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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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[www.nyc.gov](http://www.nyc.gov)MAYOR MICHAEL R. BLOOMBERG ANNOUNCES  
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE RESPONSE TEAMS***Launches Comprehensive Inter-Agency Initiative to Combat  
and Prevent Domestic Violence***

Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg today announced the creation of Domestic Violence Response Teams (DVRT). The teams will consist of City agencies, from law enforcement to social services, which can assist the victims and children most at risk of repeated episodes of domestic violence. The pilot project will focus on the 43rd precinct in the Bronx and the 67th precinct in Brooklyn, which are among the precincts with the largest number of domestic violence cases in New York City. DVRTs will pinpoint high-risk households and offer comprehensive services through a multi-agency approach.

The Mayor's [Office to Combat Domestic Violence](#), led by Commissioner Yolanda Jimenez, will organize and deploy response teams consisting of dedicated representatives from six City agencies - [New York Police Department](#), the [Administration for Children's Services](#), [Human Resources Administration](#), [Department of Homeless Services](#), [Health and Hospitals Corporation](#) and the [New York City Housing Authority](#). DVRTs will assess and coordinate an intervention plan based on the family's history to provide an individual response for each family.

"Domestic violence is a particularly difficult crime to combat because it happens in the home, usually outside the public's eye," said Mayor Bloomberg. "We need new strategies to stop this cycle of violence that menaces too many of New York's families. This initiative will focus on households most at risk and help victims get what they need, whether it be police protection or health care. With the collaborative efforts of our capable and compassionate City agencies, Safe Horizon, the Urban Justice Center and Verizon Wireless, working together means working towards helping these families."

"Identifying high-risk households and offering victims and their children comprehensive services is not just good government, but it also provides the hope and support that victims need to turn their lives around," said Commissioner Jimenez.

In 2001, the New York City Police Department responded to over 230,000 domestic incident cases. The top one percent, or approximately 2,300 households, reported four or more domestic incidents. Many of these households also received services from multiple City agencies, including City hospitals, child protective services, the shelter system and the courts. These households need a coordinated response. By focusing on these high-risk

households, the DVRTs aim is to reduce the risk of serious and repetitive violence.

In addition to City agencies, the DVRT initiative will partner with community based organizations, such as Safe Horizon and the Urban Justice Center, that provide critical support at the local level. Safe Horizon is the nation's leading nonprofit victim assistance, advocacy and violence prevention organization. The Urban Justice Center is a community-based entity that provides legal and preventive services to victims of domestic violence through their Family Violence Project.

"This initiative represents a new level of commitment to solving a complex problem," said Safe Horizon CEO Gordon Campbell.

"Domestic violence victims and their children will benefit from a strategy that draws together the City's resources into one comprehensive plan."

"Violence in the home is a serious problem for women and children in diverse communities throughout New York City," said Urban Justice Center Co-Director Mary Haviland. "Too often, victims seeking crucial assistance are navigating several complex government agencies at the same time without support or advocacy. This program offers a comprehensive approach targeted at high-incident, underserved communities. We applaud the efforts of the Mayor to bring additional aid to the survivors of domestic violence."

Another key component of the DVRT initiative will be a partnership with Verizon Wireless, the nation's largest wireless carrier. Verizon Wireless will donate wireless phones that families in the pilot program can carry with them and use to call 911 in an emergency. In addition, the company will provide HopeLine SM voice mailboxes to allow women at risk to receive confidential messages from prospective employers, landlords and the case management team.

"Verizon Wireless is pleased to support the City's intervention program," said Charles Hand, President of Verizon Wireless' New York Metro Region. "Victims of domestic violence are survivors from every walk of life who deserve all the support and assistance we can give them. It is our hope that the phones and resources we provide can help them in an emergency and assist them in rebuilding their lives."

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