



MICHAEL G. BRESLIN
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

COUNTY OF ALBANY
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE
112 STATE STREET, ROOM 200
ALBANY, NEW YORK 12207-2021
(518) 447-7040 - FAX (518) 447-5589
WWW.ALBANYCOUNTY.COM

MICHAEL D. PERRIN
DEPUTY COUNTY EXECUTIVE

March 11, 2011

Dear Friend,

Over the last several years, we have had the privilege of working on the Albany County Family Partnerships for Change initiative, funded by the United States Department of Health and Human Services.

As part of this initiative, the Albany County Department for Children, Youth and Families worked closely with Families Together in New York State (FTNYS) and Families United Network (FUN) to improve access to mental health services for youth and their families. As a result, three community-based family resource centers were established in rural, urban and suburban communities.

There were many lessons learned from this initiative that are valuable to our ongoing efforts to improve access to children's mental health services. This experience is essential to our ongoing development in care for children, youth and young adults with emotional behavioral and social challenges. This initiative also enabled Albany County to learn many things about our ability to meet the needs of these communities, directly and indirectly related to children's mental health services.

The suburban family resource center in Colonie served a high volume of clients, established strong relationships with the school districts, and as a result of aggressive outreach, will continue to serve clients. It is through the rural site in the hilltowns of Albany County that we established a location for additional County departments to offer on-site information and enrollment sessions for Food Stamps, Medicaid and other benefit programs. Through the urban site in the city of Albany, we learned successful and unsuccessful approaches to delivering the system of care. One significant accomplishment was the implementation of the Safe Schools Healthy Students grant through the Albany City School District.

I want to thank all of those involved in this initiative including, DCYF, FTNYS and FUN staff, our dedicated parent partners, and most importantly the children and their families who were an essential part of this learning process. It is because of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) that we were given the opportunity to explore the system of care philosophy in serving this important population.

I hope that you find valuable information about our efforts in the enclosed Final Evaluation Report completed by the Center for Human Services Research, University of Albany, State University of New York.

Sincerely,


Michael G. Breslin