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**MAYOR BLOOMBERG LAUNCHES PUBLIC AWARENESS CAMPAIGN TO CURB
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND JOINS V-DAY TO LAUNCH TWO-WEEK FESTIVAL
*UNTIL THE VIOLENCE STOPS: NYC***

Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg today unveiled a public awareness campaign to encourage New Yorkers to seek assistance if they or someone they know is a victim of domestic violence and announced that New York City will host *Until The Violence Stops: NYC*, a two week festival of artistic performances and community events designed to bring the issue of violence against women and girls to the forefront. Developed *pro bono* by McCann Erickson, the public awareness advertising campaign will be featured in subways, buses and telephone kiosks. The nearly half a million dollar print advertising campaign is scheduled to run initially for three months citywide. *Until The Violence Stops: NYC* will be presented by V-Day – a global grassroots movement founded by award-winning playwright Eve Ensler to end violence against women and girls. Mayor Bloomberg was joined by City Council Speaker Christine C. Quinn, Deputy Mayor Carol Robles-Roman, Mayor’s Office to Combat Domestic Violence Commissioner Yolanda Jimenez, Commission on Women’s Issues Chair Anne Sutherland Fuchs, McCann Erickson Senior Vice President Susan Irwin, Playwright and V-Day Founder Eve Ensler and Executive Director of the Commission on Women’s Issues Elizabeth LoNigro.

“Domestic violence is a crime that damages innocent lives in the place where they should be the safest – in their own homes,” said Mayor Bloomberg. “Eve Ensler’s festival, *Until the Violence Stops: NYC*, takes the issue of violence against women out of the silence of the home and into the community, demanding all New Yorkers work to end violence against women. Last year, domestic violence was responsible for nearly one out of every eight homicides in our City. We must encourage everyone who is a victim or who knows a victim to make the call for help. One call could mean the difference between life and death. ”

On Monday, May 22nd as part of the V-Day Festival an outdoor messaging and advertising campaign will hit subways and buses in all five boroughs asking New Yorkers to ‘Make NYC the safest place on earth for women and girls’. The campaign will run through the end of June. From June 12th until June 27th, the *Until The Violence Stops: NYC* Festival will feature performances starring Salma Hayek, Rosario Dawson, Kathy Bates and many others.

“We owe it to those who came before us, and we owe it to the generations to come, to end violence against women and girls throughout New York City,” said City Council Speaker Quinn. “The education campaign we are unveiling today, in addition to the great work done by Eve Ensler and V-Day, is an important step in ending domestic violence. This effort promotes greater community awareness, gives a voice to victims of domestic violence and empowers us all to take action.”

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“Chances are the next victim could be someone you know. One in four women will experience domestic violence at some time during their life,” said Commissioner Jimenez. “We all have an opportunity to prevent a tragedy by reaching out.”

“Through V-Day, we have witnessed the power of art to transform and galvanize change,” said V-Day founder Eve Ensler. “V-Day was born in New York City and *Until The Violence Stops: NYC* takes our message directly to the people of New York. Together, we will make New York City the safest possible place for women and girls.”

“Domestic violence is a powerfully destructive force, robbing its victims of their well-being,” said Commission on Women’s Issues Chair Anne Sutherland Fuchs. “I’m proud that our Commission stands today with a different force – one that combats domestic violence. Through the efforts of the Mayor’s Office and V-Day, we can help eliminate violence against women in New York City, and help victims take back their lives.”

Although domestic violence affects both men and women, the vast majority of victims are women. In the last four years, major domestic violence felony crimes have decreased by 21% and family related homicides have declined by 11%. On average in New York City, police respond to 600 domestic violence related calls each day and the domestic violence hotline answers 400 calls each day. However, of the 68 domestic violence related homicides last year, the majority of the victims had no known prior contact with police and no existing order of protection. Victims and their friends and family often underestimate the level of risk in abusive relationships. This public awareness campaign encourages all New Yorkers to take action against domestic violence.

Through innovative programs and improved coordination between service providers, New York City has worked to help victims and their children find the safety and support they need. The following are examples of enhanced services that are now available:

- ? The first one-stop service center, the Family Justice Center, opened in Brooklyn last year. Since opening, over 3,100 victims and 650 children have received assistance at the Center. Planning is underway to open Centers in the Bronx and Queens
- ? All City run hospitals offer on-site social and legal services
- ? The public housing application process has been streamlined
- ? The number of shelter beds has been increased
- ? All police precincts have instant access to language interpreters in over 150 languages

V-Day is a global movement to end violence against women and girls, including rape, incest, battery, female genital mutilation, and sex slavery. Over 100 celebrated actors, writers and directors will come together for *Until The Violence Stops: NYC*, which will feature several star-studded marquee events with performances by celebrated actors, original works by noted authors and community events throughout the five boroughs.

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Kathy Bates, Jane Fonda, Salma Hayek, Kerry Washington, Rosario Dawson, Diane Lane, Suheir Hammad, Marcia Gay Harden, Sarah Jones, Brittany Murphy, Rosie O'Donnell, Phylicia Rashad, Isabella Rossellini, Marian Seldes, Gloria Steinem, Marlo Thomas, Idina Menzel are among performers who have committed to participating in the Festival. Edward Albee, Tariq Ali, Maya Angelou, Edwidge Danticat, Anna Deavere Smith, Ariel Dorfman, Michael Eric Dyson, Dave Eggers, Nicholas Kristof, Azar Nafisi, Paula Vogel, Alice Walker, Nobel Prize-winner Jody Williams, Howard Zinn, and more are contributing original works written exclusively for the Festival.

Start-up support for the Festival is being provided by the Rockefeller Foundation. Lead corporate support is being provided by Verizon. Proceeds from the festival will benefit numerous groups, including the New York City Family Justice Center Initiative, a private public partnership. For more information about V-Day, please visit www.vday.org.

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