



## Message from Commissioner

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**Cecile Noel**

### **May is Mental Health Awareness Month**

May is National Mental Health Awareness Month, a time when advocates and activists across the country draw attention to the mental health issues that affect as many as one in four Americans. Unfortunately, because of the stigma associated with mental illness, many people are too ashamed or embarrassed to seek the help they need for themselves or their loved ones.

In New York City, First Lady Chirlane Mc Cray's THRIVENYC initiative is working to de-stigmatize mental illness by raising awareness about the prevalence of mental illness, the impacts on individuals and the resources available throughout the City. As part of THRIVE, Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) trainings provide proven practices that help individuals recognize the early signs and symptoms of mental illness and substance misuse. Participants learn how to listen without judgement, and respond to and help someone in distress until they can get the professional care they may need.

In addition, Mental Health First Aid USA instructor trainings teach individuals how to provide MHFA trainings through the completion of a five day course. Here at OCDV, there are four MHFA trainers, and since this initiative launched, they have trained more than 750 participants. To learn how to become a trainer or how to attend a MHFA training, click [here](#).

News/Events

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### **New York City Announces Ground-breaking Abusive Partner Intervention Program**

On May 2 at John Jay College, First Lady Chirlane McCray announced the City's investment in *Interrupting Violence at Home*, a groundbreaking initiative to implement interventions for abusive partners.

With these new programs, the City will:

- Create the first City-funded community-based program for abusive partners who are not involved in the criminal justice system. This groundbreaking trauma-informed program will be culturally and linguistically specific and will focus on both community and family accountability.

- Create the first City-funded trauma-informed and culturally-competent accountability program for teens who have demonstrated unhealthy relationships with intimate partners and/or family members. The program will create safe, age-appropriate environments that focus youth offending and adolescent development behaviors such as impulse control and emotion management.
- Incorporate Domestic Violence Coordinators at NYC Crisis Management System (CMS) sites to enhance the identification and response to domestic violence in communities served by CMS sites. The rate of domestic violence related calls to NYPD in the CMS precincts is 2.3 times higher than the rest of NYC.
- Work with an expert consultant to develop a blueprint for implementing restorative justice practices in community-based models to address domestic violence in NYC.
- Develop a specialized training curriculum to provide City agency staff working with offender populations with tools to understand offender risk factors, identify high levels of risk, and gain skills to engage with abusive partners.

See the press release [here](#).



First Lady Chirlane McCray announcing *Interrupting Violence at Home* as Deputy Mayor Herminia Palacio, Commissioner Cecile Noel, Quintin Walcott, Co-Executive Director of CONNECT, Purvi Shah, Consultant to the Interagency Working Group on Abusive Partners, and Eric Cumberbatch, Executive Director of the Mayor's Office to Prevent Gun Violence look on.

## **Mayor de Blasio Signs Legislation Strengthening Protections Against Sexual Harassment**

On May 9, 2018, Mayor de Blasio signed 11 bills to combat workplace sexual harassment. These bills mandate anti-sexual harassment trainings in the public and private sectors; make information about sexual harassment available so more New Yorkers know their rights; require sexual harassment data reporting from city agencies; and expand sexual harassment protections under the New York City Human Rights Law. See the press release [here](#).

### **OCDV'S Public Artist In Residence (PAIR): Ebony Golden**



The NYC Department of Cultural Affairs (DCLA) Public Artists in Residence (PAIR) is an experimental municipal residency program that embeds artists into city government agencies to propose and implement creative solutions to pressing civic challenges. Launched in the fall of 2015, PAIR takes its inspiration and its name from the pioneering work of artist Mierle Laderman Ukeles, the first official City agency artist-in-residence who has been with the New York City Department of Sanitation (DSNY) since 1977.

PAIR is based on the premise that artists are creative problem-solvers. Moving beyond politics and public relations, artists are able to create long-term and lasting impact by working collaboratively and in open-ended processes to build community bonds, open channels for two-way dialogue, and reimagine realities to create new possibilities for those who experience and participate in the work. OCDV was

thrilled to be included in a new cohort of agencies to have a PAIR, and in January announced the selection of Ebony Golden. Ms. Golden is an artist, scholar, and culture strategist from Houston, Texas.

As an artist, Ms. Golden stages site-specific rituals and live art performances that explore the complexities of freedom today. She lectures on contemporary black feminist, womanist, and experimental theatre of the African diaspora at The New School. Her current creative work, “125th & FREEdom”, is a public performance art project consisting of curated community events and a durational public performance comprised of ten interactive choreopoetic rituals staged along 125th Street between the Harlem and Hudson Rivers. The work is slated for a spring 2019 world premiere in NYC.

Currently, Ms. Golden is working with staff throughout OCDV to learn more about the agency’s programs and services and New York City’s approach to the delivery of domestic violence services, outreach, education and prevention. Since January, she has been attending workshops, visiting FJCs, and going to outreach events with OCDV and is currently working on a proposal for an original, collaborative, community-based art project that will culminate with a performance early next year.

### **NYC’s Earned Sick and Safe Time Act Now In Effect**

On May 5, 2018, New York City’s “Earned Sick and Safe Time Act,” which allows survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, human trafficking and stalking to use earned sick time to take time off of work to address immediate service and safety needs went into effect. It is critical for survivors to be able to maintain their economic and employment stability while also taking important steps to secure their safety.

This groundbreaking law makes New York City the first city to include this provision for survivors of human trafficking, and also expands the definition of “family” members that are covered under the law to include an individual’s chosen family NYC’s law and others like it in cities and states across the country is an important step forward in protecting and supporting victims of gender-based violence.

Many thanks to the OCDV team, and the NYC Department of Consumer Affairs for its partnership on drafting and advocating for this important legislation, in addition to the bill’s sponsor, former Councilmember Julissa Ferreras-Copeland.

See the press release [here](#).

### **OCDV and John Jay to host The Hidden Crime: Covering Domestic Violence workshop**

Last year, OCDV released a media guide for journalists, sharing information and strategies on how to enhance the quality of reporting that the media does on intimate partner violence. See the guide and resources [here](#).

In continuation of OCDV's efforts to raise awareness about how to strengthen reporting on IPV, on May 22-23, John Jay College's Center on Media, Crime and Justice and OCDV will host a workshop for NYC-area journalists covering justice, gender issues and related issues together with experts in the field of intimate partner violence. Spaces are still available for journalists to participate as Reporting Fellows at the two day symposium. Applicants can apply [here](#).

Participants include journalists in the tristate area working for U.S.-based print, online and broadcast publications, who cover politics, government affairs, health, crime, police, courts, and related topics.

## Upcoming Trainings

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### Family Justice Center (FJC) Trainings and Workshops

These workshops are geared towards service providers.

#### Manhattan Family Justice Center

- **Intimate Partner Violence**  
Facilitated by: Arab American Family Support Center  
Wednesday June 4, 10:00am —1:00 pm
- **Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression**  
Facilitated by: The NYC Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence  
Wednesday June 6, 10:00 am—1:00 pm
- **Risk Assessment and Safety Planning**  
Facilitated by: Safe Horizon  
Wednesday June 6, 2:00—4:00pm
- **Elder Abuse**  
Facilitated by: Carter Burden Network  
Thursday June 14, 10:00am—1:00 pm
- **Cultural Conversations: Tools for Supportive Practice**  
Facilitated by: Arab American Family Support Center  
Friday June 11, 10:00am—12:00pm

To register, please email Indhira Castro at [IndhiraC@fjcnyc.org](mailto:IndhiraC@fjcnyc.org). Trainings are held at the Manhattan Family Justice Center, 80 Centre Street, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor.

#### Staten Island FJC

- **Overdose Prevention Training**  
Facilitated by: Planned Parenthood  
Friday, May 25, 2018, 11:00 am—12:00 pm  
The Staten Island Family Justice Center, 126 Stuyvesant Place, Staten Island  
Contact [JaneiraB@fjcnyc.org](mailto:JaneiraB@fjcnyc.org) to register.

## **NY Times Article Examines The Challenges of Divorce for Survivors of Domestic Violence**

An in-depth article examines the difficulties survivors of domestic violence have getting divorces.

[Read more](#)

## **Four Women Accused New York's Attorney General of Physical Abuse**

Eric Schneiderman resigns after allegations of abuse surface.

[Read more](#)

## **NY Times Article Explores Consent on College Campuses**

An article shares stories from college students about consent in relationships while in college.

[Read more](#)

## **Churches Can No Longer Hide Domestic Violence**

A New York Times article explores why churches should do more to protect survivors.

[Read more](#)

## **The de Blasio's Administration's Progress on Mental Health Programming**

An article examines the de Blasio Administration's THRIVE program after the death of a mentally ill man.

[Read more](#)

## **Mayor de Blasio Signs Sexual Harassment Laws**

Mayor Bill de Blasio on Wednesday signed 11 bills that aim to bolster protections against sexual harassment — both for municipal and private employees.

[Read more](#)

## **Identifying Survivors of Domestic Violence**

An article on an interview with Dr. Mayumi Okuda, MD, a practicing psychiatrist and assistant professor of psychiatry at Columbia University Medical Center.

[Read more](#)