



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES, MAYOR'S OFFICE TO
COMBAT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND MAYOR'S OFFICE OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE
ANNOUNCE NEW PROTOCOL TO HELP IDENTIFY AND INTERVENE IN
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CASES**

Under the new protocol, families in high-risk cases who are receiving prevention services will be screened for risk factors and develop safety plans

New York, NY – The New York City Administration for Children's Services (ACS), Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence and Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice today announced a significant expansion of services to protect families at risk of, or experiencing, domestic violence. ACS is now using a new protocol to help identify and intervene in domestic violence situations, where families are receiving supportive services through ACS but are not subjects of active child-protection investigations. Families who are involved in investigations already receive domestic violence screening and intervention when needed. The new protocol is a recommendation from the NYC Domestic Violence Task Force.

Under the new protocol, ACS' Investigative Consultants (retired NYPD detectives) will expand their scope beyond investigations, to work on cases with families receiving prevention services from ACS – supportive services to address potential risks to children – when three criteria are met:

- There are domestic-violence risk factors and/or criminal history;
- A new adult has been added to the household and has taken on a caretaker role; and
- There are children under 7 years of age in the household.

The Investigative Consultants will work with ACS prevention staff and provider agencies to obtain background checks of the new person in the household to identify any domestic violence history, and develop a safety assessment of the family. Prevention service providers will then have comprehensive information to engage the family in creating a safety plan and services consistent with that plan, including domestic violence advocacy and prevention services. ACS' Investigative Consultants often handled domestic violence cases for years as NYPD detectives, and most have worked on domestic violence cases at ACS for several years, in active child-protection investigations.

The new protocol is one of 32 recommendations from the NYC Task Force on Domestic Violence, which Mayor Bill de Blasio launched in November 2016. The Task Force is co-chaired by First Lady Chirlane McCray and NYPD Commissioner James O’Neill, and co-led by Commissioner of the Mayor’s Office to Combat Domestic Violence Cecile Noel and Director of the Mayor’s Office of Criminal Justice Elizabeth Glazer.

“All of our children deserve a safe and healthy emotional start in life,” said **First Lady Chirlane McCray, Co-Chair of the Domestic Violence Task Force**. “That is why the City of New York is investing in early intervention measures to ensure that children are raised in safe, supportive environments. I commend ACS and the partner agencies for making the emotional and physical well-being of our youngest New Yorkers a priority by taking a public health approach to breaking the cycle of domestic violence.”

“ACS’s new protocol and expansion of services will help connect more domestic violence survivors to the resources and support they need to keep their families safe,” said **Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services Dr. Herminia Palacio**. “The consequences of domestic violence permeate through families and communities, and I applaud ACS, OCDV, MOCJ, and the Domestic Violence Task Force for their ongoing work.”

“This new protocol will help families get the information and tools they need to get out of a violent situation or prevent it from happening in the first place,” said **ACS Commissioner David A. Hansell**. “Data and experience tell us that the risk of violence can increase after a new adult partner moves into a home with young children. This protocol elevates our highest-risk cases for a much closer look, with the partnership of experts in law enforcement, child welfare, and preventive services. This is consistent with our effort to reach vulnerable families pro-actively with services they may need, independent of our investigative process.”

“Through the Domestic Violence Task Force, New York City is enhancing its commitment to the prevention of domestic violence,” said **Cecile Noel, Commissioner of the Mayor’s Office to Combat Domestic Violence**. “This initiative will ensure that child protective staff have even more tools to help children and families safe. This is a great step forward in our efforts, as we know that prevention is the best way to eradicate domestic violence.”

“This new protocol will help keep the youngest New Yorkers and their families safe in their homes,” said **Elizabeth Glazer, Director of the Mayor’s Office of Criminal Justice**. “Because domestic violence often happens behind closed doors, and affects not only the victim but everyone in the household we must knit together both sharp crime reduction tools and evidence-based interventions. This approach offers the greatest promise of interrupting cycles of domestic violence, implementing smart prevention and ensuring that victims are protected and abusers are held accountable.”

The true prevalence of domestic violence is unknown because it is underreported, but recent ACS data showed that 44 percent of families receiving prevention services had risk factors for domestic violence.

ACS provided 20,000 families in New York City with prevention services last year. These include substance abuse treatment, mental health counseling, and resources for education and job training. ACS contracts with nonprofit service providers who deliver services to families.

About the New York City Administration for Children’s Services:

The Administration for Children’s Services (ACS) protects and promotes safety and well-being of New York City’s children and families by providing child welfare, juvenile justice, and early care and education services. In child welfare, ACS contracts with private nonprofit organizations to support and stabilize families at risk of a crisis through preventive services, and provides foster care services for children not able to safely remain at home. ACS is aggressively implementing a [Foster Care Strategic Blueprint](#) to improve outcomes for children in foster care. The overall number of children in foster care continued to decline, among other significant progress made to improve case practice and outcomes for children and families in the foster care system. In juvenile justice, ACS manages and funds services including detention and placement, intensive community-based alternatives for youth, and support services for families. In early care and education, ACS coordinates and funds programs and vouchers for close to 100,000 children eligible for subsidized care.

For more information about NYC ACS, please visit www.nyc.gov/acs

About the NYC Domestic Violence Task Force

The NYC Domestic Violence Task Force, launched in November 2016 by Mayor Bill de Blasio, is charged with developing a coordinated, citywide strategy to address one of the most urgent challenges facing New York City. The City announced an initial investment of \$7 million with the [Domestic Violence Task Force Recommendations](#), which brings the city’s total investment in preventing and combating domestic violence to nearly \$11 million in 2017.

For more information about NYC OCDV, please visit www.nyc.gov/domesticviolence

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