



New York State Assembly

Carl E. Heastie, Speaker

ANNUAL REPORT 2015

A dark blue silhouette of a city skyline, including various skyscrapers and buildings, positioned behind the large white text of the title.

Committee on

Children and Families

Donna Lupardo, Chair

THE ASSEMBLY
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY



Donna Lupardo
Assembly 123rd District

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Honorable Carl Heastie
Speaker of the Assembly
932 Legislative Office Building
Albany, New York 12248

December 15, 2015

Dear Speaker Heastie:

As Chair of the Assembly Standing Committee on Children and Families, it is my distinct pleasure to submit to you the 2015 Annual Report. This year, the Assembly has continued its commitment to improving outcomes for New York's children and families. The Committee put forward several policy initiatives this year that were enacted into law. These include a bill clarifying and enhancing the statute providing law enforcement with access to child protective records, as well as a bill requiring the inclusion of local social services districts' comments in child fatality reports.

The Committee also advanced a legislative package based on the work of the Assembly Child Care Workgroup. Importantly, a bill was signed into law which provides families with 30 days' notice prior to a reduction in child care eligibility or an increase in co-payment. The package also included legislation to increase child care provider stability by providing reimbursement for a set number of absences and for older infants. In keeping with the goal of supporting providers, legislation was put forward to create a taskforce of state agencies to examine duplicative and unnecessary regulations. Additionally, in light of the work done by the Workgroup, the Assembly was able to include an additional \$5 million in the SFY 2015-16 budget.

This year, the Committee was active in seeking input on important policies affecting communities around the state. The Committee sponsored a roundtable and two hearings to examine issues facing children in poverty. The Committee also sponsored a hearing to examine the impact of the reauthorization of the federal Child Care and Development Block Grant on the ability of low-income families to access safe, quality child care.

Despite the budget shortfall facing the state, the Legislature was able to restore funding to many crucial programs such as \$2.45 million for Settlement Housing, \$2 million for Advantage After-School, and \$1.75 million for Community Reinvestment. The Legislature continued funding for many core programs including the Foster Care Block Grant. The Legislature also added \$2.13 million in funding for Runaway and Homeless Youth and added additional \$3 million in funds, for a total of \$4.45 million, to Safe Harbour for Exploited Children.

In closing, I would like to express my appreciation to you, the members of the Committee and the many hardworking advocates across the State for continuing to support these efforts.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Donna h. Lupardo".

Donna Lupardo
Chair
Committee on Children and Families

**2015 ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
NEW YORK STATE ASSEMBLY
STANDING COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN AND FAMILIES**

**Donna Lupardo
Chair**

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Naomi Schultz – Senior Legislative Analyst
Jennifer Sacco - Associate Counsel
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION5

II. SUMMARY OF COMMITTEE ACTION

A. CHILD CARE.....7

1. Legislative Initiatives.....7

2. Budget Initiatives11

B. JUVENILE JUSTICE/YOUTH PROGRAMS12

1. Legislative Initiatives.....12

2. Budget Initiatives.....13

C. CHILD WELFARE13

1. Legislative Initiatives.....14

2. Budget Initiatives18

III. PUBLIC HEARINGS AND ROUNDTABLES19

A. Child Poverty19

B. Child Care Workgroup.....20

 B1: Interplay between Child Day Care and Pre-Kindergarten Programs.....21

 B2: Reauthorization of the Child Care and Development Block Grant.....21

 B3: Market Rate.....22

C. Foster Care Rates.....22

D. Child Care Subsidies.....23

APPENDIX A - 2015 Summary Sheet24

APPENDIX B - 2015 All Bills.....25

I. INTRODUCTION

The Assembly Standing Committee on Children and Families, established in 1975 as the Committee on Child Care, has jurisdiction over legislation affecting: 1) child welfare, including foster care, preventive services, and adoption; 2) child care; 3) juvenile justice, including youth development and delinquency prevention programs, Persons in Need of Supervision (PINS), and the detention and placement of adjudicated youth; 4) adult protective services; 5) residential and non-residential domestic violence services; and 6) other services and programs for children and their families, including Family Court processes.

In New York State, there are 62 counties and 58 local social services districts. Each county represents a local district, with the exception of New York City, which operates as one district for all five counties. The Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) oversees local district provision and administration of child welfare, child care, youth programs, adult protective and other publicly funded services for children and families. In addition, in New York City, the Administration for Children's Services (ACS) is responsible for the provision and administration of child welfare services, juvenile justice services and child care assistance.

Each local social services district is required by law to provide child protective services, preventive services where a risk of foster care exists, and foster care services for children who are at imminent risk in their own homes. After a child protective investigation, a district will make a determination regarding the need for preventive services, as well as foster care. The district may provide preventive and foster care services directly or through contract with a private not-for-profit agency. Preventive services may help the family avoid foster care or help a child to return home from foster care. Such services may include counseling, drug treatment and home management skills.

If a child is placed in foster care, that decision must be affirmed by a Family Court judge. The court will also determine whether the local district has made reasonable efforts to reunite the child with his or her family and set forward a permanency goal for the child. Foster children may reside in a variety of settings, including foster family homes, group homes and residential institutions. Foster parents receive subsidy payments, comprised of federal, state and local funds and issued by the local social services district.

Local social services districts also issue subsidy payments to child care providers on behalf of low-income families eligible for child care assistance. This assistance is comprised of Federal, state and local funds and helps families maintain employment while their children are being cared for in a safe environment. Outside of New York City, child care providers are licensed or registered by OCFS, which also conducts inspections to ensure compliance with state regulations. In New York City, the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene is the licensing agency for child care providers, while ACS contracts with and issues payments to providers. These payments may also come in the form of a voucher given directly to the eligible family. Statewide, child care is provided in a variety of settings such as child care centers, group family day care homes and family day care homes. Informal child care is also available statewide, for providers that serve no more than two children or serve children for no more than three hours a day. These providers are not required to be registered or licensed.

The juvenile justice system in New York State is comprised of state, local and privately operated programs for youth. Youth may be placed by the Family Court in a private voluntary agency, contracting with either the local social services district or OCFS. OCFS operates secure and limited-secure juvenile justice facilities, where adjudicated youth may be placed as juvenile delinquents or by the Criminal Court as juvenile offenders. The “Close to Home” reform enacted in the SFY 12-13 budget requires that adjudicated youth from NYC be placed with the Administration for Children’s Services (ACS) rather than OCFS. This reform lowered the number of youth placed with OCFS by transferring NYC youth in non-secure facilities to, and by placing all newly adjudicated youth with, ACS. As of spring 2013, OCFS completed transferring custody for all 238 youth placed in their non-secure facilities to ACS. OCFS has recently received ACS’s limited-secure plan, and it is expected that all NYC youth placed in limited-secure facilities will be transferred to ACS in the near future.

OCFS provides after-care services to youth leaving placement, based in statewide Community Multi-Services Offices. Each youth leaving placement in an OCFS-operated facility receives after-care services to help with the transition back into the community. Pursuant to the “Close to Home” plan submitted by ACS, the city provides after-care to youth transitioning out of placement in voluntary agencies.

Localities also operate and provide juvenile justice programs and services. Counties operate detention facilities where a youth may be held prior to adjudication or placement. Counties also operate or contract with providers for non-mandated services for youth involved, or at risk of involvement, in the juvenile justice system. These programs include alternatives to detention and residential care, where an at-risk youth may receive services such as supervision and counseling. While the state provides funding for alternative programs, the number and types of programs that are available vary statewide.

Local social services districts are also responsible for providing adult protective services for adults who, because of mental or physical impairments, are unable to manage their own resources, carry out activities of daily living, or protect themselves from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, and have no one willing or able to assist them. Districts are mandated to accept and investigate reports of persons alleged to be in need of protective services and provide such services without regard to income. These services may include arranging for medical and mental health services, assisting in relocating the adult to a safe location, drug treatment and assuming guardianship of the adult.

Domestic violence services are also provided by each local social services district, as required by the New York State Domestic Violence Prevention Act of 1987. OCFS issues regulations establishing standards for such services, which include both non-residential and residential domestic violence programs. The residential programs are licensed by OCFS and include shelters with ten beds or more, safe dwellings for victims and their children and safe home networks providing emergency services coordinated by a not-for-profit organization. OCFS also sets the per diem rate for residential domestic violence programs.

II. SUMMARY OF COMMITTEE ACTION

A. CHILD CARE

The availability of child care is tied to both the social and economic development of New York State. Quite often, the child care expenses for a family of four can exceed the cost of food, rent and other household expenses, resulting in the cost of quality child care becoming the single largest expense in the family's budget. The Committee on Children and Families has continued to stress the critical need for accessible, affordable, safe, and quality child care. Parents must have reliable child care in order to maintain their employment, and young children need quality settings for appropriate educational and social development. This year, the Assembly fought to ensure that the State budget would preserve funding for quality child care, while also making quality child care more accessible and safer for children of low to moderate-income families.

1. Legislative Initiatives

a. Waiting List (A.7585, Walker/S.973, Montgomery; Passed Assembly)

Many low-income families rely on subsidized child care in order to maintain employment and ensure financial security. New York State strives to secure adequate funding each year for child care assistance. In order to do this, it is necessary that an accurate estimate be made of the outstanding need in local social services districts for subsidized child care. By establishing mandatory waiting lists, the number of families and the length of time they must wait for child care assistance can be determined. In addition, the income level of families receiving child care assistance must be determined so lawmakers can understand who the subsidies are reaching and whether current income eligibility requirements are appropriate.

This bill would require local social services districts to maintain waiting lists for child care assistance as well as data pertaining to the income level of the families receiving assistance.

b. Online Listing of After-School and Child Care Programs (A.1869, Mayer/S.1465, Kennedy; Passed Assembly) *Part of Assembly Child Care Package*

Currently, there is no statewide database through which parents and caregivers can search to identify afterschool, extended learning, and summer programs for their school age children. The bill would require the Council on Children and Families to develop and make available through its website a listing and map of all recipients of grants awarded or administered by the state for the purpose of providing afterschool or summer programs, extended learning time, or community schools, and all registered school age providers registered by the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS). The listing would include each grant recipient or provider's name, the address at which the program is offered, and the name and phone number of an individual who is authorized to answer questions regarding the program. The listing and map would be updated no less than once every ninety days to reflect changes. The listing and map would also be updated within ninety days of any contract with a grant recipient expiring or being signed. The council would be able to include locations and information for additional relevant programs as it sees fit.

c. Notification of Funding Cuts to Child Day Care Assistance (A.870, Peoples-Stokes/S.1517, Felder; Signed, Chapter 144) *Chapter Amendment*

In February 2010, with only 10 days notice, the families of 1500 children in Erie County were notified that their child care subsidies would be terminated because the county was lowering its eligibility levels from 200% to 125% of poverty. This short notice left many families in the lurch and required some to leave their jobs and others to remove their children from safe, secure and known child care providers with no time to arrange satisfactory alternatives. Families were left without adequate time to plan or react.

Similarly, in 2012, Westchester County raised the parent contribution from 20% of income above the poverty line to 27% and stopped accepting new applications for Title XX funding which provides subsidies to families earning between 200% and 275% of the federal poverty level.

This bill amends Chapter 495 of 2014 to require local social services district notify families 30 days prior to taking action which would impact their eligibility for child care assistance, or cause an increase in the co-payment. Such requirement ensures that families have adequate time to plan for their child care needs.

d. Establishes the Early Learning Investment Commission (A.6629, Lupardo/S.4421, Avella; Vetoed Memo 208) *Part of Assembly Child Care Package*

Decades of research have demonstrated the social, academic, and economic gains that result from increased investment in high quality early childhood education programs. Children who participate in quality early learning programs have higher rates of high school graduation and college enrollment and decreased rates of incarceration and reliance on public assistance. Early childhood programs produce a high rate of return, mostly due to the societal savings resulting from decreased reliance on criminal justice and safety net programs. In addition, increased investment in early learning has been shown to increase the productivity of the current workforce and provides an economic boost for local economies. It is therefore important to engage members of the business community in the discussion on early learning funding, and to encourage such persons to seek out investments both private and public to the greatest extent possible.

This bill would establish the Early Learning Investment Commission (ELIC) with the purpose of securing public and private support for early learning programs for children up to the age of five. Membership of the ELIC would include at least four business leaders appointed by the Governor, two by the Speaker of the Assembly and two by the Temporary President of the Senate, as well as the commissioners of the Office of Children and Family Service, the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance, the State Education Department and the Economic State Development Corporation, and the Director of the Division of the Budget. Members of the ELIC would serve terms of three years for appointed positions, and for all others so long as they remain in titles with state government. The ELIC would be charged with developing and implementing strategies to engage members of the business community in early learning, as well as raising

awareness of the benefits of early learning programs. The ELIC would meet twice per year and would develop an annual report which would be sent to the Governor and Legislature.

e. Provider Qualifications on OCFS Website (A.1864, Mayer/S.742, Kennedy; Passed Assembly) *Part of Assembly Child Care Package*

Currently, parents can view basic and limited information about a child care provider on the OCFS website. This information includes contact information, program type and capacity, whether the facility can administer medications, whether non-traditional hours are offered, and if there are uncorrected violations and enforcement actions that were taken. Parents are encouraged to follow up with the provider for any relevant updated information. Selecting a child care provider is one of the most important decisions that working parents face. In order to make this decision, parents should be equipped with a comprehensive overview of the providers' qualifications. By posting a child care provider's trainings online, the provider is also given the opportunity to publicize such accomplishments.

This bill would authorize child care providers to submit to the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) any additional education or trainings related to the provision of child care that they have completed. OCFS would be required to post such information online.

h. Establishes the Child Care Regulatory Review Task Force (A.7135, Gunther/S.5091, Ritchie; Vetoed memo 236) *Part of Assembly Child Care Package*

Child care providers experience administrative burdens as they work to maintain compliance with the various federal and state regulatory, licensing, and quality enhancement program requirements. Sometimes a provider may have to submit duplicative or very similar paperwork to multiple agencies. This can be time consuming and costly especially for small providers without the financial or personnel resources to dedicate to administrative activities. Depending on the circumstance, these obstacles may impose an unnecessary deterrent to maintaining a child care business.

This bill would create the Child Care Regulatory Review Task Force to review statutory and regulatory requirements for child day care providers. Members of the Task Force would include the Commissioner of the Office for Children and Family Services, the Commissioner of the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance, the Commissioner of the Department of Health, the Commissioner of the Administration for Children's Services and the Commissioner of the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, or their designees. The Task Force would be required to hold at least one public hearing, review regulatory and statutory requirements pertaining to child care, and issue a report with recommendations to the Legislature three years from the effective date.

i. Streamlining of Child Care Assistance Applications (A.4469, Barrett/S.5419, Serino; Vetoed memo 226) *Part of Assembly Child Care Package*

Applying for child care benefits can be a daunting and complicated process. Application forms often require information not pertaining to child care eligibility, and can be lengthy and

confusing for applicants. Additionally, low-income families are often not able to take paid time off from work to go into the local social services district office to fill out the applications. This bill would help to ameliorate these issues by requiring a shortened application form that could be filled out online, or mailed to the applicant at his or her request.

This bill would require local social services districts to utilize a shortened application form for persons only applying for child care assistance, and to post such form on their respective websites for online application. The Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance and the Office of Children and Family Services would be required to post links to each district's application on their respective websites.

j. Child Care Provider Reimbursement for Absences (A. 6568, Lupardo/S.5009, Felder; Passed Assembly) *Part of Assembly Child Care Package*

Local social services districts can opt to withhold a portion of subsidy reimbursement from a provider for days in which a child is absent from care. While state regulations allow up to 12 days in absences for each child in any one calendar month, most if not all of these counties choose not to pay providers when children do not attend. This creates fiscal uncertainty for many providers, leading to difficulty with staff retention and optimal quality care.

This bill would require that local social services districts make payments to providers for at least 12 absences in a 6 month period. The Office of Children and Family Services would define the maximum number of absences allowed for reimbursement, which would not be less than 24 absences in a 6 month period, unless extenuating circumstances exist.

k. Child Care Provider Reimbursement for Infants (A.7191, Simotas/No Same as; Passed Assembly) *Part of Assembly Child Care Package*

Licensing regulations require a certain staff to child ratio depending on the age and number of children receiving care with additional staff being required for any increases in infant care. As a result, the subsidy reimbursement amount for infant care is higher than what would be provided for older children. Subsidy regulations define an infant as a child from 0-18 months, however staffing ratios set forth by the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) considers an infant to be 0-24 months. This creates a 6-month financial shortfall for providers who do not receive the higher reimbursement amount, but are still required to operate under the standards of the licensing requirements such as a higher level of staff to child ratio. Aligning the definition of infant in subsidy regulation and licensing regulations will ensure that providers receive an adequate subsidy to compensate for the level of care that is being provided.

This bill would require that a home based child care provider be reimbursed at the infant rate for a child up to two years of age.

I. Sleep Subsidy for Eligible Parents (A.775-A, Jaffee/S.5184, Savino; Passed Assembly) *Part of Assembly Child Care Package*

Parents who work nights often need child care so that they can sleep during the day if their children are young and not in school. Regulations currently permit, but do not require social services districts to provide a child care subsidy to financially eligible parents and caretakers who work second or third shifts and need child care for their young children in order to sleep.

Most social services districts do exercise this option and provide subsidized daytime child care for parents who need to sleep. For those living in the eleven social services districts that do not provide this option, life can be very difficult as sleep-deprived parents juggle their need to sleep with caring for a young child.

This bill would require that otherwise eligible families with a child under the age of 6 receive a subsidy in order to sleep if they work a late shift. This would ensure that low income parents with young children who work the night shift and need child care to get adequate sleep will be able to do so regardless of where they live.

2. Budget Initiatives

Child care subsidies provide low-income families with access to quality child care. The Assembly has found that child care assistance is most successful when a dedicated, stable funding source is provided from year to year. This year, thanks to the work of the Assembly Child Care Workgroup, the Assembly approved a budget with an additional \$5 million for child care subsidies over the amount proposed in the Executive budget. This funding will help counties meet the unmet needs of families struggling to maintain employment and provide safe and affordable day care for their children.

The executive budget proposed eliminating certain vital child care programs important to families struggling to maintain self-sufficiency. Child care demonstration projects, located throughout New York City, the Capital Region, Oneida, Onondaga and Monroe County, serve families up to 275% of the poverty level and make enrollment in child care easier and more efficient. The Assembly was able to increase funding to \$9.24 million to these programs, an increase of almost \$2 million dollars from last year. The Legislature took further action to ensure that essential child care programs are preserved by restoring funding for SUNY and CUNY Child Care, in the amount of \$334,000.

The Legislature was also able to increase funding for the Advantage After School Program by \$2 million dollars, for a total of \$19.26 million dollars. This program provides structured after-school activities in order to reduce negative behaviors and offer a safe environment for children.

B. JUVENILE JUSTICE/YOUTH PROGRAMS

The Committee has jurisdiction over issues facing families and youth at every stage in the juvenile justice process. Policies concerning preventive services, alternatives to detention and placement programs, treatment of youth in care and after-care supervision all fall under the Committee's purview. The Committee has continually emphasized the need for an integrated, community-based approach in order to prevent youth from being placed in State-operated facilities. For those who must be placed, the Committee traditionally supports a rehabilitative approach to treatment while in care, and intensive after-care services so that youth can effectively and safely integrate back into their communities.

1. Legislative Initiatives

a. Permanency Planning (A.7050, Lupardo/S.5019, Felder; Passed Assembly)

This measure is vital to address the current conundrum faced by the Family Court: the Court is charged with responsibility to conduct permanency hearings, monitor permanency planning and issue fact-specific permanency orders in juvenile delinquency and Persons in Need of Supervision (PINS) proceedings, but is not given the information or authority required to discharge that responsibility. If Family Court and all parties are provided with specific service plans, if needed services are ordered, if representation by the juveniles' attorneys is continued without interruption and if the agencies' responsibilities to work with, and provide appropriate visitation to, the juveniles' parents and other legally responsible adults are clearly articulated, the likelihood of successful permanency planning is significantly increased. This would benefit not only New York State in its efforts to demonstrate compliance with the federal Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA), but also the juveniles, their families and the communities to which the juveniles return.

This bill would add permanency planning to juvenile delinquency and PINS proceedings consistent with requirements for child abuse and neglect proceedings. This includes an additional requirement to hold permanency proceedings for youth placed in limited-secure facilities, review of steps taken to ensure immediate enrollment in school, notification to parents of proceedings and continuation of attorney representation. These additions are analogous to requirements for foster children.

b. Violation Procedures (A.5897, Paulin/S.5286, Gallivan; Signed, Chapter 499)

In a juvenile delinquency or PINS proceeding, the Family Court may order a youth to comply with certain terms and conditions with the goal of dismissing the case. Such orders occur as part of a suspended judgment, conditional discharge and direction that the youth be placed on probation. If the youth is successful in meeting the terms of the order, he or she may avoid a fact-finding that could lead to a disposition of placement. Currently, there are no standards or procedures guiding the court for restoring a matter to the calendar if a violation of such terms is alleged. The youth has no due process for which to show evidence that such violation did not occur, or that mitigating circumstances exist.

This bill would provide a process in juvenile delinquency and PINS proceedings for restoring the matter to the calendar after an alleged violation. In a juvenile delinquency proceeding, a petition would be served upon the youth and the youth provided with an opportunity to respond and to be represented by counsel at a hearing. In a PINS proceeding, similar to existing juvenile delinquency proceedings, a judicial allocution procedure would be required before the court may accept the youth's admission. A petition would be served upon the youth and the youth would be represented by counsel at a hearing. A finding by competent proof that the youth committed the alleged act would be sufficient to restore the matter to the calendar.

2. Budget Initiatives

The Legislature was able to provide an additional \$1.3 million in funding for the Youth Development Programs, which are those programs formerly known as Youth Development and Delinquency Prevention (YDDP) and Special Delinquency Prevention Programs (SDPP). This restoration is in addition to a base amount of \$15.4 million.

Additionally, the Legislature was able to provide \$1.75 million in funding for the Community Reinvestment Program, which is an initiative that OCFS designed with stakeholders to invest in, expand, and enhance community resources with multi-phase interventions in order to prevent family court placements. The ultimate goal is to provide youth and families in high-need communities with a comprehensive community network of supports. This program is intended to help teach healthy behaviors, reduce gang involvement and/or violence, and improve attendance at school and court proceedings.

Finally, the Legislature approved additional funding for the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP). The final funding level was \$30 million from \$27.5 million last year. This funding will ensure that the program continues to provide paid employment to youth during the summer months.

C. CHILD WELFARE

Child abuse and neglect continue to be a reality in the lives of many children in New York State. Victims of abuse and neglect can suffer long-term adverse social and psychological consequences. Therefore, it is imperative that children in these situations are protected and that families are able to receive appropriate services in order to prevent further trauma, thereby lessening the after-effects of abuse.

The foster care system provides temporary placement, care, and services to children and families in crisis while promoting the goal of family reunification. In an effort to achieve family reunification and stability, Federal and State laws have driven the development of preventive, protective, and rehabilitative programs to provide needed services. Adequate care for these children and their families is critical, and it is imperative that a wide array of services is provided to support the reunification of stable and healthy families.

For many children who cannot be reunified with their families, adoption may be the final step in obtaining a permanent family environment. Such permanency is crucial to a child's development

and greatly enhances successful outcomes into adulthood. The Committee has continuously stressed the need for effective and timely permanency planning, incentives for adoption and continued post-adoption support for families in need.

1. Legislative Initiatives

a. Notification of Change in Placement (A.7117, Persaud/S.5331, Felder; Passed Assembly)

The removal of a child from his or her home is often a traumatic and life-altering event for the child and family involved. Once the child is placed in foster care, changing such placement brings additional instability and potential trauma into a foster child's life. Currently, local social services districts have the authority to remove a child from his or her foster home into a different setting, such as a group home or a residential facility, without informing the parents or the attorney for the child. As these parties play a vital role in the child's life, they should be informed prior to a district's decision to change placement. Such advance notice provides an opportunity to determine whether such a move is necessary and in the best interest of the child.

This bill would require local social services districts to provide 10 days advance written notice to the attorneys for the parties and the attorney for the child when a change in foster care placement is deemed necessary. If the need to change placement is an emergency, such notice would be required as soon as practicable after removal. This bill would also require the district to notify the attorneys for the parties and the attorney for the child within five days of an indicated report of child abuse in the home of a foster child when the subject of the report is the person caring for the child.

b. Ongoing Mandated Reporter Training (A.7643, Persaud/No Same as; Passed Assembly)

Mandated reporters are required by law to report suspected child abuse and neglect to the Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment (SCR). Mandated reporters include professionals who, through their official capacity, are likely to observe signs of abuse and neglect in children.

Currently, mandated reporters are required to complete 2 hours of training regarding the identification and reporting of child abuse and maltreatment. This training is required only once. Despite changing laws and regulations surrounding child abuse, no further training is required regardless of how long such professionals continue in their careers. Concerns have been raised regarding whether the current requirement is sufficient to keep mandated reporters refreshed and up-to-date on their responsibilities.

This bill would rectify this concern by requiring mandated reporters to complete 2 hours of training every 3 years. Such ongoing training would help mandated reporters to take appropriate action, improve the quality of calls to the SCR and keep children safe.

c. New York State Reuniting Families Act (A.2432, Kim/S.2516, Parker; Passed Assembly)

When a child has been in foster care for 15 of the most recent 22 months, the local social services district is required to file a petition to terminate parental rights unless certain exceptions exist. These exceptions are designed to recognize circumstances preventing a parent from reunification that may be outside his or her control, such as incarceration and participation in a drug rehabilitation program.

Likewise, a parent involved in an immigration proceeding may be unable to resume custody despite efforts to do so. Upon conclusion of the proceeding, the parent may be fully able to care for his or her child with it being in the best interest of the child to return home. To terminate parental rights, in the midst of such proceeding, would prematurely and permanently separate the parent and child, resulting in trauma and hardship to the family. In such situations, the local social services district should have the flexibility to consider the circumstances and delay the filing of a petition to terminate parental rights.

d. Licensure and Certification of a Foster Parent (A.731, Rozic/S.1514, Griffo; Signed, Chapter 142) *Chapter Amendment*

Currently, when a person applies to become a foster parent, the local social services district must review their history to determine whether a previous license or certificate was issued, and if so whether such license or certificate was revoked or suspended, or a child was removed from the home. Chapter 539 of the Laws of 2014 codified this requirement into law but placed additional requirements on local social services districts by not specifying that such reviews would be conducted within the currently utilized Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System. By omitting this, the law inadvertently expanded the districts' responsibilities so that they would be required to track down additional information that may not be available.

This bill specifies that the reviews be conducted within the currently used system thereby preventing undue burdens on local social services districts and unnecessary delays in the approval of much needed foster parents. Additionally, the bill would clarify that the previous removal of children from foster homes must only be considered when granting a new license or certificate if such removal was due to health and safety reasons, as is the intent of Chapter 539 of the Laws of 2014.

e. Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Extension (A.869, Zebrowski/S.1519, Gallivan; Signed, Chapter 146) *Chapter Amendment*

Societies for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (SPCC) were first established in New York State in the mid-1870s, in response to a need for protecting children from abuse and neglect. At that time, there were no state laws or authorities to protect children from abusive situations. For over a century these organizations helped to protect the children of our state. However, with the enactment of the Child Protective Services Act in 1973, the state assumed the role of protecting children against abuse and neglect.

In 2008, a bill was signed into law repealing unnecessary powers of SPCC organizations so that child protective services may only be handled by the appropriate local social services district. Two exceptions were made to this law. The Rockland County SPCC, which assists law enforcement with underage alcohol and tobacco stings, was allowed to retain its peace officer status to be able to continue such operations. Due to dire fiscal consequences, the Erie County SPCC was exempted from the bill so that it could continue to contract with the county to perform after-hours CPS functions. The law required these exceptions to sunset in 5 years, at which time the Legislature would review the fiscal circumstances in Erie County to determine whether an extension was warranted. The sunset date occurred in August of this year.

This bill amends Chapter 325 of the laws of 2014 to extend the provisions allowing Rockland and Erie County SPCCs to continue in their current functions for 3, rather than 5 years.

f. Fatality Reports (A.872, Lupardo/S.1518, Felder; Signed, Chapter 145) *Chapter Amendment*

Chapter 544 of the Laws of 2014 requires OCFS to accept written comments submitted by the applicable local social services district for inclusion in fatality reports issued in regards to the death of a child. The inclusion of such comments enhances the information in the report by providing additional perspective on the circumstances surrounding the child's death that may help to prevent future tragedies.

In order to further this intent, this bill will further clarify that such comments must protect the confidentiality of the family and the source of the report, and be relevant and factually accurate. The bill would also provide OCFS with the time necessary to complete the proposed report prior to sending it to the local district for comment.

While such language was not included in the bill, it was agreed upon and reiterated in the approval Memo for Chapter 544 of the Laws of 2014 issued by the Governor that comments included in the fatality report submitted by the districts may be up to 2000 characters in length. Local social services districts were informed of this requirement by an informational letter distributed by OCFS.

g. Law Enforcement Access to CPS records (A.5803, Fahy/S.3520-A, Amedore; Signed, Chapter 436)

Time is of the essence when a child goes missing. Law enforcement must be equipped to act immediately to locate that child by all appropriate means. Sometimes, this includes accessing certain child protective records maintained by local social services departments that may shed light on events related to the disappearance of the child. Current law does provide access to such records in the case of missing children however such statute is not interpreted the same way throughout the state. Discrepancies can cause confusion regarding when it is appropriate to release records to law enforcement thereby creating unnecessary delays. In such a crisis situation, it is vital that the law is clearly understood and applied.

This bill would seek to remedy this by clarifying the instances when it is appropriate to release records to law enforcement in the case of a missing child. The bill creates a definition of criminal

justice agency, reorganizes the statute so that law enforcement access provisions are in one place and clarifies that child protective records may be made available in open and closed cases. This bill will be repealed and replaced by a subsequent bill negotiated to clarify certain provisions in order to further the intent that records be provided in an appropriate and expeditious manner.

h. Enhanced Finding of Abuse and Neglect (A.7644, Fahy/S.5054, Felder; Signed, Chapter 492)

Children deserve protection from abuse and neglect regardless of who the perpetrator is. Such protection is especially crucial in instances of severe and repeated abuse; the most severe form of abuse defined by statute. Current law allows findings of severe and repeated abuse to be made in an original Article 10 proceeding, but only against a parent. This limitation does not account for the many non-biological or biological non-parent caretakers who commit such abuse against a child. These persons fall under the definition of person legally responsible and although the harm perpetrated may be equal to that of a parent, due to this gap in the law, the remedies are not.

This bill would address this shortcoming by allowing for a finding of severe and repeated abuse in an Article 10 proceeding when the perpetrator is a person legally responsible. Additionally, the bill further protects children and families by allowing orders of protection in such instances, as well as under all Article 10 proceedings, to be entered into the statewide registry of orders of protections and warrants.

i. Permanency Hearings for Youth in Foster Care (A.7679, Lupardo/S.5258-A, Felder; Signed, Chapter 573)

Children in foster care face many uncertainties; including who they will reside with, what services they will participate in and what their ultimate outcome will be. Permanency hearings, conducted in Family Court, are the forum in which these things are determined. The child's service plan is reviewed and a permanency goal is established. The topics discussed at this hearing are of the utmost importance to the child's life and well-being.

State law requires that Family Courts responsible for the permanency hearing of a child consult with that child in an age appropriate manner. The intent of the law is to include the child's wishes and keep them informed of critical decisions regarding their life. This bill would further that intent by providing each child aged ten years or older with the right to attend their own permanency hearings.

j. Health and Safety Regulations in school-aged child care settings (A.7750, Lupardo/S.5627 Felder; Vetoed Memo 286)

School age child care programs are crucial in providing safe and quality child care, promoting positive youth development and helping children socially and academically. While SACC programs are regulated by the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS), the school buildings in which they frequently operate out of are regulated by the State Education Department (SED). Problems arise when the two conflict. For example, hanging posters on the wall may be acceptable during school hours, but are considered a fire hazard and prohibited

under SACC regulations. SACC staff therefore have to spend time taking down the posters, which also creates tensions with school staff. Avoiding such conflicts would benefit the school, the SACC program and the children who they serve.

This bill would remedy this problem by requiring that SED regulations supersede any conflicting regulations concerning registered third party school age child care providers.

2. Budget Initiatives

Despite a difficult economic climate, the Legislature worked to preserve vital programs in the area of child welfare. Through the support of the Legislature, many of these programs received continued funding during the SFY 2015-2016, such as Child Advocacy Centers, Safe Harbour, and the Runaway and Homeless Youth program.

The Legislature was able to appropriate \$3 million in funding, for the Safe Harbour program created under the Safe Harbour for Exploited Children Act in 2008. Under this groundbreaking law, the Legislature established that commercially sexually exploited children are crime victims, not criminals, and recognized that these children must be provided with critical services, including short-term emergency shelter to keep them off the streets, food, clothing, medical care, counseling and crisis intervention services, and long-term housing with specialized services such as case management, legal, mental health and substance and alcohol abuse services. The Safe Harbour program also contemplates that funding be utilized to train law enforcement to better identify sexually exploited children and obtain appropriate services for them.

The Legislature also provided \$2.57 million, for Child Advocacy Centers, which provide a comfortable setting for abused children to receive care and treatment. These centers are important places where multi-disciplinary teams of professionals including doctors, mental health providers and law enforcement, can gather information about a case. The child benefits because multiple interviews, which can be a source of additional trauma, are avoided. The Legislature also continued funding for the Runaway and Homeless Youth program in the amount of \$4.5 million in the SFY 2015-2016 budget, an increase of almost \$2 over the Executive's proposed budget, improving the chances of stability and permanency options for these youth.

In 2013, through Article VII legislation, the Legislature approved a new program called "Pay for Success" which incentivizes private entities to finance public programs in the areas of health care, early childhood development, child welfare and public safety. OCFS and the Division of Criminal Justice Services enter into contracts with intermediary organizations for the raising of funds and oversight of service provision, as well as contracts for the verification of program outcomes achieved. Investors receive a return on investment based on savings the program achieves. This year the Legislature authorized an additional \$23 million for new projects in the juvenile justice and health care fields.

Several pieces of Article VII legislation were also enacted this year in order to comply with federal law. The first clarified that OCFS would no longer pay subsidies for private adoptions when the adoptive parent resides out of state at the time of application. The second enacted several provisions relating to preventing risk factors for human trafficking by ensuring

consistency in caring and planning for the lives of children in foster care. These include provisions ensuring that caretakers under the Kinship Guardianship Assistance Program, who take over in the event of incapacitation or death of the original caretaker, will continue to receive subsidy payments. Other provisions enhanced permanency planning for juvenile delinquents, PINS and Article 10 youth by ensuring that: intensive efforts are made to place a child with a permanent caretaker, independent living skills are taught at an earlier age, and the youth participates in age appropriate activities while in care.

III. PUBLIC HEARINGS & ROUNDTABLES

A. Child Poverty

Currently, New York State has some of the highest levels of child poverty in the country. According to U.S. Census data from 2013, 22% of children under the age of eighteen are living below the federal poverty level (the U.S. Census defines the family poverty level for a family of four as \$24,250 annually). Poverty is far reaching and has lasting effects on our children; according to the American Psychological Association, children living in poverty have an increased likelihood of teen pregnancy, dropping out of high school, ending up in the foster care system or becoming part of the juvenile justice system.

Given the prevalence of child poverty and the severity of its effects, the Assembly Committee on Children and Families and the Assembly Committee on Social Services sought to explore the reasons for and solutions to, poverty around the State. According to U.S. Census data, 30% of children in New York City, 47% of children in the City of Binghamton and 50% of children living in the City of Rochester live in poverty, far exceeding the state average. Therefore, these locations were chosen to hold public forums where stakeholders could speak to the impacts of child poverty. Hearings were held on August 25th in Binghamton and September 24th in NYC, and a roundtable was conducted on August 24th in Rochester.

Stakeholders testifying at the hearings and participating in the roundtable identified major issues impeding families from escaping poverty and achieving self-sufficiency. Among them, child hunger was a common theme. Advocates suggested increasing funding for free and reduced lunch programs in impoverished communities. Others spoke of the importance of raising the minimum wage, supporting pay equity and increasing access to affordable housing. Such actions would reduce barriers to employment and an eventual reliance on public assistance programs.

Child care was an area of particular focus as well. In order to maintain employment, it was identified as essential that families living in poverty have child care assistance necessary to access safe and quality day care. Stakeholders spoke of the need to increase the number of slots so that more eligible families are served. A common issue facing low-income families is that as wages increase, and self-sufficiency becomes more attainable, day care assistance eligibility is lost. Families therefore face an increase in day care costs that greatly exceeds their increase in pay. Legislation was suggested to help these families so that mobility in the workforce does not result in child care costs that keep them in poverty, thus creating a disincentive to seek higher wages.

B. Child Care Workgroup

The New York State Assembly Child Care Workgroup, formed on May 6th of 2013, is tasked with examining and exploring innovative ideas for enhancing child day care so that the needs of families and providers are met. The Workgroup is comprised of the following Committee, Task Force and Subcommittee Chairs to guide its work: Assembly-member Cathy Nolan, Chair of the Committee on Education; Assembly-member Michele Titus, Chair of the Committee on Labor; Assembly-member Aileen Gunther, Chair of the Committee on Mental Health; Assembly-member Donna Lupardo, Chair of the Committee on Children and Families; Assembly-member Andrew Hevesi, Chair of the Committee on Social Services; Assembly-member Ellen Jaffee, Chair of the Committee on Oversight, Analysis and Investigation; Assembly-member Aravella Simotas, Chair of the Task Force on Women's Issues; Assembly-member Addie Russell, Chair of the Subcommittee on Women Veterans; and Assembly-member Latrice Walker, Chair of the Subcommittee on Renewable Energy. This year, the workgroup reconvened to hold three roundtables addressing major issues facing the State's child care system. These are: the interplay between day care and pre-kindergarten, the market rate and the upcoming reauthorization of the federal Child Care and Development Block Grant.

B1. Interplay between Child Day Care and Pre-Kindergarten programs; October 6th

Expansion of universal pre-kindergarten has been long standing priority for the Assembly. However, according to education and childcare advocates, as well as parents, many children are still unable to access pre-kindergarten programs. While pre-kindergarten is an early education program, it encompasses a population of children who have traditionally been served by child care providers. In some cases, the childcare provider or community based organization is the pre-kindergarten provider, in other instances, the school districts provide pre-kindergarten.

The New York State Assembly's Workgroup on Child Care held a roundtable on October 6, 2015 to examine the interplay between pre-kindergarten and child care. As pre-kindergarten programs continue to expand across the state it is important to explore the impact pre-kindergarten has had on the child care industry and families who use various day care models offered.

Advocates provided substantive background on the issue of accessing quality child daycare and pre-kindergarten. Pre-kindergarten programs maintain varying hours, many of which are half day. This means that families are left to find arrangements for the remainder of the day. Many families do not have the flexibility to take time off to transport their children multiple times during the work day. Transportation plays a major role in this issue and advocates suggested that the State provide funding to transport children between pre-kindergarten and other childcare facilities accordingly.

In addition to the issue of transportation, advocates spoke to the need of developing a uniform curriculum for all teachers in pre-kindergarten which would include professional development, training and any relevant certification. This would allow teachers to provide improved quality care and help children learn appropriate developmental skills. Advocates also emphasized the desire to have the State also develop an "Office of Early Learning" that would work as a central

system between the Department of Education and the Office of Children and Family Services to streamline the regulatory process.

Currently, teachers in pre-kindergarten have disparities in wages. For example, teachers of four year olds earn more income than three year olds, and teachers at the Department of Education make more than community based organizations. This disparity produces major retention issues as well as consistency issues for children. Advocates expressed that the State should establish a uniformed pre-kindergarten funding stream across to remedy these disparities and discourage the competitive Request for Proposal process.

B2. Reauthorization of the Child Care and Development Block Grant; October 19th

The Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) is a federal block grant that was created in 1990 to help low income families by providing them with subsidies to afford child care and to encourage healthy child development in appropriate environments. In November 2014, President Obama reauthorized the CCDBG, making significant policy changes to the program. Several policy changes were adopted with the reauthorization, including amendments to health and safety requirements for child care providers, establishing more family-friendly guidelines for eligibility policies, and fostering trust with parents by ensuring they have access to information regarding their options for available child care providers.

The Workgroup held a roundtable on October 19 to examine how the federal reauthorization of the child care and development block grant will impact families and different providers in areas such as; health and safety requirements for child care providers, eligibility and access, child care quality improvement, and the availability of consumer and provider information. Advocates who participated in the roundtable were able to provide perspective regarding the impact of CCDBG would have on the child care industry.

One of the major concerns raised at the roundtable was the additional cost to the State. The Division of Budget estimates that administration alone will cost \$90 million. The total impact to the Child Care Block Grant, and the cost to maintain the number of families served, is unknown. Advocates raised concerns such as small counties being burdened with additional cost to provide background checks for childcare workers. The federal law will require that all counties determine eligibility every 12 months rather than 6. Advocates mentioned that currently only half the counties currently comply with this, and it may be difficult to determine eligibility for parents who lose their employment or have an increase in income during the 12 month period. To alleviate this potential issue, advocates suggested that a phase out period of benefits be established for parents whose income increases as opposed to an immediate cut off from assistance. Until regulations are issued by the Office of Children and Family Services, the true impact to providers and families is unknown.

B3. Market Rate; October 27th

The Office of Children and Families Services (OCFS) conducts a market rate survey bi-annually to determine the child day care reimbursement rate. The market rate is used as a ceiling for federal and state reimbursement for payments for child care services. The Work Group held a roundtable on October 27 to discuss with advocates and OCFS how the market rate survey is conducted and how the reimbursement rate is established; if the current methodology to establish the market rate appropriate and whether there different approaches the state should consider.

Advocates at the roundtable expressed the need to make adjustments to the rate methodology as the methodology used does not adequately capture the true cost of care. The rate reflects what providers are charging rather than what is actually required to support an adequate level of staff, comply with regulations and increase the quality of child care. The level at which the rate is set by OCFS is also problematic. Currently providers are reimbursed at 69% rather than the 75% that the federal law suggests is appropriate to ensure equal access to child care for low-income families. This impacts parental choice as well as the ability of the child care provider to stay in business. Concerns were expressed that quality of care would suffer and the robustness of the child care industry would falter as a result of the inadequacy of the rate.

C. Foster Care Rates

Each year the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) establishes rates known as Maximum State Aid Rates (MSAR), which set the maximum amount of reimbursement local social services districts will receive from the state for foster care programs and services. However, MSAR rates are not mandatory, which allows the local social services districts to set their own rates for foster care programs, creating the opportunity for disparity across the state.

Foster care programs are vital to New York, serving approximately 20,000 youth per year according to OCFS. These programs provide valuable services to foster youth and their families, helping to prepare them for adulthood and equipping them with the tools they need to escape poverty. According to a nationwide survey known as “Hitting the M.A.R.C.” conducted by Children’s Right, New York’s reimbursement rates are inadequate to meet our federal obligation to provide basic care for our youth. Several advocacy groups have also raised concerns regarding the adequacy of funding, and their ability to continue to provide appropriate services.

On September 24th, the Committee on Children and Families, the Committee on Social Services and the Subcommittee on Foster Care held a roundtable to better understand how the MSAR has impacted foster care programs, as well as foster youth and their families. Participants at the roundtable emphasized the need for a higher rate to support providers in meeting the needs of foster youth. An adequate rate would help improve services for foster youth, including mental health and behavioral services. There is also a need to better prepare youth who are aging out of foster care, rather than returning home or being placed with a relative or suitable person, so that they can be self-sufficient.

D. Child Care Subsidies

Child care subsidies provide low-income families with access to quality child care necessary to maintain employment and self-sufficiency. These subsidies are funded primarily by the state's Child Care Block Grant (CCBG), which was increased by \$5 million in the SFY 2015-16 budget. The additional dollars are intended to enable local social services districts to provide more eligible families with child care assistance, thereby providing them with crucial work support and ensuring their children are cared for in safe environments.

A major source of funding for the CCBG comes from federal dollars provided by the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG). In November 2014, President Obama reauthorized the CCDBG, making significant policy changes to the program, including amending the health and safety requirements for child care providers, establishing more family-friendly guidelines for eligibility policies, and enhancing parent's access to information regarding options for available child care providers. The federal Administration for Children and Families stated that these changes represent "a historic re-envisioning of the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) program."

With the reauthorization and policy amendments to the CCDBG several positive advancements to New York's child care system will occur, such as improvements to the quality of childcare and added stability to families receiving childcare subsidies. However, despite these advancements, New York State faces significant fiscal obstacles to make these modifications to our system. The New York State Division of Budget has estimated a \$90 million dollar impact for operating expenses in SFY 2016-2017, and is uncertain of the fiscal obligations that will be required in order to maintain the current number of child care subsidies that are provided statewide. Additionally, there is an anticipated increase in costs to providers to implement quality and training components of the CCDBG reauthorization.

On December 16th, the Committee held a hearing to examine the adequacy of child care subsidies in the context of the federal reauthorization. Many witnesses who testified spoke of the importance of providing financial support in order to implement the federal law. Some of the biggest cost drivers will be additional background check requirement, inspections and training. If additional funds are not provided, then the costs will result in fewer child care slots. The result will be less quality, regulated child care as providers struggle to stay open and parents look outside of the regulated system.

Additional concerns regarding the child care system were presented at the hearing. These included the variation in co-payments across the state, the "cliff" that makes families ineligible for child care due to an increase in income and the cost in productivity to businesses when parents are forced to cope with instability in child care arrangements.

2015 SUMMARY SHEET

SUMMARY OF ACTION ON ALL BILLS REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

<u>FINAL ACTION</u>	<u>ASSEMBLY BILLS</u>	<u>SENATE BILLS</u>	<u>TOTAL BILLS</u>
BILLS REPORTED WITH OR WITHOUT AMENDMENT			
TO FLOOR; NOT RETURNING TO COMMITTEE (FAVORABLE)	9	0	9
TO WAYS AND MEANS	4	0	4
TO CODES	10	0	10
TO RULES	3	0	3
TO JUDICIARY	0	0	0
TOTAL	26	0	26
BILLS HAVING COMMITTEE REFERENCE CHANGED			
TO <u>Codes</u>	1	0	1
TO _____	0	0	0
TO _____	0	0	0
TO _____	0	0	0
TOTAL	1	0	1
SENATE BILLS SUBSTITUTED OR RECALLED			
SUBSTITUTED		4	4
RECALLED		0	0
TOTAL			
BILLS DEFEATED IN COMMITTEE	0	0	0
BILLS HELD FOR CONSIDERATION WITH A ROLL- CALL VOTE	0	0	0
BILLS NEVER REPORTED, HELD IN COMMITTEE	105	16	121
BILLS HAVING ENACTING CLAUSES STRICKEN	17	0	17
MOTIONS TO DISCHARGE LOST	0	0	0
TOTAL BILLS IN COMMITTEE	149	20	169
TOTAL NUMBER OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS HELD	5		

APPENDIX B

2015 BILLS SIGNED INTO LAW

Bill #	Sponsor	Description	Chapter #
A.731/ S.1514	Rozic/Griffo	Clarifies statute to require that reviews of previous foster care licenses and certificates are completed by considering information available in the Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System	142
A.869/ S.1519	Zebrowski/ Gallivan	Alters the period of effectiveness to three years for the Rockland and Erie Counties' Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children	146
A.870/ S.1517	Peoples- Stokes/ Felder	Requires local social services districts to notify families 30 days prior to taking action which would impact their eligibility for child care assistance, or cause an increase in co-payment	144
A.872/ S.1518	Lupardo/ Felder	Requires comments submitted by local social services districts for inclusion in child fatality reports to adhere to current confidentiality standards and be relevant and factually accurate	145
A.5803/ S.3520-A	Fahy/ Amedore	Enhances the ability of criminal justice agencies to access child protective records in the investigation of a missing child	436
A.5897/ S.5286	Paulin/ Gallivan	Creates a procedural framework for juvenile delinquents and Persons in Need of Supervision (PINS) who have allegedly violated orders of probation/placement/conditional discharge	499
A.7644/ S.5054	Fahy/Felder	Allows a finding of severe or repeated abuse (in addition a parent) to be made against a person legally responsible	492
A.7679/ S.5258-A	Lupardo/ Felder	Establishes a statutory right for a child over the age of 10 in foster care to receive notice of and attend their permanency hearing	573

2015 BILLS PASSED

Bill #	Sponsor	Description	Last Action
A.775-A/ S.5184	Jaffee/Savino	Requires eligible parents who work at night receive a subsidy in order to sleep during the day	Referred to Senate Children and Families
A.1864/ S.742	Mayer/ Kennedy	Allows child care providers to have their qualifications posted on the OCFS website	Referred to Senate Children and Families

A.1869/ S.1465	Mayer/ Kennedy	Requires the Council on Children and Families to establish an online listing and map of publicly funded or registered after-school and school age child care programs	Referred to Senate Children and Families
A.2432/ S.2516	Kim/Parker	Enacts the New York State Reuniting Families Act to allow local social services districts to delay the filing of a petition to terminate parental rights if the parent is involved in an immigration proceeding, including detention or deportation	Referred to Senate Children and Families
A.4572/ S.4976	Clark/ Carlucci	Requires agencies to provide prospective adoptive parents with information on services the child would lose by leaving foster care	Referred to Senate Children and Families
A.6568/ S.5009	Lupardo/ Felder	Requires reimbursement for at least 12 child day care absences in a 6 month period	Referred to Senate Children and Families
A.7050/ S.5019	Lupardo/ Felder	Enhances permanency planning in juvenile delinquency and Persons in Need of Supervision (PINS) proceedings	Referred to Senate Children and Families
A.7117/ S.5331	Persaud/ Felder	Requires local social services districts provide advance notice prior to changing the placement of a foster child	Referred to Senate Rules
A.7191/ No Same As	Simotas	Distinguishes the age of an infant as a child under the age of two to ensure child care providers receive adequate reimbursement	Referred to Senate Children and Families
A.7585/ S.973	Walker/ Montgomery	Requires local social services districts to maintain a waiting list of persons applying for child care assistance	Referred to Senate Rules
A.7643/ No Same As	Persaud	Requires ongoing training for mandated reporters of child abuse and neglect	Referred to Senate Children and Families

2015 BILLS REPORTED

Bill #	Sponsor	Description	Last Action
A.405/ No Same As	Rosenthal	Requires the installation of cordless window coverings in day care centers and other institutions for children	3 rd Reading
A.4798/ S.3783	Clark/Parker	Establishes the independent Office of the Child Advocate to oversee programs and services for children	Reported to Ways and Means
A.7049/ S.5020	Lupardo/ Felder	Requires sealing of all records if a Person in Need of Supervision (PINS) proceeding is terminated in favor of the respondent	Reported to Codes

2015 BILLS VETOED

Bill #	Sponsor	Description	Veto #
A.4469/ S.5419	Barrett/ Serino	Requires simplified application forms for child care assistance	226
A.6629/ S.4421	Lupardo/ Avella	Creates an early learning investment commission	208
A.7135/ S.5091	Gunther/ Ritchie	Creates a child care regulatory review taskforce to examine ways to streamline child day care requirements	236
A.7750/ S.5627	Lupardo/ Felder	Requires health and safety regulations set by SED to remain controlling over school buildings when school aged child care is provided	Deliv'd to Gov