

Contact: Andrew Doba  
[adoba@dycd.nyc.gov](mailto:adoba@dycd.nyc.gov)  
(212) 442-5979 or (347) 622-2914

**For Immediate Release**  
November 3, 2010

## **DYCD and Broadway’s “Billy Elliot” Host Matinee Celebration for Runaway and Homeless Youth Working for a Brighter Future**

*Participants Head Back Stage for a Special Conversation with Cast and Crew*

**New York, NY** – Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) Commissioner Jeanne B. Mullgrav, together with The Frances Hartman Group and NYC & Company, today held a matinee celebration for more than 30 young people in the agency’s Runaway and Homeless Youth (RHY) programs. After the performance, the group participated in a “talk back,” an event held back stage with the cast and crew to learn about careers in theatre and meet the stars. This event kicks off a series of activities hosted by the agency to raise awareness for National Runaway Prevention Month.

“Young people who find themselves on the street face incredibly tough odds, but with the right help, they can make tremendous strides toward a better future,” said **DYCD Commissioner Jeanne B. Mullgrav**. “The young people we’re celebrating today have taken bold steps to improve their lives, and they are being rewarded for their hard work with one of the City’s greatest cultural experiences. If you know a young person who needs help, call 311 for the appropriate resources.”

DYCD’s RHY programs are designed to assist young people, and when possible, to reunite them with their families. In cases where reunification is not possible, young people are supported as they progress from a crisis shelter to a transitional independent living facility. DYCD services foster engagement in educational and career opportunities that help young people achieve independence. DYCD also offers a drop-in center in each borough, along with street outreach services.

Under the leadership of Mayor Bloomberg, the City’s Commission for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning (LGBTQ) Runaway and Homeless Youth released a report in June that outlined strategies to address the needs of this unique population. In particular, the report highlighted the special challenges faced by LGBTQ youth, and set out to promote a culture of respect and acceptance in an effort to address the underlying causes of homelessness of this population.

Research suggests that between 20% and 40% of homeless youth in the United States are LGBTQ, often because they are rejected by their families. To read the entire version of the report, click [here](#).

###