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CITY ENGAGES PARENTS TO PROMOTE RESOURCES THAT HELP NEW YORKERS STAY IN THEIR HOMES DURING BROOKLYN HOMELESS AWARENESS MONTH

The Office of Brooklyn Borough President, The City's Public Engagement Unit, the NYC Department of Social Services and the NYC Department of Education connect families to Homebase services at local public schools across the borough

NEW YORK—When the schoolyear ends, many families living in overcrowded apartments or other difficult housing situations end up applying for shelter. In an effort to educate families about the resources available to them today City officials organized the distribution of information about homelessness prevention and anti-eviction legal services to parents bringing their children to schools in areas most at risk of homelessness as part of Brooklyn Homelessness Awareness Month. The Office of Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams partnered with the City's Public Engagement Unit, the Department of Social Services (DSS), and the Department of Education (DOE) to sponsor a Day of Action, during which elected officials, agency staff and homeless services providers visited 12 public schools in Brooklyn to provide resources to parents and caregivers as they drop off their kids. The goal is to prevent family homelessness whenever possible.

New York City's Homebase program is the most comprehensive and innovative homelessness prevention services network in the country, providing access to an array of services and financial assistance to help households on the brink of homelessness remain in their communities and out of shelter.

"Preventing homelessness before it occurs is a critical part of this Administration's plan to reduce homelessness throughout New York City," said **Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services Dr. Herminia Palacio**. "The partnership between DSS, DOE and the Public Engagement Unit is a prime example of a prevention outreach effort that has the ability to help families on the brink of becoming homeless. Through these types of partnerships, as well as our investments in community based prevention programs, anti-eviction legal services, and preventive rental assistance, New York City is doing more than ever to help keep families stable and in their communities."

"Homebase is our first line of defense against homelessness, connecting families to services that can help them during what is unquestionably a trying time," said **DSS Commissioner Steven Banks**. "The earlier we can reach families, even families who are not currently at risk, the better. We want every New Yorker to know we are here to help if you're in danger of losing your home."

"The Mayor's Public Engagement Unit works with families everyday who are able to remain stably housed because of the resources Homebase provides. Through these Days of Action across the city and our year round outreach efforts we are able to connect families to a wide range of resources the city has to offer and we see the benefits to many aspects of student and family life," said **Director of the Mayor's Public Engagement Unit Regina Schwartz**

“As a city, we must come together to build bridges between those impacted by homelessness and our community as a whole,” said **Brooklyn Borough President Eric L. Adams**. “As part of Brooklyn's Homelessness Awareness Month, I was proud to partner with DSS Commissioner Banks on today's Homebase Day of Action at schools across our borough. There are plenty of services out there, whether it is through the City, non-profit organizations, or houses of worship — people just need to know it is there. We have the power to make a difference in the lives of individuals and families affected by this issue, but it will take a collective effort to help alleviate the pain and start the healing process. We cannot rest until every Brooklynite and New Yorker feels like they have a safe place to rest at night, a safe place to raise healthy children and families.”

As part of this effort, the City will also make direct phone calls to 13,000 families identified as likely being unstably housed through a match of recent DOE and DSS data. The phone calls to the 13,000 families will raise awareness about Homebase services and will continue throughout the summer months.

“We need to be proactive and focused when it comes to making sure New Yorkers stay in their homes and off the streets,” said **Council Member Stephen Levin, Chair of the General Welfare Committee**. “That effort starts at the ground level, using data to identify communities with the greatest need and following up with personal engagement. Let’s meet people where they are. That’s the approach we’re seeing here today with the Administration’s commitment to meaningful outreach, and I hope we continue to build on these and other efforts in the future.”

"Child homelessness is a tragedy for our city and I am glad that the City of New York is taking proactive steps to reach families at risk of losing their homes. It is not enough to have services that city residents can access if they happen to know about them. Government should go into communities in need of these services and educate people about their rights and how to access them. I hope to see the City of New York take on more such innovative approaches to prevent homelessness," said **New York State Senator Marisol Alcántara**.

“The best solution we have to homelessness is to prevent it before families lose their homes. Resources are available, and this day of action will help make our city’s most vulnerable families more aware of these resources. My hope is that by coming together to inform and educate, we can save Staten Island families from entering our shelter system,” said **Council Member Debi Rose**.

"Homelessness is an issue that affects our community increasingly during the summer months. One of the major groups that suffer from homelessness is our youth. It affects their ability to concentrate and learn when such basic needs as shelter are not met. It is important to bring awareness to this issue and to have events like this one that are dedicated to prevent and provide information to these families that are at risk. I would like to thank the Mayor's Office and Homebase for hosting such an informative and crucial day of action," said **New York State Senator Jamaal Bailey**.

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