



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
OFFICE TO COMBAT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**PEER EDUCATORS FROM THE MAYOR'S OFFICE TO COMBAT DOMESTIC
VIOLENCE HOLD INTERACTIVE WORKSHOP ON PREVENTING
TEEN DATING VIOLENCE**

*The NYC Healthy Relationship Training Academy celebrates its fourth
Annual Friends and Family Workshop*

Over 10% percent of NYC high school students reported having been hit, slapped, or physically hurt on purpose by a boyfriend or girlfriend in the last year, according to the Youth Risk Behavior Survey from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The NYC Healthy Relationship Training Academy, an initiative of the Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence, today invited community members to a powerful dialogue on healthy and unhealthy behaviors and the dynamics of abuse in young people's relationships.

The Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence launched the Academy in 2005 as an initiative to help youth learn about the dynamics of relationship abuse, and since then 1,601 workshops have been held with over 30,000 young people in New York City – proving effective at connecting and relating to fellow youth in a realistic way.

The Academy's Annual Friends and Family Workshop is an opportunity for the Peer Educators of the Academy to showcase their skills to friends, family, and the community at large. The Peer Educators regularly conduct the Academy's Signature Workshop throughout the year in various facilities in the five boroughs.

The Academy's Signature Workshop covers the definitions of family domestic violence and dating violence, tactics an abuser may use to gain power and control over a partner, characteristics of a healthy relationship, warning signs of abusive partners, and resources available.

"The strength of the Academy lies with its energetic, creative, and inspiring Peer Educators," said Commissioner Yolanda B. Jimenez of the Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence. "Our Peer Educators use relevant examples, and engage teens in a critical dialogue about sensitive topics. Today's workshop gives us a wonderful chance to see what the Peer Educators do best."

(more)

“The Academy started with just one workshop and now offers a total of nine different programs,” said Kirsten DeFur, Director of the NYC Healthy Relationship Training Academy. “Our goal is for workshop participants to think critically about their own relationships and engage in healthy behaviors.”

Peer Educators are selected through a competitive application and interview process, and participate in an in-depth training program.

“Healthy relationships aren’t easy to achieve but not impossible either,” said Peer Educator Keren Sharon. “They take a lot of work, determination, and compromise. What I most enjoy about being a peer educator is helping participants come to realizations on their own about how they can improve their relationships.”

Today the Academy also recognized the dedication of the Greater Ridgewood Youth Council as this year’s recipient of the Peer Educators’ Choice Award. Greater Ridgewood Youth Council has consistently provided a welcoming environment for the Academy to facilitate workshops with its program participants.

The Academy also unveiled its recently launched Twitter account **@NYCteenDV**. With this additional incursion into social media, the Academy hopes to reach an even broader audience.

The Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence (OCDV) formulates policies and programs, monitors the citywide delivery of domestic violence services, and works with diverse communities and community leaders to increase awareness of domestic violence. OCDV collaborates closely with government and nonprofit agencies that assist domestic violence victims and operates the New York City Family Justice Centers in the Bronx, Brooklyn, and Queens. These one-stop domestic violence service centers provide vital social service, civil legal and criminal justice assistance under one roof.

The NYC Healthy Relationship Training Academy is supported by the AVON Foundation for Women and *m.powement by mark* through the Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City.

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