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**NYC CHILDREN’S CABINET CONTINUES “TALK TO YOUR BABY” WITH SEASON OF BABY SHOWERS**

**NEW YORK**—The New York City Children’s Cabinet is hosting a series of 10 free baby showers to provide families with practical items like diapers, clothing and baby supplies. Attending families can also connect to City and community support programs, such as registering for a library card, IDNYC, or child care services, and learning about the Safe Sleep for Babies program and maternal and child health resources in local communities.

First Lady Chirlane McCray kicked off the series of showers today at the New York Public Library, Schwarzman Building, 42nd Street Main Branch.

Future baby showers will include events tailored to fathers and male caregivers, 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.

“I often point out that it’s easier to grow a healthy child than to mend a broken adult,” said **First Lady Chirlane McCray**. “But parenting is hard work. With these showers, we support our parents and give them some of the tools they need to help prepare their children for the future.”

“We’re on a mission to make New York City the best big city in America to raise children, and it all begins with parents and caregivers,” said **Deputy Mayor for Strategic Policy Initiatives Richard Buery, Chair of the NYC Children’s Cabinet**. “Our Baby Shower series brings information, tools, opportunities and services directly to parents so that they are best equipped to help their children reach their full potential.”

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.

The Baby Showers are organized by the NYC Children’s Cabinet, which consists of 24 City agencies and Mayoral offices and is chaired by Deputy Mayor Richard Buery. The Cabinet agencies work together to advance the Mayor’s commitment to increasing child safety and well-being in high-need communities.

**NYC Children’s Cabinet Executive Director Benita Miller** said, “I’m excited to kick off our first Baby Shower. With our Talk to Your Baby campaign, we’ve encouraged parents to read, talk and sing to their babies. And through this Baby Shower series, we want to showcase the extraordinary work our Cabinet member agencies do throughout the year. This is an opportunity to bring their information and services to parents and caregivers who may not be aware of the supports that are available to them.”

“The First Lady has made it her mission to help every child in New York get the best possible start,” said **Human Resources Administration Commissioner Steven Banks**. “At HRA we’re proud to be able to help the city’s children and parents with food and nutrition assistance, cash and emergency assistance, child support services, Medicaid coverage, care for those with disabilities and a wide variety of other services for those in need.”

“A healthy start in life is so important,” said **Administration for Children’s Services Commissioner Gladys Carrion**. “The baby shower is an excellent way to remind parents and caregivers the ABCs of safe sleeping practices for infants: ‘Babies sleep safest Alone, on their Backs and in a Crib.’”

“Our littlest New Yorkers are our city’s most precious resource,” said **Health Commissioner Dr. Mary T. Bassett**. “A child’s early years are critical – the brain is developing rapidly and the parent-child bond is forming. The NYC Children’s Cabinet Baby Showers help us spread awareness of the importance of talking, reading and singing to children from early on. Through these baby showers, we hope to introduce expectant and new parents to resources that can help them support, engage and nurture their little ones.”

"The New York Public Library offers countless free programs every day to promote early literacy and strengthen New York City's families," said **NYPL President Tony Marx**. "As such, we have been a proud partner in First Lady McCray's Talk to your Baby campaign, and are happy to host the first of the initiative's Baby Showers to give parents access to important supplies, information, and services."

“The March of Dimes is happy to be participating in the New York City Children’s Cabinet Baby Showers. This event will provide pregnant and parenting women with valuable education that will assist in improving the birth outcomes within our communities. There are large gaps in the preterm birth rate among communities in our state, and racial and ethnic disparities persist. Programs like these will help to bridge the gap,” said **Dione Durant, Associate Director of Program Services for the Staten Island and Long Island Divisions of the March of Dimes**.

“Food Bank For New York City is pleased to partner with the Children’s Cabinet on the NYC Baby Showers initiative. Expectant and new parents and caregivers will have the opportunity to connect with valuable services and resources to help their growing families. Food Bank For New York City looks forward to connecting them with such critical services as health care, free tax preparation and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP),” said **Brady Koch, Chief Programs Officer for Food Bank For New York City**.

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