

THE CITY OF NEW YORK

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**TRANSCRIPT: FIRST LADY CHIRLANE MCCRAY APPEARS ON HOT 97**

**Ebro Darden**: Ladies and gentlemen, you’ve got on Ebro in the Morning – Laura Stylez, Rosenberg, friend of the show and also First Lady of our city, Chirlane McCray, is on our show. Chirlane – excuse me – Chirlane, Chirlane.

[Applause]

How are you today?

**First Lady Chirlane McCray**: I’m well, thank you for asking.

**Darden**: Chirlane, you are very active in our city with mental health and wellness, and all of it. And today, you’re here to talk about the program you’ve been working on for some time, right? NYC Well – am i saying it right?

**First Lady**: NYC Well – yeah. It’s a core component of Thrive NYC. We just celebrated our first birthday yesterday –

**Darden**: Right, right.

**First Lady**: That’s right. So, it’s a one-year-old. And NYC Well – we just launched a couple weeks ago and we’re very excited about it. People have a place to call when they need help, when they need to figure out – I’m depressed, I can’t get out of the bed in the morning, I’m stressed, I can’t function properly – or my girlfriend is drinking too much, what do I do? They have a place to call – 1-8-8-8-N-Y-C-W-E-L-L – and they can talk to a trained counselor. And this is 365 days a year, 24/7 – free, confidential.

**Darden**: Nationally, is this something that other major cities have in place or are we leading the charge here?

**First Lady**:You can’t separate the mind and body. We – you know, we need our mental health professionals just as much as we need our primary care doctors – we really do. It’s so common – most people don’t reach out to anybody when they need help, and that is bad because, you know, it can get worse.

**Laura Stylez**: Right.

**Peter Rosenberg**: Of course.

**First Lady**: The average time of feeling like, oh, something is wrong and actually getting treatment is nine years, which is way too long.

**Rosenberg**: That is an amazing statistic.

**First Lady**: We are leading the way as a city. It’s the most comprehensive service of any city or state in the nation on this scale. I mean, because it is so common – yes, other cities have programs and lifelines and different – but this is more comprehensive than what anyone else has.

**Stylez**: Now, are people participating? Because a lot of the times when it comes to mental health I feel like – you know – especially like in, I know, in the Latino community, in the black community – a lot of people are still not as open to admit that mental health is an issue.

**Darden**: Them white people problems, man.

**Stylez**: Yeah, that’s – we hear it all the time.

**Ebro**: We got this – go talk to abuela, she got you bro.

[Laughter]

**Stylez**: Do you guys collect data to see if it is successful in certain neighborhoods and certain areas of New York?

**First Lady**: Absolutely – collecting a lot of data. I want you to know that this service is provided in more than – translations in more than 200 languages. We’ve got counselors who speak Spanish, English, Mandarin, and Cantonese. Any language you speak, we’ve got you covered. And it is being used by folks who speak – from people of all cultures. We don’t have great numbers, but I can tell you that more than 500 – the average is more than 500 calls a day so far.

Everybody is affected in some way. Every family is affected by this.

**Rosenberg**: Now, speaking of things that make you want to self-medicate. Take us through – if you will – the election night experience this year for you and the Mayor. What was that – what was that like?

**First Lady**: You know, we walked in there and we were feeling fairly optimistic –

**Rosenberg**: To the Javits Center? Where did you guys go?

**First Lady**: Yes. Yes, we went there. We felt pretty optimistic. We were getting ready to celebrate –

**Rosenberg**: We all were.

**Darden**: Getting ready to celebrate – Katy Perry, who had a stage, like, Lady Gaga had a stage show –

**First Lady**: Yeah, she was sitting in front of me there. J-Lo came in at some point.

**Rosenberg**: Everyone’s ready to party.

**First Lady**: Everyone was ready to party. And those numbers started coming in and it was very quiet –

**Darden**: For hours right? Some people stayed until two, three in the morning, right?

**First Lady**: We did not stay that long. We saw the way those numbers were going, and we said we’ve got to get out of here and get ready for what we got to do tomorrow.

**Rosenberg**: Just that alone I know has been a big issue for the City.

**First Lady**: Yeah, it’s a big issue for the City, so, of course, it’s a big stress for him. There’s a lot of anxiety daily, questions from people and press – it’s a tough situation.

**Rosenberg**: You’ve had experience with the Trumps previously, I’m sure, personally?

**First Lady**: No. No. Absolutely had never –

**Rosenberg**: No? So, your husband has but –

**First Lady**: Never met them.

**Rosenberg**: Wow.

**Darden**: When we asked de Blasio about – he was like, I met them at some fundraisers, but it wasn’t like they were –

**First Lady**: In our social circle.

**Darden**: Yeah. You guys didn’t hang out.

[Laughter]

**Rosenberg**: Tell us this though – they did meet?

**First Lady**: They did.

**Rosenberg**: How did you feel the Mayor felt after the meeting?

**First Lady**: I wasn’t there. I think that he felt it was very interesting.

[Laughter]

**Darden**: And de Blasio called in and he made sure – your husband did – that no president can just tell New York City what to do. They can pull funding from us and support from us, but they can’t tell us what to do.

**Rosenberg**: Right.

**Darden**: Right. And that’s something I think people the President is kind of, like, all-powerful and can kind of say, you’re going to – and dictate to people how it’s going to happen, and that’s not the case for –

**First Lady**: Yea, fortunately –

**Rosenberg**: In the city or state.

**First Lady**: That’s right. Fortunately, there are checks and balances. There are a lot of things we’re doing – for example, our mental health program – this is not a federal program, this is a City program.

**Rosenberg**: We see trolls on the internet who say really mean things, but when we go out in public it’s always very, very nice. What’s your guys’ experience like interacting with the public day to day when the Mayor’s out?

**First Lady**: Lots of love. Lots of love, which is why it’s good to be out there because if you stay in and just read that stuff online –

**Darden**: Oh yeah, if you trust the New York Post for feeling good about yourself, de Blasio –

**First Lady**: There’s not a lot of love, there.

[Laughter]

**Rosenberg**: No, ain’t no love. And Mrs. McCray, you’re going to be upset. You’re going to be upset.

**Darden**: Look, it’s always good to see you, Chirlane.

**First Lady**: Good to see you too. Can I tell the number again?

**Rosenberg**: Yeah. absolutely. You can do that one more time.

**First Lady**: 1-8-8-8-N-Y-C-W-E-L-L. You can call. You can text or chat. The text number is 6-5-1-7-3. And you can go online as well, and go to [nyc.gov/NYCWell](http://nyc.gov/NYCWell).

**Darden**: NYC Well – a service provided to you by New York City –

**Stylez**: Completely free.

**Darden**: – And obviously our amazing First Lady and our Mayor.

**Rosenberg**: Thank you so much.

**First Lady**: Thank you. Thank you. It’s always great to see you.

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