

**Oswego County Anti-Poverty Task Force
Response to the LIFT Oswego Needs Assessment**

**Sharing Initiatives to Reduce Poverty
& Stimulate the Economy**

June 5, 2017

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**Message from Roy Reehil,
Chair of the Oswego County Anti-Poverty Task Force**

I'd like to thank and congratulate the City of Oswego, Oswego County Opportunities, CGR and everyone who participated in the LIFT (Learn, Identify, Focus and Transform) Oswego Poverty Needs Assessment for the thoroughness of the assessment and the speed with which it was completed.

The energy and cooperation of the LIFT partners is particularly encouraging, because your work affirms many of our county wide findings, especially our belief that a coordinated effort across many disciplines and jurisdictions will be necessary to have a sustainable and effective response to the long-term challenges we face.

In response to the LIFT Assessment I have organized initiatives that our County Anti-Poverty Task Force Teams have developed that address the key findings and recommendations of the LIFT Assessment. By organizing them this way, I hoped to make it easier for LIFT Oswego partners to be able to evaluate initiatives for possible incorporation into a final vision or plan of action.

Incredibly talented and dedicated people invested many hours of volunteer work to develop these initiatives. We hope that you will find these proposals useful and that many of them will be able to be incorporated into a plan of action that will not only begin reducing poverty in the City of Oswego, but also in our tightly interconnected regional community.

—Roy Reehil,
5th District Oswego County Legislator
Chair, Oswego County Anti-Poverty Task Force
Chair, Economic Development and Planning Committee

Oswego County Anti-Poverty Task Force Response to the LIFT Oswego Needs Assessment

Sharing Initiatives to Reduce Poverty & Stimulate the Economy

As described in the opening paragraph of the LIFT Oswego Needs Assessment, it was created “to inform a work plan aimed at reducing the prevalence and impact of poverty” in Oswego. The City received funding under the Empire State Poverty Reduction Initiative (ESPRI) to support such an effort. The Oswego County Anti-Poverty Task Force (OCAPTF) has been engaged in a similar locally-funded effort since February, 2015. Utilizing the LIFT Oswego assessment as a guide, the OCAPTF response is intended to share the initiatives that OCAPTF teams identified that have the greatest potential to be impactful in combating the challenges identified within the assessment.

Prioritizing Efforts Where the LIFT and OCAPTF Assessments Align

The agreement of key findings in both the LIFT Oswego assessment and OCAPTF consultant’s report allows those issues to rise in priority. In the remainder of this report, we document where that alignment occurs, and follow that with descriptions of the initiatives identified by OCAPTF teams that are designed to address those challenges.

Part I: Economic Development and Workforce Development, Foundational Priorities

(From page 17 of the LIFT Oswego Assessment) “According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Oswego County has suffered from a persistently higher unemployment rate than New York State and the United States for at least the past 15 years. Over the past eight years, Oswego County has averaged an unemployment rate a full two percentage points higher than New York State, and has never been closer than 1.5 points to the statewide figure.” (And from page 18) “Oswego County has the 10th lowest labor force participation rate in the state (out of 62 counties), and has a lower labor force participation rate than the six counties bordering it.”

Compounding these unemployment statistics is earnings data (on page 15) that suggests that “The average earnings per job held by County residents has fallen from a peak of nearly \$56,800 (in 2015 dollars) in 1984 to \$48,600 in 2015.” So not only is unemployment high, but earnings are decreasing principally due to the change in the types of jobs available in the county (page i.) “Manufacturing jobs have declined by more than 30% in the last 15 years, while Education and Health Care jobs increased 18%.” Working with similar data it’s unsurprising that the first fundamental observation that emerged during the OCAPTF study was that without a strategic plan to reinvigorate and diversify the county’s economy no plan to reduce poverty could succeed. From page 6 of the CZB, LLC “Report to Oswego County,” “Prospects for economic growth in the County won’t come without a specific and focused effort. CZB strongly recommends that the County prioritize the development of a strategy to retain existing and attract new businesses, and in the process, diversify Oswego County’s economy.”

Acknowledging the importance of these observations, the OCAPTF Economic Development Team developed the following initiatives and made the creation of an economic development plan for the county its top priority.

OCAPTF Economic Development Team Prioritized Initiatives

Create a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for Oswego County.

Oswego County has partnered with the County of Oswego Industrial Development Agency and Operation Oswego County to contract with Camoin Associates of Saratoga Springs, NY, and Bergmann Associates of Rochester, NY, to develop a strategic economic development plan of action for the county. We expect the City of Oswego will be an active participant in this process with Justin Rudgick, the City's Community Development Director joining us on the Steering Committee for the project. Completion is anticipated in August, 2017. This is a 100% locally funded initiative.

State-of-the-Art Light-Industrial Business Incubator

The County of Oswego Industrial Development Agency and Operation Oswego County are planning to transform the 43,000-square-foot former Price Chopper facility in the City of Oswego into a state-of-the-art business incubator with space for light-industrial and service-based clients. More than 30 businesses have graduated from the county's previous incubator projects and this is a way to support future small business growth.

Targeted Industry Clusters Skills Gap Analysis

Study the targeted industry clusters within Oswego County to determine the current and future skills gaps. Identify disconnects between job openings and available workforce, and forecast for next 10 years based on available demographic information. This would include specific strategies to improve the skills gaps and influence workforce development initiatives.

Countywide Broadband Analysis Feasibility Study

To map existing broadband service and quality, identify areas of low to no service, develop a priority map for broadband service and phased cost to implement.

On Page 59 of the LIFT Assessment under the heading "Program Specific Recommendations" CGR writes, "The City of Oswego lacks a number of needed services, including child care and transportation." The following initiatives may provide ways to support and subsidize start-up operations in these areas.

Community Café PILOT Program

To develop community cafes (based on the community café model) in the city of Oswego and the city of Fulton. Fund start-up costs for the first 3 years. Would provide work opportunities and business experience to those in poverty and homeless.

Matching Funds/Seed Capital for Incubator Tenants

This would match \$500,000 investment by the IDA. Partial grant/partial loans to incubator tenants for working capital and equipment. Partial funding could be forgiven as tenants hit benchmarks set in their incubation graduation plan. Priority to businesses employing those in poverty, MWBE's, veteran owned, etc.

Funding Small Business Startups, Expansions

For businesses started by those in poverty or businesses that 50% or more of jobs created are for those at or below the poverty level. Priority to women/minority owned businesses, disadvantaged populations, veteran owned.

Subsidized Employment for Individuals with a Disability

Utilize groups such as ARISE and Oswego Industries to develop subsidized employment opportunities for those in poverty that have a disability.

Agricultural Initiatives & Regional Food Hub

Fund Equipment & Leasehold Improvements for Food Production Hub

Up to \$1,000,000 for entities to manage a food processing hub to purchase specialized equipment and make leasehold improvements in a 5,500 SF space designated for food processing and food hub at the incubator facility in Oswego.

Agri-Business Revolving Loan Fund

For agriculture related businesses to purchase equipment, receive working capital.

Workforce Development in Oswego County

Preparing a Workforce that will Stimulate Business Growth

There is near total agreement regarding workforce development between the city and county assessments. There is also no area of agreement that presents a better opportunity for return on investment. The initiatives developed by the OCAPTF Workforce Development Team and those that have evolved organically within our outstanding workforce development community will not only help residents in poverty find paths to self-sufficiency, they will also help our existing businesses grow, and encourage new businesses to locate in the region, multiplying any return on investment.

There are several observations in the lift Oswego Executive Summary that support the need for investment in workforce development. (Page i) “Labor force participation (which includes adults ages 25-64 either working or looking for work) is generally low in the City at 72%, and particularly low among older adults and less educated adults. Only 57% of adults 55-64 and 52% of adults *without a high school diploma* are in the workforce.” “Some employers report difficulty in filling a variety of jobs and point to a lack of soft skills (showing up, being on time, working with others), math and literacy skills, and, in some cases, special certifications.”

On page 55, CGR shares the following observation: “Industry-specific job training programs, known as sectoral employment programs, represent the most evidence-based approach to preparing unemployed, underemployed and under-skilled workers for skilled positions with employers. These programs are designed to address the gap between the presenting skills of unemployed or underemployed individuals and the required skills for particular occupations by developing a close partnership between the job training program and local employers.”

To the credit of our workforce development community, new industry-specific job training programs are being developed and delivered at an amazing pace. The formal partnership created between Cayuga Community College (CCC) and the Center for Instruction, Technology & Innovation (CiTi) named the Center for Career and Community Education (CCCE) works closely with the human resource departments of several local manufacturers to deliver programs designed specifically to the needs of those local employers. This formal collaboration enables CiTi and CCC to maximize their resources and increase their ability to offer customized training in addition to all of the other programs they provide.

Complementing the programming at CCCE, the Workforce Development Board with input from local businesses began delivering a “Professional Certificate Series” curriculum. This delivers the “soft skills” training that many local businesses have identified as baseline skills that can impact employee retention.

This new focus on “career pathways” offers students with widely divergent entry levels an appropriate starting place to begin an education experience that they can take as far as they want. From entry-level, noncredit courses to the new Advanced Manufacturing Certificate program at CCCE, these programs provide opportunities that are aligned with demand occupations in Central New York and specifically, with Oswego County employer's needs.

If properly promoted and supported, and if the appropriate student-support system can be provided for economically challenged adult learners, our ultra-collaborative workforce development system has the potential to become the engine of change that helps revive the economic vitality of Oswego and Oswego County. What follows are the initiatives proposed by the OCAPTF Workforce Development Team to support that continued evolution.

Prioritized Initiatives Proposed by the OCAPTF Workforce Development Team

Top Priority: Fund our existing programs to attract, train and maintain a qualified workforce to respond to the needs of Oswego County businesses.

Working closely with local employers and training providers, career center staff and other workforce partners have generated training opportunities specifically addressing skills gaps and the needs of local employers.

IBEST Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) Program

In response to employer identified need for Certified Nursing Assistants (CNA's), The Workforce Development Board, the One Stop Career Center and CCCE partnered on the development of an IBEST Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) Program. The IBEST model incorporates academic learning to remediate basic skill deficiencies and/or assist individuals to begin to prepare for a high school equivalency diploma, while concurrently providing participants with occupational (CNA) and work readiness skills. The model targets individuals who lack the math and reading skills needed for enrollment in the regular CNA program. Ten individuals enrolled in the first offering of the program. 7/10 obtained the CNA license and obtained employment as a CNA; 2 are in the process of retesting and 1 is currently unavailable for employment. A second round of the program is completing in February 2017.

Oswego County “Skill Up” Initiative

The Workforce Development Board/SUNY Oswego Office of Business Community Relations, the One Stop Career Center, NY Wired For Education and the Oswego County Poverty Reduction Task Force partnered on a “Skill Up Oswego County” initiative. This initiative will provide County residents the opportunity to access a free, 6-month license to the Metrix Learning system; a flexible, self-directed e-learning service offering on-line courses for Oswego County residents to upgrade existing skills and learn new skills to improve their marketability to prospective employers. The system offers opportunities to: Explore Career Pathways to understand the skills required for in-demand careers and receive a recommended training plan. Browse the Catalog of over 3,800 different courses, complete training courses to enhance skills, and earn digital badges for each skill

learned. Look for a job by linking directly to Indeed.com to browse real-time job openings in the local labor market. County residents will be able to access the system anytime between March 1, 2017 and June 30, 2017. Licenses issued during this period will be valid for 6 months.

Advanced Manufacturing Assessment Tool

Began work with NY Wired for Education on the creation of a tool for assessing individuals for jobs in the manufacturing sector. The tool assesses the skills local employers identified they need. Once an assessment responsive to employer needs is finalized in the manufacturing sector, the tool will be further developed to expand into other sectors.

Worker Professionalism Certificate Training

Our Worker Professionalism Certificate is intended to provide yet another resource to our front line staff that are on a daily basis, working to assist and support county residents who are transitioning out of the limitations that a life within the grasp of poverty has imposed upon them. The curriculum consists of people-oriented, service-focused skills that can be practiced in a professional workplace. Once trained, staff will begin to present this curriculum to clients.

Professional Certificate Series Curriculum

Dealing with Difficult People, Stress Management, C.R.E.W. Training (Civility, Respect and Engagement in the Workplace), Effective Telecommunication, Meeting Facilitation, Presentation Skills, All on the Same Page Writing Skills, Time Management (Managing Multiple Priorities).

Advanced Manufacturing Pre-Employment Certificate Program

In an effort to respond to an increased demand for workers in Advanced Manufacturing, Cayuga Community College (CCC) launched a Pre-Employment Certificate Program in Advanced Manufacturing. Representatives from area manufacturers and the One Stop Career Center staff worked with Cayuga Community College to help design the 10-week program based on industry-identified needs. The program prepares job-seekers for careers in the manufacturing sector, and is the first step in a career ladder in Advanced Manufacturing. Classes are taught by instructors who work for local manufacturers. Students learn both technical skills like blueprint reading and OSHA safety rules, along with soft skills, such as teamwork, dependability and problem solving. Practicing for interviews and writing successful resumes are also integral parts of the program. In addition to hands-on training, each class visits local companies to learn about their business and meet management staff. Students who complete the class are prepared to start a career as a machine operator, electrical or industrial maintenance technician, or other skilled positions available with area companies. Three offerings of the program have been made available. Outcomes from the first two classes are as follow:

22 students enrolled. 20 of 22 completed the program (91%) and earned a certificate.

14 of 22 (64%) are employed. 9 of 14 (64%) are employed in training related employment.

1 individual entered post-secondary education. 5 continue to look for work. 1 is unavailable for employment at this time. The third class of 10 students graduated at the end of January 2017, and are beginning their job search. A fourth class is scheduled to begin in summer 2017.

Internal Promotion Pathways Initiative

Used towards 2-year degree, certifications, training, skills, etc. Up to \$2,500 per employee available for employees at or below the poverty level to utilize for training costs. This provides skills/training to employees in entry level positions resulting in promotions within the company thus creating new entry level openings for those in poverty.

Career Transfer Skills Program

A program for the long term unemployed to learn skills needed in the modern workforce.

A Business Supporting Initiative

SUNY Employer Survey

The MBA Department at SUNY Oswego put out a survey to identify employer needs and concerns in Oswego County. The survey will examine current workforce conditions throughout Oswego County. The real world challenge that the survey will address is that Oswego County has a unique situation in that we have many well paying job openings at our local companies that employers are trying to fill while also having a high percentage of residents who are either unemployed or underemployed and living below the federal poverty line. The anticipated presentation date of the survey summary is June of 2017.

Crime and Probation Team Prioritized Initiatives

Oswego County 2nd Chance Program

Identifies barriers to employment and develops needed supports. “2nd Chance” for non-violent offenders, substance abusers, Veterans with PTSD, and long-term unemployed to be reintroduced to the workforce through selected employers.

Employment Retention Inventory

An assessment tool designed to detect employment barriers and needs among justice-involved individuals and help guide officers in facilitating workforce attachment.

Part II: Creating a Sustainable, Effective, and Inclusive Workforce Development Training System

Our workforce development system is excellent and improving as exemplified in the initiatives listed above. But two important questions need to be asked: Is it enrolling as many people as it could? And, are we optimizing its ability to reduce poverty?

CGR acknowledged on page 55 of the LIFT Assessment “that the workforce development programs in place in Oswego already seem aligned with... best practices, as they tailor job training programs to specific needs of local employers,” but are those who have the greatest need able to access it?

From page ii of the LIFT Assessment we know that “Transportation is an enormous problem for low-income residents. Despite the density of the City itself, **getting to jobs**, services, health care, **education programs**, **child care** and other locations without a car in and around the County is at times impossible and at the least very time-consuming, given bus routes. ...16% of City households do not have a vehicle, and 61% of jobs held by City residents are located outside of the City.... [We also know that] Access to quality child care is a major challenge – stakeholders describe an overall shortage of slots, and unavailability of off-hours or irregular hours care.” These challenges are compounded in single parent households, and as represented by the data on page 11 of the LIFT Assessment, “Single parent headed households are considerably more likely to be in poverty than married couple families, and single mother households with children (especially young children) are most likely to be in poverty.”

Given these considerations, the challenge we face is not only to continue improving the breadth and quality of training that we can provide, but also to devise a support system that will allow motivated single-parent-learners to access our training system and succeed. By necessity, that means addressing the challenges of transportation, child care and the “benefits cliff” (as described on page 45 of the LIFT Assessment). Although it will be difficult to perfect and sustain such a support system, without it we will never be as inclusive of single-parents as we could be and therefore we will not be as effective at alleviating poverty for the children of single-parents in poverty.

From the data presented on page 36 of the LIFT Assessment we know that “economically disadvantaged” students in Oswego County have a graduate rate that is 22% lower than “not economically disadvantaged” students. Therefore, the longer a child remains in poverty, the greater the likelihood that that child will have difficulty graduating. Not graduating will greatly impact their future earning potential. According to page 9 of the LIFT Assessment, “In the City of Oswego, individuals with less than a high school degree are 52% more likely to be in poverty than those with a high school diploma or GED.”

Since we know that the return on investment in education is positive, the question becomes can we significantly magnify that return on investment by finding ways to include and support economically challenged adult learners regardless of what level they enter the system? Whether they start with basic literacy or want to earn a college degree, would supporting them to achieve the highest level they can attain become one of the most powerful tools we can devise in Oswego to reduce poverty?

Through the unique collaboration of LIFT Oswego, the OCAPTF, our outstanding workforce development training partners and the potential support of New York State through ESPRI and other funding sources, devising a system of support for economically challenged adult learners is an achievable goal in Oswego. Page 60 of the LIFT Assessment describes “criteria for assessing” the various programs we may choose to pursue under the headings “Sustainable... Effective... Inclusive... Replicable and Scalable.” The following program descriptions provide a starting place to explore such programs further.

Ahead Together Oswego County

The concept of “Ahead Together” is to provide a community-based support system designed to increase access to the existing workforce development training programs in Oswego County for able but under-employed or unemployed persons who have a strong desire to improve their marketability. Potential members will meet with a facilitator or “Ambassador” (defined further in the Human Services Sector) to help those individuals define their educational or employment goals and any perceived barriers to achieving them. The facilitator will need to be knowledgeable of all the programs and financing available within the county workforce development training system, and together with the member, they will write a plan to overcome their barriers to success and achieve their educational goals. Individuals who successfully design a plan that involves any of the adult educational opportunities available in Oswego County may then be invited to join a support group of similarly positioned individuals to provide peer mentoring to help each other overcome their obstacles. Support group members will be encouraged to modify and improve their plans within the group setting and evaluate their progress and expectations for themselves. Mentors (business leaders, clergy, etc.) will join the support group periodically to help coach individuals to understand how to take control of their lives through personal growth, education and supportive relationships.

Each Ahead Together community group will have a local flavor based on the challenges within the community and the needs of each individual who joins. As opposed to a comprehensive starting place to create a system of support for adult learners, Ahead Together is a modest and inexpensive starting place to learn how we can help motivated adult learners. The pilot we have started in Pulaski, and aptly named “Ahead Together Pulaski,” is being run by an Americorps member. Utilizing some of the unique organizations already in existence in Pulaski (several under the umbrella of the Pulaski Community Services Task Force) our hope is to start a program that will be self-sustaining, provide real on-the-ground experience to improve the program all the while helping some motivated adult-learns to achieve their personal educational goals.

A Similar Program in Monroe County: Mentors for Success

The two-year “Mentors for Success” pilot program was created by the Rochester-Monroe Anti-Poverty Initiative to address its top initial priority of expanding adult mentoring services to those who want to achieve economic self-sufficiency, but find themselves below the poverty level. The program is to be funded by \$1.5 million in NYS Upstate Revitalization Initiative funding, which will need to be matched by \$1.5 million in private funding. The description and quotes that follow are excerpted from a Dec. 5, 2016, article that appeared in the Rochester "Democrat and Chronicle" newspaper entitled “Anti-poverty mentoring program to start in January.”

There are actually two different programs that will be piloted in Rochester. Both will be directed by the Catholic Family Center of Rochester. Each one will involve 150 individuals. One uses professional mentors to help participants and the other is peer-based. Both are national, evidence-based programs.

The professional model is based on a project from Economic Mobility Pathways (www.empathways.org). A trained mentor will help clients with solving problems, setting goals, monitoring progress and rewarding success. This program will run from January to April with a group of 25 participants and then ramp to 150. Up to eight mentors will be hired. The plan also calls for hiring a specialist in employment and one to help participants with the needs of dependents.

The peer mentoring is based on the Family Independence Initiative (www.fii.org). In this program each participant will receive a computer for recording information about their needs, goals and plans for accomplishments. Small groups of participants will help each other. For this model, 150 people will be selected from the start.

They are testing two models because “People respond to different ways of working toward their goals” according to program director, Ron Rizzo. Both programs are supposed to get people on the path to self-sufficiency, Rizzo said.

“The professional model says the professional role provides the guidance,” he said. “For a lot of people, they like having a trusted adviser. Then there is another theory of change that says the power is in the people. The only thing missing is the resources. So if we recognize that and get out of their way and provide these outside resources, the people will know what to do with it to advance them toward their goals.”

Participants for each model will be referred from neighborhood organizations and agencies. As the professional model expands, there may be an opportunity for people to nominate themselves. The peer model is expected to expand from early participants recruiting others. “We would love to have this peer group network grow from the inside out,” Rizzo said.

Some examples of the barriers to education and employment noted in Rochester are similar to those that have been highlighted in Oswego including transportation, lack of job skills and financial instability.

Measure of success for the program include: Increased income of participants; qualifying for jobs that pay a living wage; stable housing—where less than one-third of income goes toward rent; family wellness; and the ability of the wage earner to focus on the job or on education to get a job. After two years they hope to invest in whichever program works best or to build a hybrid of the two systems.

Family Independence Initiative (FII)

A program that provides low-income individuals with the tools and support to change their own lives. Rather than a top-down, one size fits all approach, FII provides the framework for residents to develop and implement their own solutions. A number of people CGR spoke with as part of this engagement (including low-income residents) identified the need to help low-income City residents build networks of support and guidance. For example, at the community discussion following the poverty simulation, one attendee brainstormed the idea of providing a peer support group for low-income residents. FII is one approach with promising evidence that Oswego should strongly consider.

Other Programs that can be Explored

A compendium of poverty reduction strategies (www.tamarackcommunity.ca/)

The Opportunity Community model (www.combarriers.com/opcom)

Tamarack’s Vibrant Communities Model (<http://www.tamarackcommunity.ca>)

Part III: Providing the Support System Necessary for Success

What would a successful support system for economically challenged adults look like? To have the most significant impact in reducing poverty for children a support system would need to focus on single-parents and parents who have hit a set-back and are in “situational poverty.” Therefore, the kinds of support needed would come in many forms, including transportation, child care, drug and alcohol counseling, etc. Regardless of the education level that an adult learner enters an approved training program we should be willing to support them to achieve the highest level they can attain. Based on our strengths and the unique collaboration of LIFT Oswego partners, adopting an existing strategy or customizing one that will work in Oswego is an achievable and impactful goal.

The Overwhelming Need — Transportation

Just as it was in the LIFT Assessment, transportation issues were identified by the OCAPTF as the most critical barrier to returning to self-sufficiency or completing coursework that could improve employability. Below are “key findings” noted in the Executive Summary of the LIFT Oswego Needs Assessment, “Employees cite lack of transportation and child care as key challenges in holding down jobs.... Transportation is an enormous problem for low-income residents.... Census data show that 16% of City households do not have a vehicle, and 61% of jobs held by City residents are located outside of the City. And from Page 59 of the Assessment, “Although expanding the public transportation network is financially difficult in a rural county like Oswego, the community should explore other options to increase access to transportation.” The OCAPTF completely concurs, and members have been working with the Oswego County Transportation Coalition to find ways to improve or enhance the current public transportation system in the County. The LIFT Steering

Committee may wish to offer a participant to the Coalition, to insure seamless communications. We also encourage LIFT to support a grant application to conduct a countywide needs assessment of public transportation and reallocating existing transportation resources to meet those needs. Draft language for an RFP follows:

Recommended Action: Oswego County Multimodal Transportation Study

Oswego County is seeking to conduct a study to identify the most critical transportation needs for the county. The purpose of the study is to identify the most critical multi-modal transportation infrastructure and service needs within Oswego County. The study will recommend a program of short range (0-5 yrs), mid-range (6-10 years) and long range (11 -20 yrs.) improvements that address:

- Regional access and mobility: address the identified need and deficiencies to improve local and regional mobility and circulation;
- Bicycle and pedestrian safety and mobility: projects for sidewalks, paths, shoulders to accommodate bicycles and pedestrians;
- Rural transit service: confirm the need for and provide recommendations for transit service including rural route mapping.

This project will recommend a program of improvement projects to address those needs and to serve as a guide for community and economic development. Study recommendations will address multiple modes of transportation, including roadways, bicyclists, pedestrians, and ride sharing and transit service.

Study activities should include the following:

- Collect and review existing and future conditions related to socio economic and demographic conditions;
- Evaluate the performance of the existing transportation system and document needs and deficiencies;
- Project future transportation needs;
- Evaluate the need and opportunities for providing rural transit services and other modes of transportation;
- Recommend new mobility concepts and solutions that are agile, responsive and seamless multimodal services inclusive of enabling technologies and innovative partnerships; and
- Recommend improvement that address the identified needs and deficiencies.

Providing Reliable, Safe, and Affordable Transportation Options for At-Risk Families through Mobility Management, the mobility manager conducts outreach efforts and matches individuals with low incomes who need transportation to employment or employment related activities with the most appropriate transportation provider. In addition, the Mobility Manager leads coordination and planning with public and private transportation providers to help extend the service areas and times, reaching more rural clients and offering service on weekends, holidays, and after hours including during weekdays. In areas where a Mobility Manager exists, the program outcomes included individuals:

- Moving out of low income housing, often to home ownership;
- Purchasing their own vehicle;
- Maintaining steady employment.

Initiatives from the OCAPTF Workforce Development Team Regarding Transportation

Transportation Access to Employees in Poverty

This initiative would reimburse employers that provide transportation services for employees in poverty. Rural poverty creates issues of lack of public transportation and longer commute times to places of employment. This program would provide transportation to employees that do not have transportation to/from work and meet poverty thresholds.

Employer Sponsored Public Transportation Runs

This initiative would provide a mechanism for businesses to fund or “purchase” public transit routes that would enhance business traffic to their establishment or carry their employees to and from work.

Other Transportation Programs to Explore

As noted on page 51 of the LIFT Assessment under the heading “Promising Approaches to Reducing Poverty,” the following programs were noted and are of value to explore. The potential in Oswego County is to create a similar local initiative in partnership with CCCE and CiTi (BOCES) where repairs may be able to be conducted concurrently with auto tech training. The OCAPTF encourages a joint exploration of all options regarding transportation with LIFT Oswego in light of the fact that transportation is of regional importance.

Vehicles for Change

This initiative is led by a non-profit organization of the same name based in Detroit that provides needy families with used cars for less than \$1,000. The costs associated with the vehicle include a six-month, 6,000 mile warranty and an AAA membership. Cars are donated by private citizens, who receive a tax credit for the donation. The organization repairs the automobile and ensures it is safe and reliable. Potential recipients are identified via a local social service agency, the Wayne County Metropolitan Community Action Agency. Low-interest loans are provided to recipients by a local credit union and are guaranteed by Vehicles for Change. A 2001 study conducted by the organization revealed that access to these used vehicles increased the earnings of clients by an average of \$7,000 in the first year after receiving the automobile. Since 1999, this program has provided at least 4,700 vehicles impacting over 16,000 people, significantly reducing their daily commute to work and increasing their ability to retain a job. Vehicles for Change also serves as an employment training site for novice mechanics seeking their license. Mechanics in training earn \$8.50 per hour for a 40-hour week. However, \$1 per hour is set aside to pay for required tools of the trade. Once licensed, mechanics can earn at least \$35,000. (www.vehiclesforchange.org)

The Good News Garage

A similar program to Vehicles for Change in New Hampshire, Vermont and Massachusetts. (www.goodnewsgarage.org)

Car Share Programs

An alternative to private car ownership programs. (www.governing.com/topics/urban/gov-buffalo-car-share.html)

Vanpool Programs

A number of communities around the country have developed vanpool programs to help low-income individuals access jobs that are not located along existing public transportation lines. These programs are often run by the local transportation authority or government agencies, and are frequently structured as a public-private partnership between government and local employers. The exact model varies by community, but most share certain characteristics. A group of 5 or so individuals with similar work locations and shifts agree to pay a low monthly fee (often subsidized by the employer or government agency) for rides to work and back. One of the 5 participants is licensed as the driver (and another serves as the back-up). The participants meet at central location each day and return to that location at the end of the workday. (www.cityofrochester.gov/Vanpool) (www.connectingcommuters.org/vanpool)

The LIFT Garage

The LIFT Garage (unrelated to the City of Oswego's LIFT Task Force) is a 501c3 nonprofit aimed to move people out of poverty and homelessness by providing low-cost car repair, free pre-purchase car inspections, and honest advice that supports our community on the road to more secure lives. (www.theliftgarage.org)

Affordable and Accessible Day Care

Accessible day care is clearly a barrier to parents who are trying to re-enter the workforce. From page ii of the Needs Assessment, "Access to quality child care is a major challenge – stakeholders describe an overall shortage of slots, and unavailability of off-hours or irregular hours care." And from page 38, "Quality, affordable, accessible child care can be an important strategy for improving financial self-sufficiency among families with young children, who make up a disproportionate share of people in poverty.... The number of registered and regulated child care providers in the county has fallen from about 2,400 in 2011 to less than 1,900 this year, a 21% decline. This aligns with stakeholder and resident comments about the difficulty of finding care experienced by many families. In addition, many low-income workers have irregular or evening/weekend hours, when finding care is particularly difficult, if not impossible."

Creativity will be necessary to solve the day care dilemma in Oswego. Organizing a team to explore options would be a good first step. This was an area of study that the OCAPTF was unable to muster a team to look into. A list of known day care centers in Oswego is listed in the Appendix B. Finding ways to incentivize or subsidize the growth of existing facilities may be possible. Many centers are affiliated with existing not-for-profits, churches and businesses. Finding ways to help them grow may be helpful.

Perhaps there is a way to partner with CCC and their Early Childhood AAS program to develop sponsored child care services and well as holistic family supports. If CCC does not have a representative on the LIFT Task Force it might be advisable to invite them to send one.

The Chambliss Center for Children in Chattanooga, Tennessee, has a very interesting child care center to that could be modeled after. They cater to the real needs of families – primarily single mothers who don't work traditional 9-5 jobs – by offering affordable, high-quality learning environments, nutritious meals, school transportation and care 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year, for children ranging from 6 weeks to 12 years. There's more information at their web site: www.wkkf.org/what-we-do/featured-work/chambliss-center-for-childrens-early-learning-program-provides-affordable-child-care-for-families.

Addressing the “Benefits Cliff” in Transition to Self-Sufficiency

From page 57 of the LIFT Assessment, many stakeholders “mentioned the need to better manage the transition for those on public assistance to employment...” Some stated that a person could lose a dollar or more in assistance for every dollar they earned and others stated that workers may decline to pick up hours or accept raises or promotions because they face a decline in social services benefits. The issue is worth further study to determine what sort of transitional support, or “benefits gap” insurance, would be necessary to create incentives to improve job skills and face the risks involved with being completely self-sufficient. Page 53 of the Assessment also mentions the potential use of “Targeted Income Supplements,” such as New York City’s “Paycheck Plus” program.

Without Supportive Services Workforce Development Training Will Not Be Accessible to Many Who Need it Most

From page 59 of the LIFT Assessment, “[CGR] recommend[s] that the LIFT initiative identify creative ways to engage and support low-income community members.... Doing so would also amplify the voice and perspective of low-income residents most affected by the economic stagnation and high rate of poverty in the City of Oswego. Finally, an inclusive poverty reduction process will better ensure that the efforts proposed will have the intended impact of poverty reduction.” It goes on to recommend exploring the “Family Independence Initiative... a program with impressive outcomes in several communities that provides low-income individuals with the tools and support to change their own lives. Rather than a top-down, one size fits all approach, FII provides the framework for residents to develop and implement their own solutions....”

The elements of a support system for economically challenged adult learners designed specifically for the City of Oswego is discussed further in Part VII, but it’s important to acknowledge that several components of any successful local system will necessitate addressing issues that are regional in nature such as transportation, adult education programs, drug and alcohol rehabilitation and the role of the Department of Social Services. The good news is that the outstanding collaborations taking place between so many of our institutions are growing and that portends improved outcomes going forward.

Part IV: Youth and Schools

From page 57 of the LIFT Assessment, “In order to break the cycle of poverty in families, quality early childhood experiences can be critical. Conversations with low-income residents, social services providers, and educators in the community all revealed the need for additional supports for children under 5. Opportunities to expand universal prekindergarten, Healthy Families or other home-visiting programs for at-risk mothers, and child care subsidies with ties to quality care should be aggressively prioritized.” From page 43, “A number of the parents whose children were enrolled in the Head Start program expressed a strong reluctance to rely on family for additional child care, and distrusted a number of the other providers in the community. For these parents, the time constraints imposed by the six-hour length of the Head Start program, the time required to get to and from the program site and their uncertainty about the safety of their child in other settings combine to limit their opportunities for advancement.

As a partnership of the Oswego County Legislature and all nine School Districts in the County, the OCAPTF had the unique opportunity to staff our Youth and Schools Team with the superintendents of all nine county school districts, and it was chaired by recently retired Sandy Creek Central School District Superintendent, Stewart Amell. What follows are two initiatives prioritized by the Schools and Youth Team that address the challenges mentioned in the LIFT Assessment.

Youth and Schools Team Prioritized Initiatives

1. To provide funding for new and existing full day Pre-K for all 4 year olds in all nine Oswego County school districts, so that all state funded UPK funding can support half day Pre-K for all 3 year olds in the county.

New York State provides support for half day pre-K but the funding does not cover transportation and is only for students in a very specific age range. This has caused many students to have a gap year between half day Pre-K and kindergarten; there are also waiting lists for the program in many of the school districts. The expansion of pre-K particularly for families living in poverty is a critical component of this initiative. The research from the Perry High Scope Preschool Study shows that students living in poverty have better academic achievement and are less likely to be imprisoned as adults. The study also showed that students living in poverty who attend preschool are also much more likely to be reading on level by grade three. Services for Pre-K students are uneven county wide where two of the nine districts provide a half and full day program, where only one district provides transportation and the other seven provide only the half day program funded by New York State. To aid and advocate for students the superintendents have proposed a half day program for all three year olds county wide and a full day Pre-K program for all four year old students county wide.

2. Ensure that all nine Oswego County school districts have comprehensive medical, dental and social/ emotional support and services within each school building.

Given that over 50% of the children in the county live in generational poverty, lack transportation and are a part of communities with few or no services, expanded social, emotional and health care supports are critical for academic success. The results of this not only effect children many are whom have already been diagnosed with trauma, other mental health concerns, and health care concerns but include their families many of whom have similar problems. Under the direction of the District Superintendent the counties school districts have attempted to work with social services. However, given the number of children in need, the social service organizations are understaffed and cannot provide the support necessary. Many children wait for months on lists to get mental and physical health services, dental services are non-existent, county wide and there is a lack of primary health care physicians in many areas of the county.

While the expansion of these services would be impossible in all nine school districts, consolidated efforts to provide the services that the community needs is possible by pooling resources.

Local Schools and Poverty

A majority of respondents to the lift survey on page 47 answered that they do not believe that local schools are providing young people with a path out of poverty. When asked what schools could do to be more effective, a greater focus on life skills, especially in regard to financial literacy and realistic expectations for the future was mentioned seven times; locally focused trade and vocational career paths was suggested five times. Citi's announcement of a full-day regional technical high school for 2017 may help fill the vocational career path void.

Full-Day Regional Technical High School at CiTi for 2017

(Excerpted from www.citiboces.org) At the request of its nine component school districts, the Center for Instruction, Technology & Innovation (CiTi) will be unveiling a full-day regional technical high school in the fall of 2017.

The traditional half-day CTE model will still exist, but the new regional technical high school will offer innovative instruction to 9th through 12th grade students in a non-traditional education setting. Students will be able to pursue multiple CTE courses during their high school career, some with industry credentials and college credits offered.

“By accelerating student academic work and education requirements, students will have a fuller and more meaningful senior year through hands-on internships or early college,” said CiTi Assistant Superintendent for Instruction Roseann Bayne.

Taught by NYS certified educators, the rigorous, program will combine all of the required diploma exit requirements and CTE curriculum, including Regents exams. It will also feature new credit-bearing options: art, chorus, physics, biology, English Language Arts (9-12), social studies (9-12), math (9-12), engineering and foreign language.

Spending the full school day at CiTi will eliminate transportation time, allowing students to focus on learning career skills and earning graduation requirements, so that their senior year can be dedicated to internships, job shadowing and real-life experiences.

“The regional technical high school is designed for career-minded students,” said CTE Principal Marla Berlin. “Every schedule will be tailored to their individual, specific needs, and provide them with more opportunities to succeed in careers and college.”

Students who attend will still be able to participate in all of the extracurricular activities in their home district and they will earn their graduation certificate with all of their peers at home district graduation ceremonies.

For students unsure of their career path, a Campus Explore option will allow them to explore all of the programs before making a decision.

Implementation of the initiatives of the Schools and Youth Team along with other innovative programs such as P-Tech and the Full-Day Regional Technical High School will have many positive effects. Not only will students have more opportunities, but they will also have choices that may lead them directly to local careers. This can amplify a sense of community within our anchor institutions—that we so appreciate their place in our community that we are willing to design educational programming to meet their workforce needs and to increase their ability to grow. High quality, innovative schools are a key factor for families deciding to locate in Oswego and Oswego County and bodes well for our future.

Part V: The Dept. of Social Services Role in Reducing Poverty

On page 57 under the heading of “System Recommendations” the LIFT Assessment suggests that “In order to break the cycle of poverty in families, quality early childhood experiences can be critical. Conversations with low-income residents, social services providers, and educators in the community all revealed the need for additional supports for children under 5. Opportunities to

expand universal prekindergarten, Healthy Families or other home-visiting programs for at-risk mothers, and child care subsidies with ties to quality care should be aggressively prioritized.”

The ability to create better outcomes for children is a determining factor in any long-term success we can have to reduce poverty, particularly generational poverty. The OCAPTF Health and Human Services Team, led by Stacy Alvord, Commissioner of the Oswego County Department of Social Services and Diane Cooper-Currier, the Executive Director of Oswego County Opportunities, Inc., have prioritized the following initiatives because of the positive impact they could have on children.

Human Services Team Initiatives

1. Healthy Families New York State Home Visiting Program

The evidence exists in NYS and across the nation that early intervention has the highest impact on young children and their families. Presently in 27 counties and all boroughs of NYC, HFNY is our best hope to preventing child abuse and maltreatment of our youngest children.

We Know it Works

Home Visiting Programs change the lives of children and their families. Research shows Healthy Families New York (HFNY) works for many families, from first time teen parents to families with other children. Families have healthier babies, demonstrate better knowledge of parenting and child development, create positive family bonds, develop connections to community services, and have children who do better in school.

The Oswego County Health Department will launch a HFNY pilot project in February 2017 by building on their existing child and maternal health initiatives. They will be able to serve 40 families who are assessed as high risk. We need to take this county wide and to full scale. We seek to establish a coalition “Building Healthy Families Home Visiting in Oswego County” to research the costs and scope of work required to take this program to full scale and to establish sustainable funding.

Outcomes:

Oswego County will have a well-developed plan, including completion of a vendor selection process, to take HFNY full-scale. To be completed in two years. Oswego County will be at the forefront of developing contracts with Health Insurance Companies to pay for the Assessment / Referral phase of the program. This has been discussed in NYS over the past decade, without traction. With Medicaid Reform and the transition to a value based payment, health insurance is embracing the social determinates of health research. This is the time to devote resources. Our work in this arena will impact all existing programs in NYS, as well as Oswego County. To be completed in two years.

Program Manager will develop boilerplate grant proposal in year one and Oswego County will be posed for the next round of funding for HFNY or federal Early Head Start funding.

Training of existing staff who work with young children in all private and public agencies will be provided training to infuse best practice standards in our community to include:

- Trauma informed intervention.
- Growing Great Kids or similar curriculum to be used by practitioners.
- Circle of Security to be provided across Oswego County for all parents.

My Brother's Keeper

From Fulton City School District, the table below shows data from the first 20 weeks of school. As evidenced, 649 students currently meet the definition of “chronically absent” – missing 10% or more of school days for any reason (excused or unexcused). Among those, 257 students are “severely chronically absent” - missing 20% or more of school days. Attendance is poorest among students in grades 7-12, but equally concerning is the high rate of absenteeism in kindergarten and first grade.

Attendance Summary

Grade	Tier 1 (90%+)		Tier 2 (80%-89%)		Tier 3 (<80%)	
	Total Students	% of Students	Total Students	% of Students	Total Students	% of Students
K	230	85.5%	35	13.0%	4	1.5%
1	230	85.2%	36	13.3%	4	1.5%
2	245	90.4%	20	7.4%	6	2.2%
3	243	92.4%	15	5.7%	5	1.9%
4	218	89.3%	22	9.0%	4	1.6%
5	242	89.3%	25	9.2%	4	1.5%
6	209	89.7%	16	6.9%	8	3.4%
7	197	81.1%	34	14.0%	12	4.9%
8	230	77.4%	33	11.1%	34	11.4%
9	172	75.4%	36	15.8%	20	8.8%
10	193	73.1%	32	12.1%	39	14.8%
11	207	70.6%	41	14.0%	45	15.4%
12	182	60.5%	47	15.6%	72	23.9%
Grand Total	2798	81.2%	392	11.4%	257	7.5%

Prevention Strategy: Taking Collective Action to Confront Chronic Absence

In the United States, the promise of an equal opportunity to learn and succeed, regardless of circumstance or social class, is a shared value and widely accepted civil right that binds us together as a nation. The recent release of the first-ever national, chronic absence data set by the U.S. Department of Education (ED), Office for Civil Rights (OCR) reveals that this promise is broken for far too many children. More than 6.5 million students, or about 13 percent, missed three or more weeks of school during a single school year, which is enough time to erode their achievement and threaten their chance of graduating. Over half were in elementary or middle school.

We Know What Reduces Chronic Absenteeism

Reducing chronic absence requires a comprehensive, tiered approach that goes far beyond just enforcing school attendance rules. It starts with prevention. Schools need to offer welcoming, engaging, safe school environments as well as positive messaging that emphasizes the need to avoid unnecessary absences. It takes investing in early intervention, helping students with poor attendance form positive, caring relationships with other adults or peers that encourage them to get to class even when it is not easy. It involves addressing attendance barriers such as unreliable transportation, chronic health issues, or unstable housing. Especially in communities with large numbers and high concentrations of chronically absent students, it requires schools to forge strategic partnerships with government agencies and other key stakeholders who can help provide sufficient resources to meet the needs of children and their families.

Goal: 95% of all Fulton City School District children in K–8th grade will be above 90% attendance on a consistent basis.

2. My Brother’s Keeper — A Groundbreaking Mentorship Initiative

We seek to pilot in the Fulton City School District the My Brother’s Keeper (MBK) program. MBK Success Mentors Initiative aims to reduce chronic absenteeism by connecting students with caring mentors. It is the first-ever effort to scale an evidence-based, data-driven mentor model to reach and support the highest risk students in an Oswego County School District. We propose to use existing resources already linked to schools, and the metric of chronic absenteeism to drive school and life success. At a national level, the Initiative is a partnership between the Department of Education and Johns Hopkins University.

We seek to mirror this evidenced based program and target children with attendance below 90% in grades K – 8. We propose to see an elimination of chronic absenteeism over the course of two years. The initiative will be bolstered by college students from nearby colleges who will serve as MBK College Success Mentors, leveraging federal work-study allocations. The MBK Success Mentors Initiative model connects students to caring adults who are trained school-linked personnel. These mentors will receive additional resources and tools to help them mentor students with greater impact. Mentors will include coaches, administrative staff, teachers, security guards, educators, AmeriCorps members, tutors, after-school providers and others. They will serve as trained and supported motivators, problem solvers, connectors, and advocates to form supportive relationships, identify and celebrate student’s strengths, promote their attendance every day, and connect them with the necessary supports to keep them on track and thriving. Each mentor is assigned 3-5 students as mentees. Mentors are also “connectors,” helping flag challenges causing absenteeism and connecting mentees to appropriate school personnel or resources through this system that would otherwise remain untapped. Mentors meet with students 3 times per week in school all year and are trained to find a mentee’s positive strengths, celebrate them, and call home as a parent engagement tool.

Implementation

A manager will be recruited and will collaborate with Johns Hopkins University to assure fidelity to this research based program. Within the first year, the manager will present and receive approval from the Fulton City School District Superintendent and Board of Education to launch the project. Year 2 & 3 the MBK initiative will go to full scale in the school district with attendance rates tracked, along with a projected 10 training classes conducted per year, and a total of 36 volunteers recruited.

Human Services Team—Developing Initiatives for Consideration

On page 57, under the heading of “System Recommendations” the LIFT Assessment suggests that “Many low-income residents would likely have better access to services and better outcomes if there was a satellite Department of Social Services office within the City of Oswego limits.” But before jumping to that conclusion it’s important to consider whether “better access to services” will always lead directly to “better outcomes.” If opportunities for self-improvement, education and empowerment are not offered along with “better access to services,” will better access create an easier path to dependency on social services?

One challenge the Human Services Team has been considering is how to develop a “No Wrong Door” system of human services support that can link individuals to the full range of public and private services along with the opportunity to create a life-changing educational experience from anywhere in the county. One option that has been proposed is the train counselors or “Ambassadors” who would guide individuals to the services that would best suit their needs. Another promising technological tool is the local 2-1-1 system. We’ll explore how both ideas work together.

Central New York 211



With this system residents can Dial 211 from cell phones or land lines anywhere in Oswego County and receive free help from well-trained staff to locate important resources such as emergency food or shelter as well as help with employment services or health care. Instead of struggling through a maze of agencies and services to make the right connections 211 simplifies that process with a call to one phone number or by visiting the web site.

The engine of 211CNY is a continually updated database of service organizations located within a five county region and made accessible through the 211 CNY web site 211cny.com.

By aggressively promoting 211CNY we hope to make more people aware of it as a resource and also as a way to continue to make sure that the data there is accurate and up to date.

Utilizing "Ambassadors" to Spread the Word

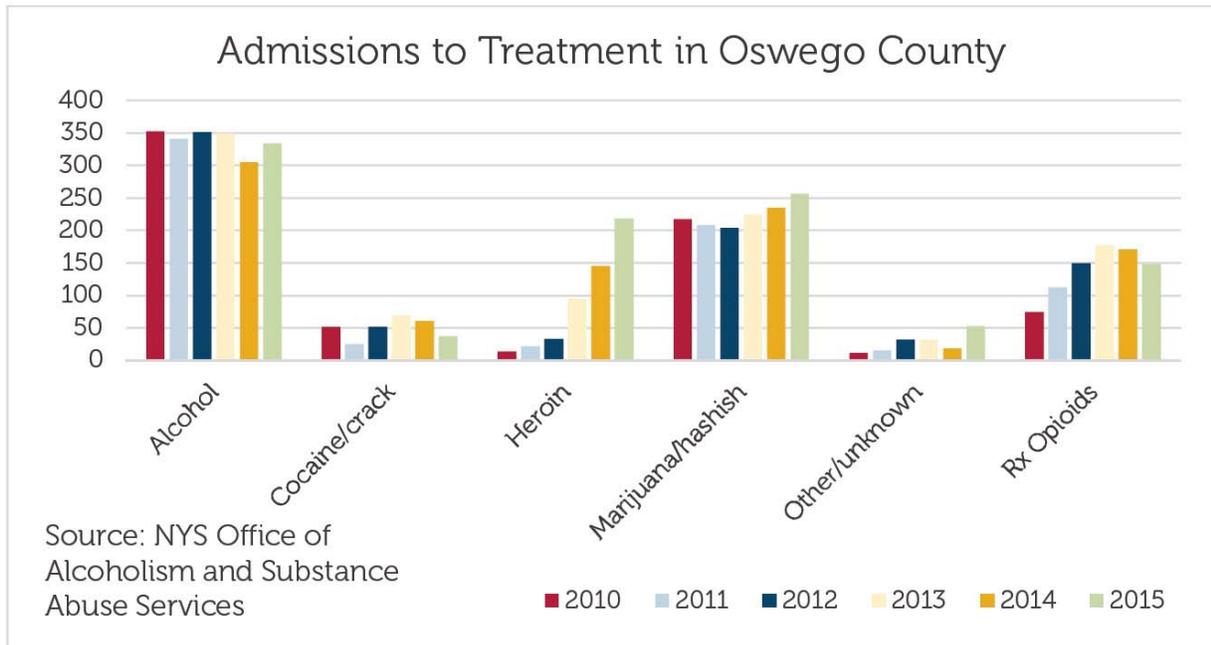
To help promote the usefulness of the 211CNY system as well as all the educational opportunities available to adult learners in Oswego County the Human Services Team is working to develop an "Ambassadors Program." Simply described, Ambassadors will be people who have received training that will allow them to help anyone in need access the wide range of services and educational opportunities available in Oswego County. Candidates to become Ambassadors will include persons with regular interaction with the public and might include policemen, clergy, city, town and village officials as well as paid mentors, or Americorps members.

Under the guidance of the Department of Social Services, Ambassadors could be incredibly helpful in implementing a “No Wrong Door” philosophy of human services delivery and may lead to the

creation of a variety of "Personal Empowerment Programs" that will help encourage and support residents who are motivated to improve their circumstances. Several programs were detailed under the Workforce Development Team initiatives and a discussion of what an Oswego City Support Team might look like appears in Part VII.

Part VI: Substance Abuse and Treatment

From the LIFT Assessment Executive Summary, "Substance use is a concern, with treatment admissions for opiate addiction up 300% since 2010."



The chart above and the following appear on page 41 of the LIFT Assessment, "Substance abuse treatment options were all cited as major challenges for low income community residents. Poor health status in any of these areas can impact employability. As many other areas have, Oswego has experienced an increase in opioid-related substance abuse problems. The number of admissions to treatment in the county for heroin or prescription opioids has grown more than 300% since 2010 and gone from 12% to 35% of all treatment admissions. In addition, while still a small number overall, more newborns are being born with drug-related problems from their mother's use."

The OCAPTF Substance Use Disorder and Recovery Team has advanced a thorough set of initiatives to help reduce substance abuse in our youth through education as well as providing a strong voice for enhancing insurance and treatment options in the region.

Background and Needs:

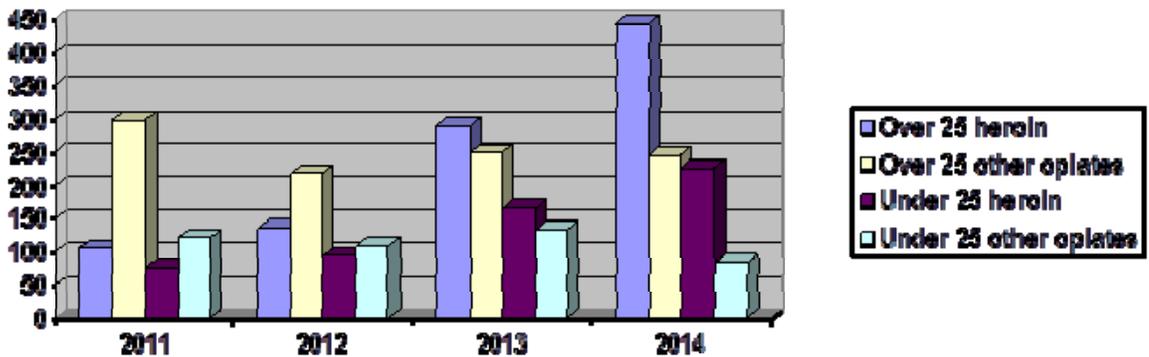
The heroin and synthetic drug epidemic has hit Oswego County hard. The overdose death rate for Oswego County was the highest in the region in 2014 and the state ranked 6th highest in the Nation, according to a nationwide ranking annual report from the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute. Oswego County is mostly rural with two cities (Oswego and Fulton). According to the Youth Development Survey from 2014 in Oswego County, the percent of students using alcohol and other drugs increases from grades 7-12. By 12th grade 71% of our children are using alcohol. According to the Surgeon General, DiNapoli, heroin and prescription Opioid abuse is a significant

and growing public health concern across the United State. Comparing rates for 2005 and 2014, both heroin and prescription Opioid overdose death rates in New York increased faster than the corresponding rates in nearly all states for which data are available.

http://www.osc.state.ny.us/press/releases/june16/heroin_and_opioids.pdf

Youth substance use is a critical problem in Oswego County with extensive effects on adults and families. Data from the 2013-2014 Youth Development Survey (YDS), shows: Youth report early initiation of drug use (24% under the age of 15 years old at first use of alcohol, tobacco and/or other drugs); norms favorable to drug use (31%) and perceived availability of drugs (31%). Past 30 day use of alcohol for 8th graders is 12.7% and it jumps to 40% of 12th graders. Binge drinking for 8th graders is 7% and it jumps to 20% for 12th graders. The 2016 Youth Pride Survey (1772 students in grades 7-12) show the percent using any illicit drug is 7.6% for 7th grade growing to an alarming 45.2% for 12th graders, with 7.7% of 12 graders using Heroin. The Pride Survey also shows how easy students are saying it is to get alcohol, from 15.2% 7th graders indicating Very Easy to 39.6% of 12th graders responding Very Easy. The percentage of students who use illicit drugs and never take part in Community Activities is 25.3% (a protective factor) and of those whose parents never or Seldom talk about the dangers of drugs is 25-26%. Of those students using illicit drugs, 30.6% Never take part in school activities. According to the NYS Kids Well Being Indicator Data for 2014, Oswego County has a Young Adults DWI rate of 41.1, much higher than the NYS rate of 23.8. Reports of lifetime prescription medication/pain killers/over the counter medications in 8th grade is 20% and jumps to 34% for 12th graders. Local high school students in a New Visions (NV) program from across the county set out to determine the level of prescription and other drug abuse in schools. They administered 2,797 surveys to high school students through the county, the majority surveyed were aged 14-19 and saw the enormity of the problem. Data from the survey indicated that 84% of students surveyed believed drugs had an impact on school performance; 47% indicated that they had witnessed a classmate abusing illegal drugs; 81% indicated that a family member abused illegal or prescription drugs; 35% reported that they get drugs from friends or family members; 238 youth reported using heroin, 521 youth reported using prescription drugs including 242 using Oxycontin. It is very clear that our community has a large problem with youth substance use, particularly around alcohol, prescription meds, opiates and heroin.

Heroin use by individuals in the county is on the rise:



Adults living in the community are affected as a result of general community impact such as increase in crimes (shoplifting, stealing from vehicles and stealing of electronics), litter and property damage. Oswego County's Juvenile arrests for property crimes rate was 162.6 in 2014 compared to 137.1 for NYS. Oswego County Emergency Room admissions related to alcohol and drug use are on the rise. The ER rate due to alcohol abuse increased from 23.4 (2013) to 26.1 (2014). The ER rate due to

substance abuse increased from 22.9 (2013) to 25.7 in (2014). A prescription Opioid overdose rate (8.9, Oswego County) of more than double the state average (4.2) makes our ability to engage and retain individuals in treatment extremely dire. (NYS DOH 2015).

The US Surgeon General released a report in November *Facing Addiction in America*. Some of the key findings include nearly 21 million people in America have a substance use disorder, comparable to the number with diabetes and higher than total number of American's suffering from all cancers combined. Only about 10% of people with a substance use disorder receive any type of specialty treatment. Over 40% of those also have a mental health condition, yet fewer than half receive treatment for either disorder (NSDUH 2015). Well supported scientific evidence shows that addiction to alcohol or drugs is a chronic brain disease that has potential for recurrence and recovery. The cycle of addiction becomes more severe with use and it produces dramatic changes in brain function that reduce a person's ability to control their substance use. Supported scientific evidence indicates that approximately 50% of adults (25 million people) are currently in stable remission of one year or longer. Even so, remission can take several years and multiple episodes of treatment.

Geographically, Oswego County is in a rural area with 61% of the population living in the rural area. Demographically, white non-Hispanic is the predominant ethnic group with more than 96% in the county population of over 122,000. Socioeconomically, Oswego County experienced difficulties such as high unemployment rate, high poverty rate and low education attaining rate. It is generally agreed that these disadvantages are linked to poor health outcomes in a community. The county has the highest adult smoking rate and obesity rate among all its neighboring counties, and highest school student obesity rate in the state. Other challenges include inadequate dental provider coverage, high suicide death rate, high alcohol and drug abuse, increased incidence of STDs. Oswego County Community Health Assessment for 2014-2017 notes the contributing causes to the main health challenges include the rural area and subsequent socioeconomic and environmental disadvantages, geographic isolation, poor health behaviors, shortage of primary care physicians, dentists and mental health providers.

The Substance Use Disorder & Recovery was organized in January of 2016. To help change the stigma in Oswego County, the name reflects the updated and current information about this critical health issue. While there are several projects happening, there are several more that are critical to alleviating substance use disorder in our County.

Initiatives from the OCAPTF Substance Use Disorder and Recovery Team

Prevention via Education - Collaborate, design and distribute information about educational programming events, with current focus on the following projects:

Community Educational Events and Forums geared toward prevention, addiction and recovery services. The plan includes continuing to bring education to the community in several formats and locations.

Film Showings – Documentary type films about addiction will help bring education and awareness to the community including the depth and degree to which addiction is harmful to our community. Films such as *Hungry Heart* (Cost \$700/showing). Other films include *Anonymous People*, *Chasing the Dragon* and *Generation Found*. Showing the films in different locations around the county would be ideal.

SAFE Fair – Annual Family Educational Event sponsored by the VOW Foundation with collaboration from dozens of service agencies. Event has been held in April at the Oswego Elks Lodge, with 4/30/17 scheduled for the 4th Annual Event.

Heroin/Synthetic Forums – Additional events and forums are planned throughout the County.

Evening Classes by Farnham’s Prevention Office – Once a week evidence-based programming.

Coalition Education – Coalition education includes showing the DVD production “Overdoes Epidemic: What Can be Done to Stop it” and/or “Marijuana Higher Potency, Greater Dangers.”

Medication Drop Box – Locate additional medication drop boxes throughout the County for medication disposal.

Community NARCAN Training – This will be scheduled as soon as the kits are no longer on back-order. COCOAA and Harbor Lights are certified and ready to schedule the trainings.

Responsible Server Training – This training is currently being offered by COCOAA’s Prevention Director. RST is an environmental strategy resulting in fewer people leaving bars intoxicated, fewer underage youth consuming alcohol, fewer arrests and more people and property will remain safer.

211CNY Resource – The 211 service is now up and running in Oswego County and the group is encouraging all agencies to keep their information up to date, along with distributing the business-size cards to the Community and encouraging their use.

SPORT is an Evidenced Based Program geared to youth in the Summer. Youth involved in sports leagues would be provided with healthy choices alternatives regarding substances. Could also be offered at municipal recreation programs to allow for the inclusion of youth not be involved in organized sports. These programs are vital for youth during the summer months which provide a heightened risk of substance abuse and lack of available services.

School-Based Educational Events/Classes

Comprehensive Substance Use Prevention Education in every School District – There are 9 school districts in Oswego County. Farnham Family Services is currently providing varying levels of Student Assistance Counseling and Evidence Based prevention education and early intervention in all 9 districts.

Coalition Materials – Turn and Learn Alcohol Classroom Challenge Kit, for Classroom and Afterschool Programs and Outreach.

Coalition Materials – DVD Drinking Games, Alcohol Abuse & Overdose. DVD would educate youth and adults about alcohol abuse and overdose in the classrooms, afterschool, community events.

All Stars Program – Evidence Based program for Middle School Students (Ages 11-14)

Too Good For Drugs – Evidence Based program for Grades K-8, includes 10 one-week sessions.

Family and Schools Together (FAST) – An Evidence Based Program. COCOAA is requesting funding to restart this hugely successful preventive program for youth and family. FAST is conducted for 4 - 8 week cycles, during the school year and then has additionally programming through the summer months.

Good Samaritan Law – In 2016, this initiative was discussed and poster drafts were created by graphic artists. Future plans include bringing information to the community about this law to help save lives.

Needle/Sharps Disposal – Researching and collaborating with the County Health Committee on a community approach to the needle litter issue, to start with community education.

Treatment - Increase rehabilitation services - Identify current and needed services, work toward increasing services. In 2016 research has identified current services available as well as a list of needed services. **The prioritized list of focused areas of need are as follows:**

Develop a Medically Assisted Opiate Treatment Clinic – Farnham Family Services has started the process for a clinic within their treatment facility in Oswego. The certification and licensing process started in 2016 and the services are projected to start up in August 2017.

School Based Treatment – Student Assistance Program Staff for all 23 school buildings. Farnham Family Services is currently providing varying levels of Student Assistance Counseling and Evidence Based prevention education and early intervention in all 9 districts but not all buildings receive services. An infusion of funding would allow this service to expand to reach all students in the county.

Teen Intervene Program – Three one-hour sessions 10 days apart for ages 12-19

Additional Medically Assisted Opiate Treatment Services – COCOAA is one of the three outpatient treatment facilities in Oswego County. COCOAA like Farnham Family Services has offices in both Oswego and Fulton. Farnham is planning on offering Suboxone prescription and monitoring services alongside of the full Opiate Treatment Program that is slated to open in Oswego.

Detox, Inpatient and Specialized services for Adolescents – See School Based treatment iv for FAST Program request by COCOAA.

Ancillary/Withdrawal Services – Outpatient / Ancillary withdrawal services & medication assisted treatment (an OASAS Certified Service) has been discussed in detail. Providing this service would be an important addition to Oswego County residents suffering from addiction. Farnham also anticipates launching Ancillary Withdrawal Services alongside of the Opiate Treatment and other medication assisted services that are in development.

Regional Crisis Center – Oswego County Health Department is working with OASAS on this exciting and needed regional project. We think Oswego County is the best place to locate this Center due to the high overdose death rate and no inpatient facilities available.

Expand and/or Develop Diversion and Incarceration Programs

Misdemeanor Level Drug Court – Working with service providers, the District Attorney’s Office offers 2 diversion programs for misdemeanor level alcohol & drug court offenses for ages 25 and under.

Diversion Programs – The group researched and discussed the current programs and what is needed. The goals include increasing both Project Intervention and Project U-Turn which can be utilized as Misdemeanor Court Education.

Project U-Turn is a 6-hour education program designed to address the issues of drinking and other drug offenses committed by persons under the age of 21. Collaboration, the key to this successful program, with the STOP-DWI, DA’s office and COCOAA. From 2011-2015 there were a total of 114 participants. The recidivism is very low and the participant’s knowledge is dramatically increased (via test scores). The goal is to decrease drinking and other drug offenses committed by our youth.

Project Intervention is a 4-hour educational program for defendants who are charged with UPM or Misdemeanor marijuana or criminal possession of a controlled substance 7th or criminally using drug paraphernalia. Modeled after Project U-Turn and a partnership with the District Attorney’s Office and COCOAA, it is intended to educate of the medical, legal and social consequences of drug use. Upon completion, participants are given an assessment to determine whether a full substance abuse evaluation is needed.

Vivitrol treatment prior to release from incarceration – Discussions regarding the desire to treat those incarcerated, investigation into the surrounding counties’ use of Vivitrol upon release. A physician and part-time Nurse Practitioner was hired for basic health services in the jail. No treatment is available at this time. Follow-up on treatment outcomes from surrounding areas will be investigated for positive outcomes.

Research the Possibilities of In-Patient Services

New Health Center in Oswego County – There is a huge need for a dual diagnosis health center in Oswego County for in-patient services such as evaluations, detox and treatment of Mental Health Disorders and/or Substance use Disorders.

Residential Services – Women residential specialized services following release from in-patient treatment facilities is highly needed. Supportive Housing is lacking in Oswego County.

Enhance mentoring and support services. Identify services and work to increase services and programs. The group discussed the current services, mostly none, with a focus on the following needs:

Certified Peer Support Specialists are needed for comprehensive Peer Support.

Family Navigation Services – A Family Support Navigator for Oswego County would be helpful for those seeking services as well as working with insurances.

Peer Engagement Services at the ER – A dedicated Peer Support Specialist working directly with patients and their families at the Oswego Hospital.

SBIRT services at the Oswego Emergency Room, This needed service could be offered by COCOAA. Farnham Family Services could also offer this service with similar levels of funding. Enhanced Services for Adults – Programs that include stress reduction available to the community such as Recovery Color Books.

OCO's Medical Van is now in service. HIV testing is currently being done with targeted population of 24 and under. The services are being brought to remote locations throughout the county. Long-term goals include providing additional medical services. Addiction treatment information is available on the van.

Identify policies that deter the recovery process and seek options to change them
The group responded to an RFI by the Heroin Task Force for information.

Transportation – Reliable and improved transportation services around the county is a critical need.

Taxi Vouchers – Providing vouchers for taxi services to and from treatment would alleviate the immediate need. Funding would be needed.

Insurance – Supporting access and coverage of services for insurances to help with treatment and recovery services is an identified need.

Goals and timeline:

Decrease the prevalence of substance use disorder through the development of comprehensive prevention efforts by 2030. Increase access to comprehensive treatment and support services by 2030. Shift community perception to reduce stigma and increase acceptance and support for people struggling with addiction by 2030.

Part VII: Implementing Poverty Reduction Initiatives

Community Empowerment Teams

One way to implement many of the initiatives prioritized during the Oswego LIFT and OCAPTF studies is to create Community Empowerment Teams customized to the needs of each area. By engaging local leaders from all corners of the community to participate, it is hoped that the collaborations between government, schools, businesses and faith organizations will be strengthened and that the full range of community planning, educational resources and social services available in the county can be promoted and more easily accessed by the individuals that need them most. In the end, this is not just about helping people out of poverty. If there is one over-arching theme that can be taken away from studying poverty in Oswego County it's this: everything is connected. It's one big circle. Negative trends in one area will inevitably lead to negative trends elsewhere. But the opposite is true as well. Positive trends will lead to more positive trends and success will breed further success. By moving many trends simultaneously in the right direction—by the actions we take in government and through the actions and engagement of the business, educational, ecumenical and non-profit community—we can slowly gain momentum and as the old saying goes, “a rising tide lifts all ships.”

Continuing our Solid Movement in the Right Direction

The string of good news we've experienced—State investment flowing in, the partnership to create CCCE, the establishment of the Land Bank, the purchase and re-fueling of the Fitzpatrick Nuclear Plant by Exelon and the outstanding progress being made by the Fulton Block Builders and the Oswego Renaissance Association—none of these things happened in a vacuum. They all happened as a result of hard work and well-intentioned leadership. And though none of these “wins” were purposely coordinated to start tipping dominoes in a positive direction, taken together, that's the effect they've had. Now, armed with the knowledge that we have the power to keep this positive momentum going, it is incumbent upon us to do that in a way that, as suggested by CGR is sustainable, effective, inclusive, replicable and scalable.

CGR: “The collaborative relationships formed and strengthened through this effort... show how this community can build upon shared resources to address the challenge of poverty in Oswego.”

The graphic on the following page illustrates the interconnectedness of many factors that are inexorably linked and therefore move together in either positive or negative directions. This creates momentum over a long period of time that will either increase or decrease poverty and enhance or compromise the vitality of a community and its economy.

Negative Factors that Lead to Negative Momentum vs Positive Factors that Lead to Positive Momentum

Failing Schools
Lower Graduation Rates
Students Ill Prepared For Work or College
Inadequate Workforce

Population Shrinking
Housing Market Weakening
More Blight & Fewer Amenities
Families Moving Out

Businesses Failing
Fewer Good Jobs Available
More People Seek Public Assistance
Businesses Leave

Economy Shrinking
Sales Tax Revenue Decreases
Property Taxes Increase
Spending Decreases

Poverty Increases
Quality of Life Decreases
Crumbling Public Spaces
Less Civic Pride

Good Schools
Higher Graduation Rates
Students Prepared For Work or College
Workforce Improving

Population Growing
Housing Market Strengthening
Less Blight & More Amenities
Families Moving in

Businesses Grow
More & Better Jobs Available
Fewer People Need Public Assistance
New Businesses Start

Economy Improving
Sales Tax Revenue Increases
Property Taxes Decrease
Spending Increases

Poverty Decreases
Quality of Life Improves
Improved Public Spaces
More Civic Pride

OCAPTF Community Empowerment Team Initiatives and Ideas

The Ambassador Program

As discussed in Part: V, the Ambassador program is designed to work under the guidance of the Department of Social Services and the Human Services Collaborative Team. "Ambassadors" would include paid staff or volunteers who have routine interaction with the public, for example, elected officials, government employees, clergy, emergency service workers, public school personnel, etc. They will receive training to be familiar with the availability of, and how to access all social services, employment services and crisis services in the county as well as the educational opportunities available through the Center for Career and Community Education (CCCE), the Center for Instruction, Technology and Innovation (CiTi - Boces) Cayuga County Community College, Oswego State University and the County Workforce New York American Job Center (One Stop). Ambassadors may also become the leaders of local "Ahead Together" teams, to facilitate motivated individuals to create personal educational and employment goals, to define their barriers to achieving those goals and to create plans to overcome the barriers to their success.

Maximizing Utilization of our Adult Education System

Our workforce development system is excellent as has been discussed, but is it helping as many people as it could and if not how can we do so? One consideration is to simplify the branding of our adult education system and to promote it as a single entity with many entry points, many partners, and no end to an individual's potential once they enter the system. The essential thought is to provide hope—that a better life is available for anyone who wants to try, and confidence—that motivated learners will have the support they need to succeed. The idea that "we have your back" is the core of the "Ahead Together" initiative—"Start anywhere and reach for the stars." We have the educational system in place. Now we need to create the support services system to back it up.

Regional Ecumenical Collaborative

Our ecumenical community already does an amazing amount of work for those in need. The idea of an ecumenical collaborative is to maximize the communications and collaboration between parishes in order to maximize the effectiveness of their programs and to reduce redundancy. It could also produce efficiencies of scale for purchasing, etc. Our hope is that it may also be a source of volunteers to fill gaps in services (volunteer transportation services or mentoring for example) in ways that government is unable to respond to. This volunteer based initiative may also provide tremendous versatility in the kinds of response it can have.

Utilizing Other Volunteer Services

There are other sources of volunteer services in Oswego that could also be utilized to help support adult learners. The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) of SUNY Oswego is one example. Their mission is "To encourage and foster the development and maintenance of volunteer opportunities that engage, support and enhance the lives of Americans 55+, while responding to the priority needs of the community." Several of their goals are also parallel to what LIFT is trying to accomplish: "Increase economic, education and health opportunities for veterans and military families" and more generally to "Improve financial stability, access to affordable housing and employment opportunities for economically vulnerable families." Their "Vision" to "Improve lives, strengthen communities and foster civic engagement through service and volunteering" may be a perfect fit to assist LIFT Oswego to create a support and mentoring system to help economically challenged adult learners to succeed.

A Regional Approach to Maximizing Local Effectiveness

On page 58 of the LIFT Assessment under the heading of “System Recommendations,” CGR suggests that LIFT Oswego “Collaborate with [the] County Effort... As much as possible, the City of Oswego’s effort should seek to align with that initiative by sharing information, collaborating on system design efforts, and partnering with County as much as possible so that lessons can be shared and successes replicated.” In agreement with that recommendation please forgive this sports analogy. Jim Boehiem’s Syracuse Orange Basketball team often resorts to a defense called “the full court press” when it’s in trouble. It’s a gamble, but it often pays off. We’re in trouble now too, and though we’ve had some recent successes it’s time to put on a full court press, maximize our positive momentum and not look back.

The OCAPTF stands ready to partner with LIFT Oswego to help design and seek funding for plans to improve regional systems that will be of long term benefit to the residents and businesses in the City of Oswego.

- Conduct an Intermodal Transportation Study to develop a dependable transportation system.
- Explore starting our own “Vehicles for Change” type program through CCCE and CiTi where repairs may be able to be conducted concurrently with auto tech training.
- Support the development of a state-of-the-art workforce training facility.
- Support additional “Career Academies” using the IBEST model for Manufacturing, Healthcare, Agriculture, Hospitality/Tourism and Energy, potentially co-locating with local businesses.
- Support and provide incentives to start businesses that will provide support services necessary to allow for greater access to adult education for economically challenged individuals.
- Help establish systems to provide support during transitions to self-sufficiency.
- Help our schools institute programs that will improve outcomes for children of families of lesser means.
- Complete and implement an Economic Development Strategic Plan that can produce long-term economic growth.

The OCAPTF supports the creation of a LIFT Oswego Support Team or pilot program that will provide the types of incentives and supports we have described throughout this document.

Part VIII: Initiatives Identified by the OCAPTF that Could Contribute to the Reduction of Poverty in the Long-Term

Community Empowerment Team Youth Focused Initiatives

The Challenge: To extend our children's educational opportunities outside the classroom and provide a wide variety of recreational activities that can stimulate their desire to learn and become good citizens.

Healthy Highway Program

An inexpensive, fun and imaginative nutrition program that integrates seamlessly into curriculum. A school wide, cost effective nutrition program.

Bridging the Gap

Innovative, evidence based 12 week, life skills curriculum which focuses on either prevention or intervention for court involved at-risk youth in Oswego County. The Salvation Army currently offers this program in Oswego County to youth between the ages of 16-19. Provides a head-on diversion curriculum designed to reduce behaviors among youthful offenders by providing direct service and evidence-based treatments to address unhealthy behaviors. The program serves as a "bridge" between youth and community services and works cooperatively with the District Attorney's Office, the courts, local law enforcement, probation, schools, and healthcare organizations. It provides a safe alternative to violent or risky behavior and significantly reduces the potential for court-involved youth to re-offend.

Promote After School Programming

After school activities provide mentoring opportunities and can help connect families to the community. There is evidence that supports the idea that increasing the participation of children in poverty in after school activities by providing transportation and financial support to participate can reduce their chances of participating in destructive behaviors and increase their ability to succeed in school. Some of the programming that could be supported includes all regular school based after school activities as well as 4-H, STEM Robotics teams, and community sports leagues.

Youth Court

A Family Court diversion program aimed at reducing juvenile delinquency in the City/County of Oswego. It is a trial by peers process for first time offenders between the ages of seven and less than sixteen, who have allegedly committed violations and/or misdemeanors. Youth Court offers these youth an opportunity to constructively assume responsibility for their actions as well as offers them a chance to learn about the justice system.

Establish "Libraries of the Future"

Where hands on technology are the books. Learning Stations include Lego Robotics, Broadcasting and Recording Studios, 3-D Printing and CAD Design stations as well as tradition arts stations, wood working areas, painting and drawing, etc. After school classes and mentorship opportunities.

Leadership Oswego County Youth

Designed to develop skills in potential teen leaders. Based on Leadership Oswego County, an adult leadership program, the youth version teaches valuable skills using a network of established leaders, young and old alike. The curriculum is built on a trusteeship design, (taking responsibility for one's community) reinforcing aspects of personal, team and community growth using a series of

workshops combining discussions and activities that relate to the community of Oswego County. Once graduated from LOCY students will be prepared to become involved in a number of leadership opportunities in Oswego County schools, agencies and other community service organizations.

Community Empowerment Team Adult Focused Initiatives

Social Adult Program

A program that provides functionally impaired adults with socialization, recreation, supervision and monitoring, transportation and nutrition in a safe setting during the day. Social Adult Day Programs are defined as structured, comprehensive programs that provide functionally impaired adults with socialization, recreation, supervision and monitoring, personal care enhancement of daily living skills, transportation and nutrition in a safe setting during the day.

By providing this service, Arc of Oswego County's goals are to lessen caregiver stress, increase a caretaker's ability to maintain employment outside of the home, to improve or maintain the physical and mental health of the older adult through social activities and education, and to lessen the risk of elder abuse to those participating in the program. These goals parallel the Oswego County's larger goals of improving health outcomes, reducing hospital admissions, reducing poverty and lowering healthcare costs for Oswego County residents. By providing ongoing supportive services to identified individuals who may be at risk of or experiencing declining health we, as a community, will begin to meet some of those goals.

Part IX: Some Issues Not Addressed in the LIFT Assessment That Are Worthy of Consideration

Teen Pregnancy Prevention and Intervention Services

Oswego County Opportunities, Inc. (OCO) currently provides Health Education and Pregnancy Prevention/Intervention Services to the young adult population through several programs. The OCAPTF believes that these efforts should be supported and promoted and that reducing unwanted teen pregnancies would reduce poverty and insure that more girls complete an education that will allow them to be productive and self-sufficient.

1. The Teen Pregnancy Prevention Project (TPP), funded through HHS OAH, currently partners with three school districts (APW, Fulton & Mexico) and existing community-based services within the surrounding communities to provide comprehensive pregnancy prevention programming targeting youth under 21. OCO TPP reaches youth residing in high need zip codes as well as students from neighboring townships, lending to higher impact, as families move throughout the area, increasing the number of youth receiving a consistent sex education message. OCO Health Educators partner with school district health teachers to implement two evidence-based programs (EBPs): Be Proud! Be Responsible! and Making Proud Choices to scale. These EBPs are delivered in middle and high school health classes, after school and at community drop-in centers in order to reach as many youth as possible and reach youth multiple times over the course of their adolescence. The EBIs selected have shown to reduce the onset of sexual activity among teens who are currently sexually inexperienced and increases condom use among youth who are currently sexually active, helping to prevent teen pregnancy and the transmission of STDs/HIV. TPP also operates community-based drop-in centers that function to connect out-of-school youth to the interventions and are locations within each community where youth can access resources & other program activities including:

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- Peer education
 - Access to condoms and other safer sex supplies
 - Youth Leadership Council
 - Group activities (outside presentations, community service learning activities, recreation events, family activities, etc.)
 - Referrals and linkages to community resources
 - Connections, including transportation, to and from reproductive health appointments

OCO was selected to participate in a federal evaluation of the TPP project activities, & work closely with the federal evaluation team from Abt. Associates and the local independent evaluator from Cornell University. As the project is in the early stages of operation, there is not evaluation data available at this time. The number of youth to be reached by this TPP project is projected at 4896 youth over the course of the 5-year project.

The Youth Health Advocate Project (YHAP), funded by NYS DOH, serves youth that are at greatest risk for contracting HIV, STD, and Hepatitis C as well as having an increased risk of unintended pregnancy. Youth that are target for this project are 13-26 with a focus on the following populations: LGBTQ youth, IDUs, and youth who have sex in exchange for money or drugs. Staff & Youth Health Advocates provide mobile HIV testing & prevention services, linkage and connections to services, a direct connection to PrEP, transportation, Evidence-Based Interventions, harm reduction supplies (including condoms and other safer sex supplies). Youth engaged in this project primarily more disconnected from community services and youth leadership opportunities. YHAP staff facilitate community drop-in sessions to help youth connect to community resources and provide transportation to help them obtain additional medical services including contraception.

The Family Planning Health Educator - Funded through the NYS DOH funding that funds the OCO Reproductive health centers. Staff is stationed within the health centers working collaboratively with Reproductive Health staff to quickly connect youth and other individuals to contraception through outreach, community education, transportation, assessments, and education.

OPTIONS - mission is to promote the physical, emotional, and intellectual growth of pregnant & parenting teens and their babies. OPTIONS is a voluntary case management program in the county whose program design offers home visiting and engages teens in early prenatal health care and building of parenting and self-reliance skills. OPTIONS provides free services directly to consumers using youth-directed, individualized service plans that focus on meeting needs, building assets and opportunities for pro-social involvement with peers through educational and skill-building activities. Young adults/teens can enroll in OPTIONS services prenatally, beginning with assistance to confirm or refute pregnancy, or postnatal. Consumers can continue to work with OPTIONS after their baby is born for a period of time that best meet their needs. OPTIONS engages teen fathers in services, assisting with involvement in prenatal care and educating on the rights and responsibilities of parenting and infant care. Staff completes a comprehensive assessment to assist fathers with obtaining services and supports. Staff would provide opportunities for pro-social involvement with peers through educational and skill building activities.

Child Advocacy Team

The rate of child maltreatment in our community is 84.7 per 1,000 which is substantially higher than in comparable counties where the rate in the general population of children is 60.4 per 1,000. Of concern in Oswego County is the rate of recurrence of abuse, or continued reports on a family for child maltreatment. Oswego County recurrence is at 30.4% of all reports, compared to national average of 9.1% and NYS of 18%

There was a 48% increase in the placement of children in foster care in the past four years. This marked increase is due in part to the opioid epidemic, as well as a second Family Court Judge seated in Oswego County. Of all children in foster care, 65% of families received preventive and protective services prior to placement. Yet, parents were unable to benefit from service delivery to avert placement.

The health and safety of children is in peril given that over 50% of our preventive and foster care cases involve addiction issues, among other risk factors such as poverty, domestic violence, and serious mental illness by one or both parents. Research evidences that poverty is the most impactful factor resulting in poor outcomes for children.

Child Advocacy Team Prioritized Initiatives:

Darkness to Light Stewards of Children Training

Implement a 911-style of reporting where every child abuse report is rapidly reported to the CAC/Multi Disciplinary Team (MDT) for investigation.

Improve caregiver supports and provide greater communication with school and agency professionals. Implement parental supports.

Develop coordinated systemic approach for intervening and responding to child abuse disclosures utilizing the National CAC model, 10 accrediting standards and the CAC building for co-location of MDT members.

Conclusion

There is a great deal of optimism among the participants of the Oswego County Anti-Poverty Task Force that we now have the collaborations and toolkit ready to begin reversing negative trends in the county regarding poverty and the economy. The sense is that we are on the verge of positive change.

We are pleased to have the opportunity to share what we've learned with the LIFT Oswego partners and hope that our similar experience and findings will be of value to you as you develop a coordinated plan of action. The problems we face are daunting, but we feel confident that with a coordinated effort executed across many disciplines, we can turn the tide and maintain the positive momentum necessary to effect long-term change.

Most of what we have shared in this report has been summarized, but we will gladly share all the details, backing data and cost estimates we have upon request. We are also prepared to join together more completely should the LIFT Oswego partners decide that would be of value—to partner on research, funding, or implementing any initiatives we have shared.

This is of immense importance to the future of Oswego County and we are committed to helping prepare the documentation necessary to make the most of any potential funding opportunities as soon as possible and in order to meet the deadlines of this year's CFA funding schedules if necessary.

Thank you again for the opportunity to share this information with LIFT Oswego.

—Roy Reehil, Chair,
Oswego County Anti-poverty Task Force

Appendix A

Oswego County Anti Poverty Task Force— Teams and Participants

Oswego County Anti-Poverty Task Force Steering Committee

Roy Reehil, 5th District Oswego County Legislator and Chair
Daniel LeClair, 8th District Oswego County Legislator, Vice-Chair
Jacob Mulcahey, 15th District Oswego County Legislator
Stewart Amell, Special Projects Consultant, CiTi
Anita Murphy, Superintendent, Altmar-Parish-Williamstown Central School District
John Shelmidine, Board President of CiTi

Prior Steering Committee Members

Marie Schadt, Vice-Chair, Legislator
Lisa Roman, Counselor, Oswego City School District

Task Force Advisors

Kevin Gardner, Chairman of the Oswego County Legislature
Chris Todd, District Superintendent of the CiTi
Gregg Heffner, Previous Oswego County Commissioner of Social Services
Jiancheng Huang, Director of Public Health Oswego County Health Department
Oswego County Administrator Philip Church
Legislator Shane Broadwell, Chairman of the County Legislature's Human Services Committee
Legislator John Proud, Chairman of the County Legislature's Health Committee
Brian Chetney, Oswego Youth Bureau Executive Director
Jeffery Grimshaw, Office of Business and Community Relations, Oswego State University of New York
Paul Forestiere, Executive Director, Oswego County Office of Cornell Cooperative Extension
Diane Cooper-Currier, Executive Director, Oswego County Opportunities, Inc.
Joseph Rotella, SUNY Oswego Office of Business and Community Relations
Barbara Recchio, Staff Development and Data Coordinator at CiTi-Boces

Economic Development Sector Coordinators: Austin Wheelock & Roy Reehil

Austin Wheelock is the Deputy Director at Operation Oswego County, Inc., the county's designated economic development agency. He is a Certified Economic Developer (CEcD), He is Board President of Heritage Foundation of Oswego County and serves on the Oswego Renaissance Association Board of Directors. He holds a Master of Urban and Regional Planning degree from the University at Buffalo and a Bachelor of Science degree in Architectural Technology at Alfred State College.

Roy Reehil is an author, publisher, graphic designer and President of the Forager Press, LLC. In his capacity as 5th District Oswego County Legislator he serves as Chair of the Economic Development and Planning Committee, Chair of the Oswego County Anti-Poverty Task Force and as Majority Whip. He also serves on the Government, Courts and Consumer Affairs Committee, Operation Oswego County (Ex-Officio Board Member) Oswego County Tourism Advisory Council, Central New York Regional Planning and Development Board and serves on the Board of Directors of The Wisdom Thinkers Network.

Economic Development and Workforce Development Team Participants:

Austin M. Wheelock, Economic Development Specialist, Operation Oswego County, Inc.
Joseph Rotella, SUNY Oswego Office of Business and Community Relations
Roy Reehil, Legislator, Author, Publisher
Pam Caraccioli, Deputy to the Pres., SUNY Oswego for
External Partnerships & Economic Development
Patrick Carroll, Local 73 Plumbers & Steamfitters
Margaret Clerkin, Treasurer, Pulaski Eastern Shore Chamber of Commerce
Carla DeShaw, Business and Community Relations, Cayuga County Community College
Phil Church, Oswego County Administrator
Karen and George DeRousie, Co-Presidents, Ft. Brewerton/Greater Oneida Lake Chamber of
Commerce
Dan Dorsey Jr., Eagle Beverage Company
James Dowd, Pathfinder Bank
John FitzGibbons, FitzGibbons Agency
Theresa Himes, Bosco & Geers Food Market
Daniel LeClair, Legislator, Pastor
Jennifer Mays, Oswego Expeditions Sole Proprietor
Karen Merrill, Oswego County Opportunities
Greg Mills, Greater Oswego-Fulton Chamber of Commerce
Jacob Mulcahey, Legislator, Construction Business Owner
Anita Murphy, Superintendent of Schools APW Central School District
Justin Rudgick, Director of Community Development Office, City of Oswego
Morris Sorbello, Legislator, Farming Industry
L. Michael Treadwell, Operation Oswego County & IDA
Chena Tucker, SUNY Oswego Workforce Development Board
Dave Turner, Oswego County Planning & Tourism
Christine Weaver, Director, Oswego County Workforce New York
Garrette Weiss, Business Education Liaison at CiTi

**Workforce Development Team Leaders: Joseph Rotella & Christine Weaver
(On May 1, 2017, Chena Tucker replaced Joe at the time of his retirement)**

Joseph A. Rotella is the Executive Director of the Workforce Development Board of Oswego County. His responsibilities include the oversight of the Oswego County Workforce New York American Job Center located in Fulton, NY and management of the NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance contracts. Joe also serves as the Executive Director of the Oswego County Workforce Development Board, ARISE Central New York Executive Board, Central New York Rural Schools Association Executive Board. Joe has previously served as the Superintendent of Schools with the Onondaga Central School District and as an Associate Professor at the University of Maine. Joe earned his Bachelors of Science in Education from SUNY Cortland, A Master of Science in Education from Northeastern University and his Certificate of Advanced Study in Education Administration from SUNY Oswego.

Christine Weaver, is the Director of the Oswego County Division of Employment and Training with over 30 years experience operating, administering and delivering employment and training services to meet the needs of job seekers and business in Oswego County. She holds a Bachelors degree in Psychology.

Health and Human Services Sector Coordinators: Stacy Alvord & Diane Cooper-Currier

Stacy Alvord, MSW, is the Commissioner of the Oswego County Department of Social Services with 37 years of experience in the public and private health and human services arena. She served as a Governor's Appointee to the NYS Citizens Review Panel on Child Protection, developed a credentialed Healthy Families NYS Home Visiting Program in Madison County, served on Madison County's Board of Health for a decade, and is on the Workforce Development Board for Oswego County.

Diane Cooper-Currier, MSW, is the Executive Director of Oswego County Opportunities, Inc., the federally designated Community Action Agency in Oswego County. Her agency employs 600+ and includes programs that span the health and human services industry. She holds an MSW from Syracuse University and several certifications including Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, National ROMA Trainer and Peer Reviewer for the Award for Excellence in Community Action. She serves on Oswego County Workforce Development Board, Central New York Care Coordination and NYS Community Action Association.

Health and Human Services Team participants

Sabine Ingerson ARISE
Tammie Nipper, Palermo UMC
Teresa Woolson, Substance Abuse Team Leader
Trish Wilckens, Central Square School District
Marti Babcock, DSS
Patty O'Connor Operation Oswego County
Karrie Damm, CAC
Brian Chetney, Youth Bureau
Doug Baldwin, DSS Mental Hygiene
Penny Halstead, Shineman
Eric Bresee, Farnham
Jiancheng Huang, OC Health Dept.
Mary Margaret Pekoe, Catholic Charities
Debbie Meyer, OC Probation
Karrie Ann Webb, YMCA
Roy Reehil, OC Legislator
Kortney Dale, Liberty Resources
Karen Goetz, Shineman
Meg Gilmore, Huntington
Sara Sunday, OC Office for the Aging

Health and Human Services Partner Organizations:

ARISE
Catholic Charities of Oswego County
Cayuga Centers
Child Advocacy Center
Cornell Cooperative Extension
County of Oswego Council on Alcoholism and Addictions, Inc.
Farnham Family Services, Inc.
Fulton City School District
Hillside Children's Center
Huntington Family Center

Liberty Resources, Inc.
Northern Oswego County Health Services
Oswego Health
Oswego County Opportunities, Inc.
Oswego County Dept. of Social Services
Oswego County Planning Department
Oswego County Probation Department
Oswego County Public Health Department
Oswego City- County Youth Bureau
Oswego County Office for the Aging
Oswego County Workforce NY
Retired & Senior Volunteer Program
The Salvation Army
United Way of Greater Oswego County
Victory Transformation, Inc.

Substance Use Disorder and Recovery Team Leader: Teresa Woolson

Teresa Woolson is the Administrative Coordinator at Operation Oswego County, Inc. since 1984. She graduated Leadership Oswego County in 2008 and started a Non-profit Organization in 2013 following the death of her son, with a mission of educating and advocating about synthetic drugs. Teresa is a Steering Committee Member of the Oswego County Prevention Coalition, traveling to CADCA in Washington DC in 2015 and 2016 for leadership trainings. In addition, she is a member of SAVE CNY, Zonta Club of Oswego, Oswego County Suicide Coalition and a Board Member of COCOAA. Teresa helped start two Addiction Awareness groups and continually looks for ways to help save lives.

Team Participants and Special Qualifications

Eric Bresee, Executive Director of Farnham Family Services – LMHC with BA in Psychology and MS in Counseling and Psychological Services; Held many leadership roles and earned awards while at Oswego County Opportunities, Inc.; Is also an Independent Contractor for Integrative Counseling Services providing mental health counseling;

Karyn Grow, Director of Prevention Services at COCOAA – CASAC-G providing services including chemical dependency treatment, coordination of information and referral services, and prevention program leadership and development since 2000. Held many Counselor positions at adolescent residential treatments centers, NYS Dept of Corrections and Oswego County Sheriff’s Dept of Corrections.

Robin Burdick, Coordinator for the Oswego County Prevention Coalition – DFC Project Coordinator. Previously with Oswego County Probation Department, working with youth and families for 10 years. Robin is the parent of a teen and grandmother with a vested interest in working to alleviate substance use in Oswego County.

Sarah Banach – Assistant/Acting Program Director at Harbor Lights Chemical Dependency Services – CASAC, licensed by OASAS with a BS in Human Services with a focus on children and family services; Previously an outpatient counselor at Credo Community Center.

Jiancheng Huang - Director of Public Health, Oswego County Health Department. MSc from Harvard School of Public Health and MD from Shanghai University. Previously Director of Maine CDC, Epidemiologist at Maine BOH, Clinical Research Specialist at University of PA. Initialized,

Designed and Supervised several Public Health Research and Practice Projects and published articles, reports and presentations.

Greg Oakes - District Attorney & Coroner for Oswego County since 2011 and a Prosecutor since 2001. Also a Legal Advisor to the NYS Association of County Coroners & Medical Examiners (NYSACCME).

Ellen Lazarek - Oswego County Opportunities for 16 years serving diverse populations including: pregnant/parenting youth, runaway/homeless youth, and the last 6 years with Health Education, HIV prevention & education, teen pregnancy prevention, reproductive health and youth & peer leadership development. Facilitator on the Oswego County Positive Youth Development team, countywide trainings, active on Oswego PRIDE Committee.

Amy Pelow & Cori Welch – Mothers of Addicts & Facilitators of support Group for Family & Friends of Addicts, Addiction Awareness Sharing Without Shame. These women have had firsthand knowledge and experience with a child addict. They both also work in the health field.

Youth and Schools Sector Coordinators: Stewart Amell, John Shelmidine and Anita Murphy

Stewart Amell served as the Superintendent of the Sandy Creek Central School District for 12 years until his retirement in 2016. During his tenure graduation rates rose dramatically and programs and services for students living in poverty were developed and expanded. Under Mr. Amell's leadership the district focused on all children with an understanding that they each need individualized support in order to achieve. Because Mr. Amell believes so strongly in the ability of all children to succeed given the right supports, he has agreed to stay on as a special projects consultant under the direction of Mr. Christopher Todd, District Superintendent CiTi BOCES which will allow him to continue his work with the Task Force.

Anita Murphy is currently the Superintendent of the Altmar Parish Williamstown School District. Prior to coming to APW Ms. Murphy spent 25 years in the Binghamton, Albany, Syracuse and Rochester City School Districts. Ms. Murphy was also the Associate Commissioner for Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment and Field Services for the New York State Department of Education. Under Ms. Murphy's tenure at APW the district has added full day pre-K for all 4 year olds, advanced placement courses, a degree program in collaboration with OCC where students can receive an Associate's Degree in Humanities at the same time that they receive a high school education. She was also instrumental in the county being awarded the NYS PTECH Grant.

John Shelmidine is currently the Board President of CiTi BOCES. Prior to that appointment Mr. Shelmidine served on the Sandy Creek Central School Board of Education for 15 years. Between the two, John has 35 years of experience on Boards of Education. In addition to his board service, Mr. Shelmidine's career has been devoted to families living in poverty. John served as the Supervisor of Child Protective Services, adult protective services and an investigator for the department of Social Services in Jefferson County for 38 years. His distinguished service makes him uniquely qualified to serve as a coordinator of this sector as well as a member of the Task Force steering Committee.

Youth and Schools Team and Focus Group Participants

The Youth and Schools Team is staffed by all nine Oswego County School Superintendents and chaired by Stu Amell and John Shelmidine. Focus group participants included:
Present & Former School Superintendents: Brian Hartwell, Chris Staats, Christopher Todd, Dean Goewey, Judy Belfield, Sean Bruno, Joseph Menard, Bill Lynch, Joe Rotella

Guidance Counselors, Social Workers: Kelly Hayden, Dave Eastman, Sue Evans, Scott Henry, Patricia Meaker, Paul McPherson, Kathy Auyer, Lisa Roman, Barb Carroll, Lisa Gaudreau, Jim Petrella, Laura Hyde, Buffy Peterson
Principals, Teachers, Professors and Administrators: Maureen Shiel, Tonya Trudell, Geri Geitner, Barbara Recchio, John Lamphere, Jackie Reihman
School Board Members: Sarah Taylor, Eric Behling, Janice Scott, Erin Hess, Diana Cook, Judy Belfield, Donna Blake, Matt Geitner, Gregory Muench

Child Advocacy Team Leaders: Karrie Damm and Tom Drumm

Karrie Damm is the Executive Director of the Child Advocacy Center (CAC) Foundation Inc., overseeing the daily operations of a child-friendly, safe place where children can tell their stories of abuse. She coordinates multi-disciplinary team members in the investigation, prosecution and healing of crimes against children. She also supervises the clinical program and provide training for Mental Health Practitioners/students.

Tom Drumm serves on the Oswego County Legislature representing District 16 in the City of Oswego. Legislator Drumm serves on the Human Services and Government Courts & Consumer Affairs committees.

Community Empowerment Sector Leaders: Dan LeClair and Roy Reehil

Dan LeClair, Minister, County Legislator, Chair of the Human Services Committee
Roy Reehil, Legislator and Chair of the Oswego County Anti-Poverty Task Force

Community Empowerment Team and Focus Group Participants:

Amy Roland, OCO
Brandon Morey, Youth Bureau
Brian Chetney, Oswego County Youth Bureau
Caitlin Prior, ARC
Carmella Smith, Oswego County Pregnancy Care Center
Christian Weaver, Oswego County Workforce
Cindy Hampson, CSSD
Cindy Walsh, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Oswego County
Daphne Brown, Hillside YFCF
Denise Corsette, Central Square School District
Diane Oldenburg, Health Dept
Garrette Weiss, CiTi
Jane Furletti, Hillside YFCF
Jennifer Hall, Hillside YFCF
Jessica Westberry, Hillside YFCF
Jiancheng Huang, Health Dept
Jonathan Schell, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Oswego County
Karen Goetz, Shineman Foundation
Kathy Felon, Shineman Foundation
Linda Brosch, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Oswego County
Linda House, Divine Mercy Food Pantry
Linda Wright, Salvation Army
Louella LeClair, Town of Hastings Tourism
Major Purvis, Salvation Army
Marla Berlin, CiTi
Marti Babcock, Dept Social Services

Meghan Regano, Hillside YFCF
Mr Mrs Bill Bellows, Business Leaders
Pastor Wade Smith, Oswego Alliance Church
Paul Forestiere, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Oswego County
Rev. Greg Stein, Mallory Wesleyan
Robin Burdick, ASAPC
Sabine Ingerson, ARISE
Sara Sunday, OFA
Tammie Nipper, Palermo UMC
Teresa Woolson, Substance Abuse Team Leader
Trish Wilckens, Central Square School District

There are some omissions to our lists so we apologize if your name is missing!
Let us know and we'll add you.

Appendix B

Day Care Centers in Oswego

Bear Cub Day Care
(315) 343-7534

Little Lukes Preschool and Childcare Center
(315) 342-4600

Great Beginnings Child Care
(315) 806-7382

Daycare Little Lamb
(315) 963-8787

Children's Center of Oswego
(315) 312-2587

State University Child Care
(315) 312-2587

Scriba School Age Child Care
(315) 342-6919

See also:

Child Care and Development Council of Oswego County
(315) 343-2344