



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

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**NEW YORK CITY'S FIRST FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER  
CELEBRATES ONE YEAR ANNIVERSARY**

*Domestic violence victims receive more help than ever before*

New York City's first one-stop domestic violence center, the New York City Family Justice Center in Brooklyn, has helped over 3,500 victims and 800 children find safety and support in its first year. The Center began providing comprehensive services to domestic violence victims on July 20, 2005. Victims can begin long-term counseling, develop a safety plan, apply for an order of protection, have their locks changed, meet with an attorney, apply for housing, and receive spiritual support – all in their native language and while their children play safely in the Children's Room. As a result of the Center, more victims are receiving help than ever before. Many victims return to the Center to receive additional services, and community based organizations report that more victims have sought services from them since the Center opened. Although domestic violence is underreported, the Center's welcoming environment empowers victims to report abuse to police for the first time. Victims who have never filed a report at their local police precinct often feel more comfortable doing so at the Center after speaking with advocates and learning more about the options available to them.

“Over the past year, the Family Justice Center has helped thousands of victims find safety and realize their dreams of living a life free from violence,” said Commissioner Yolanda B. Jimenez of the Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence. “The Center has revolutionized the way we assist domestic violence victims by bringing comprehensive services under one roof.”

District Attorney Charles J. Hynes said, “Since the Family Justice Center opened a year ago, more than 4000 domestic violence victims and their children have had access to comprehensive, multidisciplinary services, to allow them to break the isolation that they've experienced and to gain needed assistance in the most seamless way imaginable.”

*(more)*

Collaboration among City, state, and community agencies has also improved as a result of the Center. Monthly training sessions keep staff informed about new City policies and resources to better assist victims. Over 2,000 domestic violence service providers have received training at the Center. In the past 6 months, final criminal orders of protection issued to victims have increased by 36%. The latest initiative at the Center allows elderly victims to petition for a civil order of protection from their home rather than have to spend a day in court.

The following services are available at the Center in Brooklyn:

- Information on civil legal matters involving family law, housing, and immigration
- Children's activities
- Safety planning
- Financial assistance
- Assistance with filing Police and Probation reports
- Counseling
- Parenting and support groups
- Prosecution of domestic violence crimes
- Services for the elderly and/or disabled
- Access to shelter and housing
- Language interpretation
- Voluntary spiritual support

The \$7 million Center was created through in-kind donations from the City and community partners, through a \$1.2 million grant from the U.S. Department of Justice Office on Violence Against Women, and through nearly \$1 million from the Founders' Circle - a diverse group of foundations and corporate citizens who have pledged to support the Center. Members of the Founders' Circle include: Avon Foundation, Altria Group, Inc., Cisco Systems, Inc., Dell, Inc., Dr. Joy to the World Foundation, Joe Torre Safe at Home Foundation, Lifetime Television, United Way of New York City and Verizon Wireless, New York Metro Region. Additional information on how to make a donation to the New York City Family Justice Initiative and become a member of the Founders' Circle is available at [www.nyc.gov/domesticviolence](http://www.nyc.gov/domesticviolence).

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