

## Message from the Staten Island Family Justice Center



(From left: Deputy Mayor for Health & Human Services Herminia Palacio, Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence Commissioner Cecile Noel, New York City First Lady Chirlane McCray, and Council Member Debi Rose officially open the Staten Island Family Justice Center on Wednesday, June 29<sup>th</sup>, 2016.)

Wednesday, June 29<sup>th</sup>, 2016 marked the official opening of New York City's fifth Family Justice Center, an important day for survivors of domestic violence, elder abuse and sex trafficking in Staten Island. NYC First Lady Chirlane McCray joined Office to Combat Domestic Violence Commissioner Cecile Noel on a tour of the center and kicked off the opening. Also in attendance were Deputy Mayor Herminia Palacio, Borough President James Oddo, District Attorney Michael McMahon, U.S. Congressman Daniel Donovan, Councilmember Debi Rose, State Assemblyman Mathew Titone, and Department of Design and Construction Commissioner Feniosky Pena-Mora.

Visitors to the center can simply walk in and receive a variety of services regardless of income,

language, immigration status, gender identity or sexual orientation. Free and confidential services available are offered by our community-based organization partners and include case management, counseling for adults and children, civil legal services, immigration services, risk assessment and safety planning. All of these are available under one roof, in order for clients to safely and comfortably navigate sometimes complex systems. Co-located with the Richmond County District Attorney's Office, survivors can meet with an Assistant District Attorney, receive services and have their children cared for in a safe and secure environment.

In addition to the services provided at the Staten Island Family Justice Center, OCDV promotes continued wellness and education for clients and staff alike. Wellness programs such as yoga and transcendental meditation will be offered to clients and staff. Promoting these wellness programs will not only positively impact survivors but also create a positive and healthy work environment. The better the staff cares for themselves the better they will be able to care for others.

Survivors of intimate partner violence not only need assistance in seeking safety, shelter, and security, but also are in need of long term sustainability. To assist in those efforts, the Staten Island Family Justice Center will provide ongoing counseling and therapy services. In addition, clients can participate in financial literacy and empowerment courses, English classes, and receive guidance with job-training opportunities and financial public assistance.

OCDV will continue to ensure that we reach all communities in Staten Island to let them know that they are not alone. In order to accomplish this, the SIFJC will continue to expand what is already a prominent outreach presence. In collaboration with our community partners, the Staten Island Family Justice Center staff will make sure that the North Shore, South Shore, and Mid-Island are all aware of the resources available at the Center. Over the summer, we will be in the community conducting outreach at events such as Staten Island PrideFest, Back to the Beach, Staten Island's Sunset Summer Concert Series and National Night Out. And we will continue to work with local faith leaders and city officials to make sure every community knows that the Family Justice Center is open for business.

We could not be here, open to the public, without the support of the Mayor's Office, the District Attorney's Office, our local elected officials, the city agencies who worked on designing and constructing the center, the NYPD, and the community partners who help staff and support the family justice centers across the city. The residents of Staten Island can now take comfort that help is available.

SIFJC Details:

126 Stuyvesant Place  
Staten Island, NY 10301  
(718) 697-4301  
Walk in Monday through Friday, 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM

Executive Director Darren Albanese  
Deputy Director Alison Francis-Lord  
Director of Programs and Community Partnerships Janeira Bencosme-Gil



Host a workshop on teen dating violence and healthy relationships with OCDV's NYC Healthy Relationship Training Academy. Submit your request through our online [workshop request form](#) or call the Academy at 212-788-2516.

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## Upcoming OCDV Events & Trainings

**\*Please note that Family Justice Center trainings are geared toward service providers and professionals.**

### **BRONX:**

#### **Mental Health First Aid Training**

*Facilitated by Hakeem Rahim, a Mental Health Awareness Expert, Author, and Advocate, and Margarita Guzman, Executive Director of the New York City Family Justice Center, Bronx*  
Tuesday, July 19<sup>th</sup>, 9:00 a.m.-5:00p.m.

NYC Family Justice Center, Bronx  
198 E. 161<sup>st</sup> Street, Second Floor

To register, please [click here](#). (Registration closed, please stay tuned for more opportunities)

#### **Assessing & Responding to Suicidality: Tools & Practices for Providers**

*Facilitated by Mayumi Okuda Benavides, MD, Chapman Perelman Fellow in Psychiatry, Bronx Family Justice Center / Columbia University Medical Center*  
Wednesday, July 6<sup>th</sup>, 2:30-4:00 p.m.

NYC Family Justice Center, Bronx  
198 E. 161<sup>st</sup> Street, Second Floor

To register, please [click here](#). (Registration closed, please stay tuned for more opportunities)

#### **CLE Training: Trauma-informed Legal Interviewing (for attorneys)**

*Facilitated by Lynly Egyes, Esq., from the Sex Workers Project at the Urban Justice Center and Josie Torielli, LCSW, from the New York City Alliance Against Sexual Assault*  
Tuesday, July 26<sup>th</sup> – Thursday, July 28<sup>th</sup>, 1:00-2:00 p.m. each day

NYC Family Justice Center, Bronx  
198 E. 161<sup>st</sup> Street, Second Floor

To register, please [click here](#).

### **MANHATTAN:**

#### **Special Immigrant Juvenile Status**

*Facilitated by Sanctuary for Families*  
Monday, July 18<sup>th</sup>, 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

NYC Family Justice Center, Manhattan  
80 Centre Street, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor

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To register, please [click here](#).

**NYC Shelter Systems: What You Need to Know**

*Facilitated by NYC Human Resources Administration & Department of Homeless Services*

Tuesday, July 19<sup>th</sup>, 2:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m.

NYC Family Justice Center, Manhattan

80 Centre Street, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor

To register, please [click here](#).

**Animal Abuse & Domestic Violence**

*Facilitated by Urban Resource Institute*

Wednesday, July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m.

NYC Family Justice Center, Manhattan

80 Centre Street, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor

To register, please [click here](#).

**STATEN ISLAND:**

**NYC Shelter Systems: What You Need to Know**

*Facilitated by NYC Human Resources Administration & Department of Homeless Services*

Thursday, July 21<sup>st</sup>, 2:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m.

NYC Family Justice Center, Staten Island

126 Stuyvesant Place

To register, please [click here](#).

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## Top News Stories from June

### Center for Domestic Violence Opens on Staten Island (Video)

It's the first center of its kind on Staten Island, providing a lifeline for victims of domestic violence. "Welcome to the brand New Staten Island Family Justice Center," applauded First Lady Chirlane McCray. The Center officially opened Wednesday, a place for survivors of violence, sex trafficking and other forms of abuse to get immediate help. First Lady Chirlane McCray toured the facility and met with a victim, Anastasia Martin. Services include counseling, childcare and legal aid. There are no beds here, but for women who need a place to stay, that's arranged, too. The Staten Island Family Justice Center is a free walk-in center that will offer confidential help. Officials want victims to know everyone is welcome.

[Read more](#)

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## **Staten Island D.A. McMahon Creates Domestic Violence Bureau**

Staten Island District Attorney Michael E. McMahon announced the creation of a Domestic Violence Bureau to tackle the spike in domestic incidents and arrests. The new bureau will allow prosecutors to more sharply focus on domestic violence cases, help victims get the resources they need both inside and outside of the judicial system, and keep the same attorney on the case from start to finish.

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## **Supreme Court Says No to Guns for Domestic Batterers**

Should domestic abusers who get convicted of minor domestic-violence charges get to keep their right to own guns just because their crimes were merely reckless, as opposed to premeditated? That's more or less the question the Supreme Court was considering in *Voisine v. US*, a somewhat obscure case that was languishing on the court's docket as one of the last cases decided of the term. In a 6-2 opinion written by Justice Elena Kagan, the high court answered that question with a muted "no."

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## **Emotional Abuse Can Be Hard To Recognize**

Abuse isn't always physical, and it isn't always obvious. This

## **National Domestic Violence Hotline Gets Major Upgrade**

The National Domestic Violence Hotline helps

heart-wrenching video shows how emotional abuse can be excused and unrecognized, even by the person directly affected.

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thousands of people across the country, but its cramped facilities weren't matching its growing needs. The Hotline is making big changes, and is now in a brand new building after 20 years in its original, cramped location. With the upgrade, the Austin-based organization has doubled its service capacity. A much needed boost, especially since more than 100,000 contacts went unanswered last year due to lack of resources.

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## **Control and Fear: What Mass Killings and Domestic Violence Have in Common**

One of the first things we learned about Omar Mateen, the gunman in the nightclub massacre in Orlando, Fla., was that his ex-wife said he had beaten her severely until she left him in 2009. If it sounds familiar that a gunman in a mass shooting would have a history of domestic violence, it should. When Everytown for Gun Safety, a gun control group, analyzed

## **5 Mind-Boggling Stats About Guns and Violence Every Woman Needs to Know**

As the gun regulation debate rages on, it's crucial to remember that gun violence is a women's issue, especially considering the fact that 50 percent of victims in mass shootings between January 2009 and July 2015 were women. Curious about the devastating effects gun violence has on women? Here are five shocking facts that every woman

F.B.I. data on mass shootings from 2009 to 2015, it found that 57 percent of the cases included a spouse, former spouse or other family member among the victims — and that 16 percent of the attackers had previously been charged with domestic violence.

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should know.

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## **Elder Mistreatment: Are You Safe At Home?**

Are you safe at home? It's a simple question that social workers, nurses, physicians, emergency medical technicians, and indeed all health care providers need to ask their older patients every time they see them. Why? Because that simple question can be a crucial first step toward identifying potential elder mistreatment. Adding the syndrome of elder mistreatment to a patient's history and physical exam is crucial, because elder mistreatment is a serious, common, and sometimes fatal problem that is easily missed unless astute clinicians are assessing for it.

## **Man Charged With Murder for Allegedly Driving His Partner to Suicide**

For approximately 10 years, Minnesota authorities say, Jessica Haban was physically and emotionally abused by her partner. Long Vang, 34, allegedly smashed her head into a washing machine, tossed her into the wall by her hair, held a knife to her throat, and in May 2015, punched her in the head with a closed fist, causing a traumatic brain injury. Haban was hospitalized on three occasions, but never stayed long. She was afraid of losing custody of her kids — which, according to a social worker, is what

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Vang told her would happen if she continued receiving care. On December 16, 2015, three days after being discharged from the hospital, Haban killed herself at age 28. Earlier this month, in a surprising move, authorities arrested Vang and charged him with murder for allegedly driving his partner to take her own life.

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