



Message from Commissioner

Cecile Noel

April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month

April is Sexual Assault Awareness month, and a very important part of this month is Denim Day. Denim Day is an annual event in which people are encouraged to wear blue jeans (denim) in order to raise awareness of rape and sexual assault. Denim Day NYC is a coalition of survivors, advocates, community organizations, city council members, and city agencies working together to raise awareness about sexual assault. Denim Day NYC hosts events throughout the year all around NYC to promote awareness about sexual assault and connect New Yorkers to resources. Since 2010, Denim Day NYC has hosted a rally and press conference in April to unite New Yorkers around the issue of sexual assault and show solidarity with survivors.

Why Denim?

In Rome in 1992, a 45-year-old driving instructor was charged with raping an 18-year-old female student during her first driving lesson. While the alleged rapist was convicted and sentenced, the Italian Supreme Court overturned the conviction in 1998 because the victim wore tight jeans. It was argued that she must have had to help her attacker remove her jeans, thus making the act consensual. The Italian Supreme Court stated in its decision "It is a fact of common experience that it is nearly impossible to slip off tight jeans even partly without the active collaboration of the person who is wearing them." As of 2008 the Italian Supreme Court has overturned their findings, and there is no longer a "denim" defense to the charge of rape.

What can you do?

On April 25th please encourage your staff and colleagues to wear denim, join the marches, attend the rally and post pictures supporting Denim Day by using the hashtags #DenimDayNYC #whatyoucansay #whatyoucando.

Participate in Denim Day On April 25th!

There are several events scheduled on Denim Day. See the list below.

Staten Island Borough Hall Call To Action

Tuesday, 4/24/2018, 1:00 pm

Staten Island Borough Hall, 10 Richmond Terrace, Staten Island, NY 10301

Community Health Action of Staten Island (CHASI) is partnering with the Richmond County District Attorney's Office for a Call to Action.

Theater Of War Presents *Tape*

Tuesday, 4/24/2018, 4:30 pm – 6:30 pm

YWCA of Brooklyn, 30 Third Ave., Brooklyn. Open to the public. Free.

Theater of War is a social impact theater project that uses dramatic readings of theater pieces as a catalyst for important community conversations. TAPE is a free, interactive performance of scenes from Stephen Belber's play TAPE, followed by discussions about consent, power dynamics, and sexual assault. These performances are designed to challenge individuals and communities to examine their own core values and pursue positive action.

Register at www.tapeywca.eventbrite.com

Staten Island Ferry Terminal Outreach

Wednesday, 4/25/18, 8:00 am – 10:00 am AND 3:00 pm – 6:00 pm.

Safe Horizon, Community Health Action of Staten Island (CHASI), the Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence, and many other advocacy organizations will be conducting outreach during morning and evening rush hour at the SI Ferry Terminal.

Denim Walk Across The Brooklyn Bridge

Wednesday, 4/25/18, 10:00 a.m.

Fashion Week Brooklyn organizers, models, and stylists will be meeting at Brooklyn Borough Hall and then marching across the Brooklyn Bridge to Foley Square in downtown Manhattan for the 12:00 Rally!

Rally Against Sexual Assault

Wednesday, 4/25/18, Noon

Foley Square - Worth Street, Centre Street, and Lafayette Street New York, NY 10013

Join survivors, students, performers, elected officials, and advocates for the annual rally against sexual assault. The focus of our rally is #WhatYouCanSay #WhatYouCanDo – how to support survivors and work to create a society free of sexual violence.

Denim Day Bronx March

Thursday, 4/26/18

Meet at 4:00 PM at Corner of Grand Concourse and Mt. Eden Parkway

March begins at 4:30 PM to New Settlement Community Center at 1501 Jerome Avenue, Second Floor. There will be a tabling event at New Settlement Community Center.

OCDV Announces New Youth Leadership Council

OCDV is excited to announce the launch of our Youth Leadership Council (YLC). The YLC will bring together young people from around New York City to lead the charge in raising awareness about Teen Dating Violence (TDV) and Healthy Relationships. The YLC members will work to engage their peers in discussions about TDV and Healthy Relationships to assess the needs and concerns of our young people. Armed with their insight, the YLC members will advise OCDV on programming and ensure that youth voices are heard. OCDV is currently accepting applications from young people, ages 13-18, from all boroughs of NYC. Applicants should have an interest in TDV, Healthy Relationships, community engagement, social change, policy work and/or peer education. Each YLC member will have the opportunity to gain meaningful experience while working to address the needs of their peers and their city. Apply [here](#).

OCDV Launches “Voices”, A New Survivor-led Leadership Group

This month, OCDV is launching VOICES, a survivor-led committee that works to inform policies and programs at OCDV and the FJCs and support survivor leadership, with its first meeting at the Manhattan FJC. Committee members will have the opportunity to provide a survivor’s perspective on the office’s programming initiatives, and outreach and training efforts. Members can also volunteer to speak to media and engage with current clients, sharing their stories of courage, hope, and empowerment. We will continue to recruit additional members who have received services at the FJCs, and are particularly interested in including groups that are under-represented in the current cohort, such as young people, men, and monolingual Spanish speakers.

If you have questions or would like to refer someone please contact Saloni Sethi at ssethi@ocdv.nyc.gov.

OCDV and John Jay announce The Hidden Crime: Covering Domestic Violence

This workshop for NYC-area journalists sponsored by John Jay College’s Center on Media, Crime and Justice, and OCDV will bring journalists covering justice, gender issues and related issues together with experts in the field of intimate partner violence. Up to 30 spaces are available for journalists to participate as Reporting Fellows in the two-day workshop, which will be held on the main John Jay campus at 524 W. 59th St. Successful applicants should be journalists in the tristate area working for U.S.-based publications (print, online and broadcast outlets), who cover politics, government affairs, health, crime, police, courts, and related topics. Freelance journalists are also eligible to apply. Apply [here](#).

Upcoming Trainings

Family Justice Center (FJC) Trainings and Workshops

Queens FJC

- **IPV in the LGBTQ + Community**

Facilitated by: OCDV Policy and Training Institute Staff and the New York City Anti-Violence Project (AVP)

Monday, April 23, 2018 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

The QFJC 126-02 82nd Avenue, Kew Gardens, NY 11415

Please register [here](#).

Staten Island FJC

- **Criminal Justice Response to Intimate Partner Violence**

Facilitated by New York City Police Department and

The Richmond County District Attorney's Office

Friday, April 20, 2018, 9:30 – 12:00 PM

- **Introduction to Family & Matrimonial Law**

Facilitated by New York Legal Assistance Group and Staten Island Legal Services

Monday, April 23, 2018, 10:00 – 1:00 PM

- **Introduction to Immigration Law**

Facilitated by New York Legal Assistance Group and Her Justice

Monday, April 23, 2018, 2:00 – 5:00 PM

- **Shelter Options for Intimate Partner Survivors**

Facilitated by Safe Horizon

Tuesday, April 24, 2018, 10:00 – 12:00 PM

- **Economic Empowerment for Victims of Intimate Partner Violence**

Facilitated by NYC Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence

Tuesday, April 24, 2018, 2:00 – 5:00 PM

- **Affordable Housing Options for Intimate Partner Violence Survivors**

Facilitated by New Destiny Housing, HousingLink

Thursday, April 26, 2018, 10:00 – 1:00 PM

[Register Here](#)

NY Times Profiles Survivors of Boko Haram

In a sweeping portrait, the New York Times profiles the lives of survivors of kidnappings in Nigeria by Boko Haram, a militia group. In 2014, Boko Haram abducted over 200 girls from a school in Nigeria. Intense international advocacy and interest led to the return of some of these women, and a popular hashtag--#BringBackOurGirls.

[Read more.](#)

Trump Signs Bill Amid Momentum to Crack Down on Trafficking

President Trump has signed new anti-sex trafficking legislation into law. The law, which passed Congress with near unanimous bipartisan support, will give prosecutors stronger tools to go after similar sites in the future and suspend liability protections for internet companies for the content on their sites.

[Read more.](#)

NYPD Pushes Back Against Calls to Reform Special Victims Division

At an oversight hearing examining the NYPD's response to sex crimes, the NYPD opposed all four bills introduced by the City Council in response to a Department of Investigation report released two weeks earlier.

[Read more.](#)

Domestic Violence A Common Trait Among Mass Shooters

An article examines the Parkland school shooting.

[Read more.](#) See the 2015 report [here](#).

Domestic Abusers Lethal for Cops

In 2017, more officers were shot responding to domestic violence than any other type of firearm-related fatality, according to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund.

[Read more.](#)

Twin Cities Housing Shortage Affects Survivors

Housing is the No. 1 need for domestic violence survivors, many leaving behind their only stable option for a home. In the Twin Cities, high rents and low vacancies have made it even tougher, advocates say.

[Read more.](#)

Fighting to Change the Perspective on Domestic Violence

An article discusses a conversation with administrators at Samaritan House, a shelter in Virginia Beach.

[Read more.](#)

A Women's Only Club Under Investigation by NYC's Human Rights Commission

Now, a year and a half after first opening in the Flatiron district of Manhattan, the Wing, a private club, is the subject of an investigation by the New York City Commission on Human Rights for possible discrimination violations.

[Read more.](#)

NYC Commission on Human Rights Launches New Sexual Harassment Campaign

The NYC Commission on Human Rights today launched a citywide ad campaign to combat sexual harassment in the workplace. The ads, which will run for six weeks, inform New Yorkers of their rights against sexual harassment and encourage people to report incidents to the Commission, a venue for justice that will investigate their claims.

See the press release [here.](#)

Ohio's Governor Signs Law Closing a Loophole for Survivors of Domestic Violence

Victims of dating violence now have legal protections in Ohio after Gov. John Kasich signed a bipartisan bill closing what some said was a gaping loophole in Ohio's domestic violence laws.

[Read more.](#)

In Illinois, specialized treatment of sexual assault patients could be mandated soon

Illinois legislators advanced a bill Tuesday that would require that hospitals provide a specially trained medical provider to treat sexual assault patients.

[Read more.](#)

Ulster County launches first-in-NY effort to reduce domestic violence by intimate partners

A local program that is the first of its kind in New York state aims to reduce domestic violence by working with offenders to keep them from repeating or escalating their behavior, while at the same time offering more support to victims.

[Read more.](#)