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**CITY OF NEW YORK PARTNERS WITH THE JED FOUNDATION ON MENTAL
HEALTH AWARENESS CAMPAIGN IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

Campaign will reach over 1.1 million New York City students

NEW YORK – New York City First Lady Chirlane McCray announced today the launch of a groundbreaking school mental health awareness campaign, “*There’s Help All Around You.*” The campaign, which targets students and parents, will appear in all New York City public schools. It was developed in partnership among ThriveNYC, The Jed Foundation (JED), the New York City Department of Education, the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, the Mayor’s Fund to Advance New York City, and greyhealth group.

One in five young people will experience a mental health challenge each year, with issues like depression and anxiety acting as significant impediments to academic success for many students. Additionally, individuals ages 15-21 are significantly more likely to report their mental health as fair or poor than the two generations before them, according to the American Psychological Association’s annual [Stress in America](#) report.

“Young people between the ages of 15 and 21 are experiencing unprecedented levels of emotional distress due to bullying, academic pressures, family dysfunction and many other stressors,” said **First Lady Chirlane McCray**. “We want students and parents in New York City to know that help is available. The partnership between ThriveNYC, The Jed Foundation (JED) and the City of New York will ensure that the 1.1 million children in New York City public schools have the information they need to connect to care.”

The “*There’s Help All Around You*” campaign, tailored for elementary, middle, and high school students, explains common mental health challenges and encourages help-seeking behavior among students in an age-appropriate way. The campaign will promote mental health understanding and dialogue, and decrease shame, prejudice, and uncertainty surrounding these challenges. The campaign will also point students and parents to available mental resources in schools and communities including guidance counselors, social workers, school mental health consultants, substance abuse prevention and intervention specialists, and community school mental health providers.

“We are thrilled to partner with the City of New York on this pioneering campaign to help the largest school district in the country support the mental health of their students,” said **John MacPhee, Executive Director/CEO of JED**. “Today’s students can face a variety of challenges, which makes it essential they know that help is all around them, and how and where to find it. This campaign will empower more of NYC’s young people to speak up and seek the help they may need. Our hope is that the “*There’s Help All Around You*” campaign can serve as a model for other school districts to implement across the country.”

By focusing on the nation’s largest school district, the campaign will reach over 1.1 million students in over 1,800 New York City schools and will be available in multiple languages including Spanish, Arabic, Bengali, and Chinese.

“Supporting the mental health of the youngest New Yorkers is a priority for ThriveNYC,” said **ThriveNYC Executive Director Alexis Confer**. “We want students and parents to know about every available resource and we’re proud to partner with the Jed Foundation and others to achieve that goal.”

“We are proud to partner with The Jed Foundation, greyhealth group, and the City of New York on this groundbreaking campaign,” said **Mayor’s Fund to Advance New York City Executive Director Toya Williford**. “This powerful partnership will ensure all public school students understand what critical mental health services are available to them.”

“Every school has mental health supports available for students, and this new awareness campaign will help ensure students know where to turn for help. Our schools are here to support the needs of each student and family, and I thank First Lady McCray and our partners across the city for their commitment to health and well-being of children,” said **Schools Chancellor Richard A. Carranza**.

“Young people should know that mental health concerns are common, typical, and nothing to be ashamed of,” said **Acting Health Commissioner Dr. Oxiris Barbot**. “This campaign is a great way to engage youth and adolescents and encourage them to seek care if they need it.”

“We can no longer accept the many barriers to mental health care, including the lack of knowledge about available resources. With this campaign, we’ll educate and motivate students and their families to seek care through the many available resources to them,” said **Erin Byrne, CEO of greyhealth group**.

“I have long been a champion of supporting mental health programs in both the Assembly and the Senate. I am particularly proud that Gov. Cuomo recently formed a mental health task force incorporating my call for a stronger focus on teen suicide, especially among Hispanic youth, who have some of the highest suicide rates in the state. I salute New York City First Lady Chirlane McCray and her new school mental health awareness campaign, which will go a long way to dealing with that issue,” said **State Senator Luis Sepulveda**.

“Mental health challenges can start young, so awareness and services should as well,” said **Assembly Health Committee Chair Richard N. Gottfried**. “*There’s Help All Around You*’ will provide age-appropriate information, assistance, and hope to students who need it. I applaud the First Lady for this important initiative.”

“It is critical that young people are educated on the mental health conditions they may experience and connected to available resources,” said **Council Member Diana Ayala, Chair of the Council’s Committee on Mental Health, Disabilities, and Addiction**. “I am thrilled this campaign will launch in all public schools and I thank First Lady McCray, ThriveNYC, the Jed Foundation, and all other contributing agencies for investing in the health of our youth.”

"Mental health resources are long overdue in our communities. Young boys and girls of color have higher rates of attempted suicide due to depression, anxiety, and mental distress. They are proportionately at a disadvantage when it comes to having access to service due to inadequate funding. “There's Help All Around You” will help head address the most pressing issues affecting our communities and make our schools an environment where mental health is a priority. I commend First Lady McCray for her leadership on mental health and her tenacity in breaking the stigma associated with mental health care,” said **Assemblywoman Carmen De La Rosa**.

“As the product of our city’s public schools, I am encouraged to see First Lady Chirlane McCray prioritize the mental health of the children in our communities. I look forward to the roll out of this important initiative and to working together to ensure our students and their families have access to much needed mental health resources,” said **Assembly Woman Elect Catalina Cruz**.

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