



Leadership, voice and vision for child welfare in New York State

November 14, 2013

The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor of New York State
NYS State Capitol Building Albany,
NY 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo:

As providers and advocates who work every day with and on behalf of children who have been commercially sexually exploited, we are proud that our State has been a national leader in the fight against this horrendous crime. Commercial sexual exploitation is a crime that hurts New York's most vulnerable children, their families, and communities at large. Children victimized in this way, without access to comprehensive specialized services, often face a life of violence, exploitation, and justice system involvement.

New York was the first State in the Nation to pass a Safe Harbour Act that specifically addresses the needs of commercially and sexually exploited children (CSEC). With your leadership on critical antitrafficking legislation including the Women's Equality Agenda and extending Safe Harbour to include services to 16- and 17- year olds, we believe that New York can continue its path breaking commitment to these children. For the past two years, the New York State legislature has provided funding under Safe Harbour, and we write today to urge you to consider going beyond the good work already under way - to fund a comprehensive effort to combat the commercial sexual exploitation of children, and to provide the highest level of treatment to those who survive it. **We urge you to include in the Executive Budget \$9.5 million for a continuum of treatment and case management services for commercially sexually exploited children, and to reinstate \$3.5 million for shelter beds, long-term transitional living beds and support services for Homeless Youth. This will restore the detrimentally compounded cuts of over 60% since 2007.**

The Safe Harbour Act was a major step forward in New York's efforts to provide treatment for commercially sexually exploited children. While much good work has transpired as a result of Safe Harbour and other initiatives, there is still room for improvement in several key areas:

- The Safe Harbour Act authorized treatment and case management services as well as a residential Safe House, but the Act has been unevenly funded and only partially implemented. To date, only one year of State funding for these programs has come through the legislature in annual appropriations and been released, creating inefficiencies and obstacles that stand in the way of achieving our shared goal of sustained effective programs.

Council of Family and Child Caring Agencies

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- Many of New York’s efforts to assist exploited youth focus on girls who have been arrested for prostitution related offences, or who are on the street for other reasons. In our experience, there are many more youth in need of help, including homeless youth who endure exploitation to meet basic survival needs, youth who are being exploited primarily in trap houses, dance clubs, and other venues, and who do not come to the attention of the criminal or juvenile justice system, boys and transgender youth who have been commercially sexually exploited.
- New York State would vastly enhance its support for commercially sexually exploited children if it established a mandate for multiple social service systems to participate in the prevention of the commercial sexual exploitation of children and the provision of treatment and other services to survivors. The child welfare, mental health, and runaway and homeless youth systems should all be involved. Each of these systems differs in legal parameters as to length of service, the extent to which family engagement is permissible as a part of service, and level of outreach in the community, and each should be responsible for providing resources and programming for commercially sexually exploited youth and (where appropriate) their families.

To address these gaps, we ask for your support in creating a full continuum of prevention and treatment services, one that addresses the needs of boys, girls and transgender and gender nonconforming youth who are at risk or in danger and their families, no matter what system the youth first encounters. These services should embrace the idea of “no wrong door” and be available to youth through several mechanisms, including but not limited to: voluntary (walk-in/referral), as a component of a child welfare case plan, as a component of a mental health treatment plan, or as a component of a PINS, JD, or other Family Court matter. In combination with continuing existing efforts by law enforcement and others in New York, we are confident that these measures will lead to the reduction of commercial sexual exploitation of children in our State.

Continuum of prevention and treatment of commercial sexual exploitation of children

- (a) Prevention: A Statewide public service campaign, with varied messages targeted at youth, parents and community members, aimed at raising awareness of the phenomenon of commercial sexual exploitation of children, and providing information for the various target audiences on where to go for help, to allow parents and other stakeholders to have tools to identify the warning signs and prevent entrance into “the life”. **\$500,000**
- (b) Street Outreach: Time limited Safe Harbour funds are being used in New York City to fund street outreach specifically focused on identification of and assistance to children who are being commercially sexually exploited. This program should be baselined and expanded statewide. **\$1,000,000**
- (c) Outpatient Treatment: Outpatient individual and family treatment and placement prevention programs, with a focus on specialized and promising practices, in high needs areas throughout the state. **\$3 million**
- (d) Residential Treatment: Long term, residential treatment center beds, in addition to those already provided via contract with the City of New York, that provide comprehensive rehabilitative treatment to commercial sexual exploitation of children **\$2.8 million**
- (e) Safe Houses: Short-term, crisis shelter housing available for children and youth identified in high needs areas in the City and upstate **\$2.19 million**

Total cost of full continuum: **\$9.5 million**

We have selected these program elements carefully as they are emerging as among the most effective methods of working with the CSEC population, and focus on early intervention with children and, where appropriate, their families, to halt victimization and allow for these young people to experience childhood. Moreover, this early engagement will forestall the need for costlier systems, such as the criminal justice system, later in the life of the exploited young person. We have enclosed supplementary materials that illustrate the need for and success with emerging models in these types of programs.

Funding General Homeless Youth Services

A recent study by Covenant House and Fordham University demonstrates the close relationship between sex trafficking and homeless youths' need for housing. Of the homeless youth surveyed who reported engaging in commercial sex activity, 48% indicated that a lack of a safe place to sleep was a main reason for their initial entry into prostitution or other commercial sex. 13,000 young New Yorkers rely on homeless youth services each year, but thousands are not served. Unfortunately, homeless youth funding has faced severe budget cuts: the current FY 13-14 funding level of \$2.6 million represents a 59 percent decrease from FY 07-08 funding. In New York City, City and State homeless youth services funding supports only 253 emergency shelter and transitional independent living beds for the estimated 3,800 homeless youth in need on any given night. As a result, homeless youth shelter providers report having to turn away hundreds of youth each month. Without emergency and transitional shelter beds, youth often must sleep on the streets or in unsafe situations, which puts them at risk of poor mental and physical health, violence, sexual exploitation and/or human trafficking. **We therefore ask for your support to restore services for youth by adding \$3.5 million to homeless youth services for shelter beds, long-term transitional and support services. This population has shouldered more than its share of cuts over the past 6 years and cannot sustain any more.**

Prevention of the commercial sexual exploitation of children and treatment for survivors is rapidly gaining attention at the national level; multiple pieces of legislation related to this issue have recently been submitted to the United States Congress (i.e., HR 2744, *Child Sex Trafficking Data and Response Act of 2013*; S1518, *Improving Outcomes for Youth At-Risk for Sex Trafficking*; HR 3081 *To Amend Missing Children's Assistance Act*, among others), and Congress recently passed the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act. National press has also begun to make the broader public aware of the prevalence of this form of exploitation in the United States. With your support of the programs outlined above, New York would become the first state to provide comprehensive prevention and treatment, and would demonstrate to the rest of the country New York's clear leadership in this area.

Lastly, we would like to share with you and your administration suggestions from our members as to ways in which New York State can move forward toward creation and implementation of a 5-year strategic plan to combat the commercial sexual exploitation of children (See enclosed *Preserving Childhood for Children: A Call For Action*). We are aware that efforts in this regard are under way at the Office of Children and Family Services. We offer a number of ideas, outlined in the attached document, to build on the work already begun.

Many of us have unfortunately spent far too many hours in social service, legal, and other offices with children as young as 10 who have survived street homelessness, captivity, brainwashing, unspeakable assault and violent, repeated rape and endure years-long sexual exploitation to meet

their most basic survival needs such as shelter and food. As a parent and as a public servant, we imagine that you are as horrified as we at the extent to which children are commercially sexually exploited throughout New York State. While New York State at the moment remains the home of a disproportionate volume of the child trafficking that occurs in the United States, our State is also home to the nation's toughest citizens. New Yorkers do not give up in the face of challenges like these. Rather, we choose to roll up our sleeves, band together, and seize the opportunity to do right by children and families who have been abused and, in so doing, to put a stop to the horrifying trade of children for sex in this State.

We thank you for your consideration of our proposals and we are very hopeful that you will find it possible to include funding in the State's Fiscal Year 2014-15 budget. We request the opportunity of a meeting with you within the next weeks to discuss these crucial matters. Respectfully submitted,



James F. Purcell, CEO
Council of Family and Child Caring Agencies (COFCCA)

Enclosures:

- (1) Co-Signing Agencies
- (2) Budget Justification
- (3) Case Examples
- (4) Press
- (5) Preserving Childhood for Children: A Call for Action

Co-Signing Agencies

	Jess Dannhauser, President & CEO	Jewish Board of Family & Children's Services
COFCCA Member Agencies	Graham Windham	
William Holicky, Executive Director The House of the Good Shepherd	Alan Mucatel, Executive Director Leake and Watts Services, Inc.	Dennis Richardson, President & CEO Hillside Family of Agencies
Elizabeth McCarthy, Executive Director Episcopal Social Services of NY & Safe Space, Inc.	Linda Wright, Executive Director The Salvation Army Syracuse Area Services	Vincent Colonno, CEO Catholic Charities of the Albany Diocese
Anstiss Agnew, Executive Director Forestdale, Inc.	Leonardo Rodriguez, Deputy Executive Vice President	Anthony Cortese, Executive Director St. Anne Institute

Richard R. Buery, Jr., CEO
The Children's Aid Society

Sr. Mary Ann LoGiudice, Executive
Director
Community Maternity Services

Diane Aquino, Executive Director
Long Island Adolescent & Family
Services (LIAFS)

Dr. Francisco M. Vasquez, President &
CEO
Child and Family Services

Dr. David Hegarty, Executive Director
Hope for Youth, Inc.

William Wolff, Executive Director
LaSalle School

Marla G. Simpson, Executive Director
Brooklyn Community Services

Emma Jordan-Simpson, Interim
Executive Director
Edwin Gould Services for Children and
Families

Gerard McCaffery, CEO
MercyFirst

Gail Nayowith, Executive Director
SCO Family of Services

Sr. Paulette LoMonaco, Executive
Director
Good Shepherd Services

Barbara Rothbart, LCSW-R Executive
Director, CSFCF
St. Luke's Roosevelt Hospital

Christina Gullo, President & CEO
Villa of Hope

Judith D. Kydon, M.A., M.E.D.
Executive Director
St. Dominic's Home

Alissa Deakin, Executive Director
St. John's Residence and School for
Boys

Partners

Emily Amick, Esq., Executive Director
Sanctuary for Families Michael A.
Corriero, Executive Director
New York Center for Juvenile Justice

Sonia Ossorio, President
National Organization for Women,
NYC

Jimmy Lee, Executive Director
Restore NYC

Holly G. Atkinson, MD
Human Rights Program, Mount Sinai
Global Health

Sr. Joan S. Dawber, Executive Director
LifeWay Network

Jonathan Walton, Executive Director
InterVarsity's New York City Urban
Project

Norma Ramos, Esq., Executive Director
Coalition Against Trafficking in Women

Lauren Hersh, New York Director
Equality Now

Jennifer Chan, End Trafficking Program
Officer
U.S Fund for UNICEF

Samantha Inesta, Executive Director
Beasister2asister.org

John Bolas, Executive Director
Empire State Coalition of Youth and
Family Services

Francesca Tarant, Communications
and Development Associate Apne
Aap International

Joanne Zannoni, Executive Director
New York State Coalition Against
Sexual Assault

Rachel L. Braunstein
Staff Attorney
Her Justice, Inc.

Christine Sadowski, Executive Director
YWCA Orange County & YWCAs of NYS

Carol Smolenski, Executive Director
ECPAT-USA

Diana Mayo, Executive Director
Nomi Network

Jennifer March, Executive Director
Citizens' Committee for Children of
New York

Kathy LeBron, Executive Director

JUSTIFICATION OF REQUEST

Continuum of Services for Commercially Sexually Exploited Children

<u>Item</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Justification</u>
Public Service Campaign	\$500,000	Cost to cover print/media ads in NYC and other high-needs areas
Street outreach	\$1,000,000	Cost based on NYC current expenses for CSEC street outreach (\$225,000) for street outreach; recommend increasing the outreach in NYC and expanding to upstate
Outpatient treatment	\$3,000,000	Cost to cover a combination of office-based and home-based services for NYC and upstate jurisdictions
Residential Treatment	\$2,812,371	Cost based on expenses incurred by Gateways Residential treatment center, the only licensed RTC providing CSEC specific services in the State (\$384.51/day/resident (70% NYS share) in foster care dollars + \$146.60/day/resident in Medicaid dollars (50% NYS share)). We recommend creating 25 such beds in addition to the beds already funded by the City of New York, and assume 90% capacity for the purposes of budgeting. Cost comparison based on RHY costs. Operating RHY program costs approx. \$150/day/bed; recommend creation of
Safe House	\$2,190,000	40 specialized Safe House beds
TOTAL		\$9,502,371

CASE EXAMPLES

1. Providing out-patient treatment to youth and families: New Beginnings/St. Luke's Hospital

The following is a composite of some of the work that is being done with sexually exploited youth and their families at the New Beginnings Program within Community Services for Children and Families, at St Luke's Hospital.

The following illustrates work being done at St Luke's Hospital with sexually exploited youth and their families as part of our *New Beginnings* program within Community Services for Children and Families.

Many of the distressed families who seek services from our program have children who have histories of running away from home for long periods, are or may be actively involved in commercial sex exploitation (CSEC), show signs of branding (ownership by pimps), have unexplained expensive accessories, appear to have older and/or multiple partners, and have histories of childhood sexual abuse. They generally are avoiding school, have withdrawn from their families, and refuse psychiatric and other services. Historically they have fallen through the cracks in our social safety networks and are not eligible for or amenable to services currently available in most systems. All have suffered and experienced multiple traumas, periods of empathic failure with their families as well as within traditional help systems, such as foster care, education, health and mental health and substance abuse services.

Routine and evidence-based approaches have not been successful with helping or even with engaging these youth. We find that individually they do respond, however, to non-traditional, flexible approaches provided by qualified and highly motivated clinical and case management staff. Services need to be focused and client-driven and must include home and field visits in order to meet youth where they are, literally and figuratively.

Our clients come from all backgrounds and walks of life. We have had particular success with families with complex traumatic immigration histories. These families have often suffered long periods of early separation between parents and their children as parents have striven to provide a better life for them in the USA. Typically these separations were filled with devastating and traumatic events, unbeknownst to the absent parents and despite their best intentions.

In one such story, Jane Doe immigrated to the US from Brazil to join her parents when she was 8 years old -- after 5 years under the care relatives where as a helpless child she was sexually abused. Busy confronting their own immigrant experiences of trauma and abuse, both parents had succeeded in holding full-time jobs at the time of entry into our program. But because of her private history, Jane was filled with confusion and resentment. At age 12 she began running the streets, looking for support, understanding, and a place to stay. She became involved with CSEC, having been manipulated by a pimp, after periods of explosive arguments with her baffled and distraught parents, and running away. She underwent periods of being brutally raped and beaten while under the supervised "care" of her pimp.

Our program utilizes Relational Family Therapy and Trauma Informed Services, at a pace and in a combination tailored to each family. It includes home and field visits, as well as case management services as needed. Here are some highlights in our approach to servicing the above typical sort of case:

We encouraged the family to establish the context of their current lives with a retelling of their immigration histories, each recalling hopes and dreams as well as disappointments and trauma.

This enabled the family to share and understand each other's experience and consequently better empathize with and support one another. The conversations helped each other to locate the points of personal strength, as well as to re-affirm strengths already existing within the family's relational bonds.

Our client-driven treatment sheds light on anger and confusion and alters engrained responses. We seek to locate points of empathic failure and trauma (separation, abuse), to elucidate the maladaptive behavior and coping styles (dissociation, numbing, over punishing, running away to avoid emotional pain), and to teach skills and tools for increased coping and strengthened relationships. These included several trauma-informed strategies to assist with calming, self-soothing, regulation of affect, and lessening the need to run and further endanger.

During stormy periods when the child was running away, even being actively trafficked, we worked very closely with the parents. We encouraged them to utilize the NYPD to assist with locating the child, but we also encouraged the family to utilize both electronic media and friends to convey with clarity their worries and love for the child, rather than resorting to the vocabulary of threat, punishment, and banishment previously used. As time went on, the child was rescued, the relational bonds within the family markedly strengthened, better coping abilities came into play, and the child stopped running from home. Completely. Eventually the child returned to school, began to develop positive peer relationships, and seemed no longer to be in danger.

2. Providing Residential Treatment Services: Gateways/ Jewish Child Care Association

Tiffany is an example of the Gateway's program's success. She was placed in the Gateways program after being commercially sexually exploited by a physically violent and abusive pimp. Despite the abuse, Tiffany found it hard to break the bonds and ran away on several occasions to return to her aggressor, not an unusual pattern for initial residents.

Tiffany's story prior to her sexual exploitation is typical of many of the youth we serve. Her father was physically and emotionally abusive towards her mother and siblings, though Tiffany had little contact with him in her early years as he was incarcerated for most of that time. Growing up, her mother remarried and Tiffany and her stepfather did not get along. At 13, Tiffany received outpatient therapy after reporting suicidal ideation and "cutting" behavior, but refused to take medication; the problems persisted and Tiffany began to have difficulties in school as well. Tiffany was sent to live with her father at age 15 because of her disruptive behavior at home, but returned soon thereafter due to her father's abuse. That same year, Tiffany met a 30-year-old man named Nick, who over time convinced her that he was the only one who truly cared for her. Within weeks, she moved in with him. However, Nick soon turned violent, repeatedly raping her, and forcing her to have sex with other men for money. Tiffany did attempt to leave on several occasions, and at times was successful, but Nick would always threaten her and convince her to return to him. Tiffany's use of alcohol and other substances increased during this period. When she was 16, Nick beat Tiffany unconscious; as a result of this incident, she fled and was placed in the Gateways program. Like many suffering from exploitive abuse, Tiffany had a hard time breaking the bonds and ran away from Gateways to return to Nick. However, her exploitation became worse when she returned to Nick and, when arrested and placed in Gateways a second time, she was like a prisoner of war - beaten down physically and emotionally.

Although Tiffany continued to struggle with bouts of anger and impulsivity upon her return to the program, she was open to the gamut of therapeutic services that helped her recognize her traumas, rebuild her self-esteem, and reconnect to healthy and supportive community resources. Through the individual, family, group, and peer counseling offered at Gateways, Tiffany and her family were able to rebuild their relationship in a healthy way. Tiffany graduated from the Gateways program in March 2011 and was reunited with her mother, stepfather, and siblings. She is now enrolled in dual college credit/GED program and planning for her future.

RECENT PRESS COVERAGE

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887323683504578565763773056802.html?mod=WSJ_NY_LEFT

A version of this article appeared June 25, 2013, on page A19 in the U.S. edition of The Wall Street Journal, with the headline: One Women's Bill Does Pass.

One Women's Rights Bill Does Pass in Albany

By MARA GAY

ALBANY—While Gov. Andrew Cuomo's women's rights agenda failed to pass the state Legislature last week, lawmakers managed to rescue a single piece: a bill that would extend to 17 from 15 the age at which judges can offer counseling instead of jail time to minors facing prostitution charges.

The bill, initially part of anti-sex trafficking legislation included in the failed Women's Equality Act, was introduced in the Assembly as a separate bill Tuesday, when it became clear that the 10 planks in the women's agenda were likely dead.

Late Friday night, the provision passed both legislative chambers and supporters expect it to be signed into law by Mr. Cuomo, making it the only piece of the women's rights agenda to succeed in Albany so far this year.

Advocates called the legislation, which expands a 2008 Safe Harbour provision allowing judges to offer services to juveniles instead of prosecuting them, a victory that would treat those arrested for prostitution as victims.

It also gives 16- and 17-year-olds charged with prostitution youthful-offender status, allowing their records to be sealed after their 18th birthdays.

Lauren Hersh, the New York director of Equality Now, an anti-sex-trafficking organization that pushed for the broader legislation, called passage of the bill "an extremely positive step."

Although the legislation is only a sliver of the women's agenda that advocates pushed for, Assemblywoman Amy Paulin, who introduced the sex-trafficking legislation in that chamber, said it was a victory nonetheless.

Realizing the larger agenda was in danger, Ms. Paulin, a Democrat from Westchester, and Sen. Andrew Lanza, a Republican from Staten Island, introduced the new, separate sex-trafficking bill earlier last week.

While the Assembly passed the entire women's agenda, the Senate approved nine of the provisions individually—excluding one regarding abortion rights.

The Assembly would also need to pass the bills separately for them to become law, a strategy that had been avoided in an attempt to push through the entire agenda.

Ms. Paulin said she was disappointed the broader legislation never saw a vote, but said the bill passed Friday would help women and girls in the state.

"This was one of the most important provisions that we were trying to enact," she said. "The most important focus is about helping these girls by treating them as victims and getting them services, and this provision does that."

The larger sex-trafficking bill that was in the governor's agenda would have enacted stricter penalties for traffickers and made trafficking with force a violent class B felony, which carries a minimum of five years of prison, advocates said.

It also would have aligned the penalties for prostitution of a child with the penalties for statutory rape, and raised the penalties for promoting prostitution among minors.

Stella Marr, the executive director of Sex Trafficking Survivors United, who said she was a victim of trafficking in New York City for 10 years, said most women in prostitution have been forced into the trade.

"We're trying to make sure that people in prostitution are recognized as sex-trafficking victims," she said.

In New York State in 2011, 791 people were arrested for prostitution, according to the FBI, including 14 people under the age of 18. But advocates and researchers, citing a 2007 study prepared for the New York state Office of Children and Family Services, estimate that the actual number of child sex trafficking victims in the state is in the thousands.

The governor said he had not ruled out a special session to call upon lawmakers to vote on the nine bills in the Assembly.

"Everything is possible," he told reporters Monday, saying the nine bills that did have support of both the senate and Assembly "literally made history."

Preserving Childhood for Children: A Call for Action to Fight the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in New York State

Service providers from the child welfare, juvenile justice, and runaway and homeless youth continuum are calling for New York State to implement a 5-year, Statewide strategic plan to protect

the childhoods of New York's vulnerable children and youth by combatting the commercial sexual exploitation of children.

THE NEED

Estimates of the population of commercially sexually exploited children in the state vary:

- A 2008 study by the Center for Court Innovation (CCI) and the John Jay College of Criminal Justice¹ concluded that there were over 3,900 commercially sexually exploited children in New York City in 2005/06.
- A 2007 study by Westat², commissioned by the NYS Office of Children and Family Services and using a different methodology than the CCI study referenced above, concluded that there were 2,253 commercially sexually exploited children in New York City and a total of 2,652 commercially exploited children in New York State in a two month period during 2006.

PROPOSALS FOR NEW YORK STATE

1. **Assure that New York State is moving forward toward full compliance with the Safe Harbour Act**

The Safe Harbour Act calls for, among other provisions, local social services districts to:

- Determine the need for services annually; and include services in the integrated county plan;
- Address the child welfare services needs of sexually exploited children; specifically (to the extent that funds are available) ensure that placement, services and programs shall be readily accessible to sexually exploited children residing within the district;
- Coordinate services among various local social service agencies;
- Ensure that all of the services created pursuant to the Safe Harbour Act are available to all sexually exploited children whether they are accessed voluntarily, or through the court system. In other words, services need not be reserved for youth who have been involved with law enforcement or a formal criminal or juvenile justice complaint; rather, help should be available to any child or young person who needs it.

As five years have passed since Safe Harbour was enacted, it would be timely for your administration to seek to assess the extent to which the State has carried out the intent of the Safe Harbour Act, and where and why we have fallen short in any areas where the actions contemplated in the Safe Harbour Act have not been carried out. A timeline for full implementation could then be created for full implementation where such is lacking, ideally, within this fiscal year.

Total Cost of full compliance: No new cost

¹ http://www.courtinnovation.org/sites/default/files/CSEC_NYC_Volume1.pdf

² <http://www.ocfs.state.ny.us/main/reports/csec-2007.pdf>

2. Incorporate CSEC into existing state government programs:

The commercial sexual exploitation of children is so prevalent in our State that we believe it is time – past time, in fact – for major State agencies to ensure that commercially sexually exploited children are contemplated in their basic operations. That is to say, there is much we can do as a state without additional funding, simply by adjusting the way in which current programs operate. We would appreciate your consideration of the following:

- a. Create, with the engagement of survivors, service providers, law enforcement, legal advocates, judges, and others, a 5 year strategic plan to combat the commercial sexual exploitation of children in New York State.
- b. Direct that all New York State law enforcement officers receive annual training on the commercial sexual exploitation of children
- c. Direct the New York State Department of Education to mandate the inclusion of CSEC awareness and prevention in elementary, middle and high school health curricula.
- d. Direct the New York State Office of Children and Family Services to modify its own/Local Social Service District child protective services training curriculum and its foster parent training curricula to include a segment on prevention, identification and treatment of CSEC

Total Cost of incorporating CSEC into existing state government programs: No new cost

3. Increase to 17 the age for youth to have cases transferred to Family Court under the Safe Harbour Act

We urge you to increase to 17 the age of youth whose case will be transferred to Family Court under the Safe Harbour Act, and to ensure that judges have the discretion to ensure that young people are getting the services that they need and there is a clear legal mechanism by which that could happen. This will ensure that young people arrested for offenses related to their commercial sexual exploitation, will be treated as victims in need of services and bring New York in line with the rest of the country.

4. Fund a Statewide continuum of dedicated prevention and treatment services

Continuum of prevention and treatment of commercial sexual exploitation of children

- (a) Prevention: A Statewide public service campaign, with varied messages targeted at youth, parents and community members, aimed at raising awareness of the phenomenon of commercial sexual exploitation of children, and providing information for the various target audiences on where to go for help. **\$500,000**
- (b) Street Outreach: Time limited Safe Harbour funds are being used in New York City to fund street outreach specifically focused on identification of and assistance to children who are being commercially sexually exploited. This program should be baselined and expanded statewide. **\$1,000,000**
- (c) Outpatient Treatment: Outpatient individual and family treatment and placement prevention programs, with a focus on specialized and promising practices, in high needs areas throughout the state. **\$3 million**

- (d) Residential Treatment: Long term, residential treatment center beds, in addition to those already provided via contract with the City of New York, that provide comprehensive rehabilitative treatment to commercial sexual exploitation of children **\$2.8 million**
- (e) Safe Houses: Short-term, crisis shelter housing available for children and youth identified in high needs areas in the City and upstate **\$2.19 million**

Total cost of full continuum: **\$9.5 million**

Funding Runaway and Homeless Youth services

A recent study by Covenant House and Fordham University demonstrates the close relationship between sex trafficking and the need for housing. Of the runaway/homeless youth surveyed who reported engaging in commercial sex activity, 48% indicated that a lack of a safe place to sleep was a main reason for their initial entry into prostitution or other commercial sex. 13,000 young New Yorkers rely on RHY services each year, but thousands are not served. Unfortunately, RHY funding has faced severe budget cuts: the current FY 13-14 funding level of \$2.6 million represents a 59 percent decrease from FY 07-08 funding. In New York City, City and State RHY services funding supports only 253 emergency shelter and transitional independent living beds for the estimated 3,800 runaway and homeless youth in need. As a result, RHY shelter providers report having to turn away hundreds of youth each month. Without emergency and transitional shelter beds, youth often must sleep on the streets or in unsafe situations, which puts them at risk of poor mental and physical health, violence, sexual exploitation and/or human trafficking. **We therefore ask for your support in increasing funding for State RHY services by \$3.5 million to fund an additional 100 shelter beds.**