



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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ACS LAUNCHES ROBUST RECRUITMENT CAMPAIGN TO HIRE 200 NEW ‘YOUTH DEVELOPMENT SPECIALISTS’ AT NYC’S JUVENILE DETENTION CENTERS

Robust Recruitment Campaign, Including TV, Radio & Print Ads, Will Begin This Week in An Effort to Hire Highly-Qualified Individuals to Work with At-Risk Youth

(May 30, 2018) -- As part of efforts to implement “Raise the Age,” the New York City Administration for Children’s Services (ACS) is launching a new recruitment campaign aimed at hiring approximately 200 “Youth Development Specialists” (YDS) to staff its secure juvenile detention system by October. Beginning this week, an array of radio, television and print ads will appear throughout the City in an effort to recruit highly qualified individuals interested in making a difference in the life of a young person. Overall, ACS plans to hire approximately 600 YDS in total over the next two years. A link to the ads can be viewed [here](#).

Earlier this month, working with the Department of Citywide Administrative Services, the Office of Labor Relations and the Office of Management and Budget, and through negotiation with Local 371 of District Council 37, ACS finalized the new YDS civil service title, which will replace the Juvenile Counselor title. ACS Commissioner Hansell today said that the new title encompasses the hard work that is involved in helping youth learn new skills and behaviors. Moreover, the YDS title offers a more competitive compensation package and career-step-pay ladder.

“The Youth Development Specialist title builds on the important work of our Juvenile Counselors, but better reflects the qualifications needed to support and protect the youth served in our detention system. Moreover, the new YDS title better reflects the rehabilitative and positive youth development approach we use in the juvenile justice system. We expect our staff to not simply monitor youth, but to engage with them, mentor them, and serve as role models in an attempt to turn young lives around. The job specifications for this new title now reflect this,” said **Commissioner Hansell**.

Commissioner Hansell went on to explain that this is the first time in forty years that the Juvenile Counselor title has been updated.

“The Juvenile Counselor title was nearly a half century old, despite the fact that the juvenile justice system has changed dramatically over that time period. The new YDS title is a significant achievement and puts our juvenile justice system on the right trajectory forward,” **added Commissioner Hansell**.

Specifically, the YDS job responsibilities include:

- Providing safe and secure supervision and care to at-risk youth who are placed in secure juvenile detention by the court
- Guiding youth through a broad array of activities including school, meals, chores, wake-up and bedtime routines, family visits, escort to appointments, recreation and other programmatic events
- Serving as a role model, mentor and guide
- Working as part of a team to support positive and healthy youth development
- Managing conflict and youth behavior safely to maintain a calm and supportive environment
- Providing structure and engage youth in pro-social activities and behaviors
- Supporting youth in their efforts to develop new social, interpersonal, academic and vocational skills and interests
- Receiving valuable training on building healthy relationships with youth, crisis prevention and management and other critical topics

ACS operates two secure detention facilities for youth awaiting adjudication in the justice system: Crossroads (in Brooklyn) and Horizon (in the Bronx). Currently, there are 637 young people in the City's juvenile justice system continuum, a number that will increase significantly as Raise the Age is implemented.

Youth Development Specialists will receive a starting salary of \$45,000, increasing to \$59,000 after seven years of service, with regular salary increments each year, opportunity for overtime, longevity increases in addition to salary and a night differential for working hours between 6:00pm and 7:00am. YDS are provided with the tools needed to successfully work with high needs adolescents. The James Satterwhite Training Academy provides pre-service training on important topics, such as: understanding youth development and relationships; safety, security, and supervision; behavior modification and management; and facilitating groups. Ongoing, in-service training is also provided throughout the year to support professional development and additional training opportunities are available through the ACS Workforce Institute.

Individuals can also apply or be promoted to an Associate Youth Development Specialist, a new supervisory title to accompany the YDS.

Individuals interested in applying to become a YDS should visit this website: www.nyc.gov/yds

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About the New York City Administration for Children's Services:

The Administration for Children's Services (ACS) protects and promotes safety and well-being of New York City's children and families by providing child welfare, juvenile justice, and early care and education services. For more information, please visit: www.nyc.gov/acs.

