



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

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Contact: Ruth Villalonga
(212) 788-3156
Rvillalonga@cityhall.nyc.gov
www.nyc.gov/domesticviolence

**MAYOR'S OFFICE TO COMBAT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOSTS A SPECIAL
THANKSGIVING SESSION FOR THE CHILDREN AND PARENTS ATTENDING
THE BROOKE JACKMAN LITERACY PROGRAM AT THE
NEW YORK CITY FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER, BROOKLYN**

An event hosted in partnership with the Brooke Jackman Foundation

Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence Commissioner Yolanda B. Jimenez, yesterday hosted a special Thanksgiving Family Literacy session for domestic violence victims and their children who are participating in the Brooke Jackman Family Literacy Program at the City's Family Justice Center in Brooklyn.

"Domestic violence affects the entire family—especially children who witness it," said Commissioner Jimenez. "This inspiring program brings domestic violence victims and their children together in a safe place so that they can learn, grow, and heal as a family; and today we are gathering together to give thanks for this opportunity."

The program is funded by the Brooke Jackman Foundation, a non-profit organization that creates and supports programs enhancing the literacy and self-esteem of disadvantaged children and their families in the New York City area. Inspired by Brooke Jackman, 23, who lost her life in the September 11 attacks, and had a deep love of reading and a profound interest in helping children, her family created the Foundation as a living legacy in her honor. The program is also made possible by the Books for Kids Foundation through the Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City.

"We are proud to partner with the Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence and with the New York City Family Justice Center," said Erin Jackman, Executive Director of the Brooke Jackman Foundation. "'We hope that the gift of literacy will enhance, soothe and inspire the lives of the families in the program.'"

The ongoing nine-week program runs through December 27, 2010 and provides domestic violence victims and their children with a safe, fun and enriching refuge filled with the magic of books. The program aims to encourage children and parents to read together in the belief that reading promotes literacy and healthy conversation among family members. For nine weeks, parents and children find a safe, colorful, fun and enriching refuge filled with the magic of books.

The Program provides families with a nutritious dinner, reading of books and arts and crafts activities. Children of domestic violence victims often accompany a parent who receives counseling, and legal, educational and job training assistance at the City's Family Justice Center, one of three Centers in New York City that provides one-stop domestic violence services to enable victims to meet with a prosecutor, speak with a trained counselor, and apply for housing and financial assistance in just one visit – all in their language while their children play safely in the next room. This one-stop domestic violence service Center houses on-site staff members from seventeen nonprofit organizations and six City agencies, who collectively speak over twenty one languages.

To date, the New York City Family Justice Center, Brooklyn has assisted over 37,700 victims and their children logging over 76,000 client visits since its opening in July 2005.

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The Brooke Jackman Foundation mission is to create and support programs enhancing the literacy and self-esteem of disadvantaged children and their families in the New York area. The Brooke Jackman Family Literacy Programs are designed to engage parents (and guardians) and their children in literacy-based activities. At each session, participants receive take-home literacy packages, age-appropriate books, and concrete strategies in order to support their child's learning experience during the workshops and at home. It is the foundation's hope that the magical world of books will promote parents and children reading aloud together each night.

The Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence operates three New York City Family Justice Centers in the Bronx, Brooklyn and Queens. The New York City Family Justice Initiative reduces barriers faced by domestic violence victims seeking help by giving them easy access to comprehensive services by placing dedicated domestic violence prosecutors and essential community and City services under one roof. The Initiative is a public-private partnership coordinated with the help of the Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City, a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization established to promote partnerships between the City and the private sector.

For more information, visit www.nyc.gov/domesticviolence or call 311.