



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

April 1, 2020

Contact: [mediainquiry@acs.nyc.gov](mailto:mediainquiry@acs.nyc.gov)

## **ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES REMINDS NEW YORKERS THAT APRIL IS NATIONAL CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH**

*As NYC Confronts the COVID-19 Public Health Crisis, ACS Continues to Ensure Children Are Safe & Families Are Supported; ACS Launches New 311 Public Service Announcement*

**NEW YORK, NY** – The NYC Administration for Children's Services (ACS) Commissioner David A. Hansell today reminded New Yorkers that April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month, a time in which families and communities shine a light on the importance of working together to strengthen families and prevent child abuse and neglect.

As New York City works to confront the COVID-19 public health crisis, ACS is continuing its important work of keeping children safe. In addition to its ongoing child protective and prevention work, the agency continues to provide critical support to families in need. For instance, the agency has provided hundreds of bags of food to ACS-involved families, including fresh produce, rice, cereal, pasta, canned goods and more. Similarly, working with various Community Partnerships and local non-profit organizations, ACS has helped families in-need file their unemployment claims, print out homework sheets for children, and more.

Starting April 1<sup>st</sup>, 311 and Radio NYC (91.5 FM) will be running a new public service announcement that reminds New Yorkers what to do if they suspect a child is being abused or neglected. To listen to the announcement, [click here](#).

"As we recognize this year's Child Abuse Prevention Month, we must be reminded that, now more than ever, families are under an unusual amount of stress due to the COVID-19 public health crisis. A strong foundation for preventing child abuse is supporting families who need a helping hand—something ACS does through prevention programs, educational campaigns, providing child care vouchers and more. Rest assured, ACS will continue doing this important work and make sure New York City children are safe and supported during this uncertain time," **said ACS Commissioner David A. Hansell.**

In the vast majority of child welfare investigations where ACS identifies a concern, families are able to engage in prevention services that provide assistance and coaching to families experiencing serious challenges and obstacles. ACS has made enormous strides in the New York City child welfare system in keeping children safe, while keeping families intact. As a result, the foster care population in New York City is at a historic low, dropping from 50,000 children in 1992 to under 17,000 in 2007 to under 8,000 in 2020.

In addition to its prevention work, ACS is using a primary prevention approach to reach families before they ever come in contact with the child welfare system. In 2018, ACS launched three

Family Enrichment Centers (FEC's), which are led by local parents and community members who determine what services and resources will be provided to families. The centers support all types of families, including those without any involvement in the child welfare system, providing them with resources ranging from health and well-being, to economic stability and employment, to child development and education and more. Now more than ever, the FECs have provided critical support to communities as New York City addresses the COVID-19 pandemic.

###