

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New York State PROMISE announces launch of recruitment, training efforts

ITHACA, NY (October 9, 2014) - New York State PROMISE (Promoting the Readiness of Minors in Supplemental Security Income) is proud to announce the start of recruitment for the PROMISE program, a research initiative developed to improve transition-to-adulthood outcomes for eligible youth who receive supplemental security income (SSI).

“We are thrilled to be starting the recruitment process for NYS PROMISE and are looking forward to this opportunity to work closely with so many local agencies to help eligible youth in our community develop the social, financial, and professional skills they need to excel academically and in the workforce,” said Joey DiPiazza, Transition Coordinator in the Albany School District.

NYS PROMISE is recruiting youth who receive SSI and are between the ages of 14 and 16 in the Capital Region. Invited youth and adults who meet eligibility requirements can choose to participate in NYS PROMISE and potentially receive services to achieve better outcomes. Eligible youth and their families will receive a personal invitation to participate and details about attending recruitment events in their region.

NYS PROMISE and its partners, including schools, parent centers, and service providers, will expand recruitment efforts to youth and their families in Western New York and New York City this fall. NYS PROMISE will recruit a total of 2,000 youth by April of 2016.

“We are excited to begin recruiting for NYS PROMISE in Albany and pleased to have such dedicated and enthusiastic partners,” said Valerie Malzer, Research Specialist at Cornell University. “This is a significant milestone in moving NYS PROMISE from concept to implementation, and marks the beginning of this initiative’s direct work with youth and families and delivering NYS PROMISE services to participants.”

NYS PROMISE will also provide trainings and materials for partnering agencies in each region. Project partners will attend statewide meetings two times a year, and will have access to technical assistance, training scholarships and specialized professional development.

“As a social worker, I am well aware of the obstacles that are faced by youth who are living in poverty,” said Adene Karhan, Special Education Resource Specialist with the Parent Network of the Capital Region. “Far too many youth are dropping out of school or getting involved in high risk activities because they have no hope for a better future. While I realize that PROMISE will not remove all of the barriers that they face, I feel hopeful that the skills and knowledge that they receive and the relationships that they build will instill a confidence that will help them to reach their greatest potential. If I can help even a handful of youth start on a more positive pathway towards economic independence, I will feel good about the work that I have done.”

The NYS PROMISE program is a five-year initiative that strives to increase access to services for eligible youth and their families to improve academic and employment outcomes, increase financial stability, and reduce reliance on SSI. New York State PROMISE is one of six PROMISE awards granted by the US. Department of Education in October of 2013. Partnering agencies include The Parent Center of Western New York, Wildwood Programs, Inc. in the capital area, and Resources for Children with Special Needs (RCSN) in the New York City area, regional schools and service providers.

The NYS PROMISE intervention model was jointly developed by the U.S. departments of Education, Health and Human Services, and Labor, and the U.S. social Security Administration in an effort to improve the service provision and coordination for youth with disabilities who receive SSI and their families.

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