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News Release

For Immediate Release

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Nassau County Youth Service Agencies Suffer Crippling Cuts

**Majority of County-Funded Youth Programs Terminated and
Remaining Agency Budgets are cut 50 to 75 percent.
Cuts Spurs Rally of up to 1,000 People at County Legislative Building.**

February 17, 2009, Mineola, New York – Youth Service Agencies across Nassau County today received termination notices while others were hit with a 50 to 75 percent cut in funding from the Nassau County Department of Health and Human Services. In response to these notices and devastating news, the leadership of The Coalition of Nassau County Youth Services Agencies, Inc., an organization comprising of more than 40 agencies which provide a wide range of essential programs and services for youth, will hold a rally on Thursday February 19, 2009, from 11:00 a.m. to 12 noon at the Theodore Roosevelt Executive and Legislative Building in Mineola. Up to 1,000 parents, children, youth service agency staff and supporters are expected to attend. Speakers will include youths currently being serviced by programs, parents and agency directors.

“Today we received horrific notice that will negatively impact the lives and futures of our children. Nassau County has decided to turn its back on our young people and no longer provide the necessary funding for programs within our communities which save lives and help kids to become healthy and productive adults,” said Coalition President Peter Levy.

Due to these cuts, programs will close immediately and The Coalition anticipates hundreds of youth service professionals will lose their jobs and even more people will be laid off in the weeks and months to come as more programs close their doors.

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In total, youth programs service just under 60,000 youth, families and members of the community annually. The future of the remaining agencies is uncertain at this time. At the rally The Coalition and supporters will urge the State, County Executive Tom Suozzi and county legislators to reinstate funds to these vital programs.

“The logic behind funding these agencies is easy to follow. It is estimated that every child who drops out of school becomes a \$1.5 million burden on the social services system with entitlements over their lifetime. It is clear that the funds spent on these programs today pay for themselves many times over in the years to come,” added Levy.

Before the cuts, Nassau County had more than 40 youth service agencies. These agencies offer hundreds of programs which address issues such as: suicide prevention, homelessness, runaway, drugs addiction, gangs, employment, family crisis, eating disorders, anger management, sexual abuse, physical abuse, teen pregnancy and many more.

Youth services agency budgets total \$7.9 million annually of Nassau County’s \$2.5 billion budget, approximately 2% of the total budget.

About The Coalition of Nassau County Youth Service Agencies, Inc.

For almost 40 years, individual community youth organizations have been working to service the youth of Nassau County. In 1996, 30 of these groups came together to form The Coalition of Nassau County Youth Service Agencies, Inc. These agencies have one goal: To better serve youth and families living within the county who may be struggling with a wide range of issues. Working together, The Coalition is able to develop, preserve and expand youth and family services, enhancing the quality of life for residents across Nassau County.

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