



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
OFFICE TO COMBAT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

*****PRESS RELEASE*****

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MAYOR'S OFFICE UNVEILS THE *THAT'S ABUSE* PUBLIC AWARENESS CAMPAIGN TO FIGHT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Citywide Outreach Effort Encourages Victims of Abuse to Seek Help

Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence Commissioner Yolanda B. Jimenez today unveiled a multi-layered public service campaign that harnesses survivors' own words to empower other victims of intimate partner violence to seek the help they need. *That's Abuse* will appear on subway platforms and in bus shelters, subway cars, grocery store circulars, and common areas at numerous City agencies, and with community-based organizations and businesses throughout key neighborhoods.

"Recognizing warning signs of abuse is key to preventing violence before it escalates, and this campaign serves as a reminder that there is help," said Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg. "Our City's top priority is to increase awareness of this crime and help victims of domestic violence get the tools they need, including safe housing, eviction prevention, financial and job skills coaching -- to end the cycle of violence."

That's Abuse lets victims know that they can call 311 or the New York City Domestic Violence Hotline to be connected to domestic violence services, including at the New York City Family Justice Centers. These Centers are part of the Bloomberg Administration's overall effort to reduce domestic violence and provide comprehensive services to victims. As a result of the City's focus on this issue, family-related crimes have declined by 16% since 2001; and family-related homicides have decreased by 22% year-to-date through September 22, 2013.

"Abuse comes in many forms; domestic violence is not only about being hit or physically hurt, it's an insidious cycle of control and manipulation that leaves victims feeling, in their own words, 'broken and humiliated,'" said Yolanda B. Jimenez, Commissioner of the Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence. "But victims are not alone, and help is only a phone call away."

This citywide campaign seeks to connect with victims through words and images that capture the emotional impact of abuse. Survivors of domestic violence who helped develop the campaign identified strongly with the message, and said they hoped it would empower others to both recognize abuse in their relationships and to take the necessary steps to get help for themselves and their families.

(more)

That's Abuse was unveiled at the start of Domestic Violence Awareness Month during the 13th Annual Brides' March – an annual event which began in New York City in 2001 to remember Gladys Ricart, a Dominican woman from Washington Heights who was murdered in New Jersey by a former abusive boyfriend on September 26, 1999, the day she was to wed someone else.

“Scores of women and men, families affected by domestic violence, and advocates gather every September 26, rain or shine, to memorialize the many victims who have lost their lives to domestic violence,” said Grace Perez, Brides' March Coordinator. “Domestic violence is preventable and so we thank the City for launching *That's Abuse* so that we may continue to work together to prevent these tragedies.”

That's Abuse also features a video and radio public service announcement that will air over various television and broadcast stations throughout the five boroughs. Beginning on September 26, staff from the Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence, New York City police officers, and teams of volunteers will also be deployed to neighborhoods with a high incidence of domestic violence, including homicides, to hang posters, distribute palm cards, and give presentations to local residents and business owners. This grassroots effort will assure that the campaign will reach New Yorkers in multiple locations over the course of their day, including community-based clinics, libraries, colleges, and supermarkets. The campaign is funded through the Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City, a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization dedicated to aiding innovative City initiatives.

In addition, *That's Abuse* includes an international component – the campaign will be distributed through social media to reach an even wider audience.

The campaign is a concept developed and produced by Bandujo advertising + design. Additionally, Bandujo is supporting the efforts of the Mayor's Office by producing the PSA pro bono and providing staff volunteers to assist with the grassroots outreach.

About the Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence

The Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence (OCDV) formulates policies and programs, monitors the citywide delivery of domestic violence services, and works with diverse communities to increase awareness of domestic violence. OCDV operates three New York City Family Justice Centers in the Bronx, Brooklyn and Queens, and will open a fourth Center in Manhattan this year. A fifth Center in Staten Island is already in its planning stage.

At these one-stop service centers, clients can meet with a specially trained prosecutor and receive civil legal representation, assistance with filing police reports and orders of protection, legal advice on divorce and custody issues and federal immigration remedies, apply for emergency housing, safety planning services, counseling, health care referrals, English as a Second Language classes, self-sufficiency services including resume assistance and job training, and language interpretation – all while their children play safely in the next room.

To date, the three Centers have assisted over 94,000 clients.

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