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NYC CHILDREN'S CABINET BABY SHOWERS SERIES CONTINUES IN HARLEM

NEW YORK—The NYC Children's Cabinet Baby Showers series continued in Harlem on Saturday with a special focus on fathers and male caregivers. This is the second of ten free baby showers to provide families with practical items like diapers, clothing and baby supplies across the five boroughs.

Hundreds of families who attended the baby shower connected with City and community support programs, such as registering for a library card, IDNYC, or child care services, and learned about the Safe Sleep for Babies program and maternal and child health resources in local communities.

"Fathers have such an important role in helping their children grow up healthy and strong," said **First Lady Chirlane McCray**. "I was lucky to have a father who took me and my two sisters to every playground in our town. And those moments were so special. Now we know that those moments between fathers and children – talking about the best playgrounds or sharing instructions on how to swing a baseball bat – help set up kids for future success. We want to encourage fathers to make talking, reading and singing, which build up children's brains and strengthen family bonds, a part of their everyday routine."

"I know how much a father's love affects a child's self-esteem, independence, emotional responsiveness, and more," said **Deputy Mayor for Strategic Policy Initiatives Richard Buery, Chair of the NYC Children's Cabinet**. "It is in our city's best interest to help our fathers find the tools and resources they need to be the best parents they can be. We're on a mission to make New York City the best big city in America to raise children, and it begins with parents and caregivers."

In 2016, more than 100,000 babies will be born across NYC. The showers are part of the Cabinet's "Talk to Your Baby" campaign, which promotes language acquisition, parent-child attachment and healthy brain development by encouraging parents to talk, read and sing to their babies from birth. Developed with support from the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, the campaign's partners include Scholastic, Inc., The Clinton Foundation and Sesame Street.

NYC Children's Cabinet Executive Director Benita Miller said, "The City of New York offers a wonderful array of resources and services for families, but too many are not aware. With

our Baby Showers series, we are bringing this valuable information directly to communities. Today, our fathers are at the heart of our celebration so that they are better prepared to raise and nurture our newest New Yorkers.”

“Being a parent is probably the most important work we do and there is very little preparation for this work,” said **Willie Tolliver, Professor at the Silberman School of Social Work at Hunter College**. “Taking the time to support parents in understanding this important role is a remarkable gift that our city is performing. Supporting parents makes for better outcomes for children.”

Future baby showers will include events tailored to young parents, Spanish-speaking parents and caregivers and LGBTQ families. Space is limited, so parents and caregivers must RSVP in advance upon receipt of an invitation. They can sign up for invitations to future baby showers [here](#). Parents and caregivers are eligible to attend if they are currently expecting a child or have a child under one-year-old.

The NYC Children's Cabinet is a multiagency initiative created by Mayor Bill de Blasio to bolster communication and coordination among City agencies and provide a space to identify and analyze individual and common areas of work that impact child safety and wellbeing. The Cabinet is chaired by Deputy Mayor for Strategic Policy Initiatives Richard Buery and is comprised of commissioners and directors from 24 City agencies and Mayoral offices.

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