



Quarterly Newsletter

F a m i l i e s o n T h e M o v e o f N e w Y o r k C i t y , I n c .

• **Legislative Luncheon**



Inside this issue:

Silence Speaks Volumes	2
FOTM meets with legislators in Albany	2
Families On The Move Board Retreat	2
FOTM to offer TA to RTF's	3
Community Involvement & Outreach Committees	3
National Mental Health Month	3
New bill constructed as a result of luncheon	4

F a m i l i e s O n T h e M o v e o f N e w Y o r k C i t y , I n c . H o n o r s S e n a t o r A n d r e w L a n z a a t t h e R e n a i s s a n c e o n S t a t e n I s l a n d .

On February 21, 2008 at the Renaissance on Staten Island, Families On The Move of New York City, Inc. sponsored its first borough-based legislative luncheon to honor New State Senator Andrew Lanza. Families On The Move wanted to recognize Senator Lanza's dedication to families and children who are experiencing or at risk of experiencing emotional, behavioral or mental health challenges on Staten Island. Senator Lanza and Families On The Move of New York City, Inc first became acquainted when he attended a meeting of the SICCAN youth group on Staten Island. The SICCAN youth group is a group of young people with special needs who gather together to discuss peer issues. Senator Lanza interacted with the youth and encouraged them to reach their full potential. Senator Lanza

also generously gave the youth group an endowment to fund future activities.



Lanza accepts plaque in front of families, youth, community and political leaders of Staten Island

A number of other attendees from Staten Island and citywide were also in attendance: Assemblyman Matthew Titone and a representative from the office of Assemblyman Louis Tobacco. Families, mental

health providers and community leaders from Staten Island and citywide were also in attendance, some notable guest were Gisele Stolper (Executive Director of the Mental Health Association of NYC), Dr. Myla Harrison (Assistant Commissioner of the Dept. of Health and Mental Hygiene), Dr. John Jannes (Jewish Board of Family and Children's Services) just to name a few. This forum presented an opportunity for legislators, families and providers to interact. This will hopefully be the genesis of open communication between the Staten Island community their elected officials and community based organizations as it relates to issues of family support and children's mental health.

P a r e n t s a n d Y o u t h I n s p i r e a n d M o v e A u d i e n c e a t L e g i s l a t i v e L u n c h e o n

Families On The Move of New York City, Inc. was honored to have so many families and youth in attendance at its first legislative luncheon. FOTM Inc. wanted to extend a special thanks to the Staten Island Parent Resource Center for their assistance with gathering families and youth to

participate in this inaugural event. The two youth speakers were awesome. Kpangb Popp spoke about the SICCAN youth group and Andres Meeks introduced and presented Senator Lanza with his award from the families of Staten Island. Families On The Move wanted to extend a

special thanks to Joyce Baldassarri and Giselle Stolper parents of youth who have special needs who offered their personal testimonies that did not leave a dry eye in the room. This was the catalyst that lead Assemblyman Titone to author a bill that would put an end to these stories.

Silence Speaks Volumes at Families Together Legislative Luncheon

Families On The Move of New York City, Inc. along with the other family run organizations of New York State held a silent protest at the annual Families Together Legislative luncheon. The silent protest was to encourage the Office of Mental Health to provide financial support to the family run organizations in New York State.

The Family Run organizations of New York State continue to struggle finding funding for sustainability and increased financial support from the state would benefit family run organizations and the families they serve. The protest culminated when family members held up signs in unison that read "Family Support is Family

Run". During the protest not a word was uttered but impact was felt throughout the room. The signs stated how the family members felt and each commissioner who was present got the message of "nothing for us without us".



"Family Support is Family Run"

FOTM goes to Albany to Discuss Family Support

Families On The Move of New York City, Inc. presents white paper to elected officials of all five boroughs in Albany

Representatives of Families On The Move met with legislators in Albany from each borough to discuss family support and to distribute Families On The Move's White paper.

The meetings were with State Senator Ruben Diaz from the Bronx, State Senator Velmanette Montgomery from Brooklyn,

State Senator Liz Krueger from Manhattan, State Senator Andrew Lanza from Staten Island and State Senator Shirley Huntley from Queens.

Each senator was receptive to the mission and goals of the organization and advised Families On The Move to apply for discretionary funding from

their offices. They were also eager to hear more about the organization but the time to discuss was limited.

Future meetings were discussed and brainstorming was done to work together for the improvement of services for children and youth with emotional, behavioral and mental health challenges.

Families On The Move has Board Retreat

Families On The Move Board members, staff and their family's met in Westchester, NY for a Board retreat.

The retreat was three days of seclusion and provided an opportunity for the board and staff to brainstorm new and innovative strategies for future sustainability. The

evenings provided opportunities for everyone to get to know one another.

The youth who attended were able to spend time close to their parents but were also able to have a good time and enjoy themselves. Everyone was able to experience a new

environment and relax.

During the work session a number of new ideas and brainstorming took place and Families On The Move will be embarking on new and creative initiatives but with the same focus, passion and goals as before. Stay tuned for updates.



Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow.... Families On The Move.

Families On The Move to begin working with Residential Treatment Facilities



FOTM expanding our services and providing technical assistance so that they family voice is present.

Families On The Move of New York City, Inc. has partnered with ICL and the Coalition for Hispanic Families on a new **RFP (request for proposal)** for residential treatment facilities housing adolescents and youth experiencing emotional/behavioral or mental health challenges.

As a part of the **RFP** FOTM will provide technical assistance and/or training to the residential treatment facilities (**RFT's**) working

with staff on using strength based practices to engage families. Also providing trainings for advocates. The goal is to include families in all aspects of care in a culturally competent, non-stigmatizing way recognizing and valuing their strengths in order to produce the best possible outcomes for children and their family.

This is only the beginning of overcoming the barriers of family inclusion in **RTF's**.

Community Involvement and Outreach Committees

In the last two quarters FOTM has become a members of Governor Paterson's Juvenile Justice task force as well as the Juvenile Justice Coalition and their continued fight for the rights of incarcerated youth.

Representatives and members of FOTM continue

to be actively involved in community outreach and committees citywide. Consisting of the annual SPA Mental Health forum in the Bronx, the Mental Health Services Advisory Council. FOTM is actively developing partnerships with CBO's for a better tomorrow.

A representative of FOTM sits on the ACS Commissioners Clergy advisory board, as well as the ICC sub-committee that is working toward recommendations for youth experiencing emotional/behavioral challenges in after-school programs throughout the city of New York.

Life's most persistent and urgent question is: What are we doing for others?

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

FOTM & NYC recognize May as Mental Health Month

FOTM, provider partners throughout New York City recognized May as Mental Health Month. The entire month was dedicated toward informing the public about mental health. FOTM co-sponsored several of the events. The Bronx supported a community fair hosted by FRIENDS VSNY as well as a Mental Health forum at Lin-

coln Hospital . Queens PRC participated in the NAMI walk. Staten Island hosted a community fair at the Cromwell Center with food, prizes and entertainment. Manhattan hosted a mental health fair at Governors Hospital with food, prizes and information for the community. Brooklyn sponsored their mental health fair

at the Brooklyn Public Library. The youth were engaged in arts and crafts while presentations were provided for parents and providers. There was also entertainment from a youth choir, along with food and a raffle. At each event FOTM gave out green ribbons representing children's mental health month.



WE'RE ON THE WEB

WWW.FOTMNYC.ORG



F a m i l i e s o n T h e M o v e

80 Broad St. 5th Floor
New York, NY 10004

Phone: 212-837-7904, 212-837-7905
Phone: 212-837-7933
Fax: 212-837-7792
Email: CArcher@fotmnyc.org

**Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow... Families On
The Move**

Families On The Move of New York City, Inc. is a non-profit family run organization dedicated to providing support, education and advocacy for families and caregivers of children and youth who are experiencing or at risk of experiencing emotional, behavioral or mental health challenges. FOTM is the first family run organization to emerge out of the New York City system of care. The organization was incorporated in 2005. Since its inception, FOTM has advocated for family and youth involvement on every level and systemic changes in service delivery.

For further information or contributions to the newsletter please contact Carleton Archer Outreach Specialist at CArcher@fotmnyc.org or 212-837-7933.

A s s e m b l y m a n T i t o n e a n d S e n a t o r L a n z a c o n s t r u c t a b i l l r e q u e s t i n g a g e a p p r o p r i a t e s e p a r a t i o n f o r y o u t h s e e k i n g i n p a t i e n t s e r v i c e s .

As a result of the Legislative Luncheon hosted by FOTM on Staten Island Assemblyman Matthew Titone and State Senator Andrew Lanza worked jointly on a bill that would create age appropriate separation of services for youth experiencing emotional/behavioral or mental health challenges. The legislator made a commitment after the luncheon to create legislation that would prevent youth from being further traumatized through the cohabitation with adult patients.

A special thanks must be given to the two parent presenters Joyce Baldassarri and Giselle Stolper. Each parent gave a personal testimony of their experiences

with their own children. Mrs. Stolper's position at MHA demonstrates that when it comes to seeking adequate and age-appropriate services for youth experiencing emotional, behavioral or mental health challenges, position and status doesn't matter. The difference for families and youth will only come through the legislation and sanctions brought upon care facilities that do not adhere to the law.

FOTM would like to extend our appreciation to both Senator Lanza and Assemblyman Titone for keeping their word to make sure that families of youth experiencing emotional, behavioral and MH challenges get all the help that they

need. "Shame on us" said Lanza after hearing the stories of what youth with emotional/behavioral challenges have had to endure within the current system.



The beginning of something good for families of youth who are experiencing emotional, behavioral or mental health challenges.