



Scott Housley/CDC

How the Child Welfare System Can Better Respond to Needs of Children from Immigrant Families

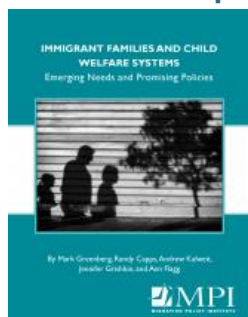
November 9, 2021



Today's Event

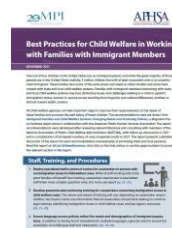
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- There is no voice Q&A. To ask a question of the panelists:
 - Use Q&A function throughout webinar.
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- Audio from today's webinar will be available at www.migrationpolicy.org/events

Related Report: ***Immigrant Families and Child Welfare Systems: Emerging Needs and Promising Policies***



By Mark Greenberg, Randy Capps, Andrew Kalweit, Jennifer Grishkin and Ann Flagg

Related 2-pager: ***Best Practices for Child Welfare in Working with Families with Immigrant Members***



<https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/immigrant-families-child-welfare-systems>

NYC ACS Immigration Services Overview

ACS Office of Immigrant Services and
Language Affairs (ISLA)

Elian Maritz, Director

November 9, 2021

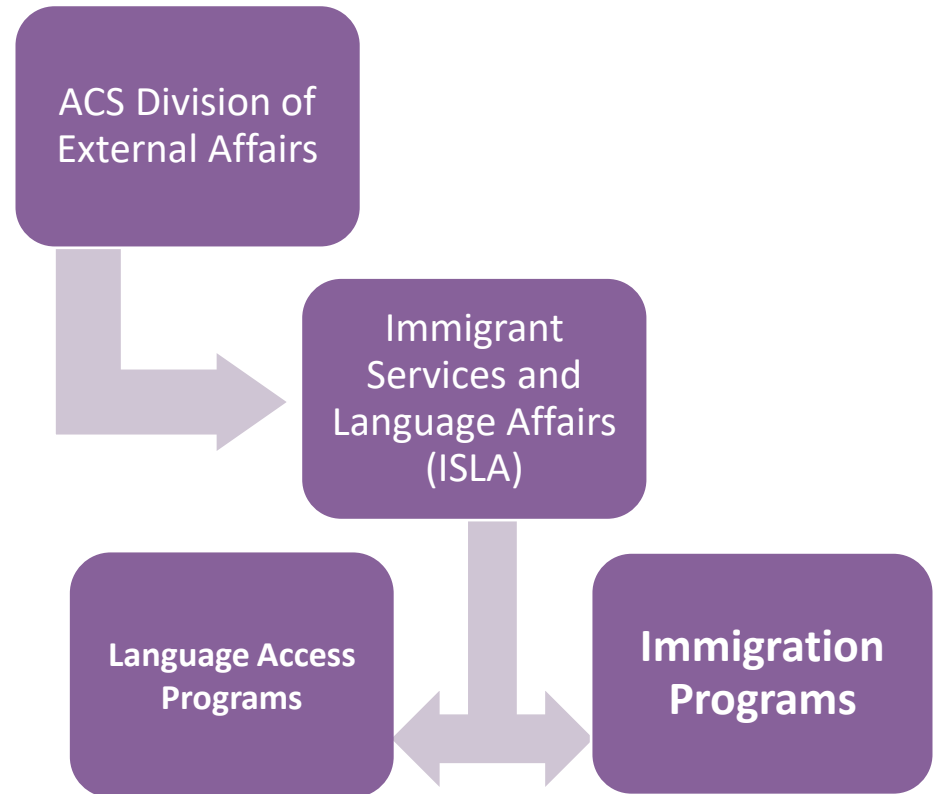
NYC Administration for Children's Services (ACS)

ACS is responsible for the safety and well-being of New York City's children and their families by providing child welfare, juvenile justice, primary prevention, and child care services.

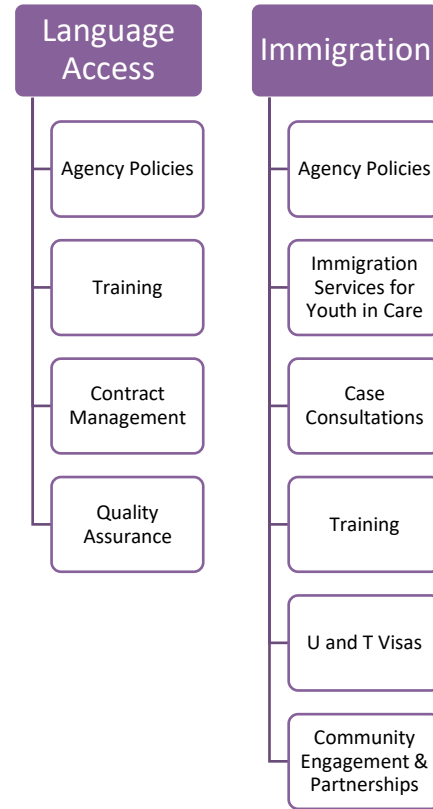
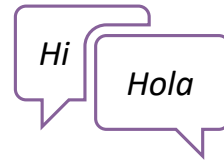
- Child Protection conducts investigations of suspected child abuse or neglect.
- Through Child and Family Well-being, ACS offers critical primary prevention support to families and children including child care vouchers.
- In Prevention Services, ACS works with nonprofit organizations to support and stabilize at-risk families.
- In Family Permanency, ACS contracts with non-profit organizations to provide foster care services.



ACS Office of Immigrant Services and Language Affairs



ACS Office of Immigrant Services and Language Affairs



Immigration Support for ACS Clients

Two main areas of immigration support:

1. Immigration Services for Youth in Care Program (youth in care)
2. Immigration support for ACS-involved families (families not in care)

ACS Immigration Services for Youth in Care (ISYC) Program

ACS Policy on SIJS and Immigration Assistance:

- All youth in ACS care who are not US citizens must be:
 - Identified; and
 - Referred for immigration services.

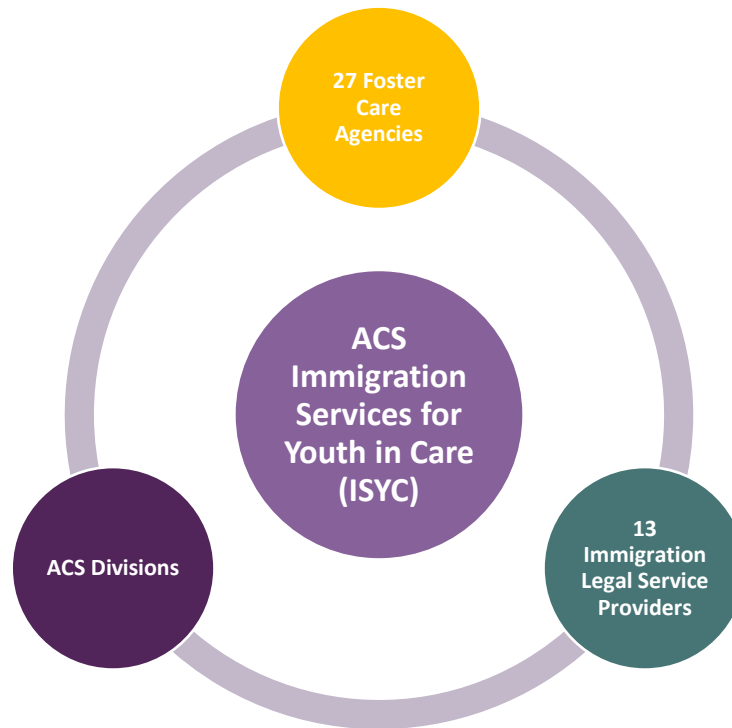


Importance of SIJS for Youth in Foster Care

Helping youth achieve lawful immigration status is integral to permanency planning i.e., ensuring access to services, resources and opportunities that will enable youth to live independent, productive lives after leaving foster care. Lawful immigration status opens pathways including:

- Housing (in NYC, NYCHA)
- Education (access to federal financial aid)
- Work (employment authorization)
- Health insurance

Collaborative Team



ACS Immigration Services for Youth in Care (ISYC)

- **Oversees** foster care agencies' efforts to assist immigrant children and youth in care
- **Trains** foster care immigration liaisons
- **Assists** on individual cases
- **Tracks and monitors** progress of reported cases

Foster Care Providers: Immigration Liaisons

Every foster care provider agency has a dedicated **Immigration Liaison** who acts as a:

- Point person for ISYC and other collaborative partners;
- In-house resource and coordinator on immigration issues.



Immigration Legal Service Providers



Represent youth in immigration court and before the federal government



Complete and file immigration documentation on the client's part



Follow up with immigration authorities



Provide immigration advice



Work with ISYC when additional assistance is needed

Outcomes and Notes

- Every youth in ACS care should leave care with the strongest immigration status they are eligible for (green card or citizenship);
- ACS pay for all immigration-related fees, such as the cost of a citizenship application;
- Youth may extend their stay in care if they are ineligible for housing due to not having their green card yet.



Immigration Support for ACS-Involved Families

- U-Visas
- Case Support
- Trainings



U-Visas

- ACS can provide certifications for U-Visas (technically, “U nonimmigrant status”) as a child protective services agency that conducts investigations;
- Certifications are for victims of certain crimes who have suffered mental or physical abuse and are helpful to law enforcement or government officials (**including CPS**) in the investigation or prosecution of criminal activity.



See, DHS “U Visa Law Enforcement Resource Guide,” child protective services qualify as a certifying agency for U certifications. Department of Homeland Security, “U Visa Law Enforcement Resource Guide,” (2019), page 2.

U-Visas

- Why certify?
 - Builds trusts with the undocumented community, who might otherwise be unwilling to cooperate with an ACS investigation;
 - Helps families get on the path to lawful status, which makes them eligible for benefits that support family stability.



Other ISLA Services

- Case support
- Explaining changes in immigration law (e.g. public charge)
- Trainings on working with immigrant families (understanding immigration law, cultural sensitivity & responsiveness, etc.)
- Community engagement and work groups
- Coordinating with the NYC Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs
- Language access contract management & policy

Questions?

Contact: Elian Maritz, Director of Immigrant Services and Language Affairs elian.maritz@acs.nyc.gov



The logo for the Children, Youth & Families Department (CYFD) of New Mexico. It features the lowercase letters 'cyfd' in a bold, orange, sans-serif font. Below the letters is a yellow curved shape that resembles a rising sun or a stylized wave.

New Mexico Children,
Youth & Families Department

Immigration & Child Welfare Best Practices

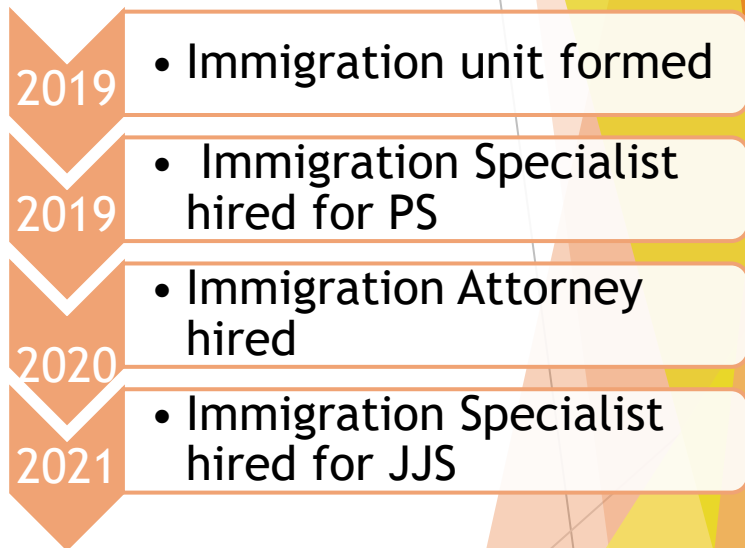
Perspectives from New Mexico's Children, Youth & Families Department

Megan Finno-Velasquez, Phd, LMSW, Director of Immigration Affairs

Andres Santiago, Esq, Immigration Attorney

WHO WE ARE

- ▶ **The New Mexico Children, Youth & Families Department (CYFD)'s Immigration Unit**
- ▶ **Comprised of:**
 - Director of Immigration Affairs
 - Immigration Attorney
 - Immigration Specialists for Protective Services (PS) and Juvenile Justice Services (JJS) Divisions



WHO WE SERVE

Immigrant & mixed-status families in NM involved with state child welfare and/or juvenile justice systems

- ▶ Most families do not have contact with CYFD due to a parent's deportation but rather due to abuse or neglect allegations.
- ▶ A deportation order may be present within the immigration history of the family, which can complicate immigration relief options.
- ▶ Many families have one parent in a home country and another parent in the U.S.
- ▶ Children who are the victims of both labor and sex trafficking.



WHAT WE DO

- ❑ Case consultation on cases involving immigrant families
- ❑ Consular Notification
- ❑ Liaison to foreign country consulates on mutual cases
- ❑ Facilitation of services in foreign countries
- ❑ Assist with communicating to relatives in foreign countries
- ❑ Eligibility screening for immigration relief
- ❑ Translation services
- ❑ Immigration representation on a case-by-case basis for children
- ❑ Referrals for immigration legal assistance for children and families
- ❑ Consultation and federal reporting of potential victims of human trafficking
- ❑ Staff training on immigration issues
- ❑ Collaboration with community-based immigrant serving organizations.
- ❑ Outreach and education to immigrant communities.

NEW POLICY

The Immigration Affairs Unit has worked to update policies on non-citizens regarding:

- ▶ **Licensing** non-citizen relatives to become resource parents (foster parents) and provide them with training and support
- ▶ **Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS)** to align the policy with current federal standards and law
- ▶ Reports of suspected **trafficking**
- ▶ The **consular notification** processes
- ▶ Updated **MOU** with Mexican Consulate
- ▶ Protocol for **communication with DHS**
- ▶ Language Access Plan





Q&A

- Use Q&A chat function to write questions
- Or email events@migrationpolicy.org with your questions
- Or tweet questions to [@MigrationPolicy](https://twitter.com/MigrationPolicy) [#MPIdiscuss](https://twitter.com/hashtag/MPIdiscuss)
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