**Department for Children, Youth and Families**

**Contract Authorization with the New York State Office of Children and Family Services for the Healthy Families Home Visiting Program**

The Department respectfully requests legislative authorization to enter into a contractual arrangement with the New York State Office of Children and Family Services (NYSOCFS) for the Healthy Families New York Home Visiting Program. The grant award is $8,305,265 for the term of July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2030.

The Healthy Families Program provides intensive home visits to pregnant women and new parents who live in target areas and who meet the criteria for needed improvement of parenting skills and increased family support. The target areas include the City of Albany, Cohoes, Watervliet and Green Island. Home visits address the needs of all family members and stress building upon family strengths. Services focus on teaching parents about child development, fostering positive parenting skills and promoting healthy parent/child interactions. Screening of families for the program takes place in the hospital, newborn nurseries and with prenatal providers in the community.

Over the years since its inception, the Healthy Families Program of Albany County has recognized an increasing need for families enrolled in the program to receive mental health, substance abuse and domestic violence services. The Social Work component specifically targets these unmet needs. The core elements of the Social Work services include:
1. Counseling and Case Management
2. Family Assessments
3. Referrals to service providers when additional intensive services are needed
4. Family Conferencing

Many parents in the Healthy Families Program hesitate to walk into an office to speak with a stranger about domestic violence, substance abuse, or mental health issues. A counselor skilled in the engagement process can address these concerns with clients in their own home. Counselors conduct assessments, provide counseling and assist them in accessing more intensive services if needed.