



Department of
Youth & Community
Development

TESTIMONY

BEFORE THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL

**COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH
OVERSIGHT HEARING ON**

DYCD'S FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES

PRESENTED BY

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MIKE BOBBITT

FEBRUARY 23, 2024

Good morning, Chair Stevens, and members of the Children and Youth Committee. I am Mike Bobbitt, Deputy Commissioner for Community Development at the Department of Youth and Community Development. I am joined by Ebony Jordan-Wilson, Assistant Commissioner for Community Development.

On behalf of Commissioner Howard, thank you for this opportunity to update the Council about DYCD's Family Support programs.

We appreciate that the Committee is uplifting some of our lesser-known programming. The Fatherhood Initiative and Healthy Families and Senior Programs are services that help improve the lives of NYC families. As you may be aware, these programs, along with others, are funded through the Federal Community Services Block Grant. Since 1996, DYCD has served as the Community Action Agency (CAA) for the City, receiving federal CSBG funds and distributing those funds to local programs in accordance with the goals of the federal statute. CSBG funds enable DYCD to provide services for the most vulnerable New Yorkers. Through these funds, DYCD aims to reduce poverty and empower people to achieve self-sufficiency in targeted low-income neighborhoods throughout the City's five boroughs.

Fatherhood is funded citywide, while Healthy Families and Senior Programs are funded through the Neighborhood Advisory Boards (NABs), which are in 41 communities across the city. I would be remiss not thanking Chair Stevens' efforts to encourage elected officials to appoint members to the NABs. We would be delighted to meet other members of the Council to discuss the NABs and the easy appointment process.

The **Fatherhood Initiative** was established in 2002 in recognition of the positive influence that fathers have on their children. Children who have strong relationships with their father are far less likely to get in trouble at home, school, or the community. An active and nurturing style of fathering is also associated with better verbal skills for infants, greater patience for toddlers, and better intellectual functioning and academic achievement among adolescents.

For the past several years, the program has supported a diverse group of community-based organizations that specialize in disconnected youth, child welfare, working with the formerly incarcerated, and workforce development. Programs offer a robust staffing model with case managers and outreach and retention specialists. This model supports the recruitment of custodial fathers and other peer mentors for program participants, enables them to offer voluntary monthly co-parenting workshops for interested custodial moms, increases awareness and coordination to address child support and visitation concerns, and better ensures appropriate screening and referrals to providers of legal services, mediation, domestic violence services, and other necessary social services.

Programs are in targeted community districts with a high need for fatherhood services based on the number of children born to unmarried women, and the number of individuals on probation. In City Fiscal Year 2023, a reported 1,067 non-custodial fathers reconnected with their children.

DYCD's Fatherhood programs partner with many city agencies and state and federal partners, including the New York State Office of Children and Family Services, New York State Department of State, and United States Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families. We work with these partners to promote the flagship event "Dads Take Your Child to

School” Day each September. The statewide campaign encourages fathers, male caregivers, and male role models to show their children the importance of education by visiting their schools at the start of the year and staying involved throughout the year. Many dads served by our programs have embraced this challenge, and the participating CBOs have developed additional referral sources through burgeoning relationships with schools, after school and Head Start programs.

As part of our efforts to continuously improve fatherhood programming, DYCD has provided targeted training and technical assistance to assist programs in initiating outings for dads and co-parents to attend (including museums, picnics, grocery shopping), at which co-parents could demonstrate appropriate behavior and share parenting roles managing the engagement of their children.

The **Neighborhood Development Area (NDA) Initiative** fosters community level engagement to ensure both that residents have opportunities to contribute to change in their neighborhoods and that services address the most pressing needs of each community. These contracts address seven service areas, including the two we are discussing today.

- **Seniors: Social, Cultural, and Supportive Services** programs provide a range of services for adults aged 60 and older, such as social, cultural, and recreational activities; intergenerational activities; exercise and nutrition; and access to social services to improve their physical, social, and emotional well-being and increase self-sufficiency. The programs serve both those who are homebound and those who are not. Programs must offer assistance in accessing services and benefits, social, cultural, and recreational services, and family development coaching. They assist participants in demonstrating self-advocacy skills and improvement of mental, behavioral, and physical health and well-being.
- **Healthy Families: Support Services** programs aim to support and strengthen families using a holistic, strengths-based approach based on the principles of family development. Last year, DYCD Healthy Families programs worked with 5,140 families to address issues concerning childcare, domestic violence, substance abuse, HIV/AIDS, and physical and mental well-being. This includes advocacy and assistance in obtaining government benefits and other social services. Each program offers services tailored to community support service needs, which can include securing SNAP/WIC services, avoiding eviction, nutritional skills, and weatherization assistance.

Funding decisions are made by hearing directly from New Yorkers in what services are needed in their community. In 2022, DYCD conducted a robust Community Needs Assessment (CNA) across the 41 neighborhoods with the highest incidences of poverty as well as citywide. This CNA aimed to document their views on what are the highest priority social services needs to improve the well-being of their own communities. DYCD collected over 24,000 useable responses from a total of nearly 30,000 responses.

In conclusion we would like to share a story of one of our many successful program participants:

- A dad served by our Fatherhood Initiative thanked the program for its tangible and meaningful support. His child and co-parent lived in another state, causing his absence as a father to be even more apparent. Not wanting to be an absent dad, he struggled to identify a pathway back into his child's life that felt appropriate and attainable. Recognizing the need for support, he found and reached out to one of the Fatherhood programs funded by DYCD. Unlike some fathers who are mandated to attend programming, this father began and completed the program as a voluntary participant. Attending a 12-week course and working with dads in similar situations motivated him every week. Each week brought him closer and closer to being the father he aspired to become. He strived to be a present father and a positive male figure in his child's life. Like many others, his goal was to simply be involved and be a dependable parent for his child. Upon completing his classes, he next expressed interest in finding employment. The case manager at the program reached out to a partner organization to refer the dad for an employment opportunity where he was hired. After a few months, he was offered a permanent position. During his time with the program, the dad built a closer relationship with his co-parent, to whom he apologized for previous grievances and his absence. Insights gained from being in the Fatherhood program shifted his perspective and allowed him to see the co-parent in a new light. Their co-parenting relationship was reinvigorated and the father worked to repair the dynamic, with newfound appreciation for his co-parent and her efforts to care for their child. He was even able to participate in a parent-teacher conference while visiting his child in another city. His dedication to the program presented him with the opportunity to be a better father using the tools and teachings provided to him.

DYCD's mission is to improve the quality of life of New Yorkers by collaborating with local organizations and investing in the talents and assets of our communities to help them develop, grow, and thrive. Thank you for the opportunity to share DYCD's efforts to serve New York's low-income individuals, families, and communities. We are pleased to answer questions.



Literacy Assistance Center

**New York City Council Committee on Children and Youth
Honorable Althea Stevens, Chair**

**DYCD Oversight Hearing
February 23, 2024**

Testimony of Ira Yankwitt, Literacy Assistance Center

Good morning Chair Stevens and members of the committee. My name is Ira Yankwitt, and I am the Executive Director of the Literacy Assistance Center (LAC), a 41-year-old nonprofit organization dedicated to strengthening and expanding the adult education system and to advancing adult literacy as a foundation for equal opportunity and social justice. The LAC is also a proud member of the New York City Coalition for Adult Literacy (NYCCAL).

As you know, DYCD currently has an open RFP that will fund community-based organizations to lead adult basic education, high school equivalency, and English for Speakers of Other Languages programs for the next three to six years. DYCD has structured this RFP to prioritize residents of the highest poverty, lowest educational attainment, most limited English proficient neighborhoods in the city. *We unequivocally support this goal.* Unfortunately, the way DYCD has structured the RFP through a two-tier funding competition could effectively render up to 70% of the current community-based adult literacy providers non-competitive, forcing them to close their classes and displace thousands of the very students that DYCD is aiming to serve. We are grateful to you, Council Member Stevens, as well as to Council Members Won and Avilés and the 38 other council members who signed on to your letter urging DYCD to revise this counterproductive competition model and to extend the proposal deadline.

The irony is that, while DYCD wants to address neighborhoods with the highest needs, the \$12.8 million in funding in this RFP is \$4 million less than the \$16.8 million in

administration-side funding for DYCD Adult Literacy contracts in FY24. This means that this RFP will serve fewer than 10,000 students annually, a significant decrease from the 11,000 – 16,000 that DYCD has reported over the past few years, and less than ½ of 1% of the 2.2 million adult New Yorkers in need.

At the same time, the Mayors Preliminary Budget for FY25 includes \$21.7 million for DYCD Adult Literacy, nearly \$9 million – or 70% - more than what is currently included in the RFP. If this additional funding could get baselined and included in the RFP, DYCD could do some combination of the following three things:

- 1) Increase the per student funding rate, which would make it more realistic for smaller programs/organizations – those that don't have additional sources of revenue to supplement the DYCD funding – to apply under this RFP and to be able to provide more comprehensive services.
- 2) Increase the number of Neighborhood Tabulation Areas (NTAs) designated for funding and increase the number of students served through this RFP.
- 3) Create a second, non-NTA based competition for providers who wish to run borough-wide and/or city-wide programs and increase the number of students served through this RFP.

With the March 6th deadline for organizations to submit proposals fast approaching, we urge this committee to get clarity on the funding and push for a baselining of the full \$21.7 million, as well as to continue to push to fix the competition model and extend the deadline.

Thank you for your attention.

Ira Yankwitt
Executive Director
Literacy Assistance Center
iray@lacnyc.org

Center for Family Life in Sunset Park
Testimony on DYCD's Family Support Services
Committee on Children and Youth Hearing

Center for Family Life in Sunset Park, Inc. (CFLSP), a neighborhood-based social service organization, has been the principal provider of integrated social and human services in the low-income community of Sunset Park, Brooklyn, since 1978. The mission of CFLSP is to promote positive outcomes for children, adults and families in Sunset Park, Brooklyn, through the provision of a comprehensive range of neighborhood-based family and social services. Our critical programs and services include food pantry, benefits access, immigration and non-immigration legal assistance, employment preparation and job placement services, ESOL classes, free tax preparation, cooperative business development, family counseling, afterschool and summer camp, youth employment, college readiness, and others designed to meet the pressing needs of our low-income, low-wealth immigrant community. We partner with community residents to identify shared goals and implement programs that promote the healthy development of interpersonal relationships that sustain and nurture families and children while advancing the quality of life for neighborhood residents. Since its inception, the Center has grown together with Sunset Park, responding to emerging needs with innovative and effective programs. Today, our comprehensive services in counseling, employment, education, the arts and recreation engage more than 15,000 children and adults each year at eleven community locations. All programs and services are provided free of charge.

Sunset Park is a diverse and densely populated neighborhood in South Brooklyn, a home to over 130,000 individuals. Thirty-six percent of residents are Latino, 35% are Asian, 24% are white, and 4% are African American. For decades, Sunset Park has been a first destination for waves of new immigrants from around the world and a place where families in poverty strive to gain economic stability and social networks as they build new lives in the United States. With 23% of residents and 25% of neighborhood children living below the poverty line, Sunset Park ranks as one of New York City's poorer communities. 30% of households receive SNAP support. Nearly half of Sunset Park residents were born outside the United States, coming to New York primarily from China, Mexico, Ecuador and other Central American countries, the Dominican Republic and other countries in the Caribbean, and the Middle East and Europe. Sunset Park has the 3rd highest concentration of individuals with limited English proficiency (46%) in New York City. Many recent immigrant families in Sunset Park have limited access to a broad range of supports including public benefits and educational opportunities. They confront challenges related to legal status and the loss of social networks, status and power. They struggle to honor their heritage while adjusting to American culture and life in New York City. Long work hours and language barriers limit the ability of many immigrant parents to guide their children through a complex and overtaxed school system.

Through our current NDA Healthy Families (established in 2015), we provide vulnerable Sunset Park families in Brooklyn CD7 with supportive case management services. Coordinated within our Adult Employment Program (established in 1981), this program offers both case

management and educational workshops in addition to service navigation support. Each year, our Healthy Families program has enrolled at least 70 families, who pursue individualized goals developed in partnership with program staff. Supports in the program include job readiness and employment referrals, ESOL classes, obtaining identification cards, accessing public benefits including SNAP (formerly food stamps) and public health insurance, and referrals for housing assistance and workshops on tenants' rights. In the current FY of our Healthy Families contract, we seek to enroll at least 106 families. Family development plans build on on-site resources such as our free employment preparation services, including job readiness and placement assistance, as well as small business development. In addition to weekly job readiness workshops, participants select from a number of other sessions on topics including financial literacy, navigating educational systems, workers' rights, immigrant rights, stress management, and conflict resolution. Within our Adult Employment Program, we have also been operating a highly successful adult literacy program serving over 300 language learners, with additional case management support for each student.

CFLSP's Healthy Families program reflects an approach which emphasizes the development of caring, supportive relationships, and incorporates the principles of inclusion, empowerment, respect and collaboration. The program's Family Development Coach and participant families work in a partnership model to formulate a plan for addressing the family's challenges and aspirations, empowering participants to make meaningful choices through the mobilization of community resources. The program benefits from the significant depth and breadth of case management experience that CFLSP has accumulated over nearly four decades of providing culturally consonant, strengths-based services. At CFLSP, we view case management as a dynamic and relational process, built on the foundation of a collaborative partnership between client and caseworker.

The program provides culturally and linguistically competent services; all CFLSP programs are provided in environments that are respectful to the cultures, sexual orientation, gender identities, heritage, and life experiences of participating families. Services are delivered in participants' native language by bilingual, bicultural staff whenever possible. CFLSP utilizes the extensive language capacity available through our staff and community partnerships to provide any necessary interpretation and translation services.

To engage and retain families in the program, the Family Development Coach employs strong and positive communication with families, ensuring that participants access the services they need and that they have opportunities to assume leadership roles and take shared responsibility for outcomes. The Family Development Coach partners with families to take inventory of their needs and aspirations, to set goals, and to develop strengths-based strategies to achieve their goals and aims to develop trusting relationships with clients providing support, a sense of belonging, and freedom to voice their opinions.

CFLSP uses a strengths based, holistic approach based on family development principals; our strategy is to help clients frame a broad plan to regain stability and grow. All of our programs embrace a strengths based approach recognizing that each individual, regardless of background,

possesses the skills and abilities needed to improve their lives. By partnering with our participants in the development of the service plan, the Family Development Coach builds on these skills and abilities, and in so doing enhances participants' self-reliance and self-advocacy abilities.

For decades, Sunset Park has been a first destination for waves of new immigrants from around the world and a place where families in poverty strive to gain economic stability and social networks as they build new lives in the United States. As our community is known as a first place of settlement, Sunset Park has become a preferred place of refuge for many of the newly arrived immigrant families from our southern border: those seeking asylum and shelter from trauma experienced in their countries of origin in Latin America. Although neither the city nor the state are producing specific data on new arrivals, Sunset Park is an enclave of immigrants and a magnet for new arrivals coming in to our doors for service. To date, we have served over 2,000 newly arrived, asylum seekers, including many young children. The vast majority of the families have come to our community from Spanish-speaking countries in Central and South America, and essentially all report arduous and treacherous journeys made fleeing dangerous situations in their home countries. The overwhelming majority continue to experience crises and destabilizing transitions long after their arrival to the US. New arrivals are lacking vital economic and personal resources to adjust to life in a new country and are simultaneously experiencing significant trauma from experiences in their country of origin. Few have familiarity with any supportive resources and services that may exist in NYC. Most new immigrants do not speak English as a first language and have a limited English proficiency. While there are individuals who come to our community as single adults, through our service we have served an enormous number of families with young children. As such, staff in our Healthy Families program have worked with recent arrivals and asylum-seeking clients to help orient them, offering guidance and providing support with concrete services such as food, clothing, benefits access, immigration and non-immigration legal services, enrolling children in school, getting identification, and navigating New York's public systems.

Every day, the Healthy Families Program assists families in our community to receive connections to all needed wrap-around supportive services necessary to obtain stability and well-being for themselves and their families:

Ms. A came to the Center for Family Life seeking assistance with searching for work. Ms. A is a 27-year-old female born in Mexico and has been living in the United States for over 20 years, always residing in Sunset Park. She lost her job in July of 2023 at a bakery because the store closed down. She was looking forward to continuing her career in food service but was also interested in working in a childcare setting, unfortunately without much success. When she approached Center for Family Life, she shared that she had been looking for food service jobs in nearby childcare centers.

Ms. A met with the Healthy Families Family Development Coach who assessed her needs and invited her to attend job-readiness workshops including resume writing, interview preparation,

workers' rights and intro to job search. She also attended a hearing loss screening event with her children. She met with the Family Development Coach for individual sessions to explore opportunities and further prepare her for her job search. The Family Development Coach checked in with Ms. A one to two times per week to follow up and assist with addressing any challenges as they arose. She was also referred for food pantry services to alleviate her family's food insecurity while she was unemployed, which Ms. A accepted and continued for 2 months. These resources put her at ease during her period of unemployment, and she shared that she was grateful to have support and resources for both her and her family.

The support from the Family Development Coach, alongside referrals to services addressing basic needs, gave Ms. A the confidence and encouragement to continue her job search. She began interviewing more often and ultimately was offered a position as a kitchen aide at a local daycare center. Ms. A gladly accepted the position, and in our most recent follow-up she stated that she was thrilled to be working again, especially in a place where she has truly hoped to be. She was grateful to work near her children's school in a convenient location close to her home. Ms. A shared that she is learning every day on her job, and that she was happy that she could start to have financial stability and a good work-life balance.

Ms. A's case is one of the examples of the many families that have received support through our Healthy Families program, which we consider a very valuable resource in our community. Daily, our staff witness new needs arise in Sunset Park as more and more clients come to our agency's doors requesting stabilizing supportive services. The Healthy Families case management program is invaluable in strengthening families and children, ensuring that families obtain enhanced stability and well-being. In turn, the empowerment of individual families has a ripple effect in our community, making our neighborhood more resilient and thriving. Through the provision of essential resources, guidance, and advocacy, we see firsthand the positive impact on familial dynamics and overall community cohesion. As families flourish, they become active participants in neighborhood initiatives, fostering a culture of collaboration and mutual support. This collaborative spirit not only fosters a sense of belonging but also contributes to the collective resilience of Sunset Park, creating a brighter and more promising future for generations to come.



**New York City Council
Committee on Children and Youth Hearing
DYCD's Family Support Services**

To: The Honorable City Councilmember Althea Stevens
From: Ursula Cooper-Hunter, Department Director-BronxWorks Children & Youth Programs
Date: February 23, 2024

Dear Councilmember Stevens,

We appreciate the opportunity to submit written testimony to the Committee on Children and Youth. Founded in 1972, BronxWorks mission is to improve the economic and social wellbeing of low-income individuals and families. We feed, shelter, teach, and support our neighbors to build a stronger community. BronxWorks currently has the following DYCD Children & Youth Programs:

- 5- COMPASS Afterschool Programs- Kindergarten -fifth grades
- 3-SONYC Afterschool Programs- sixth-eighth grades
- 2-High School Afterschool Programs
 - 1- NDA-Adlai Stevenson Campus -YABC Program
 - 1-WIOA-FDA III High School
- 3-Cornerstones and one satellite.
 - Betances Community Center
 - Classic/Melrose Community Center
 - St. Mary's Park Community Center
 - Pyramid Community Service Program (satellite of Classic Community Center)
- Summer Youth Employment Contract- 1300 young people

The DYCD children and youth funding is in alignment with BronxWorks mission to teach and support our neighbors.

During the post-pandemic era it has become increasingly apparent that a higher participant reimbursement rate is necessary. This will enhance DYCD programming to allow programs to better serve our youth population. Below is a list of program enhancements which additional funding could support:

- Swimming Programs
- Literacy and STEAM Programming
- Social Worker to address social emotional needs of youth.
- Budgets which can accommodate a floor salary of \$22/hr. and \$25/hr. during the summer-for Group Leaders/Youth Workers and increased salary rates for Instructors and Program Leaders.



Children and Youth Department

Carolyn McLaughlin Community
Center
1130 Grand Concourse, 4th Floor.
Bronx, NY 10456

- 12-month contracts as opposed to a separate summer contract- will allow organizations to plan and budget more effectively.
- NDA -shifting of Priority Areas- As a result of the most recent NDA RFP meant we were no longer able to offer programming to some of the programs-many of the high schools where we had previously offered services were very disappointed, because the need for Academic Support at their respective high schools remained, even though the priority shifted. Also, more funding needed for incentives High School Academic Support programs - particularly needed to engage high school students- creating challenges for organizations to meet goals such as participants meeting contractual requirements.

A recent Forbes January 2024 magazine article confirms that the need for afterschool programming is most needed in communities such as the Bronx. Instead of cutting funding for children and youth programming we call on DYCD (city) to find ways to prioritize the evolving needs of the City's children and youth populations.

Respectfully submitted,

Ursula Cooper-Hunter

Ursula Cooper-Hunter
Department Director Children & Youth Programs, BronxWorks



Housing and Family Services of Greater New York, Inc.

Good morning, I am Chakera Sargeant an employee at Housing & Family Services. Our organization primarily serves senior citizens who lack proficiency in technology. Many of them are widowed, live alone, or do not have family members who can teach them how to use the latest technological tools. As society and social service organizations, including HRA continue to integrate more sophisticated technologies, details regarding benefit programs are progressively being provided through online platforms. However, many seniors struggle to navigate technology and access these resources on their own. Imagine telling a 65-year-old with limited education to download an app and upload documentation.

Ms. X for example was a widow whose husband had just passed; was entitled to several benefits that could immediately make her life easier. She had just lost her husband who was also the breadwinner and was facing eviction from her apartment. As a caseworker, I was able to help her avoid eviction, secure temporary rental assistance, improve her nutrition through senior SNAP benefits but most importantly we were able to help her secure her American Citizenship after being in the US for over 25 years. All applications were submitted electronically, she would not have been able to have accomplish this without assistance from our office.

I am employed by a housing agency, and as previously mentioned, most of the individuals who come in for assistance are seniors, aged 60 and above. Often, these seniors are grappling with serious health issues associated with aging and do not have the energy or strength to advocate for themselves. They need passionate individuals and organizations like ours who can lobby for their rights and fight on their behalf against deceitful landlords who do not obey the law.

Another observation I have made is that the residents of these NDAs lack information about available resources, resulting in missed opportunities. This lack of awareness can be attributed to factors like limited education or literacy challenges. At Housing & Family Services, we prioritize community outreach by organizing workshops and meetings in these NDAS. Our objective is to educate residents about social service programs that can enhance their living conditions and to familiarize them with their rights as tenants and homeowners. Following these outreach efforts, our office has witnessed a significant increase in requests for housing counseling services, especially concerning landlord-tenant disputes and interest in newly introduced services. The enthusiastic response highlights the significance of educating residents about their rights and available resources, ultimately empowering them to address challenges and access necessary support. These initiatives would not have been possible without funding from DYCD.

Lastly, the aim of DYCD and its NDA programs is to help families reach self-sufficiency through a strength-based approach. We do this by capitalizing and building on the strengths of families. When we help these families become self-reliant, they are independent, financially literate, and less dependent on social services. Our organization has provided assistance to



Housing and Family Services of Greater New York, Inc.

numerous families through programs funded by DYCD. We have been able to support families in areas such as housing, immigration, employment, and nutrition, among others. The assistance we have offered in these areas has had a significant impact on the lives of many families. However, it is important to note that none of this would have been possible without the support we have received from DYCD.



Hello my name is Cherlie Fevrier and I am employed with Housing and Families services of Greater New York as a HUD Certified housing counselor that works with senior and their families. I am honored to present my testimony as a caseworker dedicated to serving families with diverse backgrounds and facing various challenges. As a provider of Housing and Family Services within Neighborhood Development Area 17 (NDA 17), our organization is dedicated to supporting seniors and their families in accessing vital resources and navigating housing challenges. Our NDA program offers a range of services, including housing counseling and family support aimed at facilitating access to affordable housing, SNAP benefits, and Medicaid.

Through our proactive outreach approach, we engage with families to inform them of their tenant rights and provide assistance in resolving landlord-tenant disputes. We prioritize ensuring that families have access to adequate warrantability in their apartments, advocating on their behalf to uphold their housing standards.

Last year, I had the privilege of working closely with a Haitian family who had recently immigrated to the United States. Upon meeting them, I quickly realized the significant challenges they were facing in navigating the complex social welfare system and adapting to life in a new country. The family consisted of a single mother, and her four young children. They arrived in the U.S. with limited English proficiency and minimal understanding of the available support systems. Marie expressed deep concerns about providing for her children and accessing healthcare, as well as her desire to learn English to improve their prospects for the future. Understanding the critical need for immediate assistance, I began by guiding Marie through the application process for SNAP and Medicaid benefits. Together, we gathered the necessary documents and completed the applications, ensuring accuracy and thoroughness to expedite the approval process. Throughout this journey, I provided continuous support and advocacy, addressing any concerns or questions Marie had along the way. After successfully obtaining SNAP and Medicaid benefits for the family, our focus shifted towards addressing their educational needs. I connected the mother with local resources offering English learning programs tailored to immigrants and refugees. With her eagerness to learn and improve her language skills, The mother enrolled in the program, attending classes regularly while balancing her responsibilities as a mother. Over time, I witnessed remarkable progress within the family. The mother became more confident in her ability to communicate in English, which empowered her to



Housing and Family Services of Greater New York, Inc.

HFSGNY

engage more effectively with her children's schools, healthcare providers, and the broader community. The children, too, thrived in their new environment, benefiting from access to nutritious food and essential healthcare services.

Additionally, we streamline the application process for public assistance programs, offering translation assistance in Haitian Creole to overcome language barriers and ensure equitable access to services. By accommodating families from diverse backgrounds, we strive to create an inclusive environment where everyone can access the support they need.

Our commitment to empowering families extends beyond immediate assistance. We offer self-advocacy workshops to enhance their skills and promote self-reliance, equipping them with the tools to navigate future challenges independently.

Securing funding from the Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) is critical to sustaining and expanding our services. With additional resources, we can continue to provide essential support to seniors and their families, ultimately fostering greater self-reliance and resilience within our community.

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

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I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Ebony Jordan-Wilson

Address: _____

I represent: DYCD

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Mike Bobbitt

Address: _____

I represent: DYCD

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

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I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 2/23/24

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Dionis

Address: _____

I represent: _____

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 2/23/24

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Maria Ferreira

Address: 443-39 ST

I represent: Center for family life

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 2/23/24

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Anna Kaganova, Maria Ferreira (sit together)

Address: _____

I represent: Center For Family Life in Sunset Park

Address: 443 39th St Brooklyn NY 11232

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Ira Yankovitz

Address: [redacted] Brooklyn

I represent: Literacy Assistance Center/ NYC Coalition for

Address: 85 Broad St NYC Adult Literacy

*DYLO Literacy
RFP*