would say is that for the youth within the  
20 program there's a varied array of literacy levels  
21 where they're fourth grade through sixth grade. Some  
22 may make great gains and reached higher grade levels.  
23 May up to the ninth grade level while those on the  
24 fourth grade side may take a bit more time to  
25 increase grade levels.

3 CHAIRPERSON KING: So did I—did I hear  
4 you say 75%?

5 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER MONTANEZ: 75% of  
6 enrolled students were post-tested in the program and  
7 55% of those post-tested demonstrated an educational  
8 gain of at least one grade level.

9 CHAIRPERSON KING: What happens to those  
10 who didn't even meet the 55 because in school 55 is  
11 still failing. So, what does that mean for the other  
12 who are below 55%?

13 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER MONTANEZ: So, I—I  
14 must say that YALP is not within my personal  
15 portfolio. I'd be happy to get back to you with more  
16 specifics around those outcomes.

17 CHAIRPERSON KING: Okay, I'd—I'd  
18 appreciate that answer because I've been here today.  
19 Sometimes we do a whole lot of stuff that's up here,  
20 but if you don't take care of the basic foundation,  
21 none of this really matters. So, if a young person  
22 can't read, they can't understand. Ego, frustration,  
23 all kinds of other emotions kick in because they  
24 didn't understand what's going on in their  
25 environment, and when they don't understand, then  
that's when their behaviors kick in. So, sometimes

3 we have a tendency as—and I come from a perspective  
4 of being a youth developer for 20 years knowing that  
5 a system sometimes is necessary because the system is  
6 protecting the system, and it's supposed to really  
7 hit in the core what the problem is with the child.  
8 So, that's why I'm asking these questions. I need to  
9 know if the system is track to save lives or the  
10 system is just saying we're doing some work. I'm  
11 going to stop right there. I'm going pass it over to  
12 my chair and anybody else who has any questions right  
13 now to continue this conversation.

14 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: I want to thank you  
15 for your testimony today, and I'm interested in the  
16 interagency cooperation and what relationship exists  
17 between DYCD and the DYFJ, and does DYCD interact  
18 directly with DYFJ and/or the Juvenile Justice  
19 System, and at what level is this relationship?  
20 What—what level is this correspondence happening?

21 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER MONTANEZ: So, we  
22 partner with—with all of the services—all of the  
23 agencies in the city that serve you through the ICC,  
24 and in the Workforce Development Portfolio, we work  
25 closely with out partners on several of our programs.  
One of them is the SYEP Vulnerable Youth Option,

3 which serves the young people who are either justice  
4 involved, Runaway and Homeless, foster care, in  
5 foster care or receiving ACS preventative services or  
6 placed in with our partners at ACS Department of  
7 Probation, and the Department of Homeless Services on  
8 recruiting young people for this option. This is  
9 outside of the lottery, and so any young person who  
10 is job ready can be served through this vulnerable  
11 youth option. Additionally, we work with ACS on the  
12 Intern and Earn Plus Program, which serves young  
13 people who are receiving foster care services or in  
14 the Juvenile Justice service.

15 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Is that a direct  
16 referral or a self-self-identify?

17 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER MONTANEZ: So, we  
18 do receive referrals from our partnering agency. Our  
19 providers are also on the ground working with-in  
20 their local communities with partnering organizations  
21 to recruit young people for these options.

22 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: And-and how many young  
23 people do you-have you served through this direct  
24 pipeline from direct referral from DYFJ?

25 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER MONTANEZ: So,  
overall in the Summer Youth Employment Program, the

3 Vulnerable Youth Program, we served 1,527 youth who  
4 were identified as being Justice involved, and—  
5 [pause]

6 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: And that's through  
7 direct referral not young people who self-identified?

8 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER MONTANEZ: So,  
9 that—that is actually—that includes both referrals  
10 from our agency partners and provider recruited  
11 participants as well, and I will have to get back to  
12 you with the precise number from ACS and the  
13 agencies.

14 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: But chair—  
15 chairwoman to your point, I mean every—every six  
16 months before the summer both agencies work closely  
17 together to do two things: Ensure that young people  
18 who are in detention can get a summer job, and I  
19 think we have a unique model where actually people  
20 who are in Horizon or Crossroads can actually start  
21 working Summer Youth Employment while at the  
22 facility, and if by chance they get distracted,  
23 continue the job in their job in the community, and  
24 in Close to Home, we ensure that 100% of all the  
25 youth who are in aftercare are going to get to Summer

3 Youth Employment of summer school, and we do that  
4 every summer for the last five years.

5 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: The Council Member  
6 needs to ask a question.

7 CHAIRPERSON KING: I'm just going to make  
8 a statement for the record because I have to leave.  
9 Forgive me. I apologize. I just got to manage  
10 something else, but I'm just going to ask because  
11 there was a song by James Brown: *Talking Loud and*  
12 *Saying Nothing*. I don't want us to be in a hearing  
13 where we're talking loud and not saying anything  
14 that's going to help the lives of our young people,  
15 and I want us to be real clear, whatever this mission  
16 is, if the answers don't really help a young person,  
17 let's figure out how do we get the real answers and  
18 the real progress and real program that does help.  
19 If we programs that aren't delivered, we got to—we've  
20 got to really address those programs not just to say  
21 we're doing work from 9:00 to 5:00, but they're not  
22 helping. You know, we—we come here with stats or we  
23 don't have stats, but the young people who are in  
24 these facilities still rely on us to get them right.  
25 So, we've got 14 and 15-year-olds who are still  
trying to figure out lives. If the—it the counselors

3 are there and need help to help them or the kids need  
4 additional stuff. I'm asking you all from time to  
5 time we have done it because I haven't heard the  
6 answer yet, find out from the young people in the  
7 system what do they also need to help them get to a  
8 place where the can understand what we're trying to  
9 give them. Because if we can't push through that,  
10 all our work is to defeat our effort. So, I'm asking  
11 us please, please let's do all we can to be true and  
12 not ever come into a room and saying loud-talking  
13 loud and not saying anything that's going to help our  
14 young people and I say that with all respect, but I  
15 also want to thank—we're joining—we've been joined by  
16 Council Member Inez Barron from Brooklyn to the  
17 Committee hearing. Thank you again. Thank you.  
18 I'll pass it back over to Chairman Rose.

19 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Thank you. Does the  
20 same relationship and referral method apply to Train  
21 and Earn and Inter and Earn programs? I'm sorry.

22 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER MONTANEZ: So, the  
23 Intern and Earn Plus Program this is a collaboration  
24 in particular with our partners at ACS and we work  
25 closely with our agency partners and the providers  
who support the program to gather those referrals.

3 For Train and Earn providers work on the ground and  
4 our agency partners can refer young people to that  
5 opportunity as well.

6 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: How many formerly  
7 incarcerated young people receive the programming?  
8 Well, let me change that. Do you track and count  
9 the number of youth—formerly incarcerated youth that  
10 receive programming through DYCD? And how do you  
11 determine that status? How do you know that they're  
12 formerly incarcerated or court involved young people?

13 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER MONTANEZ: So, it  
14 can happen in a few ways. We can receive that  
15 information from our referring agencies at the point  
16 of referral and our Intern and Earn and Train and  
17 Earn Programs our young people they choose to  
18 disclose that as a barrier at the time of enrollment  
19 as well, but we serve all youth regardless of status,  
20 and so in those particular programs we do not mandate  
21 that they provide us with that information. However  
22 in our Train and Earn program for instance in 2000—in  
23 Fiscal Year 2018, 23 young people identified  
24 themselves as being court involved.  
25

3 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Do you track these  
4 young people? Do you keep numbers? Do you tabulate  
5 this data?

6 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER MONTANEZ:  
7 Absolutely. So, across the portfolio of all of the  
8 programs I mentioned in my testimony, in Fiscal Year  
9 18 we served 1,919 young people identified as being  
10 court or Juvenile Justice involved.

11 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: And since the SYEP is  
12 lottery system, how are you able to meet your---is  
13 there a finite number that you are serving or--or aim  
14 to serve court involved young people?

15 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER MONTANEZ: So  
16 through the lottery options, the program is open to  
17 all young people, and this past summer 256 young  
18 people were selected through the lottery who  
19 identified--had identified on their application that  
20 they were justice involved. However, the majority of  
21 the young people who are justice involved in the  
22 program are served through the Vulnerable Youth  
23 Option and that option exists outside of the lottery  
24 process, and it's an option that we have grown. Over  
25 the number of years, we've gone from a thousand slots  
in 2014 to serving over 3,100 this past summer and a

3 great—a credit is made towards the relationship we  
4 have with our partnering agencies and our SYEP  
5 vulnerable youth providers. They sit on a work group  
6 to help every year to improve the program, increase  
7 the number of referrals and this is an option that we  
8 hope to grow throughout the coming years.

9 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: So, you're saying that  
10 a young person can opt into a specific category as  
11 court involved youth or formerly incarcerated?

12 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER MONTANEZ:  
13 [interposing] If they are court involved, they will  
14 have an opportunity to participate in SYEP through  
15 the Vulnerable Youth option, yes.

16 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: And how do they know  
17 this? How is this information given, distributed or  
18 disbursed?

19 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER MONTANEZ: So,  
20 again through referrals from our partnering agencies.  
21 Our providers are also on the ground working with  
22 their community partners and spreading the word DYCD.  
23 Shares information on our programs through our Youth  
24 Connect and social media platforms. We also have the  
25 ICC, as I mentioned, put out the report, the Coming  
Home, which is the resource for young people who are

3 leaving detention, and that's made available to young  
4 people at ACS and to a number of our partnering  
5 agencies as well.

6 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Does DOE do any type  
7 of education in terms of I could be court involved,  
8 but still going--return to my--my high school of--

9 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER MONTANEZ:  
10 [interposing] Absolutely.

11 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: --in my neighborhood?  
12 How--are they informed somehow through that process?

13 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER MONTANEZ: So,  
14 yes, DOE is also a partnering agency with us. They  
15 share information on our programs. They are also  
16 part of our ICC Coordinating Committee as well.

17 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: And the ICC all of the  
18 city agencies are involved in that, and it--it sort of  
19 resulted in a report that--or a document that's  
20 distributed to young people--

21 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER MONTANEZ: Uh-hm.

22 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: --and young people  
23 have input into this--the development of this  
24 document.

25 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER MONTANEZ: They  
do.

3 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Where is this  
4 document that young people—how—how can a young person  
5 access this—this—this document?

6 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER MONTANEZ: So,  
7 this resource directory is shared with our partnering  
8 agencies. It's also given to ACS, and distributed to  
9 young people who are in detention and their families  
10 so they have this. So, they access to information  
11 everything from education to employment programs and  
12 other supportive services. The guide is also  
13 available on our website as well. It's also  
14 distributed at public libraries.

15 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: I just need to sort of  
16 digress but not truly. We had a hearing about the  
17 hotline, but Bullying Hotline, the resources for  
18 young people and we were told that DYCD and DOE made  
19 this information know, and that most people—most  
20 young people knew of it. We took a tour of Covenant  
21 House a week ago, and there were actually three young  
22 people there who needed the resources, and clearly  
23 could have benefitted by the hotline, and they had no  
24 knowledge of it, and so it led to them being outside,  
25 being homeless much longer than was actually  
necessary and—and I don't want this to be the same

3 situation where we have a document that's—that we say  
4 is available, but the knowledge for people to know  
5 that it's available or that it exists is, you know,  
6 siloed somewhere. So, can you reassure me that, you  
7 know, this document I know it exists, but how are we  
8 making sure that the population that needs this  
9 document, you know, actually has access and—and  
10 knowledge that it exists?

11 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER MONTANEZ:

12 Absolutely. So, we'll definitely take feedback under  
13 consideration, and we'll ensure that we have this  
14 document and resource available more readily.

15 However, it is available on our websites. It is  
16 available through a number of our sister agencies,  
17 and in public libraries, and additionally, our  
18 programs at DYCD are placed intentionally in high  
19 need communities. Our provider network they do  
20 wonderful work in ensuring that they recruit and  
21 share information about our programs and our services  
22 for all those that can benefit from them.

23 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Now, I'm the—I'm the  
24 Youth Chair, and I'm always in youth centers, and I  
25 have a very good relationship with my Cure Violence--  
my Cure Violence workers. I've never seen this

3 document, and I'm—I'm in situations where I've even  
4 been at the library, and in situations where if this  
5 document existed, I should have come across it. So, I  
6 want you to—there needs to be something more done  
7 about, you know, the existences of these resources  
8 that are there to help our young people, and they're  
9 not actually getting it. I just—I'm going to ask one  
10 more question because I know the rest of the  
11 committee has questions and then I'll come back.  
12 Have there been any modifications to discharge  
13 planning services since Raise the Age, and if so,  
14 what were those modifications?

15 ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER BARRIOS: The  
16 modifications to the kids that are being discharged  
17 and released from detention and/or placement? Is  
18 that the question, Chair?

19 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Since Raise the Age,  
20 what modifications have been made to their discharge  
21 plans, their—their planning? At one time you were  
22 only making discharge plans for young people, you  
23 know, with—up to 18. Now, we're looking at people up  
24 to 24. Have there been any changes in the discharge  
25 plans for—since we, you know, adopted Raise the Age?

3 ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER BARRIOS: Right.

4 So, with respect to kids that are in detention, we're  
5 certainly taking age into account, and now we're  
6 looking at particularly in terms of educational  
7 options and vocational options what are the young  
8 people's interests and abilities, and what are some  
9 of the resources that we can expose them while  
10 they're in detention, and then identify opportunities  
11 for them to continue with those resources in the  
12 community. So, that's an adjustment we've made with  
13 respect to Raise the Age. In addition, we have  
14 expanded the use of our safety plans otherwise known  
15 as Behavioral Support Plans by looking at what the  
16 need is with respect to the older population, and  
17 particularly with young people who experience  
18 emotional dysregulation or in need of mental health  
19 services, make sure that identify those resources in  
20 the community and working with their families to  
21 ensure that we connect them to places where there's  
22 continuity of care as they're discharged from the  
23 facilities.

24 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: For example, with  
25 Train and Earn, and Intern and Earn, these programs  
are for a certain age category. Have programs like

3 these, the age then extended to include the older  
4 young people and—and if so, I think a stipend for  
5 like a 12-week program wouldn't really be an  
6 appropriate—an appropriate reentry program for me if  
7 I'm a 21-year-old person. So, are we taking into  
8 consideration, you know, those?

9 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: Yes—no, I  
10 mean, I think—I mean keep in mid that actually of the  
11 October 1<sup>st</sup> of 2018, most of the—the young people who  
12 were leaving actually our detention facilities were  
13 leaving at the age of 16 or younger. So, you're  
14 right. I mean now we are actually going to have  
15 young people leaving at the age of 16, 17 and maybe  
16 up to 18. So, as Commissioner Barrios mentioned, we  
17 have been working with the Department of Education to  
18 do a couple of things. First of all, we for the  
19 first time established equivalency programs inside—  
20 inside our detention facilities. Those were not  
21 available before October. So, now most of our young  
22 people are actually on a high school municipal track,  
23 but now we have a group of young people who are  
24 actually going for their equivalency inside both  
25 facilities. We actually as Commissioner Barrios  
mentioned before, we began offering certificate

3 programs inside the facility. Actually, yesterday I  
4 met the first nine young people who got their OSHA  
5 certificate. They're very proud of that, and I think  
6 those are the kind of trajectories that we're working  
7 with the Department of Education under District 79 to  
8 move young people not just to the traditional  
9 community schools, but to some of the co-op tech kind  
10 of programs that are going to be beneficial for them.  
11 So, it's kind of new. We began October 1<sup>st</sup> only a  
12 month ago, but we actually already have the first set  
13 of youth with certificates, and I think those are the  
14 kind of young people who are poised to benefit from  
15 the programs that were presented by DYCD before.

16 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: When you do case  
17 management, and someone is reentering, do you have a  
18 list of employers that are willing to hire these  
19 young people?

20 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: I think we  
21 should talk a little bit about our summer, and that  
22 summer actually was particularly unique because in  
23 partnership with DYCD--

24 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: [interposing] And so,  
25 outside of SYEP?

3 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: Yes. No,  
4 but I-I-what we did this summer was-it was unique, is  
5 that we began placing young people in-within small  
6 community based small businesses, and Charles can  
7 talk about this for the better, but actually, many of  
8 those young people who actually work at a barber shop  
9 or a mechanic shop in the community many of them  
10 actually kept that employment over the summer. We  
11 actually have a whole Power Point that we can share  
12 with you of how this new approach of being  
13 intentionally thinking about what the young people  
14 want to do, and how to connect them to small  
15 businesses is actually beginning to pay off. But as  
16 we get older youth, we want to do more with that.

17 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Alright, I promise  
18 this is the last one. Tracking. How long do you  
19 then track a young person who has gone through your  
20 case management, and are now back into the community?  
21 How long do you keep track of them? How long do you  
22 provide their resources and support?

23 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: Yeah, I  
24 think Commissioner Hemmeter can talk about after  
25 care. Our placements are intentionally divided  
between residential care and aftercare and actually

3 young people still report and are accountable to us  
4 for up to five to six months.

5 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: I'm talking about  
6 aftercare.

7 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: Yes.

8 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Uh-hm.

9 ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER HEMMETER: So, as  
10 mentioned in the testimony, the youth are placed with  
11 us for about 12 to 18 months, and so during that  
12 first period of--portion of time they are in a  
13 residential facility where they are living day-to-day  
14 getting this every--all their services within the  
15 residential facility, and then they are transitioned  
16 into the aftercare portion where they are living at  
17 home, but they are still be monitored and supervised  
18 by both the ACS Placement and Permanency Specialists  
19 and the provide, and so we are tracking what they're  
20 doing and how they're doing throughout the--the life  
21 of the placement from day 1 when they enter the  
22 facility all the way through until the end of their  
23 placement, which includes that aftercare portion. Is  
24 that answering the question that--?

25 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: I'm talking about  
separate and aside from like a probationary period.

3 I'm talking about how long you actually provide them  
4 with--with support services and track it.

5 ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER HEMMETER: Right,  
6 so--so legally ACS can only monitor during that  
7 placement period, but we again are trying to connect  
8 them with the services that they can continue going  
9 forward so if they are connected to a YMCA that they  
10 will continue going there. That they--if they are  
11 connected to a vocational program that they are  
12 continuing to go there. So, after that placement  
13 period, the goal is that they are connected so that  
14 we are no longer having to supper and monitor them.

15 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Okay. So, we're not  
16 just putting them out, throwing them out the door,  
17 and saying we connected you the YMCA--

18 ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER HEMMETER:  
19 [interposing] No.

20 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: --and--

21 ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER HEMMETER: I mean  
22 the whole purpose of--of Close to Home is to have that  
23 period of time while they are on aftercare, which is  
24 generally five to seven months maybe a little longer  
25 so that there is--their time in the community where we  
are working with them, where they are continuing the

3 skill building that they learned while they are in  
4 the residential facilities, and then connecting them  
5 to those services within their own community that can  
6 continue beyond the time they are with us.

7 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Council Member  
8 Perkins.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER PERKINS: [off mic]  
10 Probably-[on mic] a line of questioning. So, they  
11 continue-they continue beyond and what is their  
12 relationship with you as they are moving beyond  
13 hopefully successfully?

14 ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER HEMMETER: Yes,  
15 hopefully successfully that-that they won't need us  
16 to monitor them any more, but legally again, they are  
17 placed with us. The court places them with us for a  
18 specific period of time and after that, we have no  
19 legal authority to supervise them any more. So,  
20 again, what we're trying to do is connect them to  
21 those services within their community that can  
22 continue beyond our supervision of the youth.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER PERKINS: Okay, so you're  
24 out of the picture so to speak--

25 ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER HEMMETER: Yes,

3 COUNCIL MEMBER PERKINS: --once that  
4 connection is made?

5 ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER HEMMETER: Right.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER PERKINS: And--and what is--  
7 how do you get feedback in terms of how well they're  
8 doing following the separation?

9 ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER HEMMETER: Right.

10 So, we have a--a continuum of conferences that happen  
11 throughout the life of the case. There are six that  
12 are done automatically during the placement period  
13 where we bring together the parent or the guardian  
14 wherever the youth is going to be living. The youth,  
15 any service providers that are involve, the placement  
16 provider and our ACS staff. So, on a regular basis  
17 we're bringing those folks together to have a  
18 conference to see what are the needs? Are the needs  
19 being met? Are the services in place? Do we need to  
20 change anything? Are there other things that are  
21 happening in the youth's life that we need to figure  
22 out and address and put those services in place? In  
23 addition to that, if there are anything--any issues  
24 that kind of pop up during the life of the case, if  
25 something is not going right, then the provider can  
ask for a conference as well, and we'll try to bring

3 everyone together just to try to head off any  
4 problems and figure out what additional services need  
5 to be put in place at that point.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER PERKINS: So, again, when  
7 you say the life of the case, when does the case from  
8 your point of view end in terms of the relationship  
9 with you--

10 ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER HEMMETER:  
11 [interposing] Right, so--

12 COUNCIL MEMBER PERKINS: --or the agency?

13 ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER HEMMETER: --so  
14 legally, it ends at the end of the disposition. So,  
15 if a judge places a youth with us for 12 months, it's  
16 at the end of that 12 months.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER PERKINS: And then they're  
18 on their own? Presumably, it's somewhat stable to-to  
19 navigate the world? (sic)

20 ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER HEMMETER: Well,  
21 we try to-again, try to connect them with those  
22 services that are ongoing, but we legally are no  
23 longer supervising that-that youth.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER PERKINS: And so, and-and-  
25 so how did we know-how do you know upon the  
separation, or the-the transition so to speak what

3 this, you know how the--how the cases are going and  
4 getting along?

5 ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER HEMMETER: Yeah.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER PERKINS: How they're  
7 getting along?

8 ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER HEMMETER: Again,  
9 it's through those conferencing. You know, we have a  
10 conference. I believe it's 30 days. I could be  
11 wrong on that. I'd have to check our schedule prior  
12 to the end of the case just to make sure that  
13 everything is put in place. You know can always if  
14 things are not going well at all, we can always go  
15 back into court and ask for an extension of placement  
16 so that if a youth needs a longer period of time that  
17 we can then--but it has to be court ordered for us to  
18 do that.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER PERKINS: And it has to be  
20 court ordered, and what triggers the court order?  
21 Some problem that has--

22 ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER HEMMETER:  
23 [interposing] Usually that--

24 COUNCIL MEMBER PERKINS: [interposing] -  
25 gotten to the attention of the--

3 ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER HEMMETER: Yes,  
4 so--

5 COUNCIL MEMBER PERKINS: --authorities--

6 ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER HEMMETER: --not  
7 necessary--

8 COUNCIL MEMBER PERKINS: --or the school-  
9 -

10 ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER HEMMETER: Sorry

11 COUNCIL MEMBER PERKINS: --or the family.

12 I don't-I just want to understand how does it get to  
13 there.

14 ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER HEMMETER: Yeah.

15 So, it could be that. I t could be, you know, the  
16 youth is in contact with they police again, but it  
17 could be, you know, we're again monitoring throughout  
18 the-throughout the-the placement period if--

19 COUNCIL MEMBER PERKINS: [interposing]  
20 When you say you're in contact, you mean arrested or  
21 being charged with something?

22 ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER HEMMETER:  
23 [interposing] Well, that could happen obviously yes.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER PERKINS: Okay.  
25

3 ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER HEMMETER: If that  
4 does happen then a conference is immediately held and  
5 we are figuring out what to do, but that's not the--

6 COUNCIL MEMBER PERKINS: [interposing]  
7 So, it's not quite like the--it's not quite like going  
8 to the P-A-L.

9 ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER HEMMETER: But  
10 the--but the--no, but that's yes, that's not--it's  
11 always what triggers an extension of placement.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER PERKINS: Okay.

13 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Thank you.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER PERKINS: The--the resource  
15 directory, that's available online, you say?

16 ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER HEMMETER: Yes, it  
17 is. Oh, okay. I thought maybe it was some copies.  
18 [laughter]

19 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Thank you.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER PERKINS: Thank you.

21 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Thank you, Council  
22 Member. I just want to--one more question. In regards  
23 to SYEP, we've gotten some information from some  
24 advocates that formerly incarcerated young people  
25 were not allowed to participate in the program. Are  
you aware of that, and, you know, could you discuss

3 that and what, you know, is there something in the  
4 process that will preclude court involved or formerly  
5 incarcerated young people from participating in SYEP?

6 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER MONTANEZ: No.

7 Actually, as I mentioned the vulnerable youth option  
8 specifically serves young people who have been  
9 involved in the Juvenile Justice System, and we are  
10 actually looking to grow and expand that option  
11 hopefully bringing online additional providers, and  
12 those that have experienced working with that  
13 population.

14 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: So, you—there's

15 nothing that you know of that would have triggered  
16 this particular advocate group from not being able to  
17 process this young person? A person with, you know--  
18 ?

19 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER MONTANEZ: It may  
20 be particular instance in which case I would need to  
21 get more information about that particular instance,  
22 but in terms of the goals of SYEP, and particularly  
23 vulnerable youth, we're looking to actually expand  
24 that option for all of the vulnerable populations  
25 that fall under that population—under—under that  
option.

3 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Thank you. I want to  
4 thank you all for testifying today. I just want to  
5 encourage you all through the ICC, through your  
6 individual agencies that you're—you're putting in the  
7 work, but if no one is aware of the end product,  
8 it's-9-it's really for naught, and it's really  
9 distressing to me as the Youth Chair to go places to  
10 talk to advocate group, and—and they're not aware of  
11 the resources that we have available or that are—that  
12 have been developed. I think it's something that  
13 needs to be talked about at the ICC is how you're  
14 going to make these things much more available.  
15 People, you know, should know about it. New York  
16 City spends money on marketing campaigns for things  
17 that they think are important. I happen to think  
18 that this is very important that young people know  
19 where and how to get the resources that are  
20 available. So, I-I really would like each of you to  
21 take it back to your—your agencies, and—and figure  
22 this out, and figure this out because it's something  
23 that I'm going to continue to—to reference until I  
24 stop, you know, hearing that from—from young people  
25 in New York City. So, I want to thank you all, and  
we're going to call the next group. Thank you. Have

3 a good day. Okay, alright, Gisele Castro from Exalt  
4 Youth. Oh, we didn't—Council Member Barron had a  
5 question.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: [off mic] That's  
7 fine.

8 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Okay, Jeffrey Greda—  
9 Greda. (sic) [background comments] Guya, Getting Out  
10 and Staying Out; Nancy Ginsburg, Legal Aid Society;  
11 Alyssa Perrone, Advocates for Children and Balfour  
12 Thompson, Youth Represent. As you come forward  
13 we're going to—we're going to ask you to introduce  
14 yourself, and your organization, and you can start  
15 your testimony, and I—I hate to do this but we have  
16 to vacate this room by 4 o'clock. So, keep your  
17 testimony succinct, and we'll keep our questions  
18 likewise. So, you can begin. Identify yourself and  
19 your agency.

20 GISELE CASTRO: Good afternoon. Giselle  
21 Castro, Executive Director at Exalt Youth.

22 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Thank you.

23 GEOFFREY GOLIA: Good afternoon.  
24 Geoffrey Golia, Associate Executive Director of  
25 Getting Out and Staying Out, GOSO.

3 LEGAL FELLOW: Good afternoon, a Legal  
4 Fellow at Youth Represent.

5 NANCY GINSBURG: Good afternoon, Nancy  
6 Ginsburg, Legal Aid.

7 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Thank you.

8 ALYSSA PERRONE: Good afternoon, Alyssa  
9 Perrone, Staff Attorney at the School Justice  
10 Project, Advocates for Children.

11 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Thank you. You may  
12 begin.

13 GISELE CASTRO: Thank you and thank you  
14 so much Chair Deborah Rose and Council Members. Good  
15 afternoon everyone, and thank you for the opportunity  
16 to speak about reentry programs here in New York City  
17 and the importance about it. My name is Gisele  
18 Castro, and I'm the Executive Director at Exalt  
19 Youth, a non-profit that serves young people ages 15  
20 to 19 in New York City, and we offer paid internships  
21 for them, and we have a proprietary curriculum and we  
22 have developed individualized plans for every young  
23 person that comes in through our doors. I want to  
24 begin by thanking the Chair Deborah Rose for your  
25 advocacy on behalf of young people, and hosting this  
hearing today. Thank you so much, and I would also

3 like to thank the Division of Youth and Family  
4 Justice and also the Department of Youth and  
5 Community and Developing-Development, and other  
6 partnering agencies who are here with us this  
7 afternoon for their investment in servicing our young  
8 people. I want to briefly give an overview of our  
9 organization and the work that we have already done  
10 with young people who have been in the system. We're  
11 designed to address three particular areas, which is  
12 navigating young people away from the Juvenile  
13 Justice System, ensuring that they make improvements  
14 academically and educationally, and more-and more  
15 importantly employment as they enter their adulthood.  
16 We were founded in 2006. However, we are modeled  
17 from cases in Alternative to Incarceration Program in  
18 1997 as part of their career exploratory program, and  
19 we launched in 2006 our organization. We were  
20 incubated and tested by the Blue Ridge Foundation.  
21 The Andy (sic) Casey and John Jay College of Criminal  
22 Justice, and I have over 20 years working with young  
23 people particularly who have been incarcerated,  
24 impacted by the system in prison and detention  
25 facilities, and I also have with me this afternoon  
Bryan Lewis our Deputy Director who's overseeing our

3 programming as we scale the organization to triple  
4 the number of young the number of young people who we  
5 serve—that we're going to serve. I want to briefly  
6 and taking into consideration the time, the impact  
7 that we have made over the years, I mean over decades  
8 at this point. Over 65% of our young people they  
9 face serious charges and we have been able to do, you  
10 know, really well in terms of advocacy, and ensuring  
11 that 75% of our young people who have open court  
12 cases, their cases are reduced, but more importantly,  
13 what is encouraging for this organization is that  
14 less than 5% of our young people are reconvicted of a  
15 crime while 95% of them are entering—are progressing  
16 academically. I wanted to close out with this: We  
17 have over 400 referrals a year. We partner  
18 throughout New York City with Legal Aid Society with  
19 the DA's Office, with judges with ACS, with many, you  
20 know, organizations, the Department of Probation and  
21 we have been working together to ensure that our  
22 young people who are exiting either prison or are  
23 facing potential incarceration are given an  
24 opportunity to succeed. So, once again, thank you,  
25 Chair for this opportunity

3 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: [off mic] Thank you so  
4 much.

5 GEOFFREY GOLIA: Thank you, Chair Rose  
6 and members of the Committee. My name is Geoffrey  
7 Golia. I'm the Associate Executive Director of  
8 Getting out and Staying Out also known as GOSO.  
9 Founded in 2003, GOSO is a comprehensive reentry  
10 program serving 16 to 24-year-old young men who have  
11 been involved in the Criminal Justice System. We  
12 work with participants from all five boroughs. Many  
13 we meet during the four days a week we provide  
14 services in the jails on Rikers Island. Others  
15 joined our Community Program located in East Harlem  
16 through referrals from probation and parole, judges  
17 and district attorneys, defense attorneys,  
18 Alternative to Incarceration programs and other  
19 participants. We also do get some referrals from  
20 Council Members as well. Additionally, we correspond  
21 with hundreds of participants currently incarcerated  
22 in Upstate and federal prisons. GOSO works with more  
23 than 2,300 young people from all five boroughs in New  
24 York City and the recidivism rate is really low, 15%  
25 compared to a much higher local and federal average.  
The vast majority of our clients live well below the

3 poverty line, and lack a support system and many  
4 suffer from diagnosable mental health disorders.  
5 GOSO believes that reentry starts the day a person is  
6 incarcerated, and we support—and we support our  
7 incarcerated and detained participants by encouraging  
8 them to go to school and start planning for a  
9 productive life when they return home. For the last  
10 15 years GOSO's social workers have worked with  
11 thousands of young men in the jails on Rikers Island  
12 as well as juvenile facilities and Upstate  
13 facilities. We currently meet regularly with 250  
14 participants in the sentenced and un-sentenced  
15 buildings on Rikers Island to discuss educational and  
16 employment goals, and how to avoid re-involvement in  
17 the Criminal Justice System. GOSO is also unique in  
18 that it provides robust reentry training for youth  
19 sentenced to Upstate facilities and continues to keep  
20 in contact with is population once they are in  
21 custody Upstate. GOSO provides aftercare and reentry  
22 services that are essential to ensure that clients  
23 have support to transition to their communities and  
24 their schools. GOSO's Community Program is tailored  
25 to address educational, employment and emotional  
wellbeing concerns while also providing individual

3 attention to each participant's individual needs and  
4 goals. All participants are linked up with a  
5 licensed social worker either and LMSW or an LCSW,  
6 who are equipped to provide psychotherapy as well as  
7 reentry planning. Many of these LMSWs and LCSWs have  
8 also worked in the jails on Rikers Island providing  
9 services before providing these services in the  
10 community. Every week without fail we run a  
11 comprehensive job readiness curriculum that allows  
12 participants to be eligible for a number of  
13 additional programs designed to help them achieve  
14 personal and professional success. We have an on-  
15 site Task Program run in collaboration with the  
16 Department of Education participants-participation  
17 has grown each year, and this year we've enrolled 32  
18 participants in our school. We also provide support  
19 to our participants who are in college and trade  
20 school including monthly Metro Cards as well as  
21 books. GOSO also provides many vocational trainings  
22 to prepare [bell] our participants for careers they  
23 seek to earn. Is that my time or--?

24 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Uh-hm.

25 GEOFFREY GOLIA: Fair enough. Alright,  
well thank you so much.

3 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: [off mic] You can  
4 finish. (sic)

5 GEOFFREY GOLIA: Okay, well I guess I'll  
6 just say that much of our work remains behind bars,  
7 and it is essential that the city continue to work  
8 with organizations like GOSO, which have provided a  
9 successful reentry programming model in Rikers as  
10 well Horizons. Thank you.

11 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: [off mic] Thank you.

12 LEGAL FELLOW: Good afternoon and thank  
13 you for the opportunity to testify in front of you.  
14 I am a Legal Fellow from Youth Represent, and Youth  
15 Represent is a legal organization that works with  
16 justice involved youth ages 16 to 24 who have—who are  
17 going through justice involvement or have had justice  
18 involvement in the past, and are dealing with legal  
19 issues as a result. In particular, in terms of  
20 housing and in terms of employment we both—everybody,  
21 all the conversation that we have, we understand that  
22 those are two barriers that a lot of young people  
23 have to overcome in order to successfully reenter  
24 into society. We represent young people in NYCHA  
25 hearings so I imagine that everyone is familiar with  
permanent exclusion where a young person may have

3 committed a crime or may have been convicted of  
4 committing a crime, or even something as simple as an  
5 arrest and now the family has a decision to make in  
6 terms of either staying in the house—staying in the  
7 house and moving the young person from the house or  
8 the whole family just leaving as a whole. Youth  
9 Represent, represents young people in youth hearings,  
10 and I would like to say that we have a fair amount of  
11 success in keeping young people in their homes and  
12 making sure that they are able to reenter into—  
13 successfully reenter into society. On the employment  
14 front, just recently as recently as last week, we had  
15 a client who was a college student. She is looking  
16 for a job just for living expenses, and she applied  
17 for a job, got the job as a resident aid at a  
18 shelter. Got a full-time position. After she got  
19 the full-time position, she was told that she can't—  
20 after the background check, she was told that she  
21 couldn't work for the organization. Youth Represent  
22 stepped in. We represented here, and found out that  
23 the organization was flagrantly violating the Fair  
24 Chance Act, and now she's able to work. There's  
25 countless stories like that. A lot of times when we  
talk about reentry, we forget to talk about like the

3 legal barriers that young people have to go through  
4 and Youth Represent, represents young people on that  
5 front, and if there's something that we're not able  
6 to do, we have to find an organization that we work  
7 with in order to like a whole—have a holistic  
8 approach. Our approach is we do workshops. The  
9 Settlement House is schools, jails, pretty much  
10 letting the young people know of our services, and  
11 once they know of the services that we provide, they  
12 come up to us. We have intakes and if we're able to  
13 help them, we—we do so from whatever position they're  
14 in when we meet them until afterwards. Just on a  
15 personal note, like I—I understand the problems that  
16 plague justice-involved people. I'm from the  
17 communities that these young people are from, and I  
18 really truly do see the value in having legal reentry  
19 services so that young people [bell] so that young  
20 people can successfully reenter into society. So,  
21 thank you.

22 NANCY GINSBURG: Good afternoon. My name  
23 is Nancy Ginsburg. I oversee the Adolescent Practice  
24 for the Criminal Trial Practice of the Legal Aid  
25 Society. Thank you for having us here today. I  
would like to recognize our tremendous partnership

3 with many of the ATIs throughout the city. My  
4 testimony today is focused primarily on actual  
5 reentry. To your question earlier, Member Rose, two  
6 of the three have newly been made available through  
7 Raise the Age for adolescents who are moved from  
8 Rikers Island to Horizon. Friends of Island Academy  
9 Youth Reentry Network was created in August of 2016.  
10 New York City invested in an historic initiative to  
11 provide neighborhood based pre and post release  
12 support adolescents leaving Rikers' custody and now  
13 has been made available for those youth at Horizon.  
14 Friends of Island staff work with young people ages  
15 16 to 21, and the Friends of Island staff moved with  
16 the 16 and 17-year-olds as they went to Horizon.  
17 Staff starts working with the youth for discharge  
18 upon entry to detention through a combination of work  
19 with the young person outreach to his or her family,  
20 attorney and community support system a plan for  
21 discharge is developed. Friends of Island Staff  
22 helped connect young people to community based  
23 services and to develop plans to support release.  
24 Upon release, teams of Friends youth advocates work  
25 with youth in their neighborhoods connecting them to  
community and public resources, helping with

3 scheduling, accompanying them to appointments,  
4 activities and court dates, facilitating adjustment  
5 to school reconnections with family, local resources  
6 and community life. The relationships between  
7 Friends of Island staff and our clients have provided  
8 necessary support where some of them have little upon  
9 release. Even where our clients have a supportive  
10 parent or guardian, additional support for the  
11 vulnerable young people is always welcome  
12 particularly for working parents of those managing  
13 competing needs of their other children. Many of our  
14 clients look to the support provided by Friends of  
15 Island staff as critical to their reentry success.  
16 We encourage the Council to learn more about this  
17 program and to ensure that funding continues.  
18 Another service that transferred with the 16 and 17-  
19 year-olds moving from Rikers Island to the Horizon  
20 Juvenile Center is Mental Health Discharge Planning.  
21 As the result of a class action lawsuit filed in the  
22 1990s, Brad H. the City has been required to provide  
23 discharge planning services to individuals with  
24 mental health diagnoses held in the custody of the  
25 Department of Corrections since 2003. Now, young  
people with identified mental health services and

3 Horizon are intended--entitled to comprehensive  
4 discharge planning. As part of implementation  
5 planning for Raise the Age, Bellevue Hospital Center--  
6 --[bell]--just give me one more minute, please--which  
7 provides quality mental health services for our  
8 clients in Horizon, hired a social worker  
9 specifically to engage in discharge planning for  
10 young people with identified mental health diagnoses.  
11 While it is too early to assess these services, we  
12 are optimistic that the addition of discharge  
13 planning will provide much needed connections to  
14 ongoing mental health services in the community. I  
15 have addressed the education transition services in  
16 my written testimony and I ask you to refer to them.  
17 There is actually a website that--a link that you can--  
18 that you can access through the testimony, which will  
19 give you more information about many of the youth  
20 that the DOE, District 79 Transition Counselors have  
21 provided to our clients that have resulted in  
22 tremendous results in reentry to school and  
23 vocational programs in the community. Thank you.

24 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Thank you. Thank your  
25 for making that source known.

3 ALYSSA PERRONE: Hi. Good afternoon, and  
4 thank you for the opportunity to speak with you  
5 today. My name is Alyssa Perrone. I'm as staff  
6 attorney on the School Justice Project at Advocates  
7 for Children, and I provide education advocacy and  
8 legal representation to students who are either  
9 involved or at risk of being involved with the  
10 juvenile and criminal justice systems. So, my  
11 testimony today focuses on the educational reentry  
12 programming needs of this population I've submitted  
13 longer written testimony, but school engagement is  
14 crucial to successful reentry programming and sadly  
15 disengagement from school is unsurprising for this  
16 population. Research indicates that when students'  
17 behavioral and academic needs are unmet, and students  
18 face school suspension, they're more likely to be  
19 held back, to drop out, to not complete school, and  
20 ultimately to get rearrested again, which feeds right  
21 into the school to prison pipeline. One of the  
22 benefits of Close to Home has been the increase of  
23 youth engagement in school while in juvenile  
24 placement and detention. Students at Passages are  
25 earning more academic credits than ever before, and  
those are going right onto their transcripts. This

3 is particularly notable since the number of youth  
4 enrolled in school in the New York City Juvenile  
5 Justice System over the past five years has markedly  
6 decreased, but those who remain have greater needs.  
7 As we discussed before, 63.2% of students enrolled in  
8 Passages have a disability from the 2106-2017 school  
9 year, and more than 90% of students at Passages read  
10 below grade level. Despite the efforts of the  
11 Department of Education Transition Specialists  
12 assisting youth, reentering the community from  
13 Passages in East River, court involved youth are  
14 often inadequately supported and emotionally and  
15 academically within the under-resourced schools they  
16 return to. When compared with the 70% of students in  
17 New York City's general population, who receive a  
18 high school diploma, we've heard informally that the  
19 rates for students involved in the Juvenile Justice  
20 System is in the single digits. So, this in our  
21 opinion should be seen as nothing short of a crisis.  
22 We are frequently contacted by programs who work with  
23 court involved youth who are struggling with the  
24 education aspect of reentry, and we see that—see  
25 first hand that these students are often pushed out  
of school or drop out, and get rearrested. We—we

3 also believe that policing in schools can be  
4 especially traumatic and cause a huge barrier for  
5 these students who are returning, and these students  
6 often have unaddressed mental health needs or needs  
7 that are no longer addressed once they return to the  
8 community even if they are being addressed at  
9 Passages. Indeed, as many as 45% of New York City  
10 schools don't even have one social worker on staff.  
11 So, given the importance of these [bell] factors.  
12 Alright, I'll just wrap up. We respectfully call on  
13 City Council Committees on Juvenile Justice, Youth  
14 Services, Education and Mental Health to hold a joint  
15 hearing to examine the educational outcomes of  
16 students upon reentry, and to look at ways that we  
17 can help them reach those educational goals. Thank  
18 you.

19 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: I want to thank you  
20 all for the work that they're doing, and I want to  
21 acknowledge that Council Member Deutsch was here,  
22 and—and I have a few questions, and I have an apology  
23 to make. I didn't turn this watch back. So, I  
24 thought it was 4 o'clock. [laughter] And so—and so,  
25 I do want to apologize to you, but—so, I'd like to  
know what you think detention and facilities should

3 be doing to prepare young people for reintegration  
4 into their communities? What do you think is  
5 effective, and what isn't and, you know, some of you  
6 elucidated some of the challenges that young people  
7 have reentering. So, are there other programs that  
8 the city should create or provide? Anyone could take  
9 a stab at it or everyone.

10 GEOFFREY GOLIA: Well, I would say aside  
11 from the provision of mental health services  
12 diagnosing and—and providing I think evidence based  
13 psychotherapy, one big issue that our youngest  
14 participants face is when they come home, and this  
15 was mentioned before, they're coming back to the  
16 communities where they had been either arrested or  
17 detained, and that environment is not necessarily  
18 different, and there's not specific interventions  
19 happening now. Getting Out and Staying Out has a  
20 Cure Violence team called SAVE, Stand Against  
21 Violence East Harlem. The work that we can do with  
22 SAVE to provide the after care necessary for these  
23 adolescents is very transformative in the community  
24 or SAVE team is comprised of credible messengers who  
25 can provide mentoring as well as linkages to  
professional services, and I think that that's—that's

3 really important. Our SAVE Team has also worked in  
4 the jails on Rikers Island and I know that we're  
5 looking to have them work in Horizon and Crossroads  
6 for exactly these reasons: Involvement with gangs  
7 and crews is very high in these—in these facilities.  
8 We know because many of the young people who are  
9 transferred to these facilities we have signed up on  
10 Rikers Island when they were still locking up  
11 adolescents there. So, I think that aside from the  
12 robust reentry services that a program like GOSO can  
13 provide, continuing to invest and expand the Cure  
14 Violence model I think is a fantastic idea for  
15 addressing those issues. Thanks.

16 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Have you—I'll—I'll let  
17 you answer, have you been impacted by Raise the Age?  
18 Has it changed your programming or have you expanded  
19 programming?

20 GEOFFREY GOLIA: It is changing it. I  
21 want to say that the change has happened immediately.  
22 We are by virtue of—of young people moving to borough  
23 based facilities like Horizon and Crossroads, we—we  
24 will have to staff up and have more folks to be able  
25 to provide the services not just reentry—recruitment  
services, but also reentry planning services, and

3 that also means being liaisons to other programs  
4 whether it's our Cure Violence team or others to  
5 provide other wraparound services. So, we are  
6 preparing for that, and I think that that's  
7 something. So, so we've been anticipating this  
8 change for a while and we've just basically been  
9 looking to find in our budgets ways for us to not  
10 just increase programming, but also the staff to  
11 provide that programming. So, I think that the—the  
12 assistance of the City Council as well as other  
13 funders has been very helpful in that, and we're just  
14 looking to expand because we need to reach more young  
15 people.

16 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Okay, thank you.

17 GISELE CASTRO: Thank you. I would like  
18 to respond to the two aspect in terms of are we  
19 prepared for the Raise the Age. We in May of 2017 we  
20 launched a visibility study to assess whether organi—  
21 our organization could grow in scale, and on January  
22 our Board of Directors they endorsed that we're  
23 launching a scaling campaign to raise additional  
24 dollars. We are one of the few organizations that we  
25 are funded by private foundations and individuals.  
We have very little like 1% of our budget is

3 government, and none of City Council, and we thought  
4 there's a knowing and understand that our young  
5 people they need a lot of, you know, support and  
6 intervention. One of the areas that, you know, our  
7 youth need, you know, additional support is  
8 academically and educationally. You know we created  
9 our curriculum to inspire young people and to have  
10 them love the idea of learning once more, and we have  
11 connected with Advocates for Children, you know, so  
12 many times in identifying better or more suitable  
13 places for them to, you know, and to study. In the  
14 last hearing, I think this was like a few months ago  
15 one of our young women she testified she was referred  
16 to us by ACS, and she had graduated. She works. She  
17 interned with Janine Gray, and she's now in college.  
18 We also, you know, it's pretty outstanding, you know,  
19 the type of work and the results that we have. It  
20 takes—I've heard and I think that, you know, one of  
21 the areas that we're seeing that Raise the Age is  
22 creating is real opportunity to, you know, to work  
23 together. One last thing that I want to add we have  
24 one of our young girls who graduated seven years ago.  
25 She was referred to us by the Department of Probation  
and given three opportunities. The many challenges

3 that she presented are not, you know, unfamiliar to  
4 us. A long story short she graduated this year from  
5 Yeshiva University with her graduate studies degree  
6 in social work. This didn't happen in isolation, and  
7 so, I really do stress and, you know, ensuring that  
8 our young people are given quality education. I do  
9 believe and I have seen over and over again when our  
10 young people are challenged, but in well and  
11 meaningful and thoughtful places, they, you know,  
12 they thrive. So, I would say education is an area  
13 for us to really focus on.

14 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Are you satisfied with  
15 the level of cooperation from city agencies that are  
16 providing, you know, services?

17 GISELE CASTRO: So, we have worked with  
18 city agencies. With the Department of Probation we  
19 have referrals from ACS. We have referrals. So we  
20 have—we have worked with them in terms of referral  
21 process. We're now building stronger relationships  
22 in terms of deeper partnership. As I—as I said  
23 before, we've never formally entered any contracts  
24 with any city agencies, and now we are. You know,  
25 one of the healthy aspects about our organization  
because it has been tested, now we have more, you

3 know, to contributed to the field, and it isn't one,  
4 you know, specific discipline. So, we're not saying  
5 that we do it all, but we do, you know, have really  
6 strong collaborations, you know, other non-profits  
7 and other organizations. I would say that there's a—  
8 there's a big— What I have seen in my assessment is  
9 that there is a concerted effort, and I think that  
10 people are sensing the urgency to do well. However,  
11 you know, the system has so many challenges in itself  
12 right, and we were given a very short, you know,  
13 turnaround time implement such a huge initiative, and  
14 I think that those are the inherent challenges that  
15 people are responding. They're literally are rising  
16 up to the challenge of the occasion, and I think that  
17 one of the areas that we will all stress is that it  
18 is funding, and it is ensuring that would bring in,  
19 you know, the right people, and also retain people  
20 who have been in the field, you know, for quite some  
21 time, and just to make sure that we are successful in  
22 this huge, huge initiative.

23                   GEOFFREY GOLIA: May I add one thing,  
24 too. One of the most successful aspects of GOSO  
25 programming has been our Implement Development  
Program GOSO Works. We utilize funding from the

3 Works Progress Program, which is a city program not  
4 just to subsidize paid internships, but what we call  
5 internships to employment. We have 70 employer  
6 partners around the city in which we place young  
7 people. We start by subsidizing their wages and then  
8 they are hired by those sites, and we have 69%  
9 success rate when it comes to those placements, and  
10 again, sort of that wraparound provision of services  
11 we have, but that funding is crucial and essential  
12 for some of our older participants, the 19, 20 and  
13 21-year-olds but we're also starting to see that  
14 appropriate employment placement for adolescents  
15 coming out of Horizons, Crossroads and other non-  
16 secure detention, or those were just referred to us  
17 can also be great in terms of just building up those  
18 job skills, and again not so much towards a career  
19 per se, but definitely to build those foundational  
20 skills can also enhance their educational experience  
21 as well. So, we've worked very hard hiring staff and  
22 then finding age-appropriate job placements so that  
23 those young people can kind of develop that—not just  
24 those skills, but that ego strength necessary for  
25 them to be successful. So the Works Progress Program  
has been fantastic in that.

3 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: It's great.

4 LEGAL FELLOW: Well, good—good afternoon.

5 I just want to address the first question that you  
6 said. On a—on a super simple note I think that young  
7 people need to be more a part of the conversation  
8 when we're talking about youth reentry services. Like  
9 a lot of times we're making a lot of decisions for  
10 young people and young people aren't in the room.  
11 Youth Represent one of the programs that we have is  
12 the School Justice Project where, as I said before,  
13 we were able to go into the schools and give  
14 workshops and pretty much it works because we're able  
15 to tell them about our services, but they're also  
16 able to tell us about problems that they're dealing  
17 with, and we're not limited to one borough. So, we  
18 operate in the five boroughs in the city, and what  
19 I've found is that the issues in the Bronx might be  
20 different from the issues in Brooklyn. You know,  
21 like someone we have a one—one-size-fits-all issue,  
22 there might gang activity in one pocket more so than  
23 it would be in another pocket, and you—if we  
24 introduced you into the conversation as opposed to  
25 like making decisions for them, they probably—we'd  
probably have a better outcome in terms of how we

3 can—how they can better reenter into society. Thank  
4 you.

5 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: That's an—that's an  
6 excellent point. You must have tried to work one in  
7 Staten Island, huh?

8 LEGAL FELLOW: [off mic] Staten Island.

9 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: [laughs]

10 LEGAL FELLOW: [on mic] I actually did.  
11 My office actually has been off Staten Island all  
12 along and the issues are different from the issues

13 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: [interposing] Maybe I'd  
14 say—

15 LEGAL FELLOW: --in Brooklyn and the  
16 other boroughs.

17 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: I know. [laughs]  
18 Thank you.

19 LEGAL FELLOW: No problem.

20 GISELE CASTRO: I will say that some of  
21 the greatest barriers that we see to reentry to our  
22 young people and some of this is being amplified by  
23 Raise the Age are housing and family services.  
24 Almost all of the young people who are system  
25 involved to have extremely long trauma histories.  
Their families also have that same experience. They

3 need a lot of service. Many of them need a lot of  
4 service for extended periods of time, and the current  
5 model is for short periods of time because the  
6 programs that provide those services are considered  
7 evidence based, and I think beyond that period of  
8 time is beyond the evidence based program model, and  
9 some of our kids and their families go in and out of  
10 crisis. So, while they may successfully complete a  
11 program, and they may be fine for a few months or a  
12 year, they may lapse into a new problem, and it's  
13 very hard for them to access services at that point.  
14 And so, I think what, you know, in our dream world we  
15 would like to see young adolescent services be  
16 transformed into a young adult model so that young  
17 people can access age-appropriate services and don't  
18 have to go into adult services, into adult shelters  
19 at the age of 18, which are really not appropriate  
20 settings for them where they can get more supportive  
21 services both for them and their families where they  
22 can access age-appropriate mental health services,  
23 where they can access age-appropriate academic  
24 services, vocational services and they can be  
25 surrounded by age-appropriate groups, and so ideally  
we would love to see a system that goes through 24 or

3 maybe 26 [laughs] so that this can really happen, and  
4 I think what—what you've heard a lot about connecting  
5 people to the community and trying to get them out of  
6 the system players is one of the most important  
7 things that really the city needs to be looking at is  
8 how to—they may not necessarily be reintegrated into  
9 exactly the family unit that they left at the point  
10 they were incarcerated, but they do need to be  
11 reintegrated into some support system that they can  
12 see ongoing until they can develop the skills to live  
13 independently, and that really needs to a web of  
14 housing, academic, vocational, mental health to  
15 support all of their needs. I mean I'm sure anyone  
16 who has their own children or who has family members  
17 with children know that they don't stop calling after  
18 they become young adults. [laughter]

19 ALYSSA PERRONE: [interposing] And they  
20 don't. No.

21 GISELE CASTRO: They always call, and  
22 kids really do need a lot of help as they make that  
23 transformation into young adulthood, and just having  
24 that support system so that they can do that and they  
25 don't fall into crisis because when there is no—when  
there is no web for them to—to catch them. When they

3 go into crisis they tend to just reenter the system.  
4 So, we would—we would encourage the Council to dream  
5 big on this, and to really look at maybe a system  
6 reorganization on this.

7 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Thank you. I think  
8 that's a very important point, you know, that there  
9 should be some seamless, you know, transition with a  
10 safety nets. That's sort of what I was trying to get  
11 at when I asked them about how long do they follow  
12 these young people or trap them. We know that, you  
13 know, there are pitfalls all along the way. You—you  
14 might have traversed that, you know, that problem,  
15 but, you know, there's another one waiting. So, I-I  
16 think this is an excellent suggestion especially with  
17 Raise the Age we need to have some sort of seamless,  
18 you know, transition so that there's a safety net for  
19 them until they—they can, you know, be appropriately  
20 on their own. So thank you.

21 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Sure.

22 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Did you want to—Hm?  
23 [background comments] Okay. Wait, wait, Counsel, I—  
24 I do have—do any of you do any studies or analysis of  
25 recidivism and/or readmission rates, you know, that  
could gauge the effectiveness of aftercare programs?

3                   GEOFFREY GOLIA: I can speak to our  
4 recidivism rate and the—what—what we actually are—are  
5 looking forward to a program evaluation to really  
6 determine what specific interventions we provide that  
7 lead to our low recidivism rate because as I said,  
8 our recidivism rate is approximately 15%. That's  
9 compared to a national average of—I believe the  
10 latest statistic was 67% for—for this age group. We  
11 tend to think our model, which is comprehensive,  
12 focuses on employment, education and the emotional  
13 wellbeing with a real strong emphasis on just  
14 holistic individualized care provided by licensed  
15 social workers. We tend to feel that that is part  
16 and parcel of that model that is effective. We are  
17 looking to see again what specific interventions  
18 lead—lead to that because again that's really based  
19 on sort of a tradition of success, but not—again  
20 knowing exactly where that is. That would—that would  
21 require a fairly extensive evaluation. With that  
22 said, I think that the Council and others could  
23 support reentry programs in seeking to determine what  
24 are the evidence base practices that lead to not just  
25 reduced recidivism, what we call surviving, but also  
thriving, right. Young people who are achieving

3 educational success, employment success, as well as  
4 just avoiding re-involvement in the Criminal Justice  
5 System. So, we really look at it as recidivism is  
6 great and for the first ten or so years of our  
7 organization we really hung our hat on our recidivism  
8 rate, but then it was really looking at or in  
9 programming saying how can we help these young men  
10 radically reshape their lives in ways in which they  
11 feel satisfied by—by what they're doing that the  
12 relationships they're building are good, too. So, I  
13 think that there's a lot of look at and evaluate, but  
14 as it relates to recidivism I really feel like it's—  
15 it's—it's that—it's that therapeutic foundation for  
16 he services along with again employment and  
17 education.

18 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Thank you.

19 GISELE CASTRO: Chair, can I—can I recuse  
20 that as well? Thank you. As I said earlier, we  
21 conducted a visibility study to assess, you know,  
22 what's the impact that we're going to have in  
23 addition to serving more young people, you know,  
24 thinking through about our alumni. We have young  
25 people who have graduated 4 or 5 years out still  
engaged with us, and the main aspect, you know the—

3 and the reason why they return is academic—is for  
4 their education, and for employment, and I think  
5 that—and what we have seen and what our assessments  
6 begin to show is that our youth what they're looking  
7 for is like access for, you know, opportunities, and  
8 it is employment, and it is—it's money. You know,  
9 the bottom line is that they're looking for money  
10 and resources, and we have been able partner with  
11 CUNY for young people who are interested and ready to  
12 go off to college. You know, what we're seeing with  
13 our, you know, group of young people is that  
14 education does really matter for them because that's  
15 a way a for them and we—we talk a lot about, you  
16 know, racial equity in our organization, and what  
17 does that mean. What does, you know, living in New  
18 York City and gentrification what is that impact on  
19 them. You know, we begin to pay attention to the  
20 real challenges that they have, and our kids, you  
21 know, we've placed them, you know, into internships  
22 like the Innocence Project, and they're interning  
23 with attorney. You know, there's always the  
24 dichotomy of this conflict of, you know, where are  
25 they, and the amount of challenges that they have to  
face in their family to move away and out of the

3 system. What we have seen, and once again and I  
4 agree with Nancy, you know, we have to think more  
5 long-term because even our young people who are  
6 getting out of the system they carry the burden of  
7 taking care of their family. Well, this is economy.  
8 This is about money. This is about finances. Thai  
9 is about. This is not--this is about paying the rent.  
10 This is about so much that is rooted in our country  
11 and, you know, we--I'm not too sure we could really  
12 solve a lot, but we--what we're seeing is that a lot  
13 of it has to do with, you know, finances, and  
14 opportunities for preparing them for not just the  
15 world of work, but for a better future.

16 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Yeah, [coughs] hat's  
17 why I was saying internship programs versus an SYEP  
18 versus, you know, a job and--and you know, career  
19 development so that it's not just a job, a low-paying  
20 job, but there is the ability to--to advance and--and  
21 you have meaningful employment. So, thank you.  
22 Council Member Perkins, you had a question?

23 COUNCIL MEMBER PERKINS: [off mic] No,  
24 not all. (sic)

25 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Oh, okay, okay. If  
there was one thing that you could tell the

3 Administration that you'd want or you need changed,  
4 what would it be so that I can go back and give them  
5 a message? Is there anything? Well, I-I want you to  
6 know I've heard you about, you know, educational  
7 opportunities and jobs. I heard you. I just wanted  
8 to know if there was anything else you think would  
9 make the transition a bit easier for our young people  
10 or something that you'd like the Administration to  
11 know?

12 GISELE CASTRO: That' a great question.

13 I-I would say that, you know, in terms of what the  
14 Administration should know, it's what the  
15 Administration is doing. If it's a thing, you know,  
16 what organizations, you know are out there, you know,  
17 I would say at this point the courage, you know, to  
18 ensure that we are successful, and in order for us to  
19 do that, you know, we partner, and I have partnered  
20 with Friends of the Island Academy. We've partner  
21 with everyone. I think that, you know, at this point  
22 what we need is to ensure that we're sustained, and  
23 sustainability in running a non-profit organization.  
24 I mean I rather had and always fundraising, and that  
25 is a big challenge, you know, to ensure that the  
staff that we have that they are retained to ensure

3 that our young people they are given quality  
4 experiences and, you know, the same way that we're  
5 purveying, you know, we're providing equity for our  
6 young people, you know, I have this ongoing, you  
7 know, thought that unfortunately I'm not at the non-  
8 profits. You know, we're also fighting the cycle of  
9 poverty, and in order for us to make great-great  
10 strides, you know, we'd really have to do like an  
11 analysis of, you know, how is it that the city  
12 agencies and the non-profits are really collaborating  
13 and there is real collaboration, but at the core  
14 there is a lot of questions in terms of finances.

15 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Thank you.

16 GEOFFREY GOLIA: I'd say a recognition  
17 that there needs to be a therapeutic underpinning in  
18 particular in the context of Juvenile Justice System  
19 and juvenile facilities and that includes supporting  
20 the reentry programs to be in those facilities to  
21 provide clean transitions for these young people into  
22 the community, and into a web of support that can  
23 really lead them to be successful. Again, it's not  
24 just about wiping your hands and say well, if they're  
25 out of here, they're out of the system or they've  
aged out or whatever the case may be, but the idea of

3 really being able to utilize the folks on the ground  
4 who are able to provide the most effective services  
5 in the facilities, and then following out into the  
6 community

7 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Thank you. Anything  
8 from-[background comments]

9 LEGAL FELLOW: Just to kind of echo the  
10 sentiments about funding, but also while we talk  
11 about reentry like just so it doesn't get lost in  
12 this discussion like legal reentry is-is super  
13 important as well. You know, so like employment and  
14 housing and all these other things like the  
15 collateral consequences of like leaving jail and/or  
16 prison or any type of incarceration and come back  
17 into society there's always legal barriers that have  
18 to be-or legal hurdles that have to be overcome, and  
19 a lot of times I think, you know, we talk about  
20 different programs that aren't necessarily tied to  
21 like the legal issue that young people may have when  
22 they leave. Like I was talking about in terms of  
23 Fair Chance Act violation, and just so that-that  
24 doesn't get lost in the discussion.

25 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Thank you.

3 GISELE CASTRO: Well, since you asked the  
4 question, you're actually going to talk to the  
5 Administration.

6 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: I-I am.

7 GISELE CASTRO: [laughs-

8 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: They don't want to  
9 talk to me, but I'm going to talk to them.

10 NANCY GINSBURG: Well, our-our-one of our  
11 greatest frustrations is how quick the Administration  
12 is to write off young people who are charged with the  
13 most serious crimes despite the fact that they-there  
14 are many reasons why young people become involved in  
15 criminal activity of that nature, and those kids  
16 often have had the toughest lives, need the most  
17 support. Their families need the most support. They  
18 usually all as a unit need a tremendous amount of  
19 mental health support and treatment, and this has  
20 been I think-I'm glad I'm sitting next to advocates  
21 for children because I feel like we're a broken  
22 record in this building on this issue of the failure  
23 to provide deep and mental health supports for the  
24 most affected young people both in the schools and in  
25 the system. And until we commit as a society to help  
those young people and their families, we will not

3 really address the reasons why—why young people end  
4 up in these situations, and we have seen in  
5 situations where kids, young—where kids and young  
6 people have been charged with very serious crimes and  
7 have been provided with appropriate mental health  
8 services, we have seen them be able to turn  
9 themselves around to grow into thriving young adults.  
10 So, it is possible, but it takes—it takes a  
11 tremendous amount of support and commitment to—to  
12 make that happen, which is not to say that those  
13 young people should not be held responsible for their  
14 acts and their behavior, but because many of them are  
15 suffering under extreme mental distress at the time  
16 they commit those crimes, if you don't address that  
17 mental distress then you just warehouse them in  
18 detention or in jail, and they—their reentry is  
19 assured not to be successful. And that is a public  
20 safety issue that really needs to be considered, and  
21 the only way that there is any hope of addressing  
22 that is to provide significant supports for those  
23 young people and their families.

24 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Thank you. I  
25 wholeheartedly agree.

3           ALYSSA PERRONE: I think what has been  
4 said here is—is our feeling as well, and particularly  
5 just with that education piece. When students are in  
6 school and not receiving those critical and crucial  
7 mental health services that they need, and schools  
8 turn to school discipline or to their school safety  
9 agents who really often, and I've attached Advocates  
10 for Children's Data Brief on Children in Crisis,  
11 often the school safety agents are engaging in roles  
12 that are beyond law enforcement and typically, you  
13 know, I think it's something like over 40% really  
14 could have just been—and—and do end up just being  
15 referred back for school discipline. When you do  
16 those things instead of providing those supports in  
17 school and where we're seeing so many schools without  
18 mental health services whatsoever, these students  
19 really do just enter that school to prison pipeline  
20 loop and they're not getting those services in  
21 school, and so they're—they're getting suspended.  
22 They're dropping out. They're not graduating. The—  
23 the graduation rates are abysmal, and I think that  
24 collaboration, which is why we were calling for, you  
25 know, a joint committee hearing to talk about these

3 issues could really be beneficial to addressing those  
4 significant needs.

5 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: I want to thank you  
6 all. Your testimony has been very elucidating, and I  
7 really am going to go back and talk to the  
8 Administration. So, with that, I'd like to say at-  
9 not by my watch, [laughter] but it's 3:30.

10 MALE SPEAKER: 3:23.

11 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Oh, it's 3:23 and this  
12 meeting is--this hearing is adjourned. [gavel] Thank  
13 you.

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COMMITTEE ON YOUTH SERVICES JOINTLY WITH  
COMMITTEE ON JUVENILE JUSTICE

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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 November 29, 2018