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**FIRST LADY CHIRLANE MCCRAY ANNOUNCES GROUNDBREAKING CITY
INITIATIVE TO INTERVENE IN AND REDUCE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

New \$3.3 million investment in community programs designed to work with abusive partners who have not been involved in the criminal justice system to impact behavior change, reduce future abuse and enhance survivor safety

NEW YORK—Today, First Lady Chirlane McCray announced Interrupting Violence At Home, a groundbreaking citywide effort to address domestic violence through services, training, and intervention for abusive partners who are not involved in the criminal justice system.

Recognizing that the vast majority of domestic violence is not reported to law enforcement, the City's \$3.3 million investment leverages national research and evidence-informed intervention models to address abusive behavior and reduce future abuse in intimate partner violence relationships. This groundbreaking initiative, which is the first of its kind in the country, will have the capacity to reach 1,600 individuals across all five boroughs.

“Any kind of violence is unacceptable. But as we keep survivors and families safe, we must also do everything we can to intervene directly with their abusive partners,” said **First Lady Chirlane McCray, co-chair of the Domestic Violence Task Force and the Commission on Gender Equity**. One of the tragic truths underlying domestic violence is that many offenders have themselves been victims of violence and abuse. Hurt people hurt people. But with this program, we will employ new methods of intervening, long before a call to 911.”

“With today's announcement New York City is taking another monumental step towards protecting more victims of domestic violence,” said **Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services Dr. Herminia Palacio**. “This approach will be the first of its kind to stop and prevent domestic violence, to provide a new and additional service, keeping more families together. I am proud to be a part of an administration that has this as a top priority.”

With these new programs, the City will:

- Create the first City-funded community-based program for abusive partners who are not involved in the criminal justice system. This groundbreaking trauma-informed program

will be culturally and linguistically specific and will focus on both community and family accountability.

- Create the first City-funded trauma-informed and culturally-competent accountability program for teens who have demonstrated unhealthy relationships with intimate partners and/or family members. The program will create safe, age-appropriate environments that focus youth offending and adolescent development behaviors such as impulse control and emotion management.
- Incorporate Domestic Violence Coordinators at NYC Crisis Management System (CMS) sites to enhance the identification and response to domestic violence in communities served by CMS sites. The rate of domestic violence related calls to NYPD in the CMS precincts is 2.3 times higher than the rest of NYC.
- Work with an expert consultant to develop a blueprint for implementing restorative justice practices in community-based models to address domestic violence in NYC.
- Develop a specialized training curriculum to provide City agency staff working with offender populations with tools to understand offender risk factors, identify high levels of risk, and gain skills to engage with abusive partners.

In New York City, between 2010 and 2016, the NYPD had previous contact with the victim and the offender in only 39 percent of the intimate partner homicides. A key focus of the Interrupting Violence at Home program will be creating a baseline of information regarding the identification, engagement and intervention of abusive partners outside of the criminal justice system. This information is critical in order to continue to drive down domestic violence incidents and enhance accountability for the abusive partners as well as survivor safety.

“Interrupting Violence at Home is a ground-breaking addition to the services New York City provides to families impacted by domestic violence”, said **Cecile Noel, Commissioner of the Mayor’s Office to Combat Domestic Violence**. “This program will provide trauma informed, non-criminal justice, community-based options for abusers that hold them accountable. With this initiative, New York City continues to position itself as a leader on best practices in domestic violence services and programming.”

“Trauma and violence are too often repeated by the people who have lived through it, which is precisely why prevention is so critical. Stopping violent behavior as early as possible can change the trajectory of entire families and the investments announced today will be transformative,” said **Eric Cumberbatch, the Executive Director of the Mayor’s Office to Prevent Gun Violence**.

“New York City is now the safest big city in the nation precisely because we are willing to approach problems from multiple angles,” said **Elizabeth Glazer, Director of the Mayor’s Office of Criminal Justice**. “We can find justice for victims of domestic violence while also working with people at risk of committing abuse in order to change behavior and prevent future crises and trauma. The City’s Crisis Management System is a pioneering public safety model

that has been proven to work on the streets of New York and we are confident that once expanded to include domestic violence outreach this approach will make people even safer in their homes.”

Earlier this year, First Lady McCray launched New York City's first-ever, web-based portal, NYC HOPE, dedicated to providing resources to survivors and information to all City residents about how to help someone experiencing domestic violence. At that time, the City also unveiled its first domestic violence awareness campaign in more than a decade, "We Understand" – developed in conjunction with advocates and survivors to speak to the complexities of abusive relationships, highlight the availability of support and services in New York City, and share diverse testimonials from survivors of intimate partner violence.

In October 2017, the First Lady also announced the expansion of healthy relationship education programming to 128 middle schools across the City, the creation of supervised visitation sites for survivors with children, and the implementation of new supports to help keep survivors safe in their own homes.

Further, initiated through the recommendations of the [NYC Domestic Violence Task Force](#), which is co-chaired by First Lady McCray and NYPD Commissioner O’Neill and co-lead by the Mayor’s Office of Criminal Justice and the Mayor’s Office to Combat Domestic Violence, the City has made additional strides towards combating domestic violence and supporting survivors over the last year, including:

- Expanding the Administration for Children’s Services’ Investigative Consultant program that provides training, consultation and support to the agency’s investigative staff. Using a new protocol to identify families at risk of experiencing domestic violence, the investigative consultants will now provide support to families receiving prevention services through ACS.
- Implementing onsite housing legal assistance for clients at the NYC Family Justice Centers.

Finally, the Mayor signed into law Intro. 1313-A to expand NYC’s paid leave laws to employees who are survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking and trafficking so they can focus on safety and plan their next steps without fearing loss of income.

The Mayor’s Office to Combat Domestic Violence manages the City’s five Family Justice Centers in the Bronx, Brooklyn, Manhattan, Queens and Staten Island. The Centers serve as one-stop service centers to reduce barriers for victims of domestic violence, elder abuse, sex trafficking, and connect them to services in their language, regardless of immigration status, income, sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation. In 2016, there were more than 62,000 visits to the city’s Family Justice Centers, which offer a range of services for survivors regardless of income, age, gender identity, sexual orientation or immigration status.

The City’s Domestic Violence Hotline is available 24/7 and provides safety planning, referrals, and connections to emergency housing for victims of domestic violence. Individuals can contact the City’s Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-621-HOPE.

The City has worked closely with local experts, providers, advocates and survivors to develop this initiative, in particular the Coalition on Working with Abusive Partners (CoWAP) and the Interagency Working Group (IWG) on Abusive Partner Interventions, which included a research project by the Center for Court Innovation and independent consultant Purvi Shah, supported by Chapman Perelman Foundation.

“There are many reasons why a domestic violence victim may remain in contact with an abuser: love and children are two of the most common. Often, survivors believe that their partner can change and only want them to seek support and stop the harmful behavior,” said **Liz Roberts, Safe Horizon Deputy CEO**. “At Safe Horizon, we believe that survivors are the experts in their own lives and that, ultimately, the decision-making belongs in their hands. Therefore, it is important that we work collaboratively with survivors on the risks, needs, and concerns that are most important to them. This may include supporting survivors who want to keep their families intact and are seeking assistance to do so safely. We believe abusers must be held accountable for their harmful behavior. And we are keenly aware that abusers themselves are often survivors of violence, who deserve the opportunity to address their own hurt and pain. I applaud First Lady Chirlane McCray for launching the Interrupting Violence at Home initiative, which represents a major step forward in the city’s efforts to end domestic violence.”

“We are proud to have partnered with the Mayor’s Office to Combat Domestic Violence and the Center for Court Innovation over the past two years to help launch this groundbreaking abusive partner intervention programming,” said **Anna Chapman, President of the Chapman Perelman Foundation**. “The analysis and recommendations recently put forward through this public-private partnership have led to a more enlightened way of approaching the complex dynamics involved in inter-personal violence. The rapid implementation by the City of the recommendations has been an example of public-private partnerships at their best. We are pleased to support New York City as a pioneer in addressing this controversial, yet important issue, and believe that the initiatives being rolled out by the Mayor’s Office today have the potential to transform the lives of survivors of domestic abuse and their families.”

“Survivors who request services for partners and/or family members causing harm want options beyond criminalization - particularly in communities facing bias and lack of access including communities of color, deaf and hard of hearing individuals, and queer communities. When we create policies and programs based on input from individuals directly impacted, we begin to further real solutions with a community-driven framework. I am so grateful to the survivors, people who caused harm and advocates who participated in my year-long research and recommendations development for the [*Seeding Generations*](#) report. Our comprehensive recommendations give our City concrete avenues to further healthier relationships, families, and communities. I am eager to see how the City will open up options for survivors and families that draw upon their wisdom and community connections,” said **Purvi Shah, consultant for the Interagency Working Group on Abusive Partner Interventions**.

“There has been an appetite for “Interrupting Violence at Home” for some time in NYC, This as is a starting point in meeting the needs of a broader section of New Yorkers, that experience violence differently in their relationships and communities. I have worked with the populations

that would benefit most from this/these initiatives,” said **Quentin Walcott, Co-Executive Director of CONNECT**. “The current safety for survivors depends on the accountability for people who do harm and the types of responses that are available from city, beyond the traditional models, - that are useful- but may not be the viable option for everyone. I’m also glad that the intersection of domestic violence and gun violence will be recognized via the CMS/Cure violence sites, by having DV coordinators, as these are issues that inform each other and addressed together can interrupt cycles of violence in communities.”

“I am so pleased that New York City will focus additional resources on working with people who cause harm. By supporting these programs and new interventions, the City is reducing the likelihood of repeat offending and making an investment in safety for both survivors and communities,” said **Liberty Aldrich, Managing Director and General Counsel at the Center for Court Innovation**. I’m proud that the Center for Court Innovation had a role in the creation of Seeding Generations, the report that inspired these developments and which draws on the voices of survivors and people who cause harm as well as practitioners who work with these populations. This new effort is an example of the kind of problem-solving that occurs when the city and community-based groups work together to address challenging issues.”

“We at STEPS to End Family Violence are deeply appreciative of the City's clear and holistic commitment to disrupting the continuation of intimate partner violence through the Interrupting Violence at Home initiative,” said **Anne Patterson, Division Director, STEPS to End Family Violence**. “By designating funding for services for abusive partners, the City is demonstrating that the only way to authentically support and sustain survivor safety is by holding abusive partners meaningfully accountable. Yet unlike traditional abusive partner intervention programs that are tightly bound with the criminal legal system, these newly funded programs elevate survivor voices, centralize the importance of community, and loudly declare the City's belief that all people - and the systems that surround them - have the capacity to be radically transformed.”

“This new initiative to provide city funding to abusive partner intervention research and programming in NYC, for people of all genders and sexual orientations, is an essential step to curbing intimate partner violence,” said **Catherine Shugrue dos Santos, Co-Director of Client Services at the New York City Anti-Violence Project (AVP), and the Co-Chair of the Coalition on Working With Abusive Partners**. “This initiative goes beyond programs mandated through the courts and incorporates recognition of survivors' requests for restorative justice. This will help take the burden off survivors and broaden our approach to address whole families and communities, keeping survivor safety and healing at the center of our work.”

"This initiative will help city officials push back against domestic violence in an innovative far-reaching way," said **Council Member Daniel Dromm** (D-Jackson Heights, Elmhurst). "By designing programs to help those who are not in the criminal justice program and speak languages other than English, the city will ensure that even more survivors receive the services they need. I am particularly pleased that the initiative employs a restorative justice approach to eliminating domestic violence rather than relying heavily on incarceration. I applaud the First Lady for leading this effort and am proud to support it."

Senate Democratic Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins said, “The scourge of domestic violence needs to be confronted with all of our strength and will, and I applaud New York City for stepping up to lead on this issue. Domestic violence is often a vicious cycle, and this

groundbreaking initiative will help break it by supporting survivors, giving at-risk youth the tools needed to correct their behavior and impulses, and educating government staff to better support survivors and help abusive partners change their ways. I applaud New York City for taking these innovative actions, and hope this model will be successful and replicated by other cities to better combat domestic violence.”

"It is our job to not just make sure survivors of domestic abuse have the resources to seek help, but to use a restorative justice model that works with perpetrators of violence to address behavior, as well as identifying risk factors in young people to prevent this behavior before it takes root. Domestic and intimate partner violence are part of a cycle- one we can only disrupt with compassion, education and resources to train those tasked with keeping children safe. I look forward to seeing this program launched, and the impact it will have in our communities,” said **Senator Roxanne J. Persaud**.

"Domestic violence is a serious problem that I am glad to see our First Lady has decided to tackle head-on in a restorative manner. This new initiative will not only focus on adult intervention but will also have a component to reach out to teenagers who have a history of unhealthy relationships. Additionally, this program is comprehensive in nature and will help New Yorkers avoid going down a criminal justice track. I applaud our First Lady for this initiative, and hope to see the success of this program lead to its expansion," said **Senator Marisol Alcántara**.

"I was thrilled to learn about First Lady Chirlane McCray's Interrupting Violence At Home initiative and the city's \$3.3 million investment in the program," said **Assemblymember Rodneyse Bichotte**. "As a survivor of domestic violence, I know how it feels to be vulnerable with limited options. This initiative will address another gap in domestic violence prevention making New Yorkers safer. Victims long forced into the shadows will now have an additional resource to utilize."

“Intervention to break the cycle of violence is immensely important in protecting survivors of domestic violence. Early intervention with youth and with abusive partners outside of the criminal justice system can stop violence in its tracks. The implementation of restorative justice practices is an important preventative measure to end patterns of violence within families, and also in communities. Too often abusers have been victims themselves, and often need therapeutic and educational services to change course. I thank First Lady Chirlane McCray and the Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence for their efforts to address this critical issue,” said **Assemblymember Jo Anne Simon**.

“I applaud First Lady McCray for introducing this initiative that proactively addresses domestic violence. Victims are often left feeling voiceless, ignored, and underrepresented. I look forward to seeing how these efforts improve relationship dynamics and promote safety in the lives of our NYC residents” said **Assemblywoman Maritza Davila**.

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