



Statement in Support of Legislation A.10513 (Hevesi)/S.8421 (Persaud) to amend the social services law, in relation to reporting data on child welfare preventive services

August 17, 2020.

The New York State Child Welfare Coalition, made up of policy advocates working to improve New York’s child welfare system for children and families, applauds the legislature for passing A.10513/S.8421, establishing annual reporting requirements on child welfare preventive services to better enable New York to strengthen and support families.

Collecting and reporting data on preventive services for children and their families will better enable New York to determine which mental health, economic, social and other preventive services are available and utilized in communities. Many families, disproportionately families of color, are under increasing stress due to the health, mental health, social, and economic challenges that COVID-19 presents. This legislation provides essential insight on the availability of preventive services, which can give families and communities the tools they need to weather these challenges.

Reporting requirements will include: how many children and families receive preventive services; how long children and families receive preventive services; the utilization rate of preventive services; what preventive services are available; and, how many children entered foster care after receiving preventive services.

Analyzing and releasing this data will increase New York State’s mechanisms for child welfare oversight and accountability. This data will also help New York State prepare for Family First implementation. The Family First Prevention Services Act allows states to seek federal reimbursement for evidence-based preventive services. To utilize this aspect of the law, we urge New York to affirmatively opt into the prevention provisions in 2021. Data on the current state of preventive services in New York State can inform planning around increasing the equitable availability of evidence-based preventive services in all communities that would qualify for Family First funding.

Contacts:

Julia L. Davis, Esq.
Director of Youth Justice & Child Welfare, Children’s Defense Fund-NY

(347) 907-2761 / jdavis@childrensdefens.org

Raysa S. Rodriguez, MSW

Associate Executive Director for Policy & Advocacy, Citizens' Committee for Children of NY

(347) 385-3860 / rsrodriguez@cccnewyork.org

Kathleen Brady-Stepien, MSW

Associate Executive Director, Upstate, Council of Family and Child Caring Agencies

(716) 536-5550 / kbradystepien@cofcca.org

Crystal R. Charles, MPA

Policy Analyst, Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy

(347) 670-9730 / ccharles@scaany.org