



Message from Commissioner

Cecile Noel

July is National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month

Since the U.S. House of Representatives announced the commemoration in 2008, July has been National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month. July seeks to especially enhance public awareness for the unique experiences of a diverse range of underrepresented groups and mental health. This can include racial, ethnic, cultural, and religious minorities, as well as LGBTQI and refugee or immigrant groups. In a city with over 8.5 million inhabitants, where more than different 800 different languages are spoken, it is estimated that one in five New Yorkers are dealing with a mental health disorder. Survivors of intimate partner violence have significantly higher rates of adverse mental health outcomes, including post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Due to the stigma associated with mental illness, people can be ashamed or embarrassed to seek the help needed—for themselves, or their loved ones. Compounded by the challenges of getting help in your own language or in a culturally competent manner, and the hurdles for those in need to get help can increase exponentially.

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. Part of the ThriveNYC initiative, Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) trainings provide proven practices to help individuals recognize early signs and symptoms of mental illness and substance misuse. Trainings are available to all New Yorkers in English, Spanish, or Mandarin—as a way to better support friends, family members, or co-workers. Participants can 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, we have over 745 staff members and partner staff trained to date, and four certified MHFA trainers on staff who can provide both Youth and Adult trainings. OCDV is committed to being part of helping change the culture around mental health. [Learn how to attend MHFA, or become a trainer, on the Department of Health and Mental Health website.](#)

For more immediate resources, New Yorkers can connect with NYC Well by phone, text, or online chat. At any hour of any day, in over 200 languages, individuals can reach out to NYC Well for help with: suicide prevention and crisis counseling; peer support and short-term counseling via telephone, text and web; and help scheduling appointments or accessing other mental health services. NYC Well Counselors are trained to accept calls from deaf and hard of hearing individuals using video relay services.

Happy 2nd Anniversary to Staten Island FJC

Our Staten Island Family Justice Center team celebrated a banner year with over 6,000 client visits, more than 1,900 clients served, and almost 200 community trainings and events for the Staten Island community—all in collaboration with over 35 valued partners. Cheers to our tireless staff and staff partners for working together to provide a safe, caring space for Staten Islanders in need of services.

Anabella Escobar, Executive Director of MFJC, Speaks to Univision

Following U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions' recent decision the *Matter of A-B-*, OCDV's Anabella Escobar speaks to Mariela Salgado about domestic violence. [See the story on Univision.](#)

U.N. Human Rights Council Report Released

The United Nations released a Report of the Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. [View the full report.](#)

Upcoming Trainings

Family Justice Center (FJC) Trainings and Workshops

At Brooklyn FJC:

- **Intimate Partner Violence Dialogues**
Monday, July 16
10:00 AM - 1:00 PM
Facilitated by: Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence
- **Elder Abuse**
Monday, July 16
2:00 – 5:00 PM
Facilitated by: New York City Elder Abuse Center (NYCEAC)
- **Risk Assessment & Safety Planning**
Wednesday, July 18
10:00 AM – 1:00 PM
Facilitated by: Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence and the King's County DA's Office
- **Engaging Trauma Survivors**
Thursday, July 19
10:00 AM – 1:00 PM
Facilitated by: Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence
- **Cultural Conversations**
Thursday, July 19

2:00 – 5:00 PM

Facilitated by: Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence & the NYC Anti-Violence Project

- **Sex Trafficking**

Wednesday, July 25

10:00 AM – 1:00 PM

Facilitated by: The Metropolitan Council on Jewish Poverty & Kings County District Attorney's Office

Email Joscelyn at JoscelynT@fjcnyc.org for information and to register.

At Staten Island FJC:

- **Mental Health First Aid Training**

Tuesday, July 24

9:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Location: 126 Stuyvesant Place, Training Room

Facilitated by: Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence

[Sign up for this Mental Health First Aid Training](#)

Articles

More Vets Who Are Coping With PTSD From Sexual Assaults Get Honorable Discharges

[See the full story on NPR.](#)

Victims Of Domestic Abuse Have A High Risk For PTSD. [Watch the story on Newsy's "The Day Ahead".](#)

The Trump Administration Quietly Defunded Legal Services For Trafficking Victims

The move comes just two months after Trump signed the controversial FOSTA-SESTA anti-trafficking bill. [Read the full story at the Huffington Post.](#)

Lawsuits Allege Misconduct at Agencies Taking in Unaccompanied Minors

Court documents detail sexual and physical abuse of foster kids. [Read the full story on DocumentedNY.](#)

Why domestic abuse and anti-gay violence qualify as persecution in asylum law

[Read the full story in the Chicago Tribune](#)

NYC's new housing lottery guidelines aim to protect vulnerable New Yorkers

The new rules seek to protect survivors of domestic abuse, and improve access for low-income New Yorkers. [Read the full story at CurbedNY.](#)

New York City will be home to one of the first specifically pet-friendly domestic violence shelters. [Read the full story in Parade Magazine.](#)

Researchers put together a resource list for victims of smart home-aided domestic abuse

The creators say it will be regularly updated. [Read the full story at The Verge.](#)

Disclaimer: Opinions expressed in the content of this communication or in articles linked do not necessarily reflect the positions or policies of the NYC Mayor’s Office to Combat Domestic Violence.

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