

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON JUVENILE JUSTICE

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HELD AT: 250 Broadway - Committee Rm.
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B E F O R E: ANDY L. KING
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Inez D. Barron
Mark Gjonaj
Robert F. Holden
Mark Levine
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A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

Felipe Franco, Deputy Commissioner, Division of
Youth and Family Justice, Administration for
Children's Services

Sarah Hemmeter, Associate Commissioner for Close to
Home, Administration for Children's Services

Julia Davis, Children's Defense Fund

Christine Pahigian, Executive Director of Friends of
Island Academy

Chris Norwood, Executive Director Health People of
the Bronx

Kevin Holmes, Mentor, Health People

Mickey Woods, Staff attorney, Juvenile Defense Unit
New York County Defender Services

Kate Rubin, Director of Policy, Youth Represent

Nancy Ginsberg, IOS and Practice of the Criminal
Trial Practice of the Legal Aid Society citywide

Rebecca Consala, Senior Social Worker, Adolescent
Representation Team, Brooklyn Defender Services

Dawn Rowe, Executive Director and Founder of Girl
Vow, an Adjunct Professor at John Jay College of
Criminal Justice

Saniya Jackson, 17-Year-Old Single Parent

Jackie Torres-Douglas, Assistant Vice President,
Children's Village in Charge of: MST, Multisystemic
Therapy & Family Therapy programs

[sound check] [pause] [gavel]

CHAIRPERSON KING: Good morning, good morning, good morning all. Peace and blessings 2019. Council Member Andy King. Excuse my tardiness, but construction does it to the best of us, increased— pulled out some of the stuff and a student attorney on the road, but I want to thank everyone this morning for coming out. As the Chair of the Justice— Juvenile Justice Committee here in the City Council, today's oversight conversation will examine the success rate of various programs in the city of New York that provides services to our justice involved youth. I want to thank everyone that's here to testify. As I spoke to Deputy Commissioner Franco, our biggest goal today is to understand what services or programs that are in place for our young people who are in our system, and how effectively they are. One of the primary objectives of the Criminal Justice System is to provide individuals with services and support necessary to promote rehabilitation, and avoid cycles—and avoid cycles of reoffending. This is particularly true of our Juvenile Justice System where our youth are heavily exposed to programming that aims to rehabilitate the child, assist in

maturations and set them on a path to success. To that end, each year the city spends millions, tens of millions of dollars on providing services to justice involved youth. Again, with the hope of providing children with the necessary skills to ensure they do not return back to a life of criminal conduct or just misconduct. However, for so much—so many youth, reoffending or recidivism becomes an unfortunate bump in the road of rehabilitation with strikingly high rates of such as reoffending. We are committed. I know the Commissions of ACS we all, and all the partners in there are committed to making sure that our young people who—who have missed steps do not come back into a system as we offer help to prevent recidivism. We're here today to re-examine what the city and individual service providers do to evaluate the success of the services provide to justice involved youth. To what extent does the city track reoffending when evaluating service providers? What other metrics [coughs] are being relied on to ensure that city money is being spent well in advancing the overall objectives of the Juvenile Justice System quote/unquote "rehabilitation." Today, I'm looking forward and the committee—we're all looking forward

to learning in greater detail about how the department [coughs] Division of Youth and Family Justice evaluates the success of their internal programs and hold contractor service providers to high standards to review—to assure [coughs] that the city money is being spent well, and our youth are receiving the rehabilitative services they need. With that all being said, I want to thank my staff and the committee staff for putting this hearing together. I want to thank all of the Council Members in attendance, Council Member Holden who is here today [coughs] as well as all you. I want to say forgive me for my throat. It's kind of like one of those things. Yesterday we had a great big Martin Luther King celebration coat giveaway for over a thousand kids in the neighborhood. So, my voice is a little shot. Again, happy birthday to Dr. Martin Luther King for all he's done, and I'm pretty sure if he was sitting in the room today, he'd be inspired by today's conversation by all of you committed to making sure that we improve the lives of every young brother whether they are from Georgia, Alabama, Israel, Portugal, Jamaica, Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic, Italy, wherever they may range from,

today's conversation is about saving every youth that comes into the Juvenile Justice System regardless of their origin, and I know Dr. King would be inspired by all of our commitments, and making sure that tomorrow we have a brighter future for everyone that has endured the system, but more importantly having a real dialogue to make sure that this system doesn't fail the young people as this system across America has failed so many of Americans. As we know, the shutdown still exists today. That's a failure in a system that-that has hit on every American regardless of what your-what your start date was or where your vote date started or where you were born. So, with that all being said, I'm going to ask the Administration right now if you would kindly state your name for the record so you can take-be administered [coughs] the oath, and excuse me again for my voice.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: Felipe Franco, the Commissioner, Division of Youth and Family Justice.

ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER HEMMETER: Sarah Hemmeter, Associate Commissioner for Close to Home, ACS.

2 LEGAL COUNSEL: Thank you so much. Do you
3 affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing
4 but the truth in your testimony before this
5 committee, and to respond honestly to Council Member
6 questions?

7 ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER HEMMETER: I do.

8 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: Yes.

9 LEGAL COUNSEL: Thank you so much.

10 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: You know,
11 be-before I go into the testimony, Chair King
12 actually brought up something to-to mind when we talk
13 about effectiveness and the use of tax dollars in our
14 Juvenile Justice System. You know, I think today
15 we're going to talk about what we're doing in New
16 York City, but I think we also-I myself have to think
17 in terms of perspective where I've been before. This
18 is the first time that actually I can testify in the
19 Juvenile Justice System where we can talk about
20 investments in things that make sense on behalf of
21 kids. Sadly, you know, in my--my previous role
22 either in the State of New York or actually
23 previously in the state of New York State, most
24 systems could testify about the significant amount of
25 expense in facilities. In New York State it used to

be about \$280,000 a year a kid in a CFS facility, and we all knew that actually it comes down to where we need work and that 80% of them will come back to us within a couple of years. The fact that actually I want to talk today about how the city is better and safer than every before, but more importantly—importantly that we invest in—not just in facilities far, far away, but we’re investing in—in programs that keep kids such a fully through mentoring, and probation and others in the community, and programs that actually keep kids close to home and their families. It’s—it’s a testimony to the wisdom of New York City. So, it’s—it’s kind of a good place to be compared to where I’ve been before.

CHAIRPERSON KING: Thank you.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: Good morning, Chair King, and members of the Committee on Juvenile Justice. I’m Felipe Franco, Deputy Commissioner for the Division of Youth and Family Justice. Division of Youth D-Y-F-J within the Administration for Children’s Services. With me today is Sarah Hemmeter, Associate Commissioner for Community Based Alternatives and Close to Home. Thank you for the opportunity to testify this

morning. We appreciate the City Council's interest in young people we serve and ensuring that programs and services for that provide—produce positive youth outcomes. As you know, the Division of Youth and Family Justice administers a continuum of Juvenile Justice services, which includes community based services for youth and their families, detention services for youth who are arrested and awaiting court resolution and resident placement services and after care through Close to Home from youth are adjudicated by the Family Court. In the Division of Youth and Family Justice we—we strive to improve the life of children involve in the Juvenile Justice System, reduce their likelihood to further get involved in the Justice System, and advance public safety, preventing future reoffending, protecting public safety and enhancing youth and family wellbeing are our top priorities. To do this, we have made substantial investment through our continuum of practices that have—and programs that have been proven to be effective in producing these positive youth outcomes. Our directions are clearly working. From 2008 to 2017 the number of juvenile arrests, juvenile delinquency has decreased by 70%

from 13,564 to only 4,080. Prior to Raise the Age, the overall admissions to juvenile detention increased significantly year after year dropping from 64% in Fiscal Year 2007 when there were nearly 6,000 youth detained in the Juvenile Justice System to only 2,126 in Fiscal Year 2017. Likewise, the number of youth in placement has decreased by almost 80% from 2009 to 2017. The number of young people entering Close to Home placement declined 40% just from Fiscal Year 2017 to Fiscal Year 2018. A recent study by the Research and Evaluation Center at John Jay College of Criminal Justice came to us and remind that measuring the success of youth-of justice interventions involved more than just an analysis of recidivism. It requires a greater focus on positive youth outcomes. In the story by Dr. Jeffrey Bott he notes that when given proper reinforcement and the right supports, youth will learn over time to refrain from antisocial behavior that might otherwise result in—that actually will result in fewer Justice System involvement. In New York City—the New York City Juvenile Justice System focuses on ensuring youth's success in school, at home and in the community not just in their failures. We know that fewer youth are

being arrested than ever before in New York City and fewer—fewer youth are being admitted to detention. Few—fewer youth are being adjudicated and few young adults are entering the Criminal Justice System, but that's not enough. We cannot become complacent with our success in reducing delinquency. We need to ensure that the few youth that come in contact with the system are acquiring the skills and supports they and their families need to transition to becoming productive adults. Due to this commitment, the Division of Youth and Family Justice has intentionally expanded our array of authority and evidence based interventions throughout the continuum, which are targeted to positive youth development, strengthening family functioning and promoting a new trajectory for our youth away from criminal behavior, and into adult success. We are seeing the positive impact of these interventions are having across New York City. New York City is the safest it has been in decades. Crime in New York City has decreased over time in both adult and the Juvenile Justice System. Thousands of families continue to receive community based justice—justice preventive services through the Division of Youth and

Family Justice contracted providers this year while the number of youth entering detention in Close to Home continues to decline very markedly over of the past several years. I will now discuss all the interventions employed throughout the continuum and the ideas behind them. We know that for most young people the best way to provide positive outcomes is to support them with their families and community. Along with our partners are the Department of Probation and the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice with work engaged youth in programs and services in their homes and communities whenever possible. The most effective interventions not only engage the young people, but also treat the whole family. The Division of Youth and Family Justice Family Assessment Program, FAP, is available to families with youth up to age 18 to help avoid involvement in the Juvenile Justice System by providing service. The Family Assessment Program services help families, address difficult teenage behaviors such as truancy, using drugs, runaway from home and their struggles with mental illness. FAP services offer—offer parents the skills they need to support their children, enforce limits, and steer them to positive

activities. ACS has administered the Juvenile Justice Initiative which serve youth under the supervision of the New York City Department of Probation. Specifically JJI is a program for youth who have been adjudicated in the Family Court and improvising intensive services to keep youth with their families in their communities while under probation supervision. The Family Assessment Program under Juvenile Justice Initiative, JJI, use home based interventions. For example, family function and family therapy has decades of critical research that must rate them on FAP, reducing recidivism and— and/or also of offending between 25 and 60% more effectively than other programs, and significantly reduces the potential new offending for siblings of under previous adoptions. Similarly, more systemic therapy is an intensive family and community based treatment program that focuses on addressing factors that impact chronic and violent juvenile offenders, and has been proven effective in reducing recidivism and out-of-home placement, and improving family and peer relations. With Raise the Age, we have expanded our runaway throughout the program to meet the needs of older youth, and we are invested in new evidence

based programs such as multisystemic therapy, MST-Psychiatry for youth with high mental health needs. MSTTSB for youth with programmatic sexual behavior and MSTEA for emerging adults who don't have the family resources that they need to seek independence. ACS has to provide secure and non-secure detention services for youth 16 and under who have been arrested and detained while waiting for judges to hear their case in court as specialize secure detention for 16-year-old adults and offenders. As you know, the Raise the Age legislation actually requires New York City to move all 16 and 17-year-old out of Rikers Island to a facility needed to be certified as a special juvenile detention facility, and is only operated by the New York City Department of Corrections and ACS. Horizons in the Bronx has been licensed as those specialized juvenile detention facilities and houses young people transferred from Rikers Island as well as the newly arrested 17-year-olds that are not part of the Raise the Age Law yet. The youth that are placed in detention are often among the highest truants (sic) in New York City and who have experienced various traumas within their communities. The Division of Youth and Family

Justice youth classes (sic) the New York City model within our secure detention system. A lab tech from the nationally recognized New York City Services Institute (sic), NYCSI model, the New York City model is a therapeutic approach for working with youth in the Juvenile Justice System. Facilitators from our group interactions are at the core of this group process, and includes components of positive youth development and connected behavior to help youth make positive and long lasting changes in their thinking and in their behavior. These therapeutic components are delivered to youth in a fully integrated treatment approach for social emotional competencies to learn and practice and administered by care and skill and well trained staff who work together as a team to help youth make better decisions, manage the—manage their negative behaviors and thinking. With Raise the Age, New York City is working to help the reentry to have for the first reentry specialists in detention who will work with each youth, the youth case management and the young person's family to connect to youth and the family with services in the community for continued support after discharge. It has been well documented in a positive engagement of

the family and the community leads to improve outcomes in juvenile delinquency. Grounded in this knowledge, New York State and New York City established Close to Home in 2012. In only a few years Close to Home has been identified as a promising practice that a jurisdiction such as New Jersey Florida, Philadelphia, New York and others are looking to replicate, to reduce recidivism and help improve public safety. Close to Home allows for work to be seamlessly with the youth and the family and the community to ensure the factors that led--that led to delinquency in the first place are addressed before the youth returns to the community. In partnership with the Department of Probation, we at ACS have adopted the Risk needs framework, R&R and an evidence based assessment tool to the youth level of services wireless to carry that with intervention and ensure youth's likelihood to receive a grade. As I-- as I stated before, we reducing delinquency in New York City is not enough. We have made--we have made a location a priority. We have worked in partnership with the New York City Department or Rehabilitation (sic) District 79 in this effort. In 2016-17, school year, there were 177 Close to Home youth enrolled in

the Passages Academy, and the other youth persons passed 91% of their courses and earned a 9—and earned 9.3 credits. Of the Close to Home youth who took the New York Regents exams, almost half of them passed, and parents and family engagement restricted a component to our work with DOE. The youth living close to home in 2016, 224 of them, 81% were released to their parents or other family member. As you have heard today, the New York City—New York City has become a national model in Juvenile Justice System reform. As many jurisdictions and destination and world, we see that growing as an effort to understand—understand how we have achieved—how achieved such a decrease in juvenile arrest and in—and include back and forth youth. In March of 2018, the Columbia University Justice—Justice Lab published. *Does Keeping Youth Close to Home really matter: A Case Study*, and a full report will be published in a few months in 2019. In April of 2018, the Federal Department of Education conducted a webinar to highlight the positive educational outcomes achieved by Close To Home. In February, 2018, the Center for Children loan on policy funded through the Annie Casey Foundation published

Implementation of the New York Close to Home Initiative, a new model for youth justice. All of these stories and reports by independent entities have reaffirmed that New York City is doing what is right. We at ACS believe that we should take a close look at the—at the impacts of our work, and do more further research on recidivism and positive with outcomes. Recidivism is an important method that we and—we and New York State will be examining in the near future, and we will continue to expand the ways in which we examine youth outcomes and—and how we can reduce juvenile delinquencies and improve outcomes for youth in New York City. Thanks for the opportunity to discuss the support of the Division of Youth and Family Justice provides for youth in our Juvenile Justice continuum to promote positive youth development and improve youth outcomes. We have made deliberate efforts to connect young people to our Juvenile Justice System Continuum with the services and interventions they need to address their unique needs, driving the community and further youths that are involved Juvenile Justice System. We know that there is still more work to be done. Nevertheless, we should be proud of having a Juvenile Justice

System that focus on Youth outcomes and the safest city in the nation. We are now happy to take your questions.

CHAIRPERSON KING: Thank you.

Commissioner, I appreciate it [coughs] and Associate Commissioner, now you're Sarah.

ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER HEMMETER:

Hemmeter.

CHAIRPERSON KING: Hem-Hem-Hemmeter?

ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER HEMMETER:

Correct.

CHAIRPERSON KING: Got. Yeah, I got it.

So, thank you for breaking down the system of what is in place that's designed to help young people not return back into the system. Council Member Holden and I were--proceed to just go into questions to get more details--

ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER HEMMETER:

[interposing] Uh-hm.

CHAIRPERSON KING: --of--of what that really looks like with the goal that, you know, of having on the record the success stories within your system, and how do you manage those agencies or organizations or CBOs that we've given funding to who

have not been successful because at the end of the day, I don't want to see those getting paid and our children keep going back in through the door. You know, if you're going to do it, let's do it right. So, we'll get a person on the right track so they can go a lot and be productive and-and have their own families and be a functioning father or functioning mother or a functioning individual in society. That should be the ultimate goal. So, I'm just going to jump right into a couple of questions that we have here because I'd really like to get an idea from the start how many programs can you say that we have in the system right now that ACS is contracted with that's designed to help prevent recidivism? Is the first question, and I'd like to know how successful have they been, and what is success for the system so we can get an idea of what that means in reality for our children? I'll start there.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: Uh-hm. I mean I think the way to think about it is based on the--to the parts of the continuum we have a significant number of investments. I think I mentioned them in terms of evidence based programs as part of our community based alternatives. Some of

1 them are part of the Family Assessment Program, and—
2 and, you know, so the Commissioner is going to have a
3 different talk about those programs, and some of
4 actually in partnership with the Department of
5 Probation and the Juvenile Justice Initiative. I
6 think it is important to open up saying that many of
7 these programs that have been proven to reduce
8 recidivism without outcome research, they don't do it
9 on their own. I mean so I think that it's important
10 that program are not seen as individual programs.
11 There are part of the continuum. So, for example, I
12 used to be a functioning family therapist many, many,
13 many years ago, and a lot of the work that I used to
14 do when I was a provider was to work with the family
15 and young person to improve communication, develop
16 hope. But that's why it is very, very important to
17 set up limits, and one of the things that I used to
18 do as a clinician was to actually help the parent and
19 the youth identify programs in the community that
20 actually would be connected to, to ensure that
21 actually leisure time and peers were new. So, in a
22 way, FAP was kind of capacitating families to be able
23 to navigate many of the programs that exist in your
24 neighborhood and my neighborhood, and then making
25

sure that those kids were connected to those networks of support. When we go to Close to Home, which we could talk about the different providers that we have, and how we able to rate their performance, again, the purpose of Close to Home particularly in non-secure placement is that we actually intentionally make sur that young people are being-practicing new behaviors and new peer networks before they return home. So, most young people in Close to Home, and again the Associate Commissioner are having her go into details, they actually have a period where they actually are going home on weekends with supervision where they actually have to be connected to partners such as the YMCA and the Boys and Girls Club, and baseball leagues. So, again, all of these programs in New York City by the way they have been designed, really take advantage and normalizing those periods and connecting young people to social activities. When we get to detention, particularly in secure detention where we're limited by-by having-being able to help young people to go outside in secure detention. We actually intentionally have built programming that is actually based on having many of the folks who are in the community coming in,

and, you know, in there's at least about 16 different programs that are on a typical week go to Horizons. These are programs that actually are available in the community to other the kids. They actually in a way come in to the facility to ensure that young people understand that they can be connected to those programs with their release. So, I think the framework has to be that New York City is different than many other places, have understood that actually it's through the normal life and experience of connecting families and young people to programs in the community, which we have and we're lucky compare to other places to have, so that those programs have the long lasting and supportive relationships. But I think your question and answer is about how are we sure that the programs in the community with alternatives in Close to Home and in detention are working? And we have a very strong set of accountability measures that we can go into detail for our preventive programs for our detention programs and for our Close to Home programs. I mean we have an Office of Planning, Policy and Performance whose only job is actually to ensure particularly the monitoring of Close to Home programs and when they

don't do well, we intervene quickly. I mean we either put them on higher (sic) monitoring or we put them on the Correction Advisement Plan, and it's not unusual for me in a typical week to have to meet the Executive Directors of an agency or even sometimes with the board members when they're not doing well.

CHAIRPERSON KING: So, Deputy Commissioner, I'll just stop you there because we had a meeting [coughs] and I just want to get it on the record. I want to get on the record some specific in details. We might not be able to cover everything in the interest of time, but what I want to put on the record is you gave us therapy programs in your testimony about the therapy, the structure of what you're looking to deliver. I'd like to get in some specifics of what programs that are being brought into the homes that these young men and women are-- have to learn from--

ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER HEMMETER:
[interposing] Uh-hm.

CHAIRPERSON KING: --and understand whatever their names some of them might be sick in the room right now, but I-I need to know for the record what kind of program are we having young

people learning how to tie a tie? Are people coming and learning how to do Algebra. Are people learning how to do arts and are people coming—people come in and teaching young people how to stand upright or sit right or—

ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER HEMMETER: Uh-hm.

CHAIRPERSON KING: --or what side a fork goes on or how to hold a glass. I'm trying to get some structure of exactly what are they being taught, and then from there we can understand whether these programs are successful or help them go back out into society or not, and how do you gauge those CBOs or those organizations who are walking in the door—

ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER HEMMETER: Uh-hm.

CHAIRPERSON KING: --and saying this is what we delivered today. This is what we delivered for the last six months, and then we could say, well, why are they back here because they're having the same challenge and they went back out, and now they're back in, and they still can't demonstrate that they learned anything. So, now we engage that CBO on whether they were successful, and then we say no you don't get another contract because you were here for the last year and this guy still doesn't

know how to tie a tie. So, I'm saying to you that's why I want details like that. What programs are in-- in the houses that these kids are exposed to, and how you measure the success of them, and whether we got to put them on blasters (sic) so be it, but that's so that we can understand how successful or who is doing--actually doing the work other than just having a contract and getting paid.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: I mean I-- again, I think we--maybe we--we could take on Close to Home and maybe Sarah and I can talk about how many of the things that you're talking about are actually the elements of the program, and I think elements of the Close to Home day-to-day. I mean and again from waking up in the morning and, you know, doing what you need to do to be able to get in school on time, to making sure that actually you are ready to participate in entry when you're going to go for Summer Youth employment, and that's what our Close to Home programs do and maybe we'll begin there and then I can tell you a little bit more about what we do in detention.

ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER HEMMETER: Yeah, I--I would just add that, you know, the--the programs

that we have are a continuum of programs as well, and so what we try to do on the community based side and also on the Close to Home side is match the youth with the right program that's going to address whatever the most pressing issue for that young person and their family are. So, for instance in the Family Assessment Program, we have a continuum of services that range from those therapeutic interventions like Functional Family Therapy and Multi-Systemic Therapy, but we also have mentoring programs and other things so that we can look at the youth holistically and say, what does this young person need, and how do we get them what they need? That being said, the Multisystemic Therapy and Functional Family Therapy are not just therapeutic programs. That's a big component of those programs, but they're also doing the things that you're talking about as well, which is trying to figure out how the young person can practice skills within the—in their own communities so they have skills coaches and other things that are working with young people so that they can inter—the practicing interview skills, and practicing talking to adults in a way that is not offensive, things like that so that they can come

back from wherever they are whether that's in Close to Home or whether they are in the community, and be able to do those things well. So, I just wanted to frame it in that context as well, and in Close to Home what we also do is we have I think the Deputy Commissioner referenced this in his testimony with the risk needs responsivity factors. So, we are using an evidence based tool to look at seven different domains that affect criminogenic behavior of young people. So, whether that's the--the use of the young person's leisure time, there are [coughs] substance use issues, if there are any of those. Their schooling and--and what they need there, and we are targeting specific factors for that young person so that we can provide those services to that young person to address those needs so that they do not come back into the system.

CHAIRPERSON KING: Okay. We were joined by Council Member Gjonaj from the Bronx as well. I want to--you probably have to get this information back to us later to the committee, but I think an ideal number of how many programs--

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: Uh-hm.

CHAIRPERSON KING: -- are actually in the system.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: Okay.

CHAIRPERSON KING: Because if there are 36-30 programs in the system, then we could evaluate each program and the effectiveness of the system. I don't-wheat I'm hearing, I'm just-I'm hearing a-I'm hearing the therapeutic conversation and I don't want to say blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, but I want to hear detail of who was in the room and what are they doing, and how successful are they, and how are these young brothers and sisters improving their lives. That's how we can assess if it's Johnny Joe's therapeutic jump-arounds, whatever they are. Now we can go and cry-have a criteria on who they are. But then, I'll also ask you how do you gauge your success? Who was in the room that came up with the matrix of how you evaluate programs? Is it the CBOs? Is it the Administration? Is there doctors who are in the room who comprises of all of this evaluation?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: I believe that-that is a fair question. I mean I think I'm going to take your example of who teaches a kid to tie their tie. You know, I don't wear a tie

everyday. I did it today because of here. So, for example, if we're—if you're working in one of the programs outside I was talking about like MSD and MFP, one of the things that actually the clinician will do is do a unigram, and they will try to identify folks in the life of the kid who could be a good influence, but it could be an uncle. It could be a friend of the family or someone at the church who actually has a job where they wear a tie, and we will actually tap into those people who wear a tie. In detention, you know, and I think you may know this. We've talked about this before. We have a significant number of programs we're coming in to work with the kids where they're incarcerated or detained, and again, you know, one of them is wearing a suit. So they're really good at doing that, teaching kids how to put up a tie. But, you know, we have all the pictures, we have exemplify. We have good vow, we have yeah-yeah thinking. We have artistic knowing. We have Lead by Example and we have the Animation (sic) Project. We have Urban Heartbeats. We have the International Child program. We have Elite Learner. We have Proud by Design. We have Share New York City. We have Companion, which

is really popular around culinary arts. You know, the Westchester Barber Academy, the American Red Cross. A new program around coffee and Baristas, and Division Power, Giant Thinking. So, I was proud to design something. We—we have a significant number of programs who come in and do a piece of the puzzle. I think I would be cautious, too, though Councilman and anyone here that all of those pieces of the puzzle are part of something bigger that will actually help a young person do well, and exactly what you and I will do for our kids we want them to be in sports and music and other areas. But because we just don't want my kids to recidivism (sic) because we want them to be part of this program, and I wanted to evaluate the hiring of Annie Marie (sic) Program in terms of recidivism, and whatever there is and how they will deal with my kids around the gymnastics, which is that she does there I mean so—so all of these programs, and the ability of New York City actually having a self-contained system allows us and the Council and all of those before me to connect kids to all of those meaningful experiences, and not one of them on its own is going to reduce recidivism.

CHAIRPERSON KING: Okay. I'm going to move into another part of planning. I'd like to know does every young person who comes into the system is there a discharge plan or services created for everyone who comes in or is it just specific for young people who are a high risk or particularly getting in trouble, and are they part of their own discharge plan as well?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: Okay, maybe the big picture again. Every one of the programs that being in the community as alternatives. All of those programs even though they may be limited in time, may six, eight or nine months of intervention, all of them, however, is going to generate a section phase where young people have to be connected to things that are going to be there for the rest of their lives. I mean education, family support. When we get to detention, and again this is something that has been kind of very focused about this administration, young people who are I detention maybe discharged within a matter of days. Actually, most of them can be discharged within a matter of days. Our role is to make sure that they all get exposed to these programs and they would begin (sic)

begin their participation afterwards. Many of the young people who come through detention they're being-being adjudicated to Close to Home or they may be placed under the Department of Probation, and even in probation only Close to Home there's a significant amount of planning and dreaming (sic) and coordination. In Close to Home we could talk about it, which I think we should, but it really depends on has a plan that begins on day one, and actually it's a discharge plan and aftercare plan.

ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER HEMMETER: Yeah, and so that also goes to that just needs responsivity framework as well, and so as we are assessing the youth in terms of what-where we want to target specific services, the young person is also involved in that service planning as well, and we are asking the young person and their family what does this young-what does he or she like to do? What can we connect the young person with? So, they are very involved in-in planning the services for themselves along with their parents and other folks. We have a group of-of people who lead family team conferences at regular intervals along the life of the case in Close to Home where we are brining together the

youth, the parents or the caretaker whoever is going to be taking care of the young person, the providers and bringing everybody together and looking at the service plan, reviewing it, making sure that things are on track and going well, and if not, what do we need to do in order to tweak that plan so the young person is succeeding? But he or she is definitely involved in that service—in planning those services for themselves.

CHAIRPERSON KING: So you mentioned—okay, I'm glad to hear that a young person gets and opportunity to sit down and number of people assess them and evaluate them and say this is what you need—

—

ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER HEMMETER:
[interposing] Yep.

CHAIRPERSON KING: --and opposed to listening to them and saying this is what I would like to—need as well.

ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER HEMMETER: Right.

CHAIRPERSON KING: You mentioned the families are part of day one's conversations as well?

ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER HEMMETER: Yes

CHAIRPERSON KING: So, a lot of young people, well most of them, or if they don't—God forbid that they have to go to a bigger jail, adult jails that they go back into the community--

ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER HEMMETER: Uh-hm.

CHAIRPERSON KING: --do you connect with those sometimes because of whatever lack of support they may end up connecting with the same people who got them there from the start.

ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER HEMMETER: Yep.

CHAIRPERSON KING: Do you ever in the—in the scope of your conversations with individuals ever bring some their close friends into the mix to help them understand we—we're kind of like extending the services not only for those who are in the system, but those who they might return to because they have—they have Jose's best friend is—is—is Jacob outside. He's going to still go back to hang out with Jacob, but if Jacob is still living the life, do we connect with them and allow them to be part of these service plans as well?

ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER HEMMETER: Yeah.

So, the—the—those friends are not part of the actual service planning piece of it because we want it to be

focused around that—the young person's specifically and making sure that they are getting what they need. However, if they are connected to the Police Athletic League or the YMCA or some other organization like that, then there is definitely an encouragement to bring peers along and to help them also figure out what they need. We are definitely looking at peer relations also, and if there are negative peers that they young person is—is hanging around with, how do we help them either make better choices or figure out how to navigate that so that they are not—that they are not falling back into bad behaviors with those negative peers.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: And—and peer networks is something that actually when we look at the data, you know, we know the parents have been on probation (sic) is one of the factors that is very predictive of criminogenic behavior. So, one of the things that actually the City Council invested and pushed the agency to do is invest more in on the Cure Violence Continuum, and that has actually been very effective for those young people that we know actually are adhering (sic) to their activity to have these credible messengers in each one of the boroughs

that actually are doing what we cannot do. They know how to help a young person navigate away from those negative peer networks and they—they're—you know, this is what they do. They come in with young people in detention, and in Close to Home, and they're still helping figure out how you're going to get back to your neighborhood in Far Rockaway, South Bronx or elsewhere and be able to be able to safely not affiliate with those negative behaviors any more.

CHAIRPERSON KING: Okay. We've been joined by Council Member—Councilwoman Barron from Brooklyn in the house. [laughs] I do want to help make this a good conversation. So, I know Council Members, of course, has comments as well. So, I'd like to turn the mic over right now to Council Member Holden.

COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: Thanks, Commissioner for your testimony. I attended a joint hearing last month with the Cultural Affairs Committee, and the Criminal Justice Committee. We—we had the Department of Probation talk about their creative programs in—in connecting youth with the arts in poetry, the visual arts. There were

photographers in the room that were connected. That was probably the best hearing I have attended and that's such a great program. It sounds like a wonderful program. They actually produced a magazine, the-the students. So, investments like that, I think we know are working and-because the students actually went on, and they were-they got out of the program and went into careers in-in the arts. So, I think if we can invest more in that area, because when I was interviewing a young man who was trying to get into the Army, he needed a letter from the Councilman and-and I sat down and interviewed him. He was in the Criminal Justice-in and out of the Criminal Justice system. I asked him what are your interests? What do you like to do? And he didn't know. He had nothing, and in-in hearing that, I said well that's what we need to-to focus on to get, you know, find what-what do you like to do, what's your interests to get them into whether it's a trade, whether it's the arts. Whatever it is, we need to focus on that to get-get them out of the, you know, gang activity, and maybe sometimes away from the neighborhood.

ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER HEMMETER: Uh-hm.

COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: You know, away from hanging out with their friends. So, getting them an interest and then when they find out they're good at something, then I think they could lead productive lives. So, I think that's very important and—and I'd like to hear some investment as to how we plan to increase the support of programs like what the Department of Probation is doing.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: Yeah, I mean kudos to the Department of Probation, the work they're doing with the NeON Arts programs. It's just amazing, and again, as you know, I think I mentioned in the testimony whenever possible we want our people to be supervised and made accountable in their community. I—I will extend an invitation to everyone here February 1st is actually the Close to Home Carnegie Hall concert. Our young people in Close to Home have been working for the last three months in writing songs, and producing a concert at Carnegie Hall at 6:00 p.m. We'll make sure everyone gets an invitation, but there's no better place to see the parent of our young people and, you know, what we have learned the last five or six years of research in the work with Carnegie Hall is not just that they

produce an amazing piece of work, a concert, a CD, is it actually did become long lasting super relationships. Many of the young people who—who have been part of these programs in Close to Home for months and months while in placement continue to go inside of Carnegie Hall and some of them actually—I met one of them recently that actually is working at Carnegie Hall. So, their ability—so as you said, it's a big industry, right. It's not just about being a performer. It's about, you know, working in the union, and working in the stage, working in the—in setting up the—the—the productions. I mean we actually had through Carnegie Hall been able to place some kids in Summer Stage in Central Park, and—and we need to do more of that. We actually I believe that we'll get the invitation probably even next week in Queens with another one of our really good providers called the Kite who does a lot of spoken word work, and they are going to have a poetry café for again young people in the system. And—and I think you know, the city is full of opportunities through film and media and arts and theater, and it's something that we need to tap, and work on many advice. (sic)

COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: Yes. So I think we—
but we need a plan to expand these programs because
again giving, you know, the young people an
alternative and actually expanding the Mentoring
Program because every, you know, really that's what I
think many of them are lacking in their lives at this
point, somebody to actually to talk to them and tell
them, you know—just show them the ropes. Show them
how to survivor out there, and—and with, you know,
without a life of crime, but--

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO:
[interposing] And again, I would say we have adopted.
I mean we—we jus released an RFP on mentoring, and
maybe Sarah can talk about that program. We—we
understood that program is focused on the family and
it's essential and important, but programs that focus
on getting some one in the youth is actually
essential, and now we have this new program that get
to kids before they get into Juvenile Justice System.
We shouldn't wait until they get into probation and
to Close to Home or to detention.

COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: Sure.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: These new program are available to anyone before then. Do you want to talk?

COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: [interposing] So, what is—what are the programs that are working? I think that's what Councilman King was talking about. What are some programs that are really wonderful and—and have proven to be really worthwhile?

ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER HEMMETER: Yeah. I mean so just for the mentoring program just started, and so we're just in the beginning phases of that. I think the contracts were just registered in November of last year. So, it is still a new initiative and so we hope to see good outcomes for that just because we know that mentoring is a good option for kids, and that it isn't just the therapeutic programs that—that we generally have had in place. We wanted to expand to other things, and not that the therapeutic programs aren't good. I think those also work for kids very well as well, but some of the arts programs that Felipe was just mentioning the Carnegie Hall program is amazing for kids to get them exposed to other opportunities is—is a really great program for kids. We have programs

the Girls Vow, which works with kids, young women writing poetry and doing spoken word. A lot of those things we have seen success in as well. I don't know if you want to--other?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: Yeah, I mean I think to the point about Council Member, maybe we should provide you like a big inventory of all the programs that we have and--

COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: [interposing]
Yeah, I--and I'd like to attend some of those.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: [interposing]
We're talking about all.

COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: Yes.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: Please--
please, everyone pencil in February 1st at Carnegie Hall.

CHAIRPERSON KING: What time?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: 6:00.

ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER HEMMETER: I think
it's at--

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: 6:00.

COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: Good. Uh-hm.
Could--could I ask one--one more?

CHAIRPERSON KING: Yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: Alright. In visiting Horizons the facility, I-I wasn't very impressed with it, and it needs a lot of work. Did they open the recreational yard yet? Because that was due in January sometime. They were-they were still under construction. Is that open yet?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: Yeah, I know, we-we still are using the-the indoor-indoor courtyard.

COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: [interposing]
Yeah, it's a-it's--

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: We have to use that.

COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: --claustrophobic.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: And-and there's actually a new plan to kind of make some of the outdoor space available. I don't have to tie them in with me, but I could get it to you.

COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: Yeah, they told us January or February that it would be open. Are we nearing that because it didn't look like much work was going on there, and I just felt if I was in that facility-you try to put yourself-when you visit a facility you try to say well if I was one of the

people here, living here and I just felt—I—I just I couldn't breathe in there and—and—and you would want outdoor space for the young people to, you know—you know, get some—get some, you know, activity, run around, you know, even in—in January or February would be useful.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: Uh-hm.

COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: The fact that it opened up and it wasn't ready, it—it was—it was really kind of sad and the indoor space was old. I didn't—I thought it, you know, from the outside it would be nice. It wasn't. It's not airy. It's very confining. I don't think it's much better than Rikers, to tell you the truth. So, it's just that they go into that facility and yes maybe they're getting some programs. It's just everything is small and confined. I hope that that outdoor space can be opened as soon as possible.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: I—I will get to you and into the department beside construction, but yes, it intends to open additional outdoor space this year.

COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: But we don't have a month yet?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: I--let me--no
I don't have it with me.

COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: Okay.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: I can get it
to you.

COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: Okay, if you--you
think because that's very, very important I think for
young people to have, you know, a soccer field and to
have outdoor space where they could--they could, you
know, actually get into sports a little bit--

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: Uh-hm.

COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: --rather than
being in a very confining space especially for young
people.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: Yes, yes,
they have--

COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: [interposing]
Even old people--[laughs]

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: Or for
anyone.

COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: --but young
people especially need to--to, you know, burn off some
energy.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: I agree.

COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON KING: Thank you Council Member Holden. I'm going to ask you if you can get to the committee maybe a breakdown of everyone who is providing therapeutic services--

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: Uh-hm.

CHAIRPERSON KING: --and what therapeutic actually means, and then also those who are providing mentoring services, and then those who are providing skill services, and like Council Member Holden said, everything is not all about sitting there and you analyzing what's in my brain. Maybe if I just run and jump and--

ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER HEMMETER:

[interposing] Yes.

CHAIRPERSON KING: --you know, do some boxing or just kick a ball, shoot a ball, you know half my other anxieties go and some of my other challenges that are in my head disappears as well. So, if you can give us that kind of breakdown then we can really start assessing who is delivering those programs and form a little three categories who are actually delivering because again I don't want us to be wasting money just paying programs who are not

delivering because again, I don't want us to be wasting money just paying programs who are not delivering on our young people. So, they keep going back into-back and forth into the system when they-- their ultimate goals is to making sure young people-- well that depends. If your ultimate goal is to not to have people come back because see in some cases when you provide enough services you end up putting yourself out of a job because there's no one to service. So, I'm just calling it for what it is. We've been joined Council Member Levine and if you don't have a comment I'd like to turn it over to Council Member Gjonaj.

COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: Thank you, Chairman. Just to follow up on Councilman Holden's question about the Horizon facility that visit that the tour that we had was quite educational, and at that meeting, you recall, we brought up--in particular I brought up some of the safety concerns.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: Uh-hm.

COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: Have those been addressed?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: Yeah, I remember clearly you having feedback around fire

signatures, and we worked with the Fire Department immediately and those were taken care of. You also had, if I remember and please remind me there were a lot of people on that tour. So, I made sure about maybe looking at further safety in the light fixtures, and those actually have been changed. If there were other things, I mean please remind me and I will look into them.

COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: I had mentioned about 10 items at that point, and my concern is for the safety and the wellbeing of the young men and women that are in the facility both staff and those that are going through the system. I put in there safety first. It means everyone's priority.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: Uh-hm.

COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: And there were-- and those are my analysis of what weapons could be made there.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: Uh-hm.

COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: We're dealing with young men, energetic who've had incidents and I want to make sure that we remove all of those hazards and potential weapons that could be misused.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: Uh-hm.

COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: And we never heard back. I believe the--

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO:
[interposing] No, I-I-my understanding there was a letter that was sent back to-to-to the members with the specifics, alright, but it-I will-I will get the letter to you guys again because I mean there was a letter sent to the City Council.

COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: And we got this letter.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: Okay, so-so the letter was addressed to the Speaker. We will make sure you get a copy of it.

COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: Okay, we didn't get that letter and we were part of that charge. I should have-it should have come to all of us, but there were a number of items including glass that could be used, the showers and I don't recall them all, and I would hope that we bring experts who do a walk-through.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: Yeah, we actually did. I mean I think almost immediately after your tour, the State Commission of Corrections came by and did a walk-through of the facility, but

some of them actually were seeing that and we had it identified and all those were addressed in the letter, but I want to make sure you guys got it.

COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: And you don't have a deadline or a set date to open up that yard?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: I'm sure there is, but I need to talk to the Department of Design and Construction. I don't have it with me today.

COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: When you follow up on that, will you get us that information as well? Thank you.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON KING: Thank you, Council Member. I want to get back to—I know some of us do have concerns about our visit and the structure of the building, but I'm going to ask us all to really jump back into programming. The theme of today's hearing is to understand how effective is the programming that's designed to prevent recidivism whether it's at 16 because it doesn't just go back into a child coming-going from an unsecure placement and then going into secure placement, but if we don't get it right then, they're in the resident adult

going into a secure placement with also recidivism goes from being a 16-year-old to 19-year-old going back into an adult facility, and that—I'd like to know are we tracking programs that are—that does handle that young person to make sure that they're leaving—as they leave your system going to a bigger system?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: Yeah, I think that you cannot tap into the placement or recidivism. It's not just returning--

CHAIRPERSON KING: [interposing] Would you say that for me again?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: I mean you're—you're kind of beginning to define recidivism. It's not just returning to the program in the Juvenile Justice System. It's ensure that they're not returning either to the Juvenile Justice System or the Criminal Justice System to extend their times to be two years, and I mean the numbers actually speak for themselves. The number of young people entering--the number of young adults entering the Criminal Justice System has actually decreased significantly. I mean it's just—just think about the number of young people who are 17 that have been

arrested since the Raise the Age, continues to reduce—in reducing New York City the fact that actually I mean a few years ago, there were approximately almost 200 young people and in—in 16 and 17-year-olds in Riker. We have 70 kids in Horizons today.

CHAIRPERSON KING: Uh-hm.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: It's not just that you have a system that continues to shrink. Particularly the young adult system is actually shrinking. To your point, you know, we're getting out of business.

CHAIRPERSON KING: So, I want to ask you a question in regards to contractor service providers. The metrics are they attached as a condition, and their success to continue because I'm still not clear on how you're evaluating anybody, and who is evaluating them, and if they haven't been successful have you released them of their contract. So, if you can give us some clarity on how you gauge those who have been in the system working with you, and as you got Raise the Age, you guys are going to have a new conversation because now you end up with a new system. So, the first question is how have you

really evaluated what's already on your table, and if they're having the success, what have you done to make sure that they don't come back or if they're coming back, why? And how are you adjusting to the new system of Raise the Age?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: So, let me see if I can—just two questions. I mean one question is about the effectiveness of the system, and again, you know, based on the numbers and the reduction significantly with a number of young people coming to the Juvenile Justice System particular placement and detention and even the younger the system, the programs are being effective making the city safer. But I think your question, too, is also about within the continuum of programs how do we know which ones are doing better than others? And—and yes, and we have a monitoring unit that actually tracks performance, and actually more importantly actually goes to the homes and those are unexpected visits and we make sure that they're actually—our providers are doing what they need to do. When they are not doing what they need to do, or things actually happen because we keep track of other incidents, we move them in highly monitoring and correction action, and

if you think about, you know, the history of Close to Home and these are monitoring of five years, there's providers that we have in the contracts. I mean there's providers that actually are not in the city any more because we felt they couldn't do what they had to do.

CHAIRPERSON KING: Have they ever tried to come back in another form or another way or another name?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: No, actually the ones that left, actually some of them just left the city and don't want to come back to the city, but yeah, I mean there's--there's programs that have been closed, and providers that have been completely out of the Juvenile Justice Continuum.

CHAIRPERSON KING: Okay, I'd like to turn it over to Council Member Barron. You ready. Councilwoman Barron.

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Thank you to the Chair and thank you to the panel for coming. As we're talking about reducing recidivism, and we're talking about those after care programs, in the briefing papers, it talks about the services that are needed are employment, housing, mental health and

substance abuse. Is there one location where all of these services are offered or is there a case worker who's going to help the student, the child that's coming back particularly getting back into school.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: Uh-hm.

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Is that seamless? Do children definitely come out and get right back into school or is it a process? Who takes care of that to ensure the children are re-enrolled in school?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: Yeah, I mean one—one of the things that actually New York City has that few places have I guess in most Juvenile Justice Systems I mean it's across the river to New York City and young people actually are removed from their district. They're sent to a facility far away. For example Jamesburg, which I think is going to be closing next week, and then they have to go from that facility back to their district again. There's usually a gap. That doesn't happen in New York City any more because young people when they're arrested they go to Horizons. Horizons actually does schooling under the Department of Education. If they get placed to Close to Home, they go to a Close to

Home site. The schools are also run by the Department of Education, and then the Department of Education, you know, cannot get sent back to the community. It's not perfect but the Department of Education invested in transitional guidance counselors. So, they actually have a transitional guidance counselor who works for the Department of Education helping navigate of, you know, usually 60 days before the kid goes home into what is the right educational setting. On top of that, the providers and our staff are part of those conversations with the family to figure out what is the right place to go back to. I mean sometimes it could be the school that used to before, but many times it's not.

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: So, is there a gap between a student coming back?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: No, not any more. I mean young people that actually they live in the parent location, are actually in the new school within a couple of days. That's-that's not have always been the case. I'm looking at Legal Aid back there. I mean you guys had a lawsuit against the city many years ago because there used to be a time when where kids actually would be home waiting and

watching Rikki Lake. I mean those are the shows that they were watching in those days for—for a month. That's what they--

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: [interposing] So there--there are no gaps?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: There's not gaps.

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Okay, and what about housing? If there are students—if their children are coming back and for whatever reason they're not returning to the home where they were before?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: Yeah. I mean I think you heard that our numbers of permanency are very good compared to what it used to be when—when the kids were far away. Having said that, I'm going to let, Associate Commissioner Sarah Hemmeter talk about it because it's something that we really are keeping an eye of. As we get older I think we need to be diligent and ensure that young people can go back home or actually the resources that they need to get into housing.

ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER HEMMETER: And so one of the things that we've been working on from day

one when a young person comes into Close to Home is where are they going to go when they leave us, and so that is part of engaging that family and making sure the family understands what's happening, and what services are going to be in place, and that's why we have those family team conferences on a regular basis where everyone is coming together and saying this is what's happening, and this is what the plan is, and we have pretty—as Deputy Commissioner Franco said, we have a pretty good success rate in terms of kids returning back home to parent or a family member, but there are kids that the families disengage and that is a problem. One of the benefits of having the Juvenile Justice System along in the same agency as the Child Welfare System is then we can engage the child welfare system if we need to in those situations. Then we have had kids go from the Juvenile Justice System into the child welfare system as a last resort into foster care when the parents have disengaged from the planning for their—for their child. And we also—sorry—just so-- We have a unit actually that—that monitors those kids either who are coming from foster care into the Juvenile Justice System or who—who need a foster care placement at the

end of the Justice System to make sure that they are achieving that type of permanency when they need to.

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Is there a case manager assigned to each child that's coming back?

ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER HEMMETER: Yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: So, there's one person who's dedicated to make sure that all of these pieces are in place?

ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER HEMMETER: Yes.

So, the—so ACS has staff are called the Permanency and Placement Specialist who are the case managers of the case—of the case in Close to Home. They are assigned on day one when the young person is placed, and they follow that young person all the way to the end of—of the disposition to make sure that everything is in place for that—for that child, and making sure the provider is doing what they need to do as well. So, they're—they're overseeing the case from beginning to end. The other thing that we recently did was that we amended the contracts for our providers so that there's continuity of care on the provider's side as well so that there isn't a hand-off of the youth between the residential placement and aftercare. So, they're responsible for

both now. So, there isn't that gap as well, which we recognize was as problem because things were dropping off through that handoff. So, the providers are now responsible for planning for the aftercare services from day one as well. So, we have both the ACS staff as the case manager of the case from beginning to end and the provider working with that young person from beginning to end.

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: [coughs] And you mentioned the Peer Network, and would you talk a little bit more about that so I can get a better understanding of how that works.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: Yeah, me and Sarah can go to the specifics. I mean we—we, you know, in partnership with the Department of Probation and—and others again, you know, have been looking at what really works in reducing criminogenic behavior and juvenile delinquency and, you know, we know that young people—not all young people get in trouble for the same reasons and it has to be individualized. You know, it's not about the program. It's about what specifically that young person needs. I think Sarah could do it better than I and talk about the different domains, and one of the things that we're

very conscious about when we meet someone is to try to figure out the initial time because it's a--it's a--it's a important factor. How they think about stuff, you know, which we're--doing a lot of, you know, helping young people connect to different ways of thinking about reality, and then quit hanging around it, and--and I think that's essential. So, we--we really planned for the times of when young people are returning home particularly Close to Home to--with them have the conversation that, you know, the Council Member asked us to do about how you're going to be spending your time, and is that going to help you move forward or not. And you can talk about how to do that. I mean--

ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER HEMMETER: Yeah, so there's a lot of conversations with a young person about their--their family, you know, who is in their family, but also who their peers are so that we can kind of get a sense of what is going on with them, and also trying to create positive peer networks for young people so that they don't return to the--to negative peers and get into trouble again. So, that is some of the work that we do in trying to engage youth with--we call it pro-social activities. So,

those are the things such as Carnegie Hall or a soccer team or something like that that the young person is interested in so that they are connecting with youth who are not involved in criminal behavior and falling back into--into that when they return home. So, we're--we're working with the young person to figure out what their--what they like to do, what their interests are, and trying to find a program within their community that will assist them with that.

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: [off mic] Okay, and just [on mic] one last question. You talked about the Carnegie program. Is there another largescale program that you can bring to our attention that would give us an idea of other alliances of the agencies that you made with large organizations?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: I mean there's so many and again I mean I think one of the things that I--I want to be cautious is that Carnegie Hall is an amazing program. It's really big, but it's actually--

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: [interposing]
Right.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: --really
it's more CBOs in every community that we tap into.
So, again, it's not unusual for a young person who's
coming back to Washington Heights to connect to a
program that is actually--

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: [interposing]
Except that the CBOs have limited budgets and
Carnegie Hall has a much larger budget, and we know
that money plays a significant part in this, and I
don't know how many children are able to get into the
Carnegie program, though. Is anybody who is
interested able to get in or is there a cap on that?
So, that's why I asked about other largescale
organizations that might offer programs that they can
sustain.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: Yes. I
think I'm going to see some--some of the really good
programs in the log-ins (sic) and again, I want to be
cautious that again, you know, we have young people
who actually are really focused on workforce
development and--

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: [interposing]
Sure.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: --how they may connect to Exalt or there's young people who are actually going back to Jamaica, Queens, and you know with the Queens YMCA it's--it's amazingly receptive to actually take our kids under their wing. I mean we're doing some really good work in the South Bronx and--and in Manhattan with The Door. I would have to give you--

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: [interposing]
Okay.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: --the inventory, which I think would be many, many pages of all the great people in New York City who are stepping up on behalf of those kids.

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Okay, great.
Thanks, and I'm also concerned about the timeline for completion of the recreation area in the facility we visited. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON KING: Thank you, Council Member, and we do have some of our organizations here that we want to hear from, but before we get to them, I do want to ask how has it been with all the other agencies or who are responsible for making sure that these young people move forward and onward? How has

the relationship been with everyone sitting at the table [coughing] complying with one another? Has there been challenges of all of you coming together and not try hit those among yourself because at the end of the day the young people lose when adults don't get it right.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: Yeah, I mean it's—it's never fully small. I mean, you know, the young people that we work with sometimes have been redressing (sic) a community and in schools and in clinics and so forth. I think it takes—it takes our PPS's and our providers and actually some of the advocates in the room to be consistently advocating so theses kids---continue to give kids a chance, but again as I opened—the—the hearing, many people envy what we have in New York City. The fact that actually we have an educational system that is willing to take some ownership as this case is unique. The fact that we actually have the Department of DYCD, you actually being willing to invest in our programs, that doesn't happen everywhere. We still have challenges. We—we—we, you know, we have a lot of—a lot of young people who need mental health, and some of these our focus is not

just at the city level. You know, I testified last month in Albany because I—we do believe that OMH has to step up the Office of Mental Health at the state level and make more resources available in particular communities so that kids can actually get the services they need. I'm trying to do the same with the Office of OPWDD because there are some young people who—who have some cognitive delays that actually the state has—the state has to step up and—and help them out. I mean if those services are available and—and the supports are available, most young people do well.

CHAIRPERSON KING: Congratulations because I'm just jumping because my question, next question is going to be how does the individual who—who is experienced in any type of mental illness, how does programming for them—how do you gauge the success of a program for them? Is—is that programming different than the person who is not suffering from any type of mental illness?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: Yeah, again one of the things that we have been again very lucky in New York City is the partnership with Health and Hospitals Corporation. We made an announcement last

year and actually also two weeks ago Health and Hospitals actually took over the operation of Health Services in Horizons, and their partner is Bayview Hospital have actually been a longstanding partner in the provision of mental health services in Horizons and Crossroads, and they continue to invest not just in the provision of services, but helping our staff be better in monitoring these young people. We're doing some new things around, you know, for example the MSD and as we talk about our being second rate three capacity to help people go to their home and helping these kids.

ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER HEMMETER: Right.

So, MST, which is one of the therapeutic programs that we have talked about has an adaptation for young people and their parents who have significant mental health issues. So, they will work intensively with the young person and their family in their homes and their communities to address not only the behaviors that are bringing the young person to our attention, but also the mental health issues, and trying to connect them—make sure that their diagnosis is correct if they have a diagnosis making sure it's correct, making sure any medication that the young

person or the family or the parents is on is the right medication and connecting them to a clinic that can help serve them once they are done working with that family. So, we have connections with Article 31 clinics throughout the city, and other smaller organizations that do mental health work in the communities as well, but that is one of the programs that we are bringing on board—hopefully bringing on board with the Family Assessment Program, but we also have that in our Juvenile Justice Initiative, which is the alternative to placement program.

CHAIRPERSON KING: So, I'm just going to make a—not a random comment. I'm just going to make a comment. I could injure myself, and I can go to a doctor and the doctor I'm seeing evaluates me. They say do this. That should work, but I did it and it didn't work. There comes a point when I got to say that doctor is not getting it right. I need to go get another doctor, get another assessment and figure out what's wrong. So, my question even though we're asking them, the question of someone who's dealing with any type of mental illness or anyone who is not doing the program of being able to really assess the program. Because even if I am going to have mental

illness, what is the matrix? What is the evaluation process? How do we judge whether or not these children have gone through that part of therapy are actually being helped and being able to move forward? That's the answers I'm trying to get on, and I'd like for us to figure out what programs whether they're mental health services or they're just other therapeutic? How do we get that on record to find out what works because again, I don't us to continue to spend money on programs. It sounds good, but I don't know how many kids out of the 85 or 87 that's in the system right now has returned who's been in there before, who's gone to the same-gone to the same doctor, who's gone through the same other program. You know, sometimes in the Juvenile Justice System we have this prison-prison education system-a form of educating our kids, and nothing that steps outside of helping them seeing themselves as a person. It's that-that prison education we're always keeping vacant and that-that this is the therapy I get when I go to prison, and not something else that makes me feel worthy of being an individual. So this is why I'm trying for us to get to a place of how do we evaluate those programs so if they're not doing it

right? You mentioned Carnegie. They have the finances to expose these kids to a whole different world ,and why I appreciate some of the community based organizations and our neighbor, if they're working on with a \$100,000 budget, you know, they're not going to be able to deliver what, you know, what Jose and Malik or Israel needs. They're going to be able to deliver on it. So, but we won't know that unless we actually look at who's doing great work and if there is someone who is doing great work that you know of, then maybe we got to find the funding for them because we mat be giving too much money over here ad we're not delivering. So, this is what I'm trying to get to so I'll turn the mic back over.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FRANCO: You know, I—I think you are asking the right question. I think we—we purposely or I purposely won't talk about any—talk about positive youth outcomes. At the end of the day we have plenty of them. Actually less kids are coming to the Juvenile and Criminal Justice System, and—and that—that would show the resident is getting better, but that's not enough. I mean I think your question to me is a fair one. I mean the few people who are coming to the system and they're

doing better. We believe that actually we don't have all the statistics. I mean we—I—I—we have some numbers around education that are very, very impressive, and that's why the federal government has been pounding about Close to Home to our jurisdictions, but I think to your point and maybe to be cautious I mean I—I've been one of those providers in the community. Every—providers have to mean they're going to do a really, really job, and they have something that they can do that is beyond recidivism. I mean the commitment of someone from the South Bronx who is in the community raising (sic) those, you know, the housing developments where it's—it's one division (sic) that has been long lasting and our young people are not going to get right at the beginning. They need it—they need people in their side, in their court who are going to be there for the long haul, and those—that's not all. So, it's not ACS. I don't want to be in their life forever, and those are the CBOs that you're talking about. I—I think—I think if you think about Juvenile Justice and there has been so much money to spend in the wrong ways historically like facilities far away, where we could really grow at times. New York City

has done the right thing by bringing the kids closer to home. Should continue—to continue to—continue the narrative and continue the rest in the community where our case come from. I mean we have talked about this before in hearings. We know that cases is going to come from everywhere in New York City. They come from maybe 10 neighborhoods. Anything that you guys can do to push to invest in those neighborhoods, I welcome.

CHAIRPERSON KING: Well, I believe on the committee we will support. I always see a lack of funding. It doesn't mean lack of service, but if you have—we have programs that just have a lack of funding, but to have it to makes it serve, and maybe we do help them and—and the only way we can find that out is because of the big guy who's getting the big money from the city. It's not doing it, and they continue with the big guy just to get the money in their own way. The two CBOs, the local neighborhood organization that's doing the work, the child that's in—that live in Tilden Houses or lives either Evan Wan (sic) Houses on 149th Street, it never leaves the neighborhood because the CBO doesn't have the money to even take them out of there, and just constantly

with crisis all the time or sometimes we need to expose our kids to different environments, well I can—I wish I can do it, I just don't have the funding to do it, but someone else who does the funding to do it, is not doing it because the commitment isn't there, and that where we would only know that if we evaluate how they're delivering the services to our children. So, we really need for you all to help us. Put something together with who's doing what, how they've been delivering, and if they are worthy of continuing to being a part of the system or not be a part of the system. Kids will age out of the system, and move forward. You had talked about mentoring programs earlier. I'd like to know before we kind of conclude with this conversation, how do those are a part of mentorship when a child ages out and moves onto the next phase of life, how does that relationship—how do you monitor that relationship? Are we committed to keeping those relationships?

ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER HEMMETER: Yeah.

So, as I mentioned, the—the mentoring program that we have just started so it's—we haven't gotten there yet, but I do think that it is something that we

should be looking at in terms of when we are looking at evaluation there's what are the connections that the—that the young person has post their time with us, and how do we make sure that they are still connected to either amend that mentor or somebody else who can provide those services to them, but that's definitely something that I think we should look at when we are evaluating that program.

CHAIRPERSON KING: Okay. So with that, I'll just say I want to thank you for your testimony today. God bless us all and a great 2019 and I just say to us all in the room, Dr. King said he had a dream and sometimes everyone who doesn't believe in a dream don't want a dream to fulfill itself. So, if we are all in this committee to making it happen, then let's get the people who are not doing the right thing by programming, and tell them, Hey, you got to go sell something else, but you can't come in and sell it to our children. So, thank you again and appreciate your testimony today.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER HERMAN: Thank you.
[background comments/pause]

CHAIRPERSON KING: Okay, we're going to call up our next panel. Julia Davis from the

Children's Defense Fund; Christine Fagan and of course, Friends of Island Academy. If I said that wrong, correct me and announce yourself. [laughs] Kevin Holmes, Help-Help People of the Bronx; Chris Norwood, the Bronx. [background comments/pause] Alright, so we can start from left to right or right to left depending which you read or write.

JULIA DAVIS: Good morning, Chair and member. I'm Julia Davis from Children's Defense Fund. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. By way of context, we serve as co-lead of the Raise the Age Campaign in New York and so, part of the testimony I'd like to offer is in the context of seeing the city succeed in this reform, and before I talk a little bit about the specific needs of youth in New York, I just want to address some of the things that ACS raised today in terms of encouraging youth to think broadly about the outcomes for children in Juvenile Justice. If we're more about their connectedness to the community, their reentry into school, their reengagement with education, their mental and physical health, their connections with families and really long term about the competencies they need to succeed as young adults in the world.

And so, very happy to hear that the conversation today was about all of those different components. You know, as we think about Juvenile Justice, best practice is really about positive youth development. The focus is on all of these different components that make sure that young people's lives and the measures of the success of programming in Juvenile Justice really are about evaluating their strengths and seeing them not only as risks to the community and moving away from that model, but seeing them as people that need connections with services, and long-term connections with communities including adults will help them succeed. I think nowhere is this more important and was more visible than at Horizon with the transition of young people from Rikers Island where the availability of programming, the consistency of services provide by Friends of Island Academy, who I think you'll hear from today as well as the other service providers there made an enormous difference in reducing the conflict of violence in that facility. After the first couple of weeks what we saw were decreases in incidents and the safety of young people and staff improvements. It's all about the consistency of programming there. So, as you

think long-term about the impacts on young people as they leave these systems, we also want to talk about the importance of the programming while in side. I also just want to focus on the fact that folks like Friends of Island Academy and their service provider partners have made enormous investments in making sure that the connectivity of services when young people go back into their community are paramount, and that means the engagement with just the issues you're describing: Mentoring, family engagement, the services they need to be supported and successful and reengagement with school. And this is true not only at Horizon, which is essential to the success of Raise the Age but also with regard to Crossroads. So, I wanted to highlight those things for you today. Thank you.

CHRISTINE PAHIGIAN: Chairman, thank you. My name—and committee members. My name is Christine Pahigian and I'm the Executive Director of Friends of Island Academy, and I—I have a much too long testimony here so I'm going to deviate from it and I'll just from it. The—the work that Friends was born on the school floors of Island Academy, which was the school on Rikers Island back in the '80s, an

the reason for its birth really it was—it was the vision of the first principal and a group of people who saw that young people of color were coming back at the rates 70 and 80% back into the same classroom and to the same jail, and that was the seed that gave birth to the organization. And over most of—it was almost 30 years ago, and for the majority of those years, that is essentially what we've done on a small scale. On the heels of criminal justice reform around 2013-2014, we cooked up an idea essentially with a group of partnered community member and partners where we wanted to take this thing to scale so that every kid who got off a correction bus and walked into a door at Rikers Island would have somebody meet them at the door and say hi. How are you holding up? Is there somebody I can call for you? What do you need right now? And then from that spark of a relationship, stay with that kid throughout the period he or she was in—in detention with an eye toward building it such that that relationship goes back to the neighborhood where that goes home. If you—the testimony that I did give out, if you look at the cover sheet—let me just say one more thing. So, we peddled this idea, and eventually

the city through the Department of Correction gave us a-what turned into a three-year demonstration pilot, and this pilot had a few pieces to it. Piece Number 1 was what I just described. Every kid gets an advocate, and as many advocates as possible follow as many of the kids that we can engage post-release directly back to the neighborhood connecting them to organizations for example like Pearl Valligan (sic) talked about before who is one of our partners. Directing them directly to whether it's a pastor on the corner or Mr. or Mr. Rivera who owns the bodega upstairs whether it's Youth Force on the corner of Linden Boulevard or organizations at the grassroots level that are meaningful to the kids when they go home to the block. Through what became a 3-year demonstration pilot, that's what we started doing, and we started doing it in November of 2016. If you look at his map, the map essentially shows you that over a 2-year period that ended a couple of weeks ago--over this 2-year period, 2,828 young people met with Friends advocates who said to them: Hi, my name is Chris of Friends, and of those 2,200 we discharged to communities in New York City. The darker the blue on your page, the greater the number of young people

[bell] went to those communities. Can I just have another minute? I'm just seeing this through. Thank you, and of those we know that 1,262 of them engaged with kids post-release in those neighborhoods. I think--and then if you looked also at the back page, you'll see sort of the breakdown by facility and how that happened. When we're--in the middle of this Raise the Age went into effect, and on October 1 when those kids who were 16 and 17 at Rikers were put on a bus and delivered to Horizon, their advocates followed them, as did the group of community partners who do things like spoken word, poetry, job skills, financial management, fun stuff that followed--they also followed to Horizon such that every day at Horizon for example from 4:00 to 6:00 and the Commissioner may have testified to this, every day from 4:00 to 6:00 in ten halls this group of community partners are in there doing these different things in groups and in the Cohorts, and on Saturdays and Sundays as well, and the similar stuff is happening at Rikers with the youngest people there 18 to 21, but the--this--the heartbeat of this is the advocate that follows the kid all the way out to the community, and thank you.

CHRIS NORWOOD: Chris Norwood, Executive
Director--

CHAIRPERSON KING: Talk to the mid.

CHRIS NORWOOD: Oh, I'm sorry. It's that
way. Thank you. I need the red light. It should be
red. Okay thank you. Chris Norwood, Executive
Director of

CHAIRPERSON KING: [interposing] Did you
press the red? Is the red light on?

CHRIS NORWOOD: Hmm. Yes.

CHAIRPERSON KING: There you go.

CHRIS NORWOOD: Now it's on.

CHAIRPERSON KING: It went over and out.

CHRIS NORWOOD: It was winking at me
before. [laughter] Hello. Chris Norwood, Executive
Director of Health People of the Bronx. I want to
thank you for this very important hearing.
Evaluation is very helpful, and it helps all of us
understand how to do better. Health People from the
beginning has been one of the community groups, which
had the pleasure of implementing Arches. The
Department of Probation deserves enormous credit both
for developing Arches and making it their first
program contracted to community groups as part of its

strategy. Intensive evaluation has shown that this group and individual mentoring program where older men who were in the Criminal Justice System are the mentors, had outstanding results with at least 60% fewer re-arrests than similar young men not in Arches. I would like you to consider evaluation in a wider scope, which is how to go forward with success. The first point is to continue the success of Arches. It is only nature within organizations and city agencies that there are new challenges constantly. In the Department of Probation there is turnover probation officers for example and the new officers can't always know the importance of making referrals, but we can't enroll anyone without a probation officer signing off. We really need more and I'm sure all the community groups to work more closely with the Department of Probation to get the referrals back up to what they were at the beginning of the program so we are all at full capacity, which is what we should be. And now that ACS is involved, perhaps Probation and ACS can work more closely together to see which young people should be in Arches. The department also obviously has been under great pressure to implement Raise the Age. For

Arches Raise the Age meant that that 16 and 17-year-olds could no longer go to the established Arches groups, which were originally for 16 to 24-year-olds even though evaluation clearly showed that 16 to 17-year-olds were doing particularly well in the Arches groups. Under Raise the Age with funding the last time I looked the department could only start Arches programming for about 32 16 to 17-year-olds in each borough. By policy, the Bronx and Brooklyn have to take the brunt of the serious problems and challenges with Raise the Age. All--all Dale (sic) young people are being placed in the Bronx and in Brooklyn. As often happens in our city there is a huge discrepancy between who has the funds and where they are needed. Most of these youth are in the Bronx and Brooklyn, but the Manhattan District Attorney's Office had reported \$734 million in assets forfeiture--it's a hard word to say--funds as of June 30th. The money was gained by enforcement of federal laws, which while this federal money the key location of the Manhattan District Attorney gives that office an incredible advantage [bell] in claiming these funds. By contrast, the Bronx only had \$3 million in asset seizures. The Manhattan District Attorney amazingly

gets single-handedly to decide where this money goes. I have not been able to find that he has donated any funds whatsoever to youth and justice programs in the Bronx and Brooklyn, although he is actually used some of this money for out-of-state programming for a National Rape Kit Initiative. I realize the City Council does not provide oversight of the district attorneys, but I think we all need to ask how it can be proper for this amount of federally derived money not to be fairly used for the city, and allocated to where the needs are unquestionably highest and especially since it is derived from—from crime not to be used for programming so well shown to keep our highest need youth from further crime. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON KING: Thank you. Before—Arches is in the Department of Probation?

CHRIS NORWOOD: It is.

CHAIRPERSON KING: Okay. We should add for the record. Can you like in 30 seconds define what Arches is?

CHRIS NORWOOD: Yes, it is a—and—and Kevin can speak more to that because he's the credible mess-messenger. [laughs] It's a group and individual intensive mentoring program where older

men who have been in the Criminal Justice System are mentors for younger men. They do both group mentoring, individual mentoring. They're really available 24 hours a day, at least by phone, and Kevin, do you want to just talk about more what you—you know.

KEVIN HOLMES: Thank you. What we do at Arches— Oh, Kevin Holmes, Employee of Health People.

CHRIS NORWOOD: A mentor.

KEVIN HOLMES: A mentor [laughter] What we do at—what we do at Arches we try to—we try to meet them where they're at. You know, we—we—we go to probation where they're sitting there just ready to see their probation officer, and we recruit them. So, the referral comes from the probation officer to us and a lot—we have—we have like one-on-one sessions. We know if they want to get in school, we get them in a school. If they need a toilet, we try to find them a toilet. You know, whatever they need, we—we—we try to help them with that, and once they graduate, you know, like I always keep in contact with them. You know as I told them you can always come back, you know from, you know just for that

follow-up. You know, just to make sure that everything is going smooth, you know.

CHAIRPERSON KING: [off mic] I know we do have [on mic] I have a question and then Council Member Barron has one. I have a question and then Council Member Barron also has a question. Friends of Island Academy, how-how well do you work with ACS on this whole conversation we're having about programming because I know you're advocates? You're not a program just advocates?

CHRIS NORWOOD: Yeah, it's so hard to understand what we are because it's hard to explain it. [laughter] We're-we're sort of all of that. This particular thing and-and-and Commissioner Franco did speak about it as well. It's rolled into one-two separate things. We do provide programs. We are an organization that does a number of things. We have this youth reentry network, which is sort of our-the core of our work, which is you meet a kid inside custody, you stay with that kid for as long as you can hang onto him, whatever that takes, and not just referring somebody to Project X, but-but taking them by the hand, being there at 2:00 a.m. when they call up to say, My-my-my mother's-my mother's boyfriend

just kicked me out. Where do I go? Can you help me?

So, there's that aspect to it. This particular, and then we also operate at a couple of school sites in collaboration with DOE, and we have Career Services Center that serves any young people however they come to us to do both a combination of internships, placements, jobs and supporting their tenure and their retention. So, that's the--the big picture.

This particular thing that the map is of, is part youth advocacy and it also encompasses a group of-- right now I think it's a total of 40 community based partners. A lot of them spend time inside the jails, and put in sort of one, two or three hours a day in designated halls at Horizon or--and that only started because the kids transferred over to Horizon.

CHAIRPERSON KING: Uh-hm.

CHRIS NORWOOD: But it's--we work almost daily with the folks at ACS right down to sort of a day-to-day discussion about who--who should be in what hall because Kid X is really interested in the spoken word and Kid Y is interested in that, and so--

CHAIRPERSON KING: [interposing] So, then this sounds like it's part of our service plan for the--when the young people come in?

CHRIS NORWOOD: The -the role of the advocate is to do that, and another piece to this is that the Court system intersects because the majority of the young people that we're serving also have open pending cases. So, there's a piece of ourselves that also do mitigation work. So, we'll reach out to the defense attorney and they work--

CHAIRPERSON KING: [interposing] So, then they have it where it's in the essence of time. So, you're an advocate. You're not--you're not case workers or anything like that.

CHRIS NORWOOD: Huh-um.

CHAIRPERSON KING: Okay, where do you get your funding from?

CHRIS NORWOOD: Until about three years ago, about 85% of it was from different private foundations, and from DYCD. Starting with this, a large chunk of it now comes from the city. This thing is from our--it's through the Department of Correction, and it's at risk. So, we need to make sure that doesn't--

CHAIRPERSON KING: [interposing] So, my last question, and then I will turn it over to

1 COMMITTEE ON JUVENILE JUSTICE 91
2 Council Member Barron. You said when you walk into
3 the door--
4 CHRIS NORWOOD: Uh-hm.
5 CHAIRPERSON KING: --you greet them at
6 the door.
7 CHRIS NORWOOD: Uh-hm.
8 CHAIRPERSON KING: You hold onto them.
9 Are you at the table when ACS, psychiatrists or
10 whoever, or the stakeholders in there have an
11 assessment, and individual assessment plan, service
12 plan for these—for the young people?
13 CHRIS NORWOOD: Yes.
14 CHAIRPERSON KING: You're all sitting at
15 the table at the same time?
16 CHRIS NORWOOD: Yes. In different ways
17 in different times, yes. We're part of that same.
18 CHAIRPERSON KING: Okay, alright. Thank
19 you. Council Member Barron.
20 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: [off mic] Uh,
21 yes, thank you. [on mic] A questions for Friends of
22 the Island Academy. In your testimony you say that
23 the network is comprises of the partnership of 40
24 youth organizations, which provide programming
25 support.

CHRIS NORWOOD: Uh-hm.

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Can you give some of those--

CHRIS NORWOOD: [interposing] of that or who they are?

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Yes.

CHRIS NORWOOD: The girl there (sic) was one of them. What I can do is follow up with the--

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: [interposing] Okay.

CHRIS NORWOOD: --full list for you--

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: [interposing] Okay.

CHRIS NORWOOD: --rather than trying to remember them all. [coughs] Many of them are grassroots organizations at the neighborhood levels.

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Uh-hm.

CHRIS NORWOOD: We have incredible messengers specialized things at Richmond Tech Programs, and the way that it works is that this is all sort of in the body of the network and it's called the network because it's all in the body of one contract, and so all of this is done through the network. So, when there's risk the reason this is

relevant is if there's risk to the funding of this contract, there's risk to the whole.

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Okay.

CHRIS NORWOOD: So, not just to the advocate or not just to the service providers.

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Okay, and to Ms. Davis, in your testimony you have a sentence, which caught my eye, which I ask you on page 2 to perhaps expound upon, and you said: According to New York City Commission of Probation, recidivism is at least in part a gauge of police activity and enforcement emphasis, and because of different-differential policing practices in minority communities, using recidivism as a key measurement may disadvantage communities of color. So, I want of you to expand on that. I think that's a really key point.

JULIA DAVIS: It is a key point and I think it's-it's a caution of using recidivism as a metric of success in Juvenile Justice when we know that most of these kids are leaving-living in communities that over surveilled and over policed. And so, we're only looking at measures of arrests, conviction, prosecution, while we may actually be looking at our communities that are over-surveilled

and over policed, and we're not looking at how our services and programs are serving and the impact we're having on young people. So, I'm—I'm glad that caught your eye.

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: It did. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON KING: And I'm just going to say thank you for all of your testimony today, but that's real—and that's something that needs to be at the head of the conversations because there's not. We get—once they get in the system, we try to figure out what's broken inside of them. A lot of times it's not what's broken inside of them, it's what's broken outside in their environment, and that's one of those things that are broken. So thank you for putting that on the record, and we'll make sure that as we continue to have these conversations, that's part of the conversation because we had a whole--the people out there keep bringing them back in the door when they shouldn't be inside these doors once they get—starting to get their lives together. So, thank you all again. You want to say one more—

CHRIS NORWOOD: Well, just—just hear that Arches has other measures of success, too, and how

many kids went back to school, how many got a job,
how many actually completed over time so.

CHAIRPERSON KING: Okay, thank you.

Thank you again. Have a blessed 2019. The next
panelist is Nicky Woods, New York County Defender
Services; Rebecca Kinsella; Nancy Ginsberg and
Christine Bella; Nate Olay; Kate Ruben. [background
comments/pause] Okay. Everyone has been pretty good
with the three minutes. So, thank you. So, you may
begin.

NIKKI WOODS: Thank you. Good morning
Chair King and members of the Committee of Juvenile
Justice. My name is Nikki Woods, and I'm a staff
attorney in the Juvenile Defense Unit, at New York
County Defender Services. Thank you for the
opportunity to be heard today as the committee
considers the effectiveness of programs that aim to
reduce recidivism among court involved youth. I'll
focus on two issues in my testimony: The
effectiveness of therapeutic counseling programs and
the educational requirements that exist for the
participation in most court involved youth programs.
Our juvenile clients have participated in programs
such as Esperanza and Families Rising that provide

services such as family counseling, individual counseling and peer counseling. Our clients who have -who have at least a somewhat familial structure and tax familial structure benefit most from these programs. These programs are less effective than our clients who are also involved in the child welfare system. Programs that are focused only on peer individual and family counseling seem to be less effective for our clients because we-and because of that we need more programming that involves not only a focus on traditional talk therapy, but also on play or recreational therapy. This alternative type of engagement is critical for reducing recidivism rates in the likelihood that they would reoffend.

Recently, I represented a 16-year-old client whose case was removed from Family Court under RTA and deemed suitable for adjustment services. He was compliant with probation, but he did not openly engage in the traditional talk therapy that probation offered for him. Because of his arrest, he was also expelled from his private high school, and because of that, he could no longer participate in his basketball program. I was able to connect him to a New York City based non-profit called We Will

support. (sic) The program was funded—was founded by two therapeutic recreational therapists one who happens to be my sister-in-law. The mission of We Will is to—and this is the only program that I could provide. I actually spoke to my social workers and other individuals to try to find a basketball program, but this is the only one that I was aware of. The mission of We Will is to provide high quality sports programs that serve underserved and at-risk youth while creating and promoting connection, unity and empowerment in young male and females. My client not only participated in the winter basketball workout, but he also began to open up to his coaches about the choices that he made that led to his arrest. Our clients need better access to programs like We Will, programs that engage—that in recreational and arts therapy because these programs aid in reducing recidivism and promote teamwork, leadership and the rebuilding of the self worth of these vulnerable children. Many of the court sponsored programs that are offered to court involved youth, also require that the child not only engage in multi-disciplinary counseling sessions, but that they also regularly attend school. A child who

participates in or is mandated to one of these programs and does not regularly attend school could be detained dramatically increasing the likelihood that they will reoffend. Allowances must be made for children who are engaged in these programs, but are not enrolled in the appropriate academic setting. Many of our juvenile clients are not on a path to receiving a Regents Diploma, but they are interested in vocational programming. New York City has more than 400 high schools with over 50 [bell] career and technical education designated high schools and close to 90 schools that offer career and technique- technical education programs as part of their school's offering, but these programs don't seem to be readily accessible to my clients because they're often not even aware of their existence. A direct partnership with programs for court involve youth and New York City's career and technical education programs would be-would drastically-would be optimal for our clients [bell] and engaging them in these programs would teach our clients a trade that would drastically reduce reoffending (sic) grades and lead to lifelong employment opportunities. What's required is an expansion into these alternate

conceptions of success that may not perfectly fit the standard emphasis of aca-on academics and the results could be transformative for our most vulnerable clients. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON KING: Thank you. Are you together?

No.

CHAIRPERSON KING: Okay. We'd love to just use up one of your minutes, but that's alright. [laughter]

KATE RUBIN: Good afternoon. I'm Kate Rubin. I'm the Director of Policy at Youth Represent. We provide criminal and civil reentry legal services to court involved youth 24 and under. We're part of the Friends of Island Reentry Network, and thank you, Chair King and to the committee for the chance to testify. While keeping youth out of jail is at the core of our mission at Youth Represent, we don't rely in recidivism as the most important metric for youth's success. I appreciate that this was discussed at the prior panel, but I just want to emphasize. I think it's worth emphasizing. When young people have been incarcerated they nearly always return to the same circumstances that led to their arrest in the

first place: under-resourced schools, unstable housing, lack of consistent and culturally competent services. Compound this are the significant disruption of arrest and incarceration and possibly a criminal record. Because of racial disparity in law enforcement, recidivism is an especially imperfect sometimes dangerous measure of the young person's success, and because teen-agers and young adults are by their nature impulsive, risk taking, and susceptible to peer pressure, even arrests for more serious offenses can be aberrations from overall positive behavior, but on the other hand not getting arrested is really just a measure that the person was arrested not that they're actually doing well. For all these reasons, we need holistic measures we need to asses especially in reentry and holistic programs to help young people meet them, and these measures have to go well beyond recidivism to look at youth wellbeing in areas like work, education, relationships, community, health and creativity. Again, glad to hear that those have all been part of the discussion today, but programs that can develop strong relationships with young people and keep them engaged particularly Credible Messenger programs that

can work with young people even in times of crisis I think are especially critical. With the goal of improving our own internal program evaluation, Youth Represent has engaged in three evaluation projects over the past five years. There is a lot more detail in my written testimony, and I won't take up lots of time, but all of these evaluations have focused on the impact and results of our legal intervention. So we looked at measures like how well our Know Your Rights trainings actually increase participants' knowledge of their legal rights, and responsibilities. The value placed on our services by staff at the partner organizations that we collaborate with, and the economic impact of our Criminal Record Clearance Services. We actually found that by correcting errors on rap sheets and clearing young people's criminal records, we were able to create what the researcher who looked at it predicted was over \$3 million worth of sort of economic benefits to those young people over four years. These measures are more useful to us than recidivism rates, which can hinge more on a client's race and zip code than their actual wellbeing. And one critical thing that we learned in the evaluation process, and just in the

course of providing services is the importance of continuous and coordinated service at every point in the system especially as Raise the Age is implemented and as my colleague Julia Davis spoke to, these programs have been absolutely essential in Raise the Age implementation especially in address conflict and reducing incidents at Horizon as Raise—as the Raise the Age transition happened. Our legal work is only successful because exist in the context of other essential services provided by partner organizations including preventative services, mental health and substance abuse treatment, counseling, criminal and juvenile defense mitigation, Credible Messenger mentoring, career development and reentry services that follow young people from incarceration all the way into the community. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON KING: [off mic] Thank you.

NANCY GINSBERG: Good afternoon my name is Nancy Ginsberg. I oversee the IOS and practice of the Criminal Trial Practice of the Legal Aid Society citywide. I apologize for my colleague Christine Della. She had to go to court and she could not be here. I have submitted extensive written testimony. I'm not going to read it. I'd like to address some

of the things that came up earlier. I would join in all of the earlier emphasis that recidivism should really only be one aspect of what is measured, and that many--and the reason for that is that many of the kids who are court involved particularly who are deeply court involved have a deep set of needs, and their families often have a similar set of needs, and they really need to be addressed, and because kids often do not travel on a straight path, from the moment they are--they come into the system to the moment they leave the system, there are fits and starts to their progress, and for that reason many kids--and I do appreciate that we love the Carnegie program, too. We love arts programs. Many of our kids are very talented. They have tremendous visual art skills and written art skills, but many of our clients are not ready to engage in those kinds of services when they first meet us. They need very intensive therapy and interventions, and work with their families and their siblings to be able to accept those types of services, and for many of--many kids, who have experienced serious trauma, expressing their thoughts and their histories through spoken word or through visual art is itself traumatizing

unless they work through those issues with a skilled clinician. And so, earlier when you referenced prison therapy, the therapy that and the mental health services that are now in Crossroads and Horizon are the result of many, many years possibly decades of advocacy of many of the groups in this room. We have finally gotten real clinicians who are real doctors that that these kids would be accessing on the outside if they were in the communities. They are very highly qualified doctors, psychiatrists, psychologists, clinicians who are employed by HHC. They are trained through NYU Bellevue. They have completely changed the level of care that has been provided to our kids who are incarcerated, and many of our kids for the first time in their lives are receiving that type of intensive [bell] high quality services that they need, and part of I think what has been discussed here is allowing for a continuum of services that is so important is that as the kids who are the most in need start to heal, then the system organizations like Friends and their various partner agencies push in the other services that are necessary for them so that they can learn how to access those services, benefit from those services,

and learn how to connect to those services once they're in the community so that that they can develop those pro-social relationships in the community that perhaps they have not had an opportunity to access in the past. So thank you for your time.

CHAIRPERSON KING: Thank you.

REBECCA CONSALA: Good afternoon. My name is Rebecca Consala, and I'm a Senior Social Worker in the Adolescent Representation Team at Brooklyn Defender Services. I'm thank to Chairman King and the Committee for holding this hearing today. BDS is fortunate to have great relationships with several programs that provide many of our adolescent clients with holistic services and who are aware of the reality young people live in. I'll reiterate the point that all my colleagues have made, and though we are fortunate to work with such great partners, we need to understand that recidivism programs cannot fix it all. A three to six-month, nine month, one-year program cannot undo generational trauma, and address internal factors, and external factors that lead to young people committing crimes. Placing that expectation on these programs is

unrealistic and it—and it takes the responsibility away from other agencies and institutions that need to transform if we're truly trying to address the violence and build safer communities. That be said, we have a couple of recommendations for the Council. The city should improve access and increase funding to community based programs particularly as my colleagues have mentioned those led by Credible Messengers. I know my colleagues have named some of those. We'll reiterate example Exalt, the Paid Youth Internship Program, the Brownsville Community Justice Center and it's doing really strong work in Brownsville; Families Rising, and Esperanza, which are family based therapy programs and the Door. They all have proven track records of working diligently with our youth, and helping them to achieve their own personal goals. Additionally, we recommend that the city expand funding for adolescent social work services for public defender offices, and funding for youth detention facilities such as Crossroads and Horizons. Additionally, the city must provide safer shelter space and respite centers for homeless and formerly incarcerated individuals. Public defenders in Brooklyn serve around 500 homeless 16 and 17-year-

olds every year, the vast majority of whom are not being served by runaway homeless youth because of the lack of beds in Brooklyn. About half of these are made homeless by Criminal Justice System when orders of protection are issued at arraignments, often times involving their family members. Young people surveilled for an assumed gang affiliation should be connected to a social worker and provided additional rehabilitation services. In our experience these young people are incarcerated and not given access to alternative to incarceration options and, therefore, we suggest them being connected to social services, social workers aimed at improving their social, economic and emotional wellbeing before they become justice involved. Finally, we recommend that the program's benchmark should be individualized to the needs of each young person. Recidivism is a difficult concept to measure. This can result in programs creating a rigid standard of success that needs to be achieved within a specific timeline. In our experience using the concept of recidivism, meaning interactions with the Criminal Justice System or being rearrested has not an effective measure of success of rehabilitation or individual

transformation. As my colleagues have pointed out, many of our young people live in heavily policed neighborhoods. They go to schools with heavy police presence, and are often stopped and frisked by police on a regular basis. There is a constant risk of re-arrest. In addition, our young people have different needs. People have different levels of cognitive functioning and I know that mental illness was raised earlier. We should be changing our expectations based on each individual young person. We thank the Council for the consideration of our recommendations.

CHAIRPERSON KING: I think you, we thank you. We have one panel left. Just they can say--like they just talked a little more, but thank you. You brought some valid information to the table, and we put it on the record. So appreciate your commitment to helping change the world. Thank you. The final panel is Dawn Roe from Girl Vow, Saniya Jackson and Daphne Torres, Children's Village. [background comments/pause] Alrighty. So we are going to end the last panel with the Supremes. [laughter] Alright, Diana, you're on. [laughter]

FEMALE SPEAKER: That's you.

DAWN ROWE: Oh. [laughter] Okay. Is this on? Yeah. So, Good afternoon everyone. My— good afternoon, Chair Andy King, Council— City Council members and the Committee on Juvenile Justice and everyone in their respective places. So, my name is Dawn Rowe. I'm the Executive Director and Founder of Girl Vow. I'm also an adjunct professor at John Jay College of Criminal Justice. So, I just want to talk a little bit about Girl Vow and who we are. We've been mentioned quite often this morning, which is, you know, pretty good. So, Girl Vow is a Bronx based 501 (c) (3) birth to minimize the risk of girls impacted by the Juvenile Justice System, poverty and foster care, and what we do is we provide direct service collaborate with public and private institutions in order to transit—transition disadvantaged girls into services that will lead into career sustainability training or post-secondary education. So, one of the things that we do is we provide intensive mentorship, and like I said, we are gender focused for girls doing aftercare as an alternative to placement in schools and anywhere specifically where girls are failing. So, of the work that we're doing right now through out Friends

of Island Partnership, we've been working on—we've worked on Rikers Island for over a year. So we are part of that whole Raise the Age transition. We've done work at Horizons, Crossroads and many of the LSTs, NSDs, et cetera, even our partnership with ACS. So, a partner of our young people that we work with are—they range from age 12 to 24. So they could be chronic runaways. They could be sex survivors or girls victims as juveniles. Some of the cases that we work with the young ladies may have like for example an attempted murder charge. So, one thing I think that's key about our program is that we don't turn anyone away. Even if we feel like that we can't provide direct services for them, we find someone that can, and I think that's been part of the success for our particular program is the fact that we worked with young people throughout any stage and process of their life as well as their families. Chair King, you did mention early on, you talked about programming that's willing to do the work and go above and beyond, but doesn't have the funding and that's an example of the program that we are. Even though we're Bronx based, we do work throughout the five boroughs. As a matter of fact, on the past

1 Saturday I got a call at 11:00 at night for a young
2 lady that tried to commit suicide. She was in the
3 middle of trying to commit suicide, and she had been
4 trying to commit suicide all week long, and she
5 called me. She said I don't feel well. So, by the
6 time I got into the conversation with her, one of the
7 things that I learned is that not only has she been
8 trying to commit suicide all day, but she had been
9 drinking like bleaches and cleaners and all types of
10 stuff in order to try to kill herself. So when I
11 asked her I said, where's you mom? She said my mom
12 is downstairs. So that tells you the type of
13 connection that we have with young people that they
14 would call us to find-to-to ask for support and
15 services, and really being responsive to when-
16 whenever the need is no matter what it is. So, you
17 know, lo and behold I was able to get that young lady
18 into the hospital. She's in the hospital right now,
19 and I was able to contact her mom, and tell her what
20 she was in the process of doing. [bell] But we do
21 everything from girls' advocacy to leadership. We
22 have youth summits. I think our partnership with
23 Friends of Island Academy have been-have been
24 critical. We also work with juvenile prosecutors.

We're in the courts. We've attended FTC meetings, and like I said, we do a lot of work even with youth-youth ambassadorship. Taniya is going to talk a little bit about that. [background comments]

SANIYA JACKSON: Good afternoon, Chair Andy King and City Council Members of the Committee of Juvenile Justice. Good afternoon. My name is Saniya and I'm a 17-year-old single parent of 7-month-old baby boy named Aden. At the moment I am current--currently facing some challenges that have prevented me from moving forward. When I was 16, I was arrested on felony assault charges with a deadly weapon and a--and a result. (sic) I quickly--I quickly became a product of the system. I was sent to Rikers Island. On the island, I started a program called Cases. Since then there have been a variety of domestic violence issues that have taken place between myself and my son's paternal grandmother leading to multiple arrests and the removal--the removal of my child while my son was cared for by the state. After numerous arrests, I started to internalize on how I have been--have to be--have to be a successful mother for my kid during my time incarcerated. Rikers offered many programs and which

I attended one of them being Girl Vow. Dawn will come in twice a week and there was something about her that inspired me to attend. Although I attended other programs, it was Girl Vow that I looked forward to attending to—to the most since my release. Dawn will come in with much excitement, happiness and positive vibes just cheering all the girls up, and has the same energy every time she conducted workshops. Through her workshops—wait. Through her workshops I learned to realize my life decisions, and gave me a different perspective on life. Upon my release, I met one of the volunteers, and I was informed more about Girl Vow program. They assured me that no matter what my situation was, they were going to help me no matter what. Girl Vow offered unconditional support and because of that, I discovered and unfound love for everyone that works in the—at Girl Vow. I began to attend, and as time progressed, I met Leslie who worked with Dawn, and later became my mentor. She has not only ben an example for me as a person, but as a young mother as well. I learned through her that not every sit—not every situation needs a reaction, and that it's better to steer away from problems that will get me

in trouble. So, now I am working on me. I've been with Girl Vow for over a year, and from the other day I joined, they provided nothing but a safe environment. I am no means perfect, and unfortunately I became a product of the Criminal Justice System, but it's programs like Girl Vow that help girls just like I need to integrate back into society and find a better way. During my time on the Island, I've seen 16 and 17-year-olds suffer from all walks of life. Although some stories were harder than others, the one thing we all shared is the love we have [bell] for another, and it's only a bond that we can understand. We need more programs and facilities that help girls like me continue on the right path. One thing I learned during my time on the Island is good support is limited, and a small window of opportunity is the difference between going back to jail and beating the odds. Throughout my accomplishments, I've gone back to school. I found a job. I got my son back, and I am a Girl Vow Youth Ambassador. Mentorship with Girl Vow is changing me. Three things I recommend for girls in my position is to never look back, never trust someone whose intentions aren't better than you can dream of, and

know that even though we've committed mistakes, we are here because God gave us life so we can live it the way we want to, and also—[laughter]

CHAIRPERSON KING: Yes. [laughs]

SANIYA JACKSON: I am doing so good that they gave me like a Saniya party a success party, and I got a certificate from them. [applause/laughter] Here it is. On my certificate it says: Welcome to the Saniya Success Party. Today we are celebrating the growth and many accomplishments of Saniya Jackson. Saniya is a strong willed, intelligent and determined who overcame the obstacles that tried to knock her down. She has prevailed.

CHAIRPERSON KING: Congrats. [laughter/applause]

JACKIE TORRES-DOUGLAS: So, I'm nervous coming up here. [laughter] I'm so inspired. Thank you for sharing. My name is Jackie Torres-Douglas. I work at the Children's Village. I did have a statement, but I'd rather speak. I think it's more helpful speaking about our programming specifically. I am a Vice—I am an Assistant Vice President at the Children's Village. I oversee the MST, Multisystemic Therapy and the Family Therapy programs. We're one

agency out of many that provides MST. So, one of the things that came up earlier was the metrics. So, MST what we do is when we—when we get referred a youth, we don't look at the youth as the problem. We look at the behaviors that the youth is exhibiting, as a symptom of everything that's going on around the youth, and so as we've already talked about, disproportionality, poverty. I mean unless we're going to solve why people are poor, we're going to continue to see systemic issues that impact the families that we serve in certain practice of New York that we serve. And so, looking at the youth, we look at the determining factors or the correlating factors that come from family that come from the individual, the come from school, that come from the peers, that come from the community, and all of those different systems impact the youth as well as the youth impacting those systems. And what we try to do is understand based on those correlations that the family wants to do to address those different determining factors that continue to make the youth at risk to engage in anti-social or criminal behavior. So, we work with the family three times—two to three times a week in their homes. There's no

office space, but we're doing the work in the home to help the family address those behaviors, and--and what we really look for is a change in the parent and child via their communication pattern, their--their ability to engage differently. And so our QI system because it's evidence based programming we follow--we track the success of each of family. We look at clinical successes such as has the parent gained parenting skills? Has the parent engaged in increasing their social network? Is the parent and child relationship different? Is the youth engaged and doing well in school? Is the youth engaged in pro-social activities? Those are very basic things that are on the--on the clinical level. Now, on the contract level that most stakeholders pay for is the youth at home still at the end of treatment? Has the youth not committed any crimes and is the youth doing well in school and program, and we've been pretty successful. Twenty percent of recidivism about and 85% of youth not being--not being rearrested. So, our numbers are starting to look really good, and we're really proud of it, but it doesn't change the fact that there's so many things that the parents are exposed to, and these limitations to earn access--

limitations and access to resources in the community.

So, when we talk about legitimate access, we need

more programming. We need programs that start at an

early age to help youth very early on, programs such

as My Brother's Keeper that can help youth

academically from early ages, and—and help them

acclimate into the school system so that we can see

less suspensions from people of color. When we look

at community programs, we need [bell] more

partnerships with community programs, more resources.

There's not a lot of resources for youth in the

communities that they live in, and then

transportation outside of those communities are a

hardship as well. We need job searchers. I mean

last—last summer we had all of our youth apply for

Summer Youth. We had all of our families. We were

able to get partnership with YMCA and have families

go on a family pass for the summer. So those kinds

of things that increase family functioning that

increase prosocial outlets and participation. They

give families hope and doing something different than

their norm, and also they build a bond. Those are

things that we're really committed to and we need to

invest more funding into. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON KING: Thank you for your testimony. Congratulations sister girl.

SANIYA JACKSON: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON KING: Council Member Barron, I think you—you wanted to share something?

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Yes. I just wanted to say to the panel thank you. So, it's great to have the community come, particularly people that have been impacted by the programs make a great impression. I just want to say congratulations. Keep up the good work, and the world is your oyster. Open it up and do what you want to do with it. Keep up the good work.

JACKIE TORRES-DOUGLAS: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON KING: I believe there's a couple of pearls in that oyster, and you might be the first one. [laughter] As we conclude, I just thought over saying [coughs] an ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure, and we heard Rebecca talk about recidivism can't be the only matrices, and the services that are being provided, and there's a whole host of things that push people, young people back into a system that I call oppression and incarceration, and if we really want to have the

right conversation one day, I look forward to us all in society having the right and the real conversation because you can go back to the '70s and the '60s where the families were starting to get—especially when we talk about the black families who are getting broke up, and at that point if you make sure that communities because it's no way to dance around. The numbers tell us in the city of New York and even throughout the United States, people who make up the incarceration system are people of color. So, if you really want to end incarceration and recidivism that means you got to make sure that people have proper educational opportunities. That means our schools from Pre-K all the way to college got to be accessible, they've got to be full of quality and they got to deliver to make people fill themselves with good information. So then they can go out and seek the opportunities to provide for their families. I don't care how anybody wants to tell it, I know if my dad and my mom were in my house, I could not tell where I would be today. As much as I love my mother, my mother could teach me how to be a man. So, how many of these young children are growing up with a father that's locked up because his father couldn't

get it right, or the system set up that his father couldn't provide and the mother and father couldn't figure it out. If you go back 50 years ago where the mother and father got together especially that they need for survival. So they can rip that survival from us. So, in every other store, every other corner we got liquor stores next to churches. We crack going on in our neighborhood. Now they want a legalize-legalize marijuana, something else that's going to trip people up. I'm against legalizing marijuana. I'll put it on the record and I'll stand with that commission (sic) any day. But at the end of the day, how do we make sure that our young people have the advice of the family. The family is functioning. That means two parents in the house, you know. We can no longer advocate for the housewives of whatever that we're watching on TV and thinking that's our reality with all the drama in our young sisters, and think it's okay to behave like that amongst each other. People got to—a woman got to be a woman. They got to teach our young girls how to be young ladies. The same thing, fathers got to be around to teach their young-young brothers how to be fathers. Your first encounter with that is say if

a father is in the house is with the father. If the father is strong and deliver for his family, she doesn't mess it up. She doesn't get out of character because the dad is in the house. The same thing for a young-young brother. If he's-his first relationship with the opposite sex is with the-is with the mother, and if he respects the mother because the mother is providing and teaching and guiding and nurturing, he doesn't disrespect the young lady out here. This is where we got to get back to real talk so we don't even have to figure out why we got to have programs because the kid made a bad decision. Well, if you give them access to opportunities, good food, good loving, good spiritual belief, we're not in here having this conversation why a 16-year-old is going back to-to a Juvenile Justice System. That's real conversation for us all. Once the time-once we get to where we want to have that real conversation, then we'll move the matrices. I started this conversation earlier with Dr. King had a dream, but not everybody wants to see a dream fulfilled and makes-makes the system that much better for those who are running the system if half of the-half of the population is dysfunctional. Again,

America's shutdown of the government. It tells us that American government is not always about the American people. It's about itself. I want to thank everybody today for their testimony. You keep on striving and survive sister girl. We got your backup in here alright.

SANIYA JACKSON: Okay

CHAIRPERSON KING: Okay, everybody, we want to thank you for coming out to today's Just-- Juvenile Justice Committee hearing on recidivism and we're going to move forward to making sure that we save some souls and save some lives. Council Woman Chin. Does anybody have things to say? God bless you in 2019. [gavel] Adjourned.

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 January 23, 2019