

---

## Youth Experience Survey Implementation Plan

---

### **Foster Youth Experience Survey:**

The City Council of New York passed legislation on November 16, 2016 that requires the NYC Administration for Children's Services (ACS) to survey youth in foster care and share its findings.<sup>1</sup>

The purpose of the survey, referred to as the *Youth Experience Survey*, is to better understand the experiences of youth while they are in foster care, especially as it pertains to supporting youth's safety, permanency, and well-being. The survey will be issued on an annual basis to all foster youth who are age 13 years and older.

The survey will include research-informed questions intended to provide insight into the well-being of youth in foster care and the quality of their experiences in care. Well-being is defined as the healthy functioning of children and youth that allows for them to be successful throughout childhood and into adulthood.<sup>2</sup> It is critical to understand that, in addition to safety and permanency, a child's well-being outcomes must also include attention to social, emotional and physical health, educational success and connection to peers and community.<sup>3</sup>

As required by the legislation, the survey topic areas will include, but are not limited to:

- Access to food and clothing;
- Religious practices;
- Social connectedness, i.e., relationships with foster families, biological families and friends;
- Personal allowances;
- Access to technology (such as internet and phone);
- Educational needs and progress;
- Participation in extracurricular activities;

In addition, ACS intends to include questions related to:

- Emotional health;
- Physical health;
- Participation in permanency planning;
- Satisfaction with foster care agency services; and
- Any other information youth wish to share.

ACS seeks to promote the principles of positive youth development that support "adults and youth to work in partnership" and engage youth as "active agents" who are "valued and encouraged to participate in design, delivery, and evaluation of the services."<sup>4</sup> This survey provides a critical opportunity for ACS

---

<sup>1</sup> The New York City Council, law number 2016/146, Surveys for youth in foster care regarding experiences with foster parents. <http://legistar.council.nyc.gov/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=2735483&GUID=4AF3CACB-88C2-4D37-B998-23751B973DCC&Options=&Search=>

<sup>2</sup> Center for the Study of Social Policy (2013) Raising the Bar: Child Welfare's Shift Toward Well-Being. State Policy, Advocacy, and Reform Center (SPARC). <https://childwelfaresparc.files.wordpress.com/2013/07/raising-the-bar-child-welfares-shift-toward-well-being-7-22.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, Center for the Study of Social Policy.

<sup>4</sup> <http://youth.gov/youth-topics/positive-youth-development/key-principles-positive-youth-development>

Revised March 2, 2017

and its provider agencies to gather critical information from youth in foster care about their experiences that can inform policy and practice moving forward.

### **Phases of Implementation and Anticipated Timeframes:**

#### **Phase 1: Determine Dissemination Methods (March 2017 - May 2017):**

During this phase, we will:

1. Determine the timing of the survey (e.g., when the survey will be issued and how long it will be “live,” etc.)
2. Determine the method(s) for conducting the survey including options such as the following:
  - Survey Monkey or other web-based provider
  - Mobile Application
  - Text messaging a link
  - In person, guided by a Youth Advocate
3. Convene an advisory group to advise ACS on the survey content, methods for conducting the survey, and dissemination of a communications plan to maximize the numbers of youth completing the survey. The advisory group will include representatives from ACS, Foster Care Provider Agencies, Youth with Experience in Foster Care, and Child Legal Advocates.

#### **Phase 2: Development (April 2017 - August 2017):**

During this phase, we will:

1. Design the survey (research (*already in progress*), content development, build, and test)
2. Develop a communication plan for distribution of the survey to provider agencies and youth

#### **Phase 3: Distribution (September 2017 - November 2017):**

During this phase, ACS will distribute the *Youth Experience Survey*. The timeframes for distribution and the survey being “live” will depend in part on the methods selected.

#### **Phase 4: Analysis and Reporting (March 2018 – May 2018):**

In the final phase of implementation, ACS will facilitate the following processes within six months after dissemination of the survey:

- Reconcile Data
- Analyze Results
- Draft report of findings
- Finalize report
- Submit report to City Council
- Post findings on ACS Website