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DURING HOLIDAY SEASON & WITH KIDS OUT OF SCHOOL, ACS DOUBLES DOWN ON CHILD SAFETY BY LAUNCHING DIGITAL CAMPAIGN TO EDUCATE NEW YORKERS ON HOW TO CALL IN SUSPECTED CASES OF ABUSE OR NEGLECT

School Personnel Make Up 25 Percent of Total Allegations of Child Abuse & Neglect

Given That Many Adults, Like Extended Family Members, Neighbors & Friends, See Children During Holiday Festivities, ACS Launches New Digital Campaign to Encourage People to Say Something If They See Something

NEW YORK, NY – New York City Administration for Children's Services (ACS) Commissioner David A. Hansell today announced a new public awareness campaign that will be seen more than 10 million times in New Yorker's social media feeds. The digital campaign will educate adults and teens on how to call in suspected cases of abuse or neglect. It will run through Thanksgiving and December since many adults, like extended family members, neighbors and friends, may come in contact with children during holiday festivities. School personnel make up a quarter of all allegations of child abuse and neglect in New York City; with kids out of school during the holidays, Commissioner Hansell said that New Yorkers should speak up if they suspect that a child is unsafe.

"This brand-new digital campaign will use Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, and other platforms to put out a call to action for New Yorkers to help protect the children of the City, specifically during the holiday season when kids are out of school," said **ACS Commissioner David A. Hansell**. "Nothing is more important than keeping our children safe and, with this campaign, we are asking relatives, neighbors and friends to reach out as they may very well be helping protect a child in danger."

Anyone can report suspected abuse or neglect. Some professionals, like teachers and guidance counselors, are mandated reporters who are required by New York State law to report suspected child abuse and neglect to the state hotline, the New York State Central Register (SCR). In CY2017, 16,298 reports of child abuse and neglect in New York City were reported by school personnel, representing 24 percent of all reports.

The bilingual campaign urges New Yorkers to call in suspected cases of abuse and neglect if they feel a child is unsafe. For the first time, ACS will reach out to teens, who may choose to self-report or make a report for a friend that may be unsafe at home.

To make a report, a person can call 311 or 911, in an emergency, in New York City or the New York State Central Register at 1.800.342.3720 and provide information to help identify and locate the child or parents/persons legally responsible for child including name and address of the child and family members, child's age, gender and primary language; type of suspected abuse or neglect, including knowledge of prior history of abuse or neglect of the child or siblings and any additional information that may be helpful. If the child is in immediate danger, a person should call 911. If the information warrants an investigation, SCR will direct ACS to begin a child protective investigation.

Once the SCR assigns a case to ACS, a Child Protective Specialist (CPS) contacts the reported child's family within 24 hours and begins the investigation by reviewing the family's history with ACS, scheduling a home visit to interview the alleged victim, parents/caretaker, other household members and reach out to outside contacts (school staff, health care providers and/or neighbors). The CPS also contacts the person who reported the case for additional information. ACS has 60 days to conduct the investigation and determine if there is credible evidence of abuse, which can result in preventive support services for families, court mandated services and/or removal of a child to foster care if that child is at imminent risk of serious harm.

Commissioner Hansell explained that filing a report does not mean that a child will be removed from his or her family. ACS provides an array of preventive services to help families keep their children safely at home. Preventive services range from mental health services, substance abuse services, domestic violence services, and more.

Since taking office as ACS Commissioner last year, Hansell has made widespread reforms to strengthen the agency's protective and preventive work, including:

- Re-launched the CHILD-STAT quality improvement process, a regular review of high-risk cases under current investigation and an analysis of performance data.
- Created a new Quality Assurance Unit to improve case practice on investigations involving high-risk families.
- Hired more than 1100 new Child Protective Specialists.
- Strengthened infrastructure to support child protective work, including additional transportation options and the use of ZipCar's "local motion technology," allowing CPS the ability to find and reserve cars online so that they can respond even more quickly to reports of child abuse and neglect.
- Provided more than 2,000 frontline child welfare workers upgraded technology, including high-speed tablets and "Safe Measures" software, which can automatically identify and flag high-risk cases that need additional review by managerial staff.
- Enhanced review protocols by implementing a new Heightened Oversight Protocol on SCR reports involving alleged physical or sexual abuse of a child under the age of three.
- Increased collaboration with other agencies that can partner in investigations and in getting supportive services to families, including the Department of Education, Department of Homeless Services and NYPD.

View the campaign in [English](#) and [Spanish](#).

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