

LOCAL LAW 41 of 2016:
2020 ANNUAL REPORT

NEW YORK CITY ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN’S SERVICES
DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

A. INTRODUCTION

Local Law 41 of 2016 requires an annual report to the Speaker of the City Council, documenting the number of youth in contact with DYCD and ACS “who are referred as, self-report as, or who the department (DYCD) or ACS later determines to be sexually exploited children, disaggregated by age, gender and whether the children had contact with either DYCD or ACS or both agencies.” The law also requires DYCD and ACS to provide a “description of the services provided by the department and ACS to meet the needs of youth who are or have been sexually exploited.” Lastly, the law requires DYCD and ACS to document their methods for collecting data regarding this population.

The New York City (NYC) Administration for Children’s Services (ACS) and Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) are jointly submitting this Calendar Year 2020 (“2020”) report, which contains the following information as required:

- A. The number of youth in contact with the department’s (DYCD’s) runaway and homeless youth services or ACS who are referred as, self-report as, or who the department (DYCD) or ACS later determine to be sexually exploited*
- B. Data disaggregated by age, utilizing the following ranges:*
 - A. under 12 years old;*
 - B. 12-15 years old;*
 - C. 16-18 years old; and*
 - D. over 18 years old;**and disaggregated by gender, and by whether such children had contact with the department or ACS.*

- C. The number of sexually exploited children identified as having received services from DYCD and/or ACS.*
- D. A description of services provided by DYCD and ACS to meet the needs of youth who are or have been sexually exploited children including but not limited to the number of beds designated for such children and the types of mental health and health services provided to such children.*
- E. The methods DYCD and ACS utilized to collect data regarding the number of sexually exploited children.*

2020 DATA SUMMARY

Table 1. Youth referred as, self-reported as, or determined to be sexually exploited or at-risk for sexual exploitation served by ACS and DYCD in 2020:	
Safe Harbour Providers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Trafficking Mailbox - 123 • Child Trafficking Database - 23 • Safe Horizon Counselors at the Children's Center - 56 • Foster Care Unplugged - 9 • Day One - 51 	262
DYCD Runaway and Homeless Youth Services	534
ACS Prevention Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-Advocate Prevention Cases - 67ⁱ • Advocate (ADVPO) Cases – 15ⁱⁱ • Family Assessment Program (Advocate) Cases - 76 	158
ACS Placement Services	14
Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) Confirmed Victims of Human Trafficking	20 ⁱⁱⁱ
Total Exploited or at Risk for Exploitation Youth Served in 2020	988

In 2020, ACS, DYCD and the Safe Harbour providers served a total of 988 youth referred as, self-reported as, or determined to be sexually exploited, or at-risk for sexual exploitation.

It should be noted that the overall number of youths identified as “trafficked or at-risk for trafficking” decreased by 1,183 youth between 2019 (2,171 youth identified) and 2020 (988 youth identified), likely due to COVID-19 concerns and safety restrictions. DYCD noted the reduction as due to fewer youth accessing the Drop In Centers and residential programs, despite service availability.^{iv} ACS worked with a more limited group of Safe Harbour program providers based upon the decrease in OCFS funds to NYC. As a result, we no longer receive data about trafficked and at-risk youth

from some previous Safe Harbour providers. However, in 2020, the number of youth identified to the ACS Child Trafficking Mailbox and through the Child Trafficking Database (CTDB) were almost all (141 of 146 youth) identified at the Federal Definition of Trafficking level. Therefore, although less youth were identified to the Safe Harbour Program overall in 2020, a higher percentage (96%) of youth identified within the child welfare system were definitively identified as trafficked, rather than as at-risk.

It is important to note that the actual determination as to whether some youth are at-risk for exploitation or have been exploited is significantly challenging. Many youth who are considered at-risk for exploitation may have actually been trafficked, but chose not to disclose that information, or even outright deny exploitation, despite a proliferation of indicators. Therefore, the data in this report captures both exploited youth and youth determined to be at-risk for exploitation and these categories cannot be disaggregated. It should also be noted that there may be overlap between provider data and victim confirmations by the NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA), whose information is confidential. There is no means to determine whether or how frequently this occurred.

Provider Breakdown:

Safe Harbour Providers Served 262 and OTDA Confirmed 20 Exploited Youth or Youth At-Risk for Exploitation:

- 56 youth who were exploited or at-risk of exploitation received services from the Safe Horizon Counselors who specialize in working with commercially sexually exploited children (CSEC) at ACS' Nicholas Scoppetta Children's Center.^v
- 123 newly identified sexually exploited youth, or youth at-risk for exploitation were brought to the attention of ACS' Child Trafficking Mailbox. Note: 193 previously identified trafficked or at-risk youth also received services. See Section 1B on Data Capture Methodology for details.^{vi}
- 23 newly identified sexually exploited youth were screened through ACS' Child Trafficking Database (CTDB).

- 9 youth were served through anti-trafficking groupwork by Foster Care Unplugged.
- 51 youth were served through healthy relationship groupwork by Day One.
- The NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) confirmed 20 youth ages 0 through 23 as sexually exploited.

DYCD Served 534 Exploited and/or At-Risk for Exploitation Youth Through Runaway and Homeless Youth (RHY) Programs:

- 350 youth received Crisis Services Programs.
- 98 youth received services from Transitional Independent Living Programs (TILS).
- 86 youth received services at Drop In Centers.
- 81 youth served by DYCD-funded providers shared that they also receive some form of service from ACS.
- Gender: 98 males; 178 females; 24 Gender Non-Conforming (GNC) youth and 234 youth who did not disclose their gender. Within those gender categories, 159 transgender youth were served: Drop In Centers served 12 transgender youth, Crisis Services assisted 71 transgender youth, and TILS served 76 transgender youth.
- Ages: 0 children ages 12 to 15; 48 children ages 16 to 18; 486 youth over age 18.

Details are provided in Section D-1: DYCD Contracted Programs and Services to Meet the Needs of Sexually Exploited Children.

**ACS Foster Care Placement, Prevention Services and Advocate Provider
Services Served 172 Exploited and/or At-Risk for Exploitation Youth:**

- Foster Care Placement: The Jewish Child Care Association's (JCCA) Gateways Program served 14 Sexually Exploited Youth in 2020.
- Prevention: Served 67 Sexually Exploited and/or Sexually Abused Youth at the Mt. Sinai-St. Luke's New Beginnings prevention program (New Beginnings). New Beginnings, which accepted referrals for children age 12 and up until December 2019. New Beginnings worked with sexually abused and/or sex trafficked youth and their families. New Beginnings worked with a total of 109 children in 2020 (subject child and siblings), including 42 children under 12 years of age. Since the program serves subject children age 12 and older, it is likely these were siblings of the subject children, not subject children themselves. Therefore, the 42 children under age 12 have not been included in the total for New Beginnings.
- Advocate Only Preventive (ADVPO) providers served 14 youth identified as at-risk and 1 youth identified as trafficked.
- ACS' Family Assessment Program (PINS Diversion/Advocate) served 75 youth identified as at-risk and 1 youth identified as trafficked.

Table 2. <u>Delineation of Data by Required Local Law</u>		
<u>41 Categories:</u> Total = 988		
By Age:	Under 12 years old:	4
	12 to 15 years old:	141
	16 to 18 years old:	235
	Over 18 years old:	510
	Age unknown ^{vii}	98
By Gender:	Male:	145
	Female:	472
	Transgender Female:	0
	Transgender Male	0
	Gender Non-Conforming	25
	Gender Undisclosed	346
By Contact With DYCD or ACS:		
ACS only		434
DYCD only		453
Both ACS and DYCD		81
Unknown		20
Advocate Case Youth <u>Not at the Federal Definition Level</u> (no age or gender data provided. See footnote vi.)	ADVPO Prevention Services	14
	Family Assessment Program	75

B. DATA CAPTURE METHODOLOGY

In 2020, ACS obtained demographic data of young people served by New York State Safe Harbour-funded programs from the Safe Harbour funded providers. Primarily, ACS obtained data through its Child Trafficking Mailbox, which served as a vehicle for ACS and provider agency staff to send notifications of trafficked children, ask questions, request resources and receive case practice guidance. External stakeholders, including the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC), other City agencies and community providers also use the Child Trafficking Mailbox for notifications to, and communication with OCTPP.^{viii} The Child Trafficking Mailbox is monitored by eight professionals^{ix} within or affiliated with the ACS Office of Child Trafficking Prevention and Policy, who have extensive experience in child welfare and clinical service provision or law enforcement. OCTPP staff obtain updates on status, services and safety planning and collect demographic data. OCTPP staff also directly respond to every Federal Level screening notification generated by the Child Trafficking Database (CTDB). Every Mailbox and CTDB response consist of a series of emails and telephone contacts to ensure identification of youth, assessment of trafficking indicators and safety planning efforts, provision of guidance, arrangement for conference participation, provision of resources and meeting any other trafficking related need. OCTPP staff also attend and provide guidance at Multi-Disciplinary and Child Safety Conferences and individual case consultations, and to Safe Harbour non-child welfare case assistance requests.

In 2020, the Child Trafficking Mailbox received 3,348 emails, which identified a total of 123 children newly identified as trafficked, or at-risk of trafficking, and also received emails for, and provided support to another 193 youth, all of whom had previously been identified as trafficked or at-risk. Of the 123 youth newly-identified to the Mailbox, 118 were determined to have met the Federal Definition. Additionally, the ACS Child Trafficking Mailbox identified a greater percentage of youth (96%) at the Federal Definition of Trafficking level (118 of 123 youth reported) than at the at-risk level, and also provided guidance and resources for the aforementioned 193 previously-identified youth, many of whom were previously identified at the Federal level. The

increased percentage of youth identified at the Federal level (rather than at-risk level) in 2020 illustrates the greater awareness of trafficking recognition and indicator relevance by ACS and provider agency staff.^x

ACS also accumulated data through electronic sex trafficking screenings in its Child Trafficking Database (CTDB), which sends an automatic notification whenever a child screened meets the Federal Definition level of sex trafficking. In 2020, the CTDB electronic sex trafficking screening process identified 23 children at the Federal Definition of Trafficking level.

Screening Youth for Trafficking: OCFS Screening Tools and the ACS Child Trafficking Database (CTDB)

In 2020, ACS continued to follow the NYS Office of Children and Families (OCFS) Administrative Directive, 15-OCFS-ADM-16: Requirements to Identify, Document, Report and Provide Services to Child Sex Trafficking Victims (September 1, 2015; Revised March 30, 2016), with its mandated screening and reporting tools:

- a. Rapid Indicator Tool to Identify Children Who May Be Sex Trafficking Victims or At-Risk of Bring a Sex Trafficking Victim
- b. Child Sex Trafficking Indicators Tool (also known as the “Comprehensive Tool,” a higher level of screening which follows when the Rapid Tool identified a child as at-risk for trafficking)
- c. Law Enforcement Report of a Child Sex Trafficking Victim

It is highly likely that the issuance of ACS’ first agency-wide trafficking policy in September 2020, mandating the use of the Child Trafficking Database (CTDB) for sex trafficking screenings and contact with the Office of Child Trafficking for any child that met the Federal Definition of Sex Trafficking level^{xi} resulted in a greater awareness of trafficked children being identified to the Child Trafficking Mailbox and through CTDB screenings. As previously mentioned, a higher percentage (96%) of youth identified within the child welfare system were definitively identified as trafficked, rather than as at-risk, thus potentially illustrating greater knowledge of trafficking indicator.

Additionally, the NYS Office of Children and Family Services' (OCFS) Safe Harbour Program continued to require the use of a standardized Excel spreadsheet for data capture, which helped to gather uniform statistics from providers.

Staff and providers face challenges with using paper screening tools to report and document data about the children and youth, as paper tools cannot aggregate data, nor provide a longitudinal history of the evolution of a child's entry into trafficking. For this reason, ACS developed the aforementioned Child Trafficking Database (CTDB). A detailed description of the CTDB is included in Appendix C.

Table 3: Summary of 2020 Data Collected by the Office of Child Trafficking Prevention and Policy Through the Child Trafficking Mailbox and the Child Trafficking Database (CTDB):	
# Newly Identified Youth to the Child Trafficking Mailbox in 2020	123
# Newly Identified Youth to the CTDB in 2020	23
# Newly Identified Youth to Both the Mailbox and CTDB in 2020 (documented as CTDB only to avoid duplication)	(12)
Total Number of Newly Identified Youth to OCTPP in 2020 (Child Trafficking Mailbox <u>and</u> CTDB):	146
# New Youth Identified at the Federal Definition of Trafficking in 2020	141
# New Youth Identified as At-Risk for Trafficking in 2020	5
# Previously Identified Youth Involved in 2020 Emails to the Child Trafficking Mailbox	193
Total Number of Emails to the Child Trafficking Mailbox	3,348^{xii}

It is important to note that collecting data on trafficked and at-risk youth can be challenging and complex for many reasons, including:

- Many youth do not disclose traumatic experiences upon initial engagement. It can take an extended period of time to build trust

and establish an environment wherein the youth feels safe to disclose.

- Reluctance to provide information to an authority figure who might impact upon their life.
- Traumatic reaction due to thinking, and thereby reliving victimization.
- Fear of threats or retribution by the trafficker.
- Fear of being taken from familiar people or places.
- Embarrassed by, or ashamed of the exploitation and the abuse.
- Cultural norms that may make talking about traumatic sexually exploitive experiences difficult for children.
- Developmental delays that make it difficult to understand what has actually occurred.
- Many victims do not recognize they are in an abusive relationship and do not identify as trafficked. They truly believe their exploiter loves them and have become “trauma bonded”^{xiii} to the exploiter. Many victims who leave their exploiter return. Some never disclose or leave at all.

Table 4. NYC 2020 Safe Harbour Data Table, as Delineated by Agency and Indicator: An expanded view of this table is located in Appendix B.

NYC Administration for Children's Services																
2019 NYC Safe Harbour Data: Exploited Children and Children At-Risk of Exploitation																
as reported by ACS, DYCD and Safe Harbour Providers																
Safe Harbour Provider	Total Youth	Cis M	Cis F	Trans F	Trans M	No G Disc	GNC	<12	12-15	16-18	>18	Age unk	ACS only	DYCD only	ACS+DYCD	Unk
Child Trafficking Mailbox	123	4	111	0	0	7	1	3	47	56	8	9	123	0	0	0
Child Trafficking Database	23	2	21	0	0	0	0	0	9	14	0	0	23	0	0	0
Children's Center Counselors	56	6	49	0	0	1	0	1	21	33	1	0	56	0	0	0
DYCD RHY Programs	534	98	178	0	0	234	24	0	0	48	486	0	0	453	81	0
OTDA Confirmations (0 - 23)	20	2	18	0	0	0	0	0	2	4	14	0	0	0	0	20
Gateways Program (Placement)	14	0	14	0	0	0	0	0	7	7	0	0	14	0	0	0
New Beginnings (Preventive)	67	16	51	0	0	0	0	0	53	13	1	0	67	0	0	0
Preventive Advocate Cases	15	0	1	0	0	14	0	0	1	0	0	14	15	0	0	0
Family Assessment Program	76	0	1	0	0	75	0	0	1	0	0	75	76	0	0	0
Foster Care Unplugged Group	9	0	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	0	0	9	0	0	0
Day One Groups	51	17	19	0	0	15	0	0	0	51	0	0	51	0	0	0
Totals:	988	145	472	0	0	346	25	4	141	235	510	98	434	453	81	20
Section Totals:	988	988						988					988			
DYCD RHY Crisis Services and TILs serve ages 16-20. Drop In Centers serve ages 14-24.																
DYCD RHY served 159 transgender (TG) youth (included within the other gender categories). Drop ins served 12 TG youth, Crisis Shelters served 71 TG youth, TILs served 76 TG youth. See report for details.																
OTDA collects data on confirmed victims of all ages, but only data from ages 0 to 23 was used as 23 is when all youth would have exited the child welfare system.																
New Beginnings served a total of 67 children ages 0 through 18+. 42 children were under the age of 12. Since the program serves subject children age 12 and older, it is likely these are siblings of the subject children, not subject children themselves. Therefore the 42 children under age 12 have not been included in the total for New Beginnings.																
Preventive Advocate Cases: 14 youth screened as Medium Risk and 0 youth screened as High Risk. 1 youth identified at the Federal Level, so demographics provided for this one youth.																
Family Assessment Program Advocate Cases: 50 youth screened as Medium Risk and 25 youth screened as High Risk. 1 youth identified at the Federal Level, so demographics provided for this one youth.																

C. SERVICE PROVISION FOR SEXUALLY EXPLOITED YOUTH

1. DYCD Contracted Programs and Services to Meet the Needs of Sexually Exploited Children

The central responsibility of DYCD is to administer City, state, and federal funds to community-based organizations that serve New York City's youth and families. DYCD funds a range of programs including immigration, afterschool, literacy, jobs and internships, parenting, and runaway and homeless youth programs and services. In 2020, DYCD provided \$958.7 million in funding to support these programs and services.

DYCD's funded Runaway and Homeless Youth (RHY) services are designed to protect young people, and whenever possible, encourage family reunification. In cases where reunification is not possible, these programs help youth progress from crisis and transitional care to independent living arrangements. Youth who participate in DYCD-funded programs receive comprehensive services geared toward developing independent living skills, and strengthening their problem solving, decision making and communication abilities. This wide range of services includes food and clothing; medical services; substance abuse education; housing assistance; educational services; counseling; independent living skills training; employment counseling and assistance; recreation; legal assistance; and transportation assistance.

Services are provided to at-risk youth through Crisis Services programs (serving youth ages 16-20^{xiv}) which offer emergency, voluntary short-term residential programs. Youth in need of longer-term residential services may obtain a referral through the Crisis Services programs to DYCD-funded Transitional Independent Living (TIL) programs (serving youth ages 16-20^{xv}), which assist youth in establishing independence through services such as educational and vocational programming, job placement, and counseling.

DYCD programs offer specialized services for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Questioning (LGBTQ) youth, pregnant and parenting teens, and sexually exploited youth. Over the past few years, the City funded a significant expansion of residential programs, followed by an expansion of Drop In Center services, and including additional resources for mental health services and LGBTQ supports. DYCD's aggregate data is provided in Appendix A.

- a. **Crisis Services*** – Crisis Services programs offer emergency shelter for runaway and homeless youth age 16 to 20. These voluntary, short-term residential programs provide emergency shelter and crisis intervention services aimed at reuniting youth with their families. If family reunification is not possible, Crisis Services programs help arrange appropriate transitional and long-term placements. In 2020, DYCD had available a total of 258 crisis beds, including specialized services for LGBTQ youth.
- b. **Drop-in Centers*** – DYCD also funds emergency intervention services at seven drop-in centers across the five boroughs. Three drop-in centers are located in Manhattan and one each in Brooklyn, Queens, Staten Island, and the Bronx. Each borough has one 24/7 drop-in center. These programs serve youth ages 14 through 24^{xvi} with essentials such as food, clothing, and immediate shelter as well as access to counseling, support, and referrals to relevant services. Since 2015 DYCD has funded the Ali Forney Center to provide 24-hour drop-in center services at its Harlem location. In 2017, DYCD added Sheltering Arms to also provide 24-hour drop-in center services at its Queens location through non-Safe Harbor funding. In 2018, DYCD added Project Hospitality, SCO and Cardinal McCloskey to also provide 24-hour drop-in center services in Staten Island, Brooklyn and the Bronx respectively, through non-Safe Harbor funding.

- c. **Street Outreach Program*** – DYCD also funds street outreach to reach at-risk youth where they are. Currently, the street outreach is conducted by the contracted provider, Safe Horizon’s Streetwork Project, with the use of vans. The Streetwork Project has been serving for over 35 years, and is a confidential and voluntary program serving anyone who is 24 years old and under and homeless. The Street Outreach’s vehicle-based outreach program focuses on locations where youth are known to congregate. By going directly to where at-risk youth are, such as subway stations and transportation hubs, the Street Outreach Program, with the assistance of street outreach workers, develops rapport with youth and provides contact by disseminating information about RHY services, providing food, clothing and other resources; making referrals to other service providers; and transporting youth back to their homes or relatives, to Crisis Services programs, or to other safe locations.
- d. **Transitional Independent Living (TIL) Programs*** – DYCD contracts with providers to offer a total of 495 Transitional Independent Living beds. In addition to the services that are offered to all youth in the RHY continuum, those who are specifically identified as sexually exploited and in need of specialized services can be referred to the nationally recognized Girls Educational and Mentoring Services’ (GEMS) Transitional Independent Living program, when appropriate. The GEMS TIL program specializes in services specifically for young women who have experienced sexual exploitation. All young people residing in any of the DYCD-funded programs will receive ongoing case management and counseling to address issues associated with exploitation. As each young person’s experience is different, the service providers make referrals, as appropriate, to outside services. Program staff take care to engage youth in services when the youth is ready to address this sensitive issue.

***Update on process since the PAUSE order was enacted in March 2020:** DYCD-funded community-based organizations have gone above

and beyond in helping New York City meet one of its top priorities during the COVID-19 emergency: keeping New Yorkers safe. Runaway and Homeless Youth (RHY) Services programs continue to offer vital support. Residential programs remained open to serve youth in need, while making adjustments to ensure space for social distancing and isolation as needed. Drop-in Centers continue to offer in person services including: referrals to housing and health care; providing on-line supports such as counseling and support for coping during the pandemic, clinical support for anxiety or depression; as well as recreational activities to maintain social connections during this time.

II. New York State Safe Harbour-Funded Programs to Meet the Needs of Sexually Exploited Children

In 2020, New York State's Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) provided \$88,900 in funding to New York City (NYC), so that NYC could continue to develop and implement a child welfare response to sex trafficking. ACS also contributed additional funding and dedicated full-time resources.^{xvii} Following is a summary of Safe Harbour-funded programs:

A. ACS' Office of Child Trafficking Prevention and Policy (OCTPP)

In 2015 ACS launched the Office of Child Trafficking Prevention & Policy (OCTPP), which works to raise awareness of trafficking and helps to identify and provide appropriate services available to help youth at-risk and victims of commercial sexual exploitation and their families^{xviii}.

OCTPP coordinates trafficking-related policies and procedures across NYC's child welfare agencies. In September 2020, ACS released its first agency-wide trafficking related policy: *Identifying, Assessing, and Safety Planning with Child Sex and Labor Trafficking Victims*. This policy articulates guidelines and procedures for ACS and provider agency staff in identifying children and youth, who are in the care, custody, care and custody,

maintenance, or supervision of the Administration for Children's Services (ACS), who are survivors of, or at risk of, sex and/or labor trafficking. Additionally, this policy mandates the use of the CTDB for sex trafficking screenings and contact with OCTPP for all cases that meet the Federal Definition level, with the option for contact with OCTPP for at-risk cases, and provides guidance and procedures for ACS and provider agency staff in working towards keeping trafficked children and youth or at-risk children and youth safe and supported through safety planning, coordinating with law enforcement, and making referrals for appropriate services.

Training on the policy and the use of the Child Trafficking Database as mandated by the policy for sex trafficking screenings is integral to staff ability to understand, screen and follow up with law enforcement referrals, access and provide resources and ensure other safety-focused aspects of practice. Between October 29 and December 29, OCTPP staff provided fourteen (14) (virtual) 3-hour trainings on the policy and CTDB screening skills to 1,450 ACS and provider agency staff and several shorter overview presentations to leadership groups. The Policy-CTDB Skills training will continue on a regular schedule throughout 2021. Additionally, OCTPP's Executive Director has been working closely with the ACS Workforce Institute (WFI) as a Subject Matter Expert (SME) to develop a CTDB E-Learn which will be readily accessible through to all child welfare providers and staff. Projected completion of the E-Learn is December 2021.

OCTPP's training provision is not limited to policy awareness and CTDB skills. In 2020, the Office of Child Trafficking Prevention and Policy (OCTPP) worked diligently and continually to provide the highest quality of training, alone or in partnership with other trafficking related professionals, filling and/or facilitating a total of 3,300 trafficking awareness and skills related training seats, targeting a wide audience that included ACS, foster care, prevention and juvenile justice staff, plus other City agencies, State agencies and community and faith-based agencies.^{xix}

OCTPP also manages the NYC Safe Harbour Program, provides consultation on cases, produces trainings and events, analyzes data, provides a variety of trafficking prevention group work models, and maintains six e-mailboxes for communication with staff and external professionals on a variety of topics: Trafficking/At-Risk Cases, CTDB Issues, Training Requests, Tattoo Removal Referrals, Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting Case Reporting and Credible Messenger Program requests. OCTPP also expanded its internal capacity during 2020, adding two additional staff members, a Child Trafficking Specialist Supervisor I to assist with case history research, training, groupwork facilitation and counseling for youth at residential and group home facilities, case conference participation and assessing individual cases to ensure trauma identification and an appropriate response to meet the identified needs. OCTPP also added a Community Coordinator who assists with mailbox responses, training registrations and program support. This expansion brought team capacity to five (Executive Director, Supervisor II, Residential Social Worker, Supervisor I and Community Coordinator), which is essential because the outreach to OCTPP for case consultations on trafficked and at-risk youth had increased due to the policy release in September 2020.

In 2018, OCTPP developed “Movin’ On”: The NYC Child Tattoo Eradication Project and Network to assist trafficking victims and former gang members in positively moving forward with their lives through the provision of trauma informed tattoo removal and the provision of relevant support. In 2019, ACS developed youth focused palm cards advertising the tattoo removal service, translated them into twelve (12) languages, and posted a program descriptive video on YouTube.^{xx} Due to 2020’s COVID-19 isolation, the licensed tattoo removal providers were closed for much of the year. OCTPP only received two (2) requests for tattoo removal/modification during 2020. Additional information on “Movin’ On” is available in section E (d).

In 2019, OCTPP expanded its groupwork initiative, providing direct trafficking awareness groups to vulnerable youth at the Nicholas Scoppetta Children's Center and at Residential facilities. In 2020, OCTPP developed three new groupwork models and a Credible Messenger Program to specifically address safety and behavioral aspects of youth in care. These projects will be described in detail in section E (e): Community Support and Awareness Building.

B. Safe Horizon

Safe Horizon, a leading service provider in the field of commercial sexual exploitation, provided expert service through the provision of Licensed Master Social Workers (LMSW) who worked as Commercially Sexually Exploited Child (CSEC) Consultants at the Nicholas Scoppetta Children's Center. The social workers, who are employed through Safe Horizon's Streetwork Project, screened and assessed youth for trafficking indicators, assisted staff in identifying exploited youth, engaged with and advocated for youth, and provided trafficking relevant service recommendations and referrals. In addition to their work with exploited children and other vulnerable populations, the consultants provided safe sex awareness groups for all youth and technical support for staff. During 2020, the social workers served 56 new youth referred as, self-reported as, or determined to be sexually exploited or at risk for exploitation. They also served an additional 12 youth who had been previously referred to them and 4 youth whose information was forwarded to the Child Trafficking Mailbox and aggregated within that data set, for a total of 72 youth served during 2020.

C. Foster Care Unplugged

Foster Care Unplugged (FCUP), a 501(c)(3) is an agency founded in 2016 by Melody Centeno, LMSW, to focus on enriching the lives of youth in foster care and youth at risk of being placed in the child welfare system by promoting positive spiritual, emotional and physical outcomes for disadvantaged individuals. The organization's mission is to identify foster care youth, meet them where they are in their life journey, and help develop their emotional-social skills

as they build resiliency into adulthood. In 2020, FCUP partnered with the Office of Child Trafficking Prevention and Policy and New Yorkers for Children to develop the Mitigating Trauma through Drama groupwork model through funding from the New York Community Trust and the 2020 NYC Safe Harbour grant. Ms. Centeno and OCTPP Executive Director Selina Higgins co-wrote the curriculum and launched the first cohort of the model in November at an ACS contracted group home. The model utilizes psychodrama, a performance-based approach, to provide a trauma-informed mechanism to identify and express feelings and learn positive strategies to heal from past experiences. Cohort 1 provided these universally applicable skills coupled with a focus on trafficking awareness and prevention to 9 young women.

D. Day One

Day One partners with youth to end dating abuse and domestic violence through community education, supportive services, legal advocacy and leadership development. In 2020, through Safe Harbour funding, Day One provided a two-part (1. Consent/Sexual Violence and 2. Coercion) healthy relationship group model to youth at five group homes across NYC, and at the Nicholas Scoppetta Children's Center for a total of 51 youth.

III. ACS Contracted Prevention and Placement Programs to Meet the Needs of Sexually Exploited Children

In addition to services funded by the NYS Safe Harbour grant, ACS also contracts for specialized prevention and placement programs as part of its continuum of services for at-risk youth and victims of sexual exploitation.

A. Prevention: Mt. Sinai-St. Luke's New Beginnings Program

ACS contracted with Mt. Sinai-St. Luke's Roosevelt's New Beginnings program, which was designed to maintain youth ages 12–17 who are at-risk for sexual abuse and/or exploitation, or who are victims of sexual abuse and/or exploitation safely in their homes by providing

intensive therapy to the youth and family members. The program also worked with youth in foster care up to age 21, as well as with youth up to age 22 who had aged out of foster care. New Beginnings' Intake closed on December 3, 2019 due to contract non-renewal, but the program continued to work with previously referred families in 2020.

In 2020, New Beginnings program worked with a total of 109 children (subject child and siblings). There were 42 children under 12 years old in 2020. Since the program serves subject children age 12 and older, it is likely these are siblings of the subject children, not subject children themselves. Therefore, the 42 children under age 12 have not been included in the data total for New Beginnings, instead documenting service for 16 male and 51 female youth ages 12 and up.

B. Preventive and Family Assessment Program Advocate

Cases:

The ACS Division of Prevention Services obtained redacted sex trafficking screening data for Advocates Prevention Only (ADVPO) cases from its contracted preventive agencies. Similarly, ACS's Family Assessment Program (FAP), a Persons in Need of Supervision (PINS) diversion program obtained redacted Advocate data from its contracted service providers.

Advocate cases provide voluntarily requested prevention services (ADVPO) or PINS diversion services (FAP) for cases not involving a child in foster care or being referred to foster care, and not under investigation or having an open indicated child protective services report. ACS' contracted prevention and PINS diversion agencies do not transmit a breakdown of data on these confidential cases beyond a total number of children and their screened risk levels. Children screened at the Federal Definition of Trafficking level are identified to OCTPP, but only by age, gender and borough. Advocate case sex trafficking screenings are not

captured within the CTDB but are completed with paper templates. 2020 data provided by the Advocate agencies identified:

- Preventive ADVPO Screenings: 15 youth screened with the Comprehensive tool:
 - 14 youth screened as at-risk for trafficking
 - 1 youth screened at the Federal level
- Family Assessment Program Advocate Screenings: 76 youth screened with the Comprehensive tool:
 - 75 youth screened as at-risk for trafficking
 - 1 youth screened at the Federal level

Note: these are cases where parents pro-actively reached out to seek services to strengthen their family prior to full crisis escalation, which may account for a higher percentage of youth being assessed as at-risk for trafficking rather than meeting the Federal Definition level.

C. Placement: The Jewish Child Care Association's Gateways Program

The Jewish Child Care Association (JCCA) is an ACS contractor that provides foster home, residential, community, mental health and prevention services. Since 2011, ACS has contracted with JCCA for services provided at the Gateways Program, an intensive, specialized residential program for female trafficking victims ages 12 to 16. In 2020, Gateways served a total of 14 girls. JCCA currently supports these young people by using the Sanctuary trauma-informed care model, as well as a four-phase system of treatment that involves assessment, individual and family therapy, and peer counseling. Gateways maintains 12 child welfare beds specifically for sexually exploited girls who have indicated that they are willing to leave “the life.”

IV. Community Support and Awareness Building

A. 2020 Results of the 2018 NYC Trafficking Convening

On November 7, 2018, ACS and the Manhattan District Attorney's Office (DANY) held a convening entitled: A Roadmap for the Future: Key Strategies for Child Sex Trafficking Prevention and Intervention which led to a number of new approaches. The most recent outcome from this convening was that DANY issued an RFP for trafficking prevention/intervention services. ACS OCTPP provided input and support for the RFP. In 2020, DANY awarded a \$2 million grant to the New York Foundling (NYF) which developed its Phoenix Program through consultation with OCTPP and other NYC trafficking experts.

B. Annual Human Trafficking Awareness Exposition and Resource Fair

In recognition of January as National Human Trafficking Prevention Month, OCTPP launched its fifth year of trafficking prevention recognition events with the 2020 Human Trafficking Awareness Exposition on January 10th, "Human Trafficking Awareness Day," attended by 380 child welfare professionals from City, State, Federal and community agencies. The Exposition included ACS's 3rd Annual Human Trafficking Awareness Resource Fair with over 40 programs providing information, an expert physician panel, a hands-on art therapy workshop, "Quick Shares" (10 minute back to back agency presentations), a trafficking focused interactive art exhibit, trafficking related film screenings, and a trauma reduction salon including a labyrinth, meditation sessions, herbal teas, aromatherapy and live jazz. The Exposition continued throughout January with nine (9) additional events, including training on Safety Planning, Female Genital Mutilation Awareness, Healthy Relationships, a Legal/Law Enforcement Panel, the Child Trafficking Database and the Executive Director's initial provision of the OCFS Train the Trainer course for ACS and agency trainers.

C. 2020 Update to “Child Trafficking and What YOU Can Do About It: A Guide for NYC Child Welfare Professionals”

In 2019, ACS released a 40 page, spiral bound, pocket sized “toolkit” entitled: “Child Trafficking and What YOU Can Do About It: Tools for NYC Child Welfare Professionals.” 5,000 copies were printed and distributed to ACS and contract agency staff and to other trafficking related professionals to assist in improved identification of trafficking indicators and dynamics, skills enhancement, resource identification and service provision to trafficked and at-risk children. 2020, OCTPP updated the toolkit to include information about the new policy and additional guidance and resources, with printing of 5,000 additional copies through Safe Harbour grant funding.

D. Continuation of Tattoo Removals Referrals Through “Movin’ On”: The NYC Child Tattoo Eradication Network and Project

Exploiter brandings such as tattoos inhibit emotional healing, affect physical safety and employment opportunities, and impede the ability to “move on” with life. For this reason, in 2018, the Office of Child Trafficking Prevention and Policy developed a network of doctors and tattoo artists to help youth remove or alter exploiter tattoos, along with a trauma-informed counseling component to provide the support needed for life changing decisions by trafficked and gang-involved youth. In 2020, due to COVID-19 isolation, the licensed tattoo removal providers were closed for much of the year. OCTPP received only two (2) requests for tattoo removal/modification during 2020, but hopes that once COVID-19 is mitigated, that tattoo removal inquiries and referrals will increase.

E. Expansion of Trafficking Prevention Group Work

In 2018, OCTPP initiated direct service provision to trafficked and at-risk youth through facilitation of a variety of trafficking awareness and empowerment groupwork models. In 2019, OCTPP expanded its groupwork initiative, providing direct trafficking awareness groups to vulnerable youth at the Nicholas Scoppetta Children’s Center and at

Residential facilities. In 2020, OCTPP continued its expansion, through the development of three new groupwork models and a Credible Messenger Program to specifically address safety and behavioral aspects of youth in care, including increased virtual exposure to predators due to COVID-19 isolation:

a. Cyber Safety and Stress Relief Workshop for Teens. An original 4-session model by OCTPP Executive Director Selina Higgins. COVID-19 isolation resulted in greater amounts of screen time than ever before for both vulnerable youth and predators. Recognizing the risks of increased, unsupervised screen time, a new groupwork model for teens was created by OCTPP's Executive Director and launched virtually in May 2020. The model, "Cyber Safety and Stress Release", focuses upon online child trafficking awareness coupled with Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT) distress tolerance, emotion regulation, and interpersonal effectiveness skills. The model provides four facilitated sessions on (1) Online Sexual Abuse, (2) Sextortion and Consent, (3) Media and Human Trafficking Vulnerability, and (4) Cyberbullying, each concluding with a DBT skill to help cabin fevered youth enhance their stress tolerance and interpersonal skills.

b. "Be SEA" (Be Safe, Empowered, Aware), a twelve-session Dialectical Behavioral Therapy and Trafficking Awareness Model for Youth. A 12-session group skills/trafficking awareness adaptation of Dr. Marsha Linehan's Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT) model, developed by OCTPP Executive Director Selina Higgins for vulnerable youth. A weekly (60 to 90 minutes) group for youth teaches skills from four DBT modules: Mindfulness (2 weeks), Distress Tolerance (3 weeks), Emotional Regulation (4 weeks), Interpersonal Effectiveness (3 weeks) with each session providing and applying the learned skill to a Human Trafficking related topic towards building sequential awareness and prevention strategies. Youth receive a \$10 gift card for each week of

participation and a \$50 gift card upon successful course completion (total of \$170 possible). The group debuted simultaneously at three residential programs, facilitated by OCTPP's Executive Director, Supervisor II, Residential Social Worker and Supervisor I, along with two members of the Office of Older Youth Services and an MSW intern from the Children's Center, all of whom had successfully completed the renown 66 hour Behavioral Tech DBT Intensive Course through funding by the 2020 NYS Safe Harbour grant.

c. Mitigating Trauma through Drama: Developing Positive Pathways for Lives Through Expressive Arts

An eight-session psychodrama model for 8 to 10 youth created by OCTPP Executive Director Selina Higgins and Melody Centeno, Founder and CEO of Foster Care Unplugged, with review and feedback by trafficking survivor-leaders. This model, developed through funding from the New York Community Trust and the 2020 NYC Safe Harbour grant, utilizes psychodrama, a performance-based approach, to provide a trauma-informed mechanism to identify and express feelings and learn positive strategies to heal from past experiences. Each session provides trafficking awareness and guides youth in applying the psychodrama exercises to trafficking related scenarios to provide opportunity for expression and disclosure in a safe milieu. Two-hour sessions are held weekly, co-facilitated by Ms. Centeno and a trafficking survivor, with assessment, participation and trafficking expertise input from Ms. Higgins. Gift cards and food are provided to all group members as reinforcement for attendance and participation.

d. Credible Messenger Program:

Credible Messengers are young adults who are able to connect with and motivate the most at-risk young people to successfully challenge and transform destructive thinking, attitudes, and actions. As the Office of Child Trafficking Prevention and Policy focuses upon helping prevent

sexual and labor exploitation of youth under age 18, or over age 18 while in foster care, a former foster youth/trafficking survivor Credible Messenger who shares her story with youth who are reluctant to leave the life or a risky environment and benefit from a stable, supportive trafficking interventive placement can be highly influential. Letting vulnerable youth know that she has walked in their shoes yet overcome challenges to live a healthy and safe life will help youth recognize that no matter what situation they are currently involved in, there is hope and many other possibilities available if they are willing to try. The Messenger also worked on other youth focused projects and participated in the Youth Leadership Council. OCTPP reached out to Mentor NY for resources to develop training for the Credible Messenger program. All presentations are supervised by OCTPP staff. OCTPP intends to expand the program in 2021 to include additional messengers.

Conclusion

Over the past eight years, through the Safe Harbour affiliation, ACS and DYCD have worked together to systemically recognize and address the needs of sexually exploited young people. The Safe Harbor Act and state and agency resources have allowed us to strengthen our work in this area by enhancing existing services and developing increased specialized services for this population, training staff, and evaluating mechanisms to improve our efforts to identify and document sexually exploited youth.

For eight years (2013 to 2020), NYC has been the recipient of Safe Harbour grant funding from NYS OCFS as follows:

Year	Funding
2013	\$622,220
2014	\$550,000
2015	\$550,000
2016	\$448,000
2017	\$374,000
2018	\$88,900
2019	\$88,900
2020	\$88,900

The original 5-year Safe Harbour grant funding to New York City was drastically reduced by the State to a baseline amount in 2018. ACS has asked the State to restore this critical funding as this reduction places key services and interventions at risk.

We acknowledge the COVID-19 crisis that began to spread in the first part of Calendar Year 2020, and the enormous impact it continues to have on our youth, staff,

and communities. ACS' Office of Child Trafficking Prevention and Policy has been fully operational and available for response to all inquiries, and for the provision of guidance, technical assistance, groupwork provision, resource referrals and tattoo removal requests seamlessly throughout the year. Case consultation is available virtually and by telephone, and multi-disciplinary consultations can be provided. Although in-person trainings are currently on hold, OCTPP has been fully available to provide training through available web-based environments. ACS, DYCD, and our partner agencies remain committed to helping ensure youth are as safe and stable as possible as the unprecedented challenges related to the crisis unfold. We greatly appreciate the Council's attention to this vulnerable population of children and look forward to discussing how the Council can provide additional support for ongoing work to help the trafficked and sexually exploited children of NYC.

Appendix A: NYC DYCD 2020 Safe Harbour Data

DYCD Safe Harbor Data for New York City: 2020: Exploited Children and Children At-Risk of Exploitation																		
DYCD Program	Total Youth	Cis M	Cis F	Trans F	Trans M	No G Discl	GNC	<12	12 to 15	16 to 18	>18	Age Unk	ACS only	DYCD only	ACS & DYCD	Age Unk	MH Referrals	MH Counseling
DYCD Drop Ins	86	28	43	0	0	14	1	0	0	17	69	0	0	70	16	0	12	21
DYCD Crisis	350	33	93	0	0	217	7	0	0	24	326	0	0	320	30	0	82	206
DYCD TILS	98	37	42	0	0	3	16	0	0	7	91	0	0	63	35	0	58	48
Total	534	98	178	0	0	234	24	0	0	48	486	0	0	453	81	0	152	275

DYCD Served 534 Exploited and/or At-Risk for Exploitation Youth Through Runaway and Homeless Youth (RHY) Programs:

- 350 youth received Crisis Services Programs.
- 98 youth received services from Transitional Independent Living Programs (TILS).
- 86 youth received services at Drop In Centers.
- 81 youth served by DYCD-funded providers shared that they also receive some form of service from ACS.
- Gender: 98 males; 178 females; 24 Gender Non-Conforming (GNC) youth and 234 youth who did not disclose their gender. 159 transgender youth (included within the other gender categories) were served: Drop In Centers served 12 transgender youth, Crisis Services assisted 71 transgender youth, and TILS served 76 transgender youth.
- Ages: 0 children ages 12 to 15; 48 children ages 16 to 18; 486 youth over age 18.
- 152 youth received Mental Health referrals.
- 275 youth received Mental Health counseling.

Appendix B: All NYC 2020 Safe Harbour Provider Data

NYC Administration for Children's Services																	
2020 NYC Safe Harbour Data: Exploited Children and Children At-Risk of Exploitation																	
as reported by ACS, DYCD and Safe Harbour Providers																	
Safe Harbour Provider	Total Youth	Cis M	Cis F	Trans F	Trans M	No G Discl	GNC	<12	12- 15	16- 18	>18	Age unk	ACS only	DYCD only	ACS+DYC D	Unk	
Child Trafficking Mailbox	123	4	111	0	0	7	1	3	47	56	8	9	123	0	0	0	
Child Trafficking Database	23	2	21	0	0	0	0	0	9	14	0	0	23	0	0	0	
Children's Center Counselors	56	6	49	0	0	1	0	1	21	33	1	0	56	0	0	0	
DYCD RHY Programs	534	98	178	0	0	234	24	0	0	48	486	0	0	453	81	0	
OTDA Confirmations (0 - 23)	20	2	18	0	0	0	0	0	2	4	14	0	0	0	0	20	
Gateways Program (Placement)	14	0	14	0	0	0	0	0	7	7	0	0	14	0	0	0	
New Beginnings (Preventive)	67	16	51	0	0	0	0	0	53	13	1	0	67	0	0	0	
Preventive Advocate Cases	15	0	1	0	0	14	0	0	1	0	0	14	15	0	0	0	
Family Assessment Program	76	0	1	0	0	75	0	0	1	0	0	75	76	0	0	0	
Foster Care Unplugged Group	9	0	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	0	0	9	0	0	0	
Day One Groups	51	17	19	0	0	15	0	0	0	51	0	0	51	0	0	0	
Totals:	988	145	472	0	0	346	25	4	141	235	510	98	434	453	81	20	
Section Totals:	988	988						988					988				
<p>DYCD RHY Crisis Services and TILs serve ages 16-20. Drop In Centers serve ages 14-24.</p> <p>DYCD RHY served 159 transgender (TG) youth (included within the other gender categories). Drop ins served 12 TG youth, Crisis Shelters served 71 TG youth, TILs served 76 TG youth. See report for details.</p> <p>OTDA collects data on confirmed victims of all ages, but only data from ages 0 to 23 was used as 23 is when all youth would have exited the child welfare system.</p> <p>New Beginnings served a total of 67 children ages 0 through 18+. 42 children were under the age of 12. Since the program serves subject children age 12 and older, it is likely these are siblings of the subject children, not subject children themselves. Therefore the 42 children under age 12 have not been included in the total for New Beginnings.</p> <p>Preventive Advocate Cases: 14 youth screened as Medium Risk and 0 youth screened as High Risk. 1 youth identified at the Federal Level, so demographics provided for this one youth.</p> <p>Family Assessment Program Advocate Cases: 50 youth screened as Medium Risk and 25 youth screened as High Risk. 1 youth identified at the Federal Level, so demographics provided for this one</p>																	

Appendix C:

NYC Administration for Children's Services' Child Trafficking Database (CTDB)

Administered by ACS' Office of Child Trafficking Prevention and Policy (OCTPP), and platformed in Microsoft Dynamics, the Child Trafficking Database (CTDB) allows assigned staff to electronically complete the mandated OCFS sex trafficking screening tools, thereby alleviating the use of paper tools. As per ACS's 2020 policy: *Assessing Identifying and Service Planning for Child Sex and Labor Trafficking Victims*, all children under investigation, in the care of ACS contracted foster care agencies, and receiving services from preventive service agencies and juvenile detention providers are required to be screened using the CTDB. The only exception to use of the CTDB for sex trafficking screening is for Advocates Preventive-Only (ADVPO) cases and Family Assessment Program (FAP) cases, which require the use of paper screening tools to maintain the confidentiality required by the Advocate's Agreement.

The CTDB allows staff to view child trafficking screening histories of children on their caseload, input screenings and view caseload demographics relevant to screenings assigned, enter service referrals and generate two types of reports (Child Screening History Report and Area Compliance Report). The CTDB permits every screening to be recorded and saved in the system for future access by a worker assigned to a child (and only when a worker is assigned to a child), and for administrative research and reporting needs, as required by Federal and State legislation.

The development of the CTDB had been divided into two phases: Phase 1: Child Trafficking Screening Tool and Phase 2: Demographic and Service Data and Reports. Phase I, launched on February 15, 2017, provided a mechanism for data input in relation to NYS child sex trafficking screening mandates. CTDB Phase II launched on March 12, 2020, encompasses expanded abilities, including a new window which permits the viewing and recording of services, and auto-generated report capability as described below:

- The ability for authorized users to record information related to referring, receiving and/or providing services for every child identified as trafficked or at-risk for trafficking in a comprehensive screening
- The ability to run a ‘Child Screening History Report’ to view information on every screening ever done on a child, all indicators selected for each screening and any services referred/provided
- The ability to run a CTDB Area Compliance report that displays a comparison of all completed screenings by the screener versus screenings closed by the CTDB if not completed within the required 30 days based upon a specific ACS Division, provider, or program area.
- The ability for users with “Screener” and “Supervisor” assigned roles to deactivate a screening for a specifically provided reason
- The ability for a Supervisor to re-assign a case within their unit

OCTPP regularly conducts trainings on how to use the CTDB and is in process with ACS’ Work Force Institute (WFI) to develop a 1-hour E-Learn which will be continually available to all ACS and provider agency staff. An electronic mailbox, available at CTDB@acs.nyc.gov provides access to technical support. The CTDB Reference Guide, updated in August 2020 to include Phase II skills, provides walk through text guidance and screen shots for users.

ⁱ Mt. Sinai-St. Luke's New Beginnings Preventive Program accepted referrals for children age 12 and up who have been sexually abused and/or sex trafficked. New Beginnings worked with a total of 109 children in 2020, all of which were carried over from 2019. There were 42 children under 12 years old in 2020. Since the program served subject children age 12 and older, it is likely these are siblings of the subject children, not subject children themselves. Therefore the 42 children under age 12 have not been included in the total for New Beginnings. New Beginnings' intake closed on December 3, 2019 as the program ramped down. In the newly awarded prevention services continuum, ACS has not funded programs that exclusively serve sexually exploited youth. Instead, ACS has ensured a range of therapeutic models are available in every borough and neighborhood across New York City, including those that are equipped to serve sexually exploited youth. All prevention services programs are required to screen all children for history or risk of trafficking in persons.

ⁱⁱ OCTPP receives redacted sex trafficking screening data for Advocate (ADVPO) cases, which totaled 91 children determined to be at-risk of exploitation in Calendar Year 2020. Preventive Services Advocate Cases identified 14 children at-risk for exploitation and 1 child at the Federal Definition level, and Family Assessment Program Advocate Cases identified 75 children to be at-risk of sexual exploitation and 1 child at the Federal Definition level. For children deemed at-risk for trafficking, ACS' contracted Preventive and Family Assessment Program agencies do not transmit a breakdown of data on ADVPO cases beyond a total number of children and their risk levels. For children determined to be exploited, only age and gender are provided.

ⁱⁱⁱ As documented in 17-OCFS-INF-03: New York State Processes Related to Notifications of Victims of Human Trafficking (March 17, 2017), the NYS Anti-Trafficking Law (2007) requires the New York State (NYS) Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) and the NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) to accept referrals of potential victims from local law enforcement agencies or local district attorneys' offices. In 2015, the ability to refer potential victims of human trafficking expanded to include established legal and social services provider. OTDA and DCJS are charged with confirming or denying referrals of victims made to their agencies to allow access to services. Additionally, OTDA manages the New York State Response to Human Trafficking Program (RHTP). DCJS, in consultation with OTDA, must determine whether to confirm the referred person as a human trafficking victim (HTV) under statutory and regulatory guidelines. Once confirmed, victims are directed to either the LDSS or the RHTP service provider network. OTDA confirmation is confidential, and OTDA will only provide the number of confirmed victims, their age and gender. Some of the victims may be duplicative of reporting by other providers, but this is impossible to actually ascertain due to the confidentiality requirement. While OTDA collects data for victims of all ages, only data from ages 0 through 23 was utilized, as age 23 is when all youth are required to exit the child welfare system and receive adult services.

^{iv} DYCD Drop In Centers did not close during the pandemic. Most offered crisis services at the entrance of the sites and counseling and case management services were provided virtually. Several continued to offer overnight services and one remained open 24/7. Sites began providing some of the in-person services with overnight availability in April.

^v Many of the youth worked with by the CSEC Counselors at the ACS Children's Center received multiple and/or extended sessions. Some youth received individual sessions, and also participated in groups. Some youth had been previously referred and met again with the counselors upon return to the Children's Center. Some youth who screened at the Federal Definition of sex trafficking level were referred to the Child Trafficking Mailbox.

^{vi} 123 newly identified sexually exploited youth, or youth at-risk for exploitation were brought to the attention of ACS' Child Trafficking Mailbox. However, the Child Trafficking Mailbox received notification of many more youth who had been previously identified as exploited or at-risk for exploitation prior to

2020. The total number of youth addressed through the Child Trafficking Mailbox is documented in Section B: Data Capture Methodology.

vii Fourteen (14) age non-disclosures were from the Advocates Only Preventive (ADVPO) screenings, which only provide age if the child meets the Federal Definition level, but not for the at-risk level. Seventy-five (75) age non-disclosures were from the Family Assessment Program (FAP) screenings, which only provide age if the child meets the Federal Definition level, but not for the at-risk level. ADVPO and FAP cases do not provide any identifying information unless the youth is identified as trafficked and then only age, gender and borough. Nine (9) age non-disclosures were from the Child Trafficking Mailbox, which sometimes does not receive responses to further inquiries, or receives delayed responses. Some of these cases were non-child welfare Safe Harbour cases (no involvement with ACS or a provider agency) for which OCTPP provides limited assistance, generally through referrals.

viii In 2020, ACS continued its partnership with the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC), which notifies the Office of Child Trafficking Prevention and Policy when NYC youth (both in care and not in care) are identified by sharing relevant intelligence through the Child Trafficking Mailbox. This information sharing has provided an additional opportunity to offer services to trafficked youth both affiliated and not affiliated with the child welfare system. ACS and NCMEC attendees participate in a virtual monthly meeting to discuss cases, policies, procedures and plan cross trainings which will commence in early 2021.

ix The Child Trafficking Mailbox auto forwards emails to:

- Selina Higgins, Executive Director, OCTPP
- Shereene McDermott-Green, Supervisor II, OCTPP
- Clifton Robertson, Residential Social Worker, OCTPP
- Kristal Daniels, Supervisor I, OCTPP
- Sabine Chery, Assistant Commissioner, Office of Older Youth Services
- Susan Morley, Senior Advisor for Investigations to the Commissioner
- James Ciccotelli, Operations Manager, ACS Investigative Consultation Program
- Peter Alexander, ACS Criminal Justice Coordinator

x The overall number of youth identified as “trafficked or at-risk for trafficking” decreased by 1,183 youth between 2019 (2,171 youth identified) and 2020 (988 youth identified). In addition to Drop In Centers and other services being closed due to COVID-19 restrictions, ACS is working with a more limited group of Safe Harbour program providers based upon the decrease in OCFS funds to NYC. As a result, we no longer receive data about trafficked and at-risk youth from previous Safe Harbour providers. However, in 2020, the number of youth identified to the ACS Child Trafficking Mailbox and through the Child Trafficking Database (CTDB) were almost all (141 of 146 youth) identified at the Federal Definition of Trafficking level. Therefore, although less youth were identified to the Safe Harbour Program overall in 2020, a higher percentage (96%) of youth were definitively identified as trafficked, rather than as at-risk.

xi Identifying Assessing and Safety Planning with Child Sex and Labor Trafficking Victims. ACS Policy and Procedure 2020/05 released September 18, 2020.

xii The number of emails sent to the Child Trafficking Mailbox does not include additional trafficked or at-risk youth emails sent directly to the Executive Director of OCTPP or to other OCTPP team members (not copied to the Mailbox), nor does it include the emails sent to the CTDB Mailbox, the Training Mailbox, the Tattoo Removal Mailbox or the FGM/C Mailbox.

xiii Trauma bonding occurs due to an ongoing cycle of abuse during which intermittent punishment and reward develop a powerful emotional bond which is highly resistant to change. The lessons and punishments become more severe over time, and the victim’s compliance increases to maintain the affection of the abuser.

xiv DYCD crisis shelters provide services to youth ages 16 – 20.

xv DYCD Transitional Independent Living (TIL) programs provide services to youth ages 16 – 20.

xvi DYCD drop in centers serve young people ages 14 to 24.

xvii ACS contributed the cost of maintaining the two Safe Horizon consultants at the Children's Center and also funded child trafficking awareness items (pens, tote bags and pins) with the "Children are NOT for \$ale" logo and the National Human Trafficking Hotline contact number. ACS also expanded the staffing of its Office of Child Trafficking Prevention and Policy (OCTPP). By doing so, ACS continued its ability to reach young people who are at-risk or victims of sexual exploitation.

xviii In December 2017, ACS moved OCTPP from the ACS Investigations Unit to the Division of Family Permanency Services' Office of Older Youth Services (OYS), to enhance linkage and communication with the foster care agencies, who often help identify trafficked youth via screening and casework. One example of the benefits of the move of OCTPP to OYS is that OCTPP is now leveraging resources by working closely and in coordination with other OYS programs that work with children and staff in residential foster care programs: the Intensive Preventive Aftercare Services for Child Welfare (IPAS-CW) Unit, and the Missing Children's Outreach unit (MCOU). OCTPP and IPAS-CW continue to work together to increase outreach and communication with trafficked youth and their case planners in residential programs and to provide trainings to planners on how to use the Child Trafficking Database to screen youth. The Missing Children's Outreach Unit (MCOU) works with foster care agencies to help locate youth who leave their placements without consent ("AWOC") towards mitigating the risks of trafficking. OCTPP also works with the ACS Investigative Consultant team (comprised of former law enforcement personnel) who locate and return these vulnerable youth.

xix In 2020, the Office of Child Trafficking Prevention and Policy (OCTPP) worked diligently and continually to provide the highest quality of training, alone or in partnership with other trafficking related professionals, filling and/or facilitating a total of 3,300 trafficking awareness and skills related training seats, targeting a wide audience that included ACS, foster care, prevention and juvenile justice staff, plus other City agencies, State agencies and community and faith-based agencies. Due to COVID-19 isolation and work from home mandates, OCTPP commenced virtual training in May 2020, utilizing a variety of platforms to reach widely across NYC and beyond.

Of the total 3,368 trained by ACS in 2020:

- 3,300 seats were filled through trainings directly provided by Office of Child Trafficking Prevention and Policy staff, or OCTPP staff in partnership with other experts.
- 68 seats were filled by trainings facilitated by graduates of the NYS Office of Children and Families Services (OCFS) Train the Trainer course facilitated by the Executive Director in January 2020. These trainers work within ACS' Division of Youth and Family Justice (DYFJ), training the Youth Development Specialists (YDS) who work in the secure detention facilities.

In 2020, OCTPP continued to develop and provide a variety of original and specialized trainings, including:

- Understanding Child Trafficking Dynamics: A Bio-Psycho-Social Perspective
- Safety Planning WITH Trafficked Youth
- Endorsing Exploitation: The Influence of Media on the Developing Vulnerable Adolescent
- ACS 2020 Trafficking Policy and Child Trafficking Database (CTDB) Screenings
- Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C): Overview, Engagement Strategies and Resources

Additionally, OCTPP's Executive Director, a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW-R), presented professionally at virtual conferences and other venues which provided for the sharing of lessons learned in NYC with other jurisdictions, including:

- The International Association of Social Work with Groups 42nd Annual Symposium (with MSW intern)
- The NYS Anti-Trafficking Summit (with MSW intern)

-
- Health and Human Services (HHS) Administration for Children and Families (ACF) Children's Bureau Capacity Building Center for States' Round Table
 - Institute for Innovation in Prosecution at John Jay College's Human Trafficking, Intersectionality, and the Criminal Justice System's Panel Series (Panel 4).
 - Freedom Youth's Virtual Town Hall on COVID-19 and the Effects on Our Most Vulnerable Populations
 - Grand Rounds, Jacobi Hospital

^{xx} The tattoo removal palm cards are available in Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, English, French, Haitian Creole, Korean, Polish, Russian, Spanish, Urdu, Yiddish. The YouTube video is available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NGUMtzplo48>