

**WE ARE TODAY'S YOUTH...**

**YIP**

**WWW.YOUTHINPROGRESS.ORG**

**TOMORROW'S LEADERS.**

# "We are Today's Youth, Tomorrow's Leaders"

*The Mission of Youth In Progress is to enhance and advance the lives of today's and tomorrow's youth by enhancing their sense of self and responsibility.*

*To do this, we pledge to educate everyone involved in the various systems Youth In Progress members represent to the realities of this experience.*

# YOUTH-IN-PROGRESS IS...

- Youth Leaders and Adult Mentors from each of the regional foster care youth leadership groups
- Alumni = former YIP Youth Leaders who have aged out
- Foster Care Youth Interns
- NYS Adolescent Services Resource Network Liaisons
- Regional Office Liaisons
- OCFS Partners

# Youth Leaders Consist of Youth Placed in:

- Foster Homes (Voluntary Agency or County Operated)
- Therapeutic Foster Homes
- Group Homes
- Residential Placements
- SILP's
- Aftercare
- DJJOY Facilities (including CMSO's, ERC's & Aftercare)

# WHAT ARE OUR PRIORITIES?

- Dispel negative stereotypes to “normalize” the experiences of youth in foster care.
- Increase funding opportunities for Statewide and Regional Youth Voice activities.
- Improve policies and practices regarding family and sibling contacts.
- Increase youth involvement in selecting, assessing, and retaining service providers

# WHAT ARE OUR PRIORITIES?

- Increase youth opportunities to make decisions and to improve practices that meet their needs and directly affect them (i.e., clothing allowance and policy, financial resources).
- Improve available services for youth while in foster care, including trial discharge services.
- Improve policies and increase availability, awareness, and participation of services provided to youth aging out of foster care.

# What We Do

- Host Annual Regional Foster Care Youth Speak Outs;
- Distribute the *Handbook for Youth In Foster Care* regionally to youth ages 14-21;
- Participate in a variety of speaking engagements and conferences regionally, statewide, and nationally;
- Serve on leadership boards for agencies, local districts, and national organizations;
- Conduct a variety of community outreach and awareness activities for Foster Care Month (May);

# What We Do

- Act as co-trainers and speak as panelists for caseworker, child care staff, and foster parent training;
- Meet with NYS legislators on policy issues;
- Appear in training videos specific to working with adolescents in foster care;
- Participate in focus groups; and
- Conduct agency focus groups with youth in care.

# YIP Annual Activities

- Conference Calls/ Videoconferences throughout the year for planning sessions, updates, or follow-up sessions
- Winter Youth Leadership Academy (February)
- Summer Youth Leadership Academy (July)
- Year End Videoconference (November)

# What have we done?

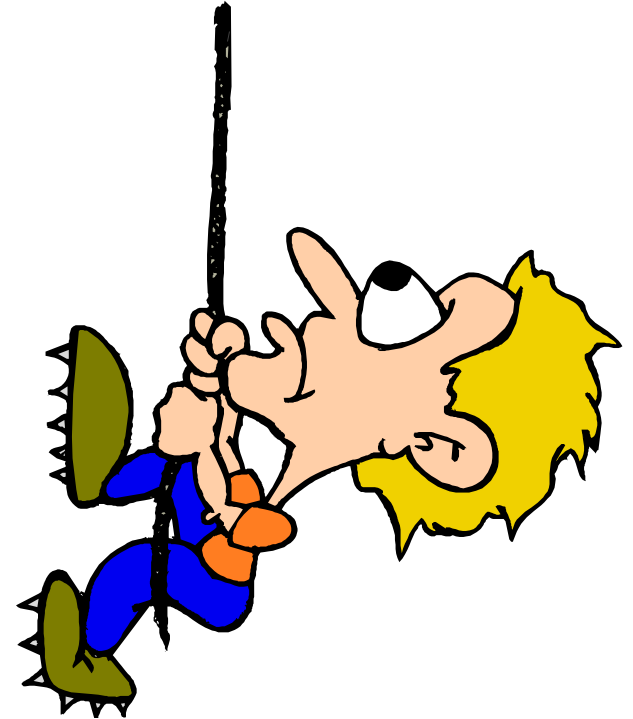
- Joined in partnership with OCFS' Adolescent Services Strategy Workgroup
- Produced the video to accompany the Handbook for Youth In Care
- Provided consultation for edits to Handbook
- Distributed Handbook regionally
- Developed a marketing committee, designed logo
- Recruited regional youth leaders
- Provided feedback and assistance in the development of NYS OCFS Family & Sibling Contact & Visitation Paper

# What have we done?

- Presented regionally, statewide, and nationally about issues specific to adolescents in foster care
- Hosted annual regional foster care youth speak outs to ensure appropriate representation of issues of all youth in foster care in NY
- Edited “clothing inventory”, conducted research surveys, and collected information about debit cards for the clothing policy discussion; wrote skits that demonstrated issues; videotaped skits
- Starred in and helped with the editing of the “Confronting Stereotypes of Youth in Foster Care” video which addresses one of the priorities

# CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED

- YIP Funding
- Getting message to the right people
- Support from agencies
- Turnover – staff & youth
- Time and commitment



# What's Next ?????

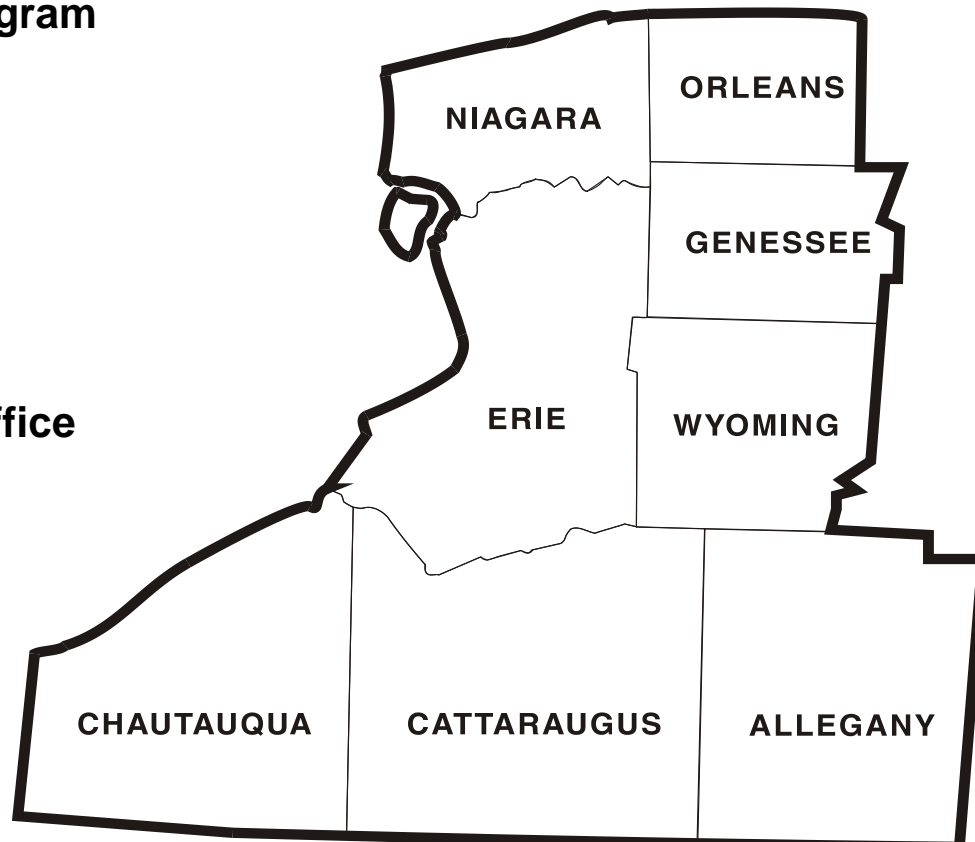
- Certify new YIP Foster Club All Americans
- Update & reprint *Handbook for Youth in Foster Care*
- Continue to develop topics for YIP *Need to Know Series* brochures
- Keep Growing



# Region 1 North & South: Stand Up 4 Youth

**Erika Leveillee**  
Professional Development Program  
University at Albany  
518-956-7884  
[eleveill@pdp.albany.edu](mailto:eleveill@pdp.albany.edu)

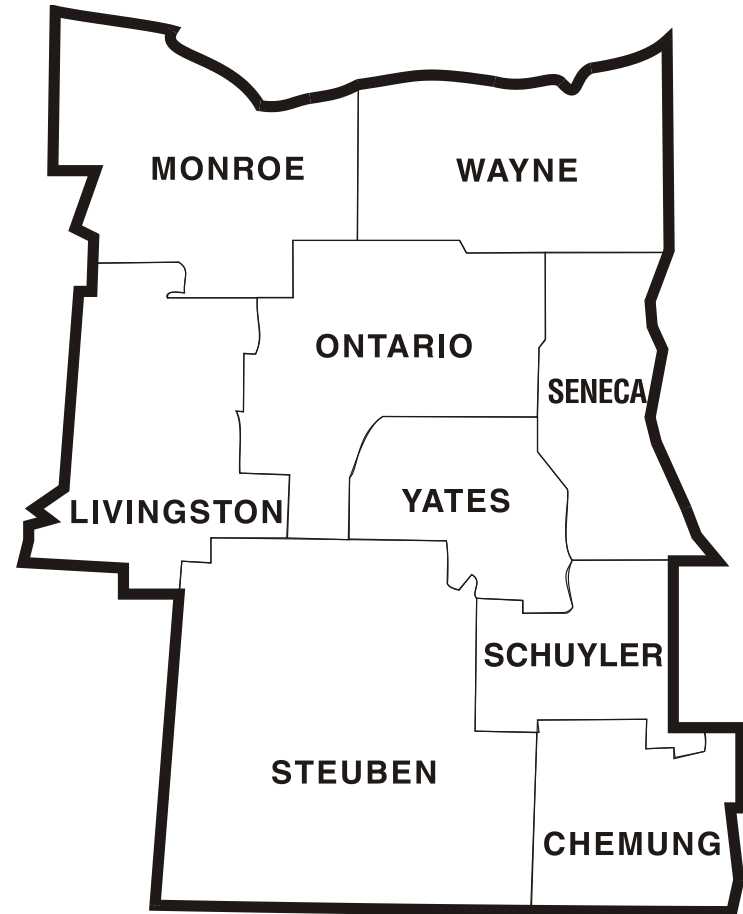
**Peter Padilla**  
NYS OCFS Buffalo Regional Office  
(716) 847-4663  
[Peter.Padilla@ocfs.state.ny.us](mailto:Peter.Padilla@ocfs.state.ny.us)



# Region 2: Youth On the Move

**Erika Leveillee**  
**Professional Development Program**  
**University at Albany**  
**518-956-7884**  
**[eleveill@pdp.albany.edu](mailto:eleveill@pdp.albany.edu)**

**Dana Brown**  
**NYS OCFS Rochester Regional Office**  
**(585) 238-8282**  
**[Dana.Brown@ocfs.state.ny.us](mailto:Dana.Brown@ocfs.state.ny.us)**



# Region 3: Voices United

**Chris Flowers**  
Professional Development Program  
University at Albany  
(518) 956-7886  
cflowers@pdp.albany.edu

**Ourania (Ray) Zongos-Lawrence**  
NYS OCFS Syracuse Regional Office  
(315) 423-1191  
Ourania.Zongos-Lawrence@ocfs.state.ny.us



# North Country: Youth In Progress

**Michelle Ray**  
Professional Development Program  
University at Albany  
(518) 956-7888  
[MRay@pdp.albany.edu](mailto:MRay@pdp.albany.edu)

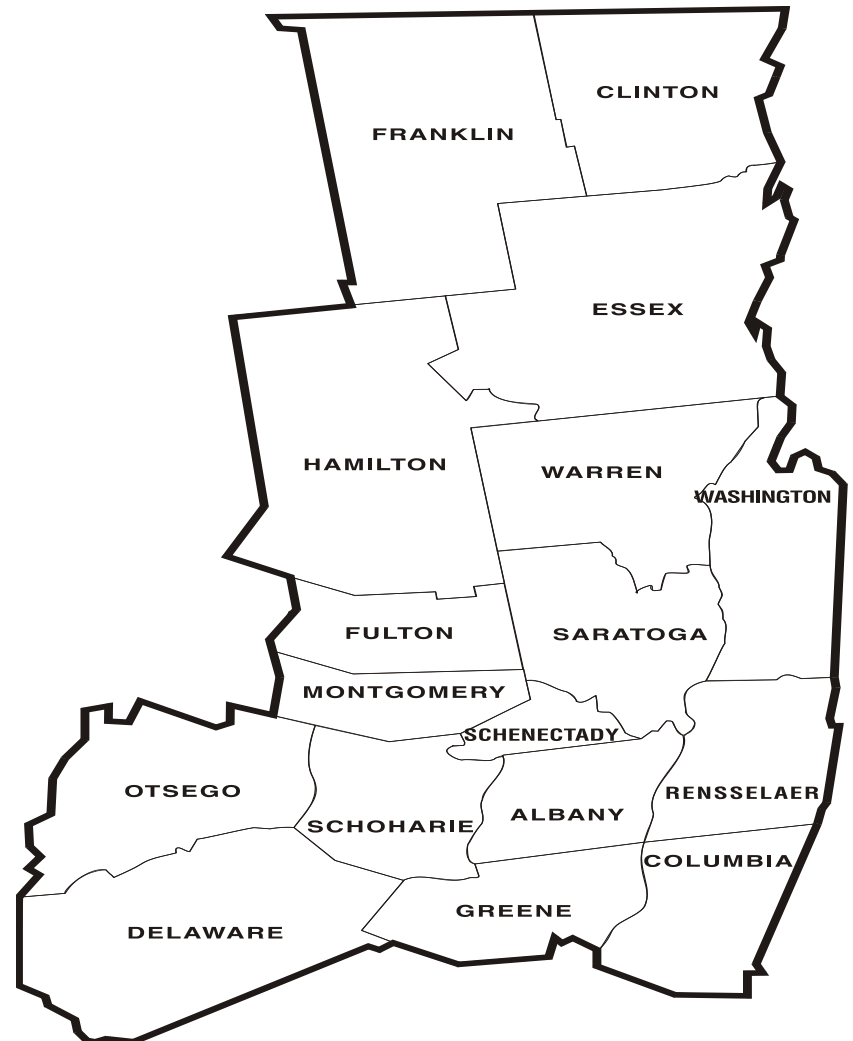
**Marie Limbach**  
NYS OCFS Albany Regional Office  
(518) 402-3395  
[Marie.Limbach@ocfs.state.ny.us](mailto:Marie.Limbach@ocfs.state.ny.us)



# Region 4: Youth 4 Progress (Y4P)

**Michelle Ray**  
Professional Development Program  
University at Albany  
(518) 956-7888  
[MRay@pdp.albany.edu](mailto:MRay@pdp.albany.edu)

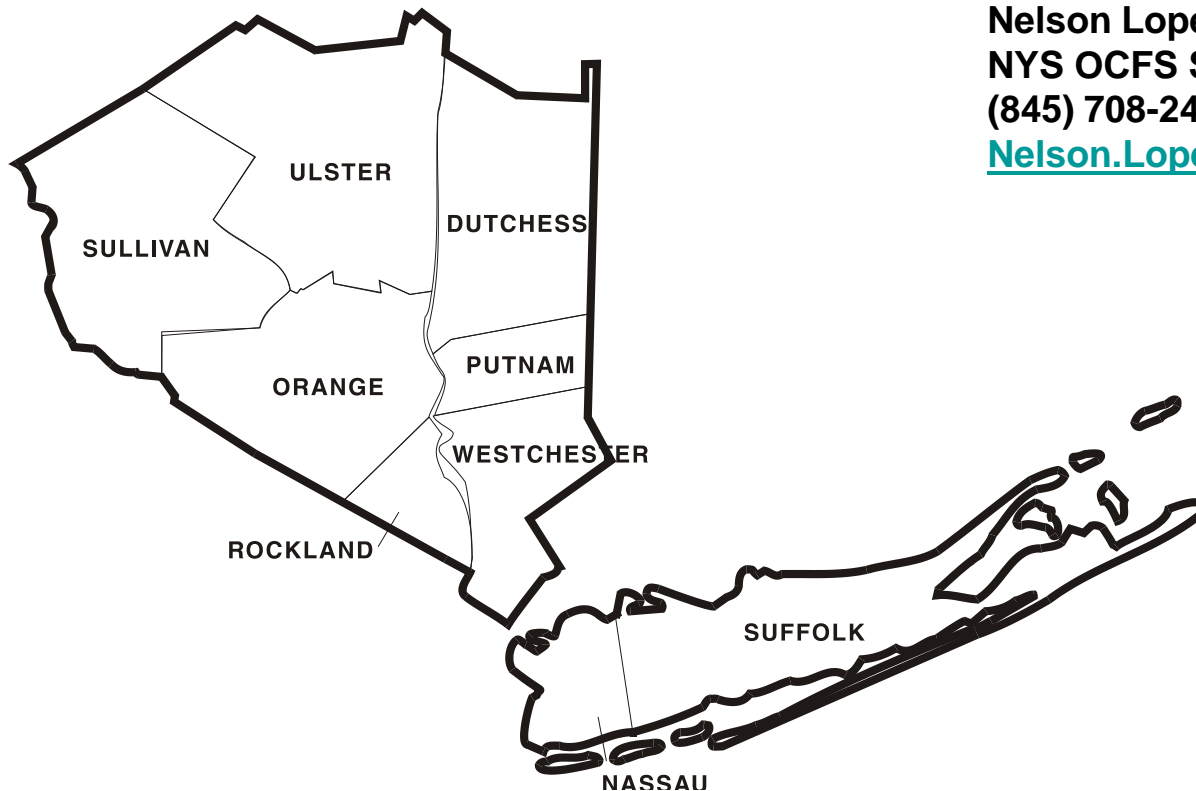
**Marie Limbach**  
NYS OCFS Albany Regional Office  
(518) 402-3395  
[Marie.Limbach@ocfs.state.ny.us](mailto:Marie.Limbach@ocfs.state.ny.us)



# Region 5: Youth of Mid-Hudson & Long Island

**Geetika Gilberti**  
SUNY-Stony Brook  
Child Welfare Training Program  
(631) 444-7996  
[Geetika.Gilberti@stonybrook.edu](mailto:Geetika.Gilberti@stonybrook.edu)

**Nelson Lopes**  
NYS OCFS Spring Valley Regional Office  
(845) 708-2498  
[Nelson.Lopes@dfa.state.ny.us](mailto:Nelson.Lopes@dfa.state.ny.us)



# Region 6: The Movement

**Melissa Rivera**

**Information Services Specialist/ Trainer/**

**YIP Region 6 Advisor**

**Adolescent Services Resource Network**

**@ Hunter College School of Social Work**

**(212) 452-7483**

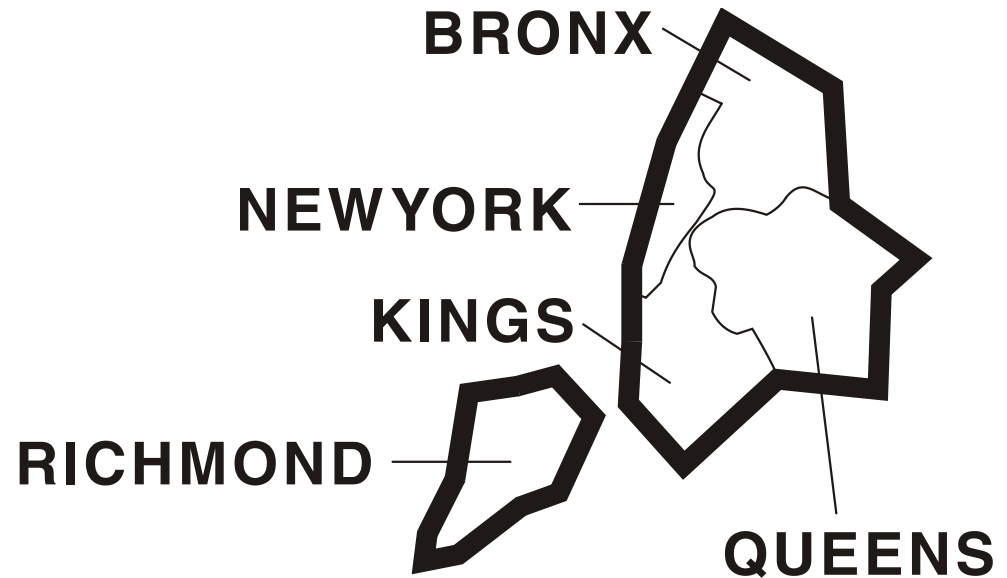
**[M.Rivera@hunter.cuny.edu](mailto:M.Rivera@hunter.cuny.edu)**

**Pamela Brown**

**OCFS NYC Regional Office**

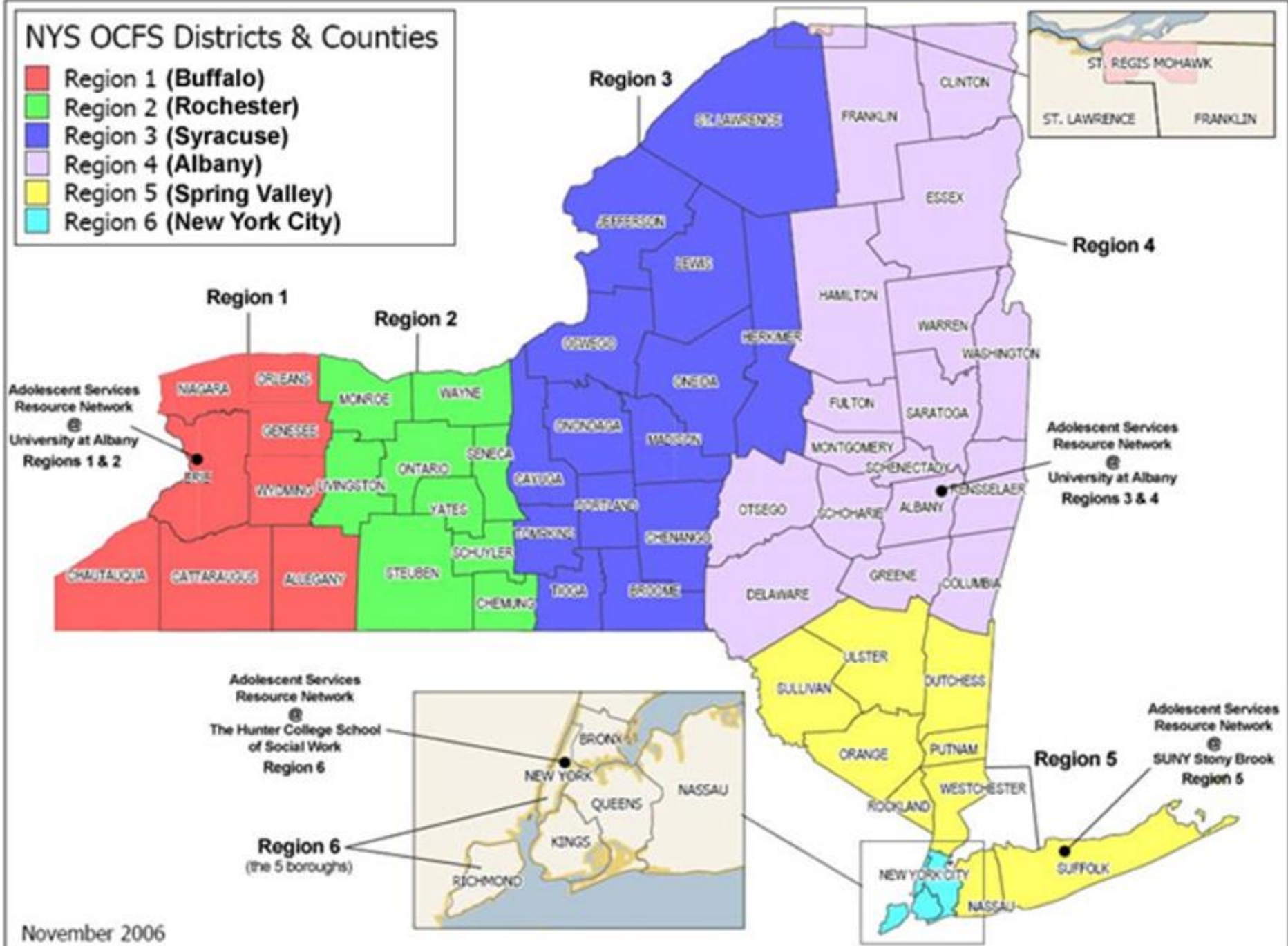
**(212) 384-1788**

**[Pamela.Brown@ocfs.state.ny.us](mailto:Pamela.Brown@ocfs.state.ny.us)**



# NYS OCFS Districts & Counties

- Region 1 (Buffalo)
- Region 2 (Rochester)
- Region 3 (Syracuse)
- Region 4 (Albany)
- Region 5 (Spring Valley)
- Region 6 (New York City)



Adolescent Services Resource Network  
 @  
 The Hunter College School of Social Work  
 Region 6

**Region 6**  
 (the 5 boroughs)

Adolescent Services Resource Network  
 @  
 SUNY Stony Brook  
 Region 5