



NEWS

FEBRUARY 2006 | CITIZENS' COMMITTEE for CHILDREN of NEW YORK, INC.

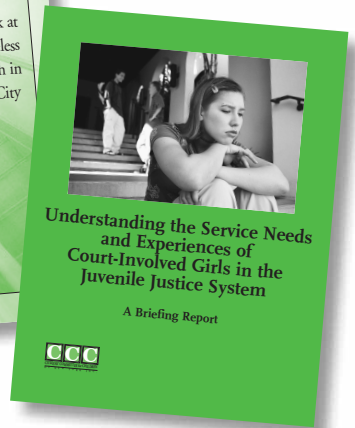
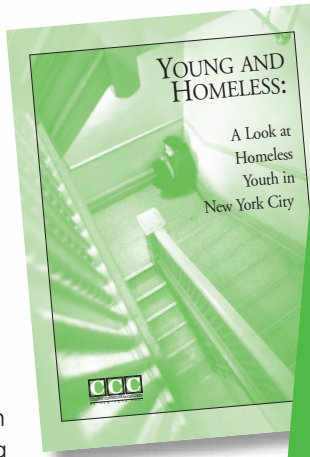
CCC's New Reports Identify Needed Policy and Program Reforms

A LOOK AT HOMELESS YOUTH

For the past 25 years, point-in-time estimates of the number of homeless youth under the age of 21 in New York City have ranged from 15,000 to 20,000, based primarily on estimates of the number of young people served by homeless youth providers. Unlike the comparatively extensive single adult and family homeless system, there is no central intake facility for homeless youth and no comprehensive data on this population is collected, impeding a full understanding of the magnitude of the homeless youth crisis in New York City.

CCC created a Task Force to study homeless youth and learn about the service needs of this population. Our goal was to identify programs, policies and practice that may help prevent episodes of youth homelessness, assist homeless youth in returning home to a family member or guardian or to transition to permanent housing on their own.

This winter, CCC will release *Young and Homeless: A Look at Homeless Youth in New York City*. This report is the culmination of three years of research and fieldwork assisted by CCC volunteers and YouthAction NYC members who formally interviewed ten homeless youth programs and 88 homeless and at-risk young people. Findings and recommendations are supplemented by independent research and discussions with city agency representatives. The report suggests the need for system-wide reforms and improved coordination among city agencies to help young people avoid homelessness and eliminate program shortfalls that may



contribute to the number of youth experiencing homelessness on their own.

The report's major recommendations call for:

- The New York City Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) to improve methods of data collection and analysis to inform public policy around prevention activities and service needs for homeless youth.
- DYCD to explore ways to provide more opportunities for family counseling and mediation to homeless and at-risk youth in residential and non-residential programs, regardless of whether the youth plan to return home.
- DYCD to fund start-up grants and technical assistance for new and existing homeless youth providers to become state certified by the Office of Children and Family Services in order to expand temporary shelter options for youth, in particular, special populations including young mothers, or parents under 21 and gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and questioning youth.
- The city to increase funds to support the expansion of a supportive housing model for young adults under 21 unable to return home or secure permanent housing on their own.

continued on page 4

INSIDE

A Message from Board Leadership	2
Celebration Breakfast	3
YouthAction NYC Voices	5

A MESSAGE FROM BOARD LEADERSHIP

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This October, at our Celebration Breakfast, we marked the close of the Family Homelessness Special Master Panel by honoring Special Masters Danny Kronenfeld and John Feerick with our Eleanor Roosevelt Award. The breakfast was a tremendous success as it provided CCC with the financial wherewithal to proceed with our agenda. As we described CCC to hundreds of New Yorkers in our audience, we highlighted our unique collaboration of expert professional staff and trained adult and youth volunteers. We conveyed CCC's role as a vital, honest partner with government and our non-profit colleagues working to develop creative solutions to tough policy, program and budget problems affecting children.

Later in the Fall, we offered seven standing-room-only Policy Briefings on subjects including effective approaches to advocacy and understanding revenue and tax policy as well as discussions on the juvenile justice system, public health and mental health priorities and child protection. We also focused one session on the three pillars of our *Securing Every Child's*

Birthright campaign with a panel of experts who discussed economic, developmental and housing security for children.

The Community Leadership Course trained an accomplished cohort of adults to be child advocates. The class visited an array of sites and heard from many experts, capped by a study of Astoria, Queens. Quite a few of you who graduated from the 2005 class have begun actively volunteering with CCC. Welcome!

The Fall YouthAction NYC Community Leadership Course (YCLC), composed of high school students from private and public schools, impressed us all with their final presentation at City Hall in December. We look forward to having them join our advocacy team.

CCC's cadre of able volunteers is working with staff on our various Task Forces. This year we have a number of opportunities for volunteer involvement including meeting newly elected city officials and those new to leadership positions, work on preventive services in child welfare, community-based alternatives to detention and incarceration as well as a look at children's services in the city's Department of Health and Mental Hygiene.

Our Works on Paper Benefit Preview and Silent Auction will be held on March 1st, 2006 at the Park Avenue Armory. If you have never been to this annual event, we urge you to come. Tickets are still available.

Lastly, CCC's campaign *Securing Every Child's Birthright* will be educating and mobilizing thousands of New Yorkers through our e-advocacy initiative. If you are not yet on our e-list, go to www.ccnyc.org and sign up!

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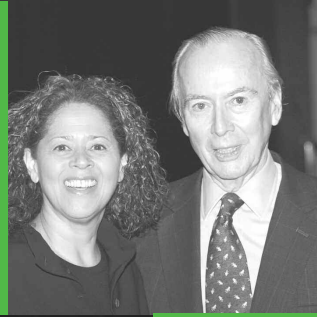
CCC Recognizes Colleagues for their Leadership on Behalf of Homeless Families

On October 25th, Citizens' Committee for Children hosted the 2005 Celebration Breakfast in the grand ballroom of the Waldorf=Astoria Hotel honoring key individuals whose talent and leadership have led to significant advances in remedying family homelessness and strengthening income, housing and developmental security.

Professor John D. Feerick, Sidney C. Norris Chair of Law in Public Service at Fordham University School of Law and **Daniel Kronenfeld**, Senior Fellow at the Fund for the City of New York, were presented with Eleanor Roosevelt Awards for their work on the Special Master Panel on Family Homelessness in New York City. CCC also presented **Picture the Homeless**, an organization that works to change laws and policies that disadvantage homeless families and individuals and challenge root causes of homelessness, with the Samuel P. Peabody Award.

Widely known for his commitment to public service, Professor Feerick has served New York City government in various capacities including as a member of the New York State Continuing Legal Education Board, Chair of the New York State Commission to Promote Public Confidence, and President of the Association of the Bar of the City of New York. Inspired by Eleanor Roosevelt's accomplishments, Professor Feerick applauded her historic Universal Declaration of Human Rights and joined CCC in affirming the message that "everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and

Anna Deavere Smith's (pictured at right with CCC Board Member Samuel P. Peabody) keynote performance expertly weaved together themes of community, social class, ethnic relations, childhood and hope. She concluded the Breakfast by remarking that those present were prisoners and pioneers of hope.



Gail B. Nayowith, CCC's Executive Director, with Awardees John D. Feerick and Daniel Kronenfeld.

well-being of children and families."

As the Executive Director of the Henry Street Settlement's Urban Family Center, Daniel Kronenfeld led the way to the expansion and strengthening of the Settlement's services to over 100,000 people each year on the Lower East Side and in other parts of the city. He established one of the first publicly-funded battered women's shelters in New York City and pioneered the development of Mobilization for Youth, an anti-poverty program in the 1960s. At the Celebration Breakfast, he spoke about the changes he has seen in his work with homeless families. While acknowledging that New York City has a far more humane shelter system today than it had 35 years ago, Mr. Kronenfeld shared, "We have created a new field of practice in social welfare – the field of homeless services – with probably close to a hundred agencies providing shelter and other services to the homeless and formerly home-

less, employing thousands of workers at a cost of hundreds of millions of dollars. Institutions once established are hard to dismantle."

As a member organization that is founded and led by homeless people, Picture the Homeless has worked tirelessly to create a place for homeless New Yorkers in public policymaking processes at all levels of government and within the greater social justice and advocacy movement. The Samuel P. Peabody Award commends their grassroots commitment to assuring that the voices and experiences of homeless individuals and families are heard. Accepting the award, Jeannette Lopez, a formerly homeless individual and member of Picture the Homeless, discussed her leadership in Picture the Homeless and her involvement with the Special Master Panel. She said, "having homeless people like myself give recommendations to make change...was very powerful...Thank you for letting my voice be heard."

New Reports

continued from page 1

GIRLS IN THE JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM

Over the past decade, juvenile crime has steadily declined nationally and in New York State, but the number of court-involved girls has increased by 20% in New York City. Along with this upward trend, recent media coverage of high profile delinquency cases involving girls as young as age 9, highlights the change in policing methods, gender bias in the processing of girls' cases and the need for gender-responsive policies, programs and practice.

This winter, CCC will release *Understanding the Service Needs and Experiences of Court-Involved Girls in the Juvenile Justice System*, highlighting the overwhelming need to re-examine current juvenile justice institutions and identify barriers and solutions that can be used to stave-off population increases and most importantly, help court-involved girls make a successful transition out of the juvenile justice system and into a healthy and productive adulthood. Over a two-year period, CCC's Court-Involved Girls and the Juvenile Justice System Task Force conducted a literature review, fact-finding and advocacy meetings with stakeholders and focus groups with court-involved girls.

The report's key recommendations call for:

- New York City to conduct a comprehensive citywide needs assessment that collects basic demographic data on court-involved girls and tracks involvement in multiple social service systems. A coordinating body that can reach across city agencies and bring together stakeholders; the Mayor's Office of the Criminal Justice Coordinator could lead this effort.

- New York City to develop a coordinated city-wide plan that includes a program, policy and budget response that reaches across city and state agencies (New York State's Office of Children and Family Services, and New York City's Department of Juvenile Justice, Department of Probation, Administration for Children's Services and Department of Youth and Community Development) responsible for meeting the service needs of court involved girls. Again, a coordinating body such as the Mayor's Office of the Criminal Justice Coordinator could lead this effort.
- New York State and New York City to invest in a continuum of gender-responsive programs and services including community-based programs that minimize out-of-home placements for court-involved girls and addresses service needs in neighborhood-based settings.
- New York State and New York City to invest in on-going training for professionals (judges, attorneys, agency personnel and service providers) that come into contact with court-involved girls to ensure that decision-makers and service providers have a better understanding of their unique service needs and experiences.
- New York State and New York City to develop self-advocacy and mentoring programs to provide court-involved girls with the knowledge, tools and support needed to navigate the criminal and juvenile justice systems (in the courtroom, detention, placement and during aftercare).

Both reports will be available online at www.cccnewyork.org.

An Historic Children's Mental Health Initiative

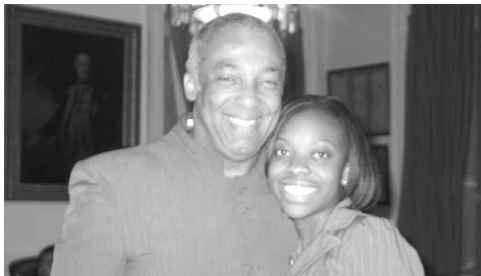
In January, Governor Pataki and the State Office of Mental Health Commissioner Carpinello proposed the single largest investment in children's mental health in New York State history. *Achieving the Promise for New York's Children and Families* will change how children's mental health services are provided and accessed. The initiative will support improvements in the quality of clinical outpatient treatment services, ensuring identification, linkages and treatment for children, and for the first time begin to meet the overwhelming demand for clinical interventions. *Achieving the Promise for New York's Children and Families* will make it possible to move children's mental health services from hospitals and offices to community settings – early childhood programs, schools, community centers, foster care agencies and other places where children and families find themselves. Overall, the proposal offers substantial benefits that will reduce crisis and problems attributed to mental illness and improve child well-being. For more information, log on to the official New York State Office of Mental Health website at www.omh.state.ny.us and go to the 2006-07 Executive Budget for Mental Health overview.

YouthAction NYC Voices

COUNCIL MEMBER CHARLES BARRON AND YCLC STUDENT NATASHA BENJAMIN

Edward R. Murrow High School
YouthAction NYC Community Leadership Course
Participant Fall'05

"I like meeting a diverse group of people and hearing their ideas and thoughts about issues that affect their communities today. My involvement in CCC allows me to see the challenges in my own community. I do feel like I can make a positive change."



MELISSA WILLIAMS

FLAGS High School
YouthAction NYC Peer Trainer

"I was surprised to see how well some families living in shelters were being served, yet I still want NYC officials to help families who don't have a home find one immediately and to make sure that children are healthy, housed, educated and safe."



ALEJANDRO PEREZ

FLAGS High School
YouthAction NYC Member

"YouthAction NYC helped me develop public speaking skills that I've been able to use in meetings with important officials. [Everyone] should experience these opportunities. Since being a member in YouthAction NYC, I have begun to think about a career in politics."



Council Member Robert Jackson talking with YouthAction NYC students.



AUSTIN RUSSELL

Xavier High School
YouthAction NYC Member
Summer Intern '05

"Being a summer intern introduced me to a whole new world and taught me to budget my time and helped me develop great organizational skills. My involvement in CCC opened my eyes to what is really going on in New York City."



For more information on YouthAction NYC, please visit www.cccnewyork.org or contact Ari Sussman, YouthAction NYC Coordinator at 212-673-1800 ext.20.

Early Childhood Initiatives in New York City: The Intersection of Theory and Practice

A Lecture in Honor of Justine Wise Polier's Legacy and Commitment to Children

Jeanne Brooks-Gunn, Ph.D.

Virginia and Leonard Marx
Professor of
Child Development
and Education
Columbia University



Hon. John B. Mattingly

Commissioner
New York City
Administration for
Children's Services

April 4, 2006, 6:00 p.m.

At the offices of Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom, LLP
4 Times Sq, at 42nd St. and 6th Ave. Manhattan
Hors d'oeuvres to follow.
Please RSVP to Mara O'Connell at (212) 673-1800 ext. 10

This event is supported by the Marion E. Kenworthy-Sarah H. Swift Foundation



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Wednesday March 1, 2006
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Park Avenue Armory, at 67th Street

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Tickets start at \$150*

* Early admission, including an opportunity to meet world-renowned artist Wolf Kahn and join a tour of the exhibitors led by experts in the field, is available from 5:30 to 6:30 at a higher ticket price.



Despite notable gains, too many children still face a future where achievement and stability are out of reach. *Securing Every Child's Birthright* is a CCC campaign to tackle these challenges. *Securing Every Child's Birthright* champions policies and initiatives that will produce improvements for all New York City children:

Economic Security: Increase the prosperity, assets and capacity of all children.

Housing Security: Promote housing stability and affordability.

Developmental Security: Help young children grow up healthy, strong and supported by a foundation for learning and achievement.

Imagining innovative solutions to complex problems affecting children has been at the heart of CCC's work for six decades. The *Securing Every Child's Birthright* campaign harnesses the power and commitment of New Yorkers to ensure that every child is healthy, housed, educated and safe. Visit: www.cccnewyork.org to learn more about and join our new campaign.