



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 16, 2015

**DHS LAUNCHES LARGEST HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION CAMPAIGN EVER:
“IMAGINE” CAMPAIGN ENCOURAGES FAMILIES TO “REACH OUT,
BEFORE A SHELTER IS YOUR ONLY OPTION”**

Homelessness Prevention is Key in the Administration’s Efforts to Reduce Homelessness

*Homebase, the City’s One-stop for Homelessness Prevention Services,
Added 9 Additional Offices in Communities Most likely to Enter Shelter*

*Citywide Print Campaign will Run on Subways and Buses;
TV Campaign will Air Today on Various Stations*

New York, NY – Department of Homeless Services announced the launch of its homeless prevention public awareness campaign following the Homebase prevention program’s recent expansion. The FY2015 expansion nearly doubled funding for the program, from \$22 to \$42 million, and added nine additional offices in Bronx, Brooklyn, Queens, and Manhattan. The citywide print and television campaign is targeted to those at risk of homelessness and directs them to visit nyc.gov/homebase or to call 311 and be connected their nearest Homebase office. The Citywide homeless prevention public awareness campaign, “Reach Out, Before a Shelter is Your Only Option,” targets the 15 communities with residents most likely to enter homeless shelters, encouraging those at risk to access Homebase services. The ads depict families with children in housing crises, and asks parents to “Imagine being forced out of your home. Now imagine see your kids go through it.” This outreach is intended to encourage families with children and individuals to access prevention services early on, averting the the need for shelter. Beginning in March and running through April, the campaign will appear on television and in print, featured on subways, buses, and checking cashing facilities. The cost of the campaign is \$870,000.

“Prevention is the foundation of our strategy to reduce homelessness in this city,” said Commissioner Taylor. “Homebase is a proven model that helps New Yorkers at risk stay in their community. We urge those at risk to reach out for assistance to ensure their housing stability.”

Additionally, DHS plans to partner with its providers coordinated town halls, church events and leaflet days in targeted communities all across the city to educate families about how Homebase can keep them in the communities in which they live. Homebase is the most extensive and innovative homelessness prevention services network in the country.

At Homebase offices throughout the five boroughs, the program provides customized assistance to families and individuals to create a personalized housing stability plan, offering a full array of services including eviction prevention, short-term emergency funding, financial counseling, and assistance in obtaining employment and public benefits. Since its inception in September 2004, Homebase has served nearly 65,000 families and individuals. Of the over 12,000 households served last year, 95-percent were able to remain stably housed in the community and avoided entering shelter.

Homebase Works: It's a Proven Program

Results of a comprehensive evaluation of the Homebase program completed in 2013 showed that it cut shelter applications nearly in half for those who applied for Homebase. New York City taxpayers saved more than \$1.37 for every City tax levy dollar invested through the program.

Homebase is also effective in the highest need communities and with families most at risk of entering shelter. Researchers found households with a previous shelter history, conflict in the household, frequent moves, child protective service involvement and domestic violence, are at the highest risk of entering shelter East Harlem, Castle Hill, Wakefield, East Tremont, Mount Hope, Concourse, Jamaica, East Flatbush, Crown Heights, Stapleton, East New York, Bushwick, Brownsville, and Bedford Stuyvesant.

-30-

Contact: Christopher Miller/Jaslee Carayol (212) 361-7973