



BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT VANESSA L. GIBSON
BRONX HEALTH MATTERS
 HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES DIVISION NEWSLETTER

2022 Issue 3

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**DOMESTIC VIOLENCE:
 ENDING THE SILENCE**

Written by **Mahnoor Jaura** | Edited by **Rubashruti Kanna**



Domestic and gender-based violence can happen to anyone. It is responsible for intergenerational cycles of physical and mental trauma. Domestic, intimate partner, and gender-based violence and abuse can take many forms, including manipulation and threats; physical, emotional, verbal, and psychological assaults; financial exploitation; stalking; and human trafficking. Domestic violence can victimize children, adults, and seniors. Nearly one in three women in the United States experiences physical violence by an intimate partner, and those who survive often suffer from a wide range of mental and physical health problems, often for many years after the trauma occurred.

Between 2010 and 2020, there were 721 people killed in domestic violence incidents in New York City, accounting for 17.2% of all murders in that time. In 2020 alone, The

Bronx had the second-highest number of total domestic violence victims reported to the NYPD and the most domestic violence homicides of any borough (221).

The communities affected by the highest homicide rates are also those with a higher poverty rate, higher unemployment rate, and higher percentage of Black and Hispanic residents.

No person should have to live in fear of violence from their intimate partners or other family members. Domestic violence must be approached not just as a women’s issue but as an issue that affects everyone in the family and the broader community.

"No person should have to live in fear of violence from their intimate partners or other family members."

Women of childbearing age are most vulnerable to intimate partner violence, which directly impacts sexual and reproductive health. Women abused during pregnancy are more likely to delay prenatal care or receive no care at all. *continued on pg. 2*

The Borough President Presents

31 Days of Domestic Violence Awareness

They are three times more likely to report symptoms of depression in the postnatal period and to suffer perinatal death. In the United States, an estimated 324,000 pregnant people are abused by their intimate partners each year.

The LGBTQIA+ community is often overlooked in domestic violence cases. However, members of this community are victimized at equal or even higher rates than heterosexual and cisgender individuals. According to the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, 43.8% of lesbian women and two-thirds of bisexual women have been raped, stalked, or physically abused by an intimate partner. 26% of gay men and over a third of bisexual men have also experienced intimate partner violence in their lifetime.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a negative effect on domestic violence in our city. Calls to the Domestic Violence Hotline (800-942-6906) and visits to in-person or online resources increased significantly in the year after the COVID-19 restrictions went into effect in comparison to the previous year.

Additionally, the New York State Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence reported that calls to their hotline surged by 75% in August 2020 compared to the previous year. During this time, they

"This is a human rights issue, and we are uniting the borough in action."

10/4 ~ Domestic Violence Press Conference



10/15 ~ Bronx DA's 5K Run/Walk/Roll



introduced a "text and chat" line option as another way to reach out for help (844-997-2121) to support individuals possibly at home with their abuser.

We must ensure that every person leaving a domestic violence situation has a safe place to go. Currently, there are not enough beds in women's and family shelters, specifically those that are reserved for victims of domestic violence. Additionally, there are very few options for victims to take their pets, which is often a limiting factor that keeps individuals from leaving the abusive environment.

In Fiscal Year (FY) 2018, there was a 41% increase in the number of families entering the Department of Homeless Services (DHS) shelter system due to domestic violence. In FY 2018 alone, 6,400 people entered the Human Resources

Administration's system of domestic violence shelters, many of whom were women of color and children.



Neighborhoods in The Bronx account for the most domestic violence DHS shelter entries, with 38% of survivors coming from The Bronx. More recent numbers will undoubtedly reveal even greater adversity exists now than before the pandemic because loss and hardship exacerbate family violence.

Lack of safe, alternative housing should not be a barrier to fleeing violence. This is a human rights issue, and we are uniting the borough in action. *continued on pg. 3*

10/18 ~ Domestic Violence Workshop for Community & Faith-Based Leaders



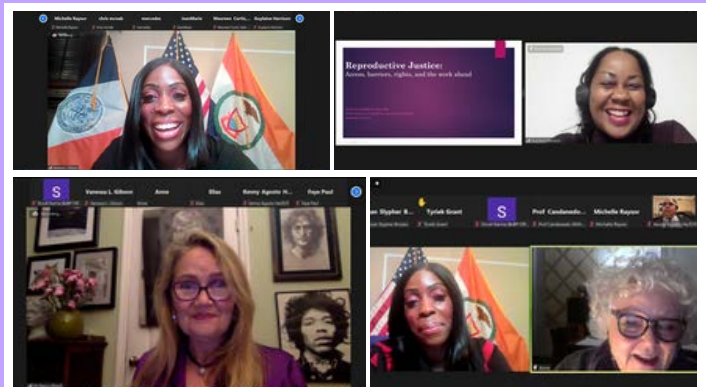
10/20 ~ Go Purple Day: Day of Action



10/18 ~ 20 Years of DiVA Celebration



10/27 DiVA Talk 2022 (Virtual)



TAKING STEPS TO END DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Relaunch of Domestic & Gender-Based Violence Advisory Council

The Office of the Bronx Borough President relaunched the **Domestic and Gender-Based (DGBV) Advisory Council** in 2022 to connect all entities invested in 1) *advocacy* to end domestic violence, 2) *victim services*, 3) *justice* and *law enforcement* work, and 4) *prevention* at every point of intersectionality that adversely affects children, seniors, women, birthing persons, and the entire social network of survivors. The Council aims to make comprehensive efforts towards ending domestic violence and related injustices affecting families in our borough.



US Department of Justice \$1 Million Grant

The Bronx Borough President's Office, in partnership with the Bronx District Attorney's Office, was awarded a **joint grant of \$1 million** over three years to address domestic violence in The Bronx. The grant comes from the Department of Justice Office of Violence Against Women and is centered on "Improving Criminal Justice Responses to Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, and Stalking." A collaboration between six partner agencies will support all work on the "Bronx Intimate Partner High-Risk Homicide Reduction Project." The proposed project represents a formal collaboration among the Borough President, District Attorney, New York City Department of Probation,

NYPD, Safe Horizon, and the New York Legal Assistance Group.

Long-Term Partnerships and Programs

The Bronx Borough President's Office has joined the long-term social justice work done by DiVA, the **Domestic Violence Awareness Initiative**. DiVA was founded in 2002 and continues today as an educational and activist initiative uniting major public and private Bronx-based institutions and organizations.

Through DiVA, the Bronx Borough President's Office collaborates with Montefiore Medical Center, Monroe College School of Criminal and Social Justice, Safe Horizon, Violence Intervention Program, and Palms Upon My Hands.

continued on pg. 4

The Bronx Borough President had the distinct honor of celebrating the 20th Anniversary of DiVA at the Pregones Theater with the DiVA Steering Committee members and Bronx native, author, advocate, and survivor April Hernandez.

Additionally, Borough President Gibson joined the annual **DiVA Talk 2022** as the keynote speaker for an interactive panel discussion on the history and modern-day realities of domestic violence, maternal health, and reproductive justice.

Engage in Public Education and Awareness Event Programming

For Domestic Violence Awareness Month in October of 2022, the Bronx Borough President's Office led **31 Days of Domestic Violence Awareness** to raise awareness, share data and resources, bring together advocates and survivors, inspire long-term conversation, and conduct outreach. The month was kicked off with a press conference, in which the Borough President was joined by local elected officials, legal service and advocacy nonprofits, and the Borough President's DGBV Advisory Council members. During the month, the Borough President cosponsored events with numerous partners, including the Bronx District Attorney for the **Annual 5K Run/Walk/Roll Against Domestic Violence** to hear stories



Bronx Borough President Vanessa L. Gibson has relaunched the Domestic Violence Advisory Council to help combat high domestic violence rates in the Bronx.

from survivors and raise awareness and the Mayor's Office to End Domestic and Gender-Based Violence to host a **Domestic Violence Awareness Workshop and Training** for faith and community-based leaders.

For **NYC Go Purple Day** on October 20, Borough President Gibson partnered with the NYPD, ENDGBV, and the NYC Commission on Human Rights to do outreach at the Parkchester, Gun Hill Road, and 161st Street-Yankee Stadium subway stops. These stations were chosen because they belong to the NYPD Precincts with the highest DV complaints (Precincts 43, 47, and 44). The Borough President spoke with community members and shared resources on how to get help.

Strengthen Criminal Penalties for Domestic Violence

The penalties for domestic and gender-based violence must be increased to deter repeat offenses. The NYPD must prioritize enforcement of orders of protection and the investigation of domestic violence complaints.

Expand Culturally Appropriate Programming

The programming that the city and community-based organizations take to fight domestic and gender-based violence must be culturally appropriate and sensitive to the needs of the populations that are being addressed. This includes programming in multiple languages as well as strong partnerships with religious organizations that have the trust of the families in their congregations and local communities.

Combat Elder Abuse

The New York State Office for the Aging estimates that 300,000 elderly New Yorkers are at risk of being



Providing DV resources at the Annual 5K Run/Walk/Roll Against Domestic Violence

victimized each year. The Borough President is strongly in favor of expanding programs to engage seniors to ensure that they have access to resources and services to protect themselves. Programs such as PROTECT that is run through the New York City Department for the Aging (DFTA) are important ways to help elders get mental health treatment. The Elderly Crime Victims Resource Center can help protect our seniors from abuse and neglect. These programs through DFTA must be fully supported and funded.

TOGETHER WE RISE

Domestic violence has always persisted in the shadows of human society. What has changed now is our reckoning of this hidden menace to our communities. For too many Bronxites, the consequences of domestic violence are exponentially magnified since violence perpetuates poverty, food and housing instability, the dissolution of families, and generational cycles of abuse.

Responsible government leadership entails piercing the veil of silence and acceptance. The Bronx is united in this work, and is investing time, effort, and money into changing the narrative around family violence. All Bronxites should receive training on how to recognize when someone is trapped in violence and to raise awareness within their community. Together we can support survivors, teach our children to reject violence as a norm, and eliminate domestic violence as a common life experience for Bronx families.

Breast Cancer Awareness Month in the Bronx

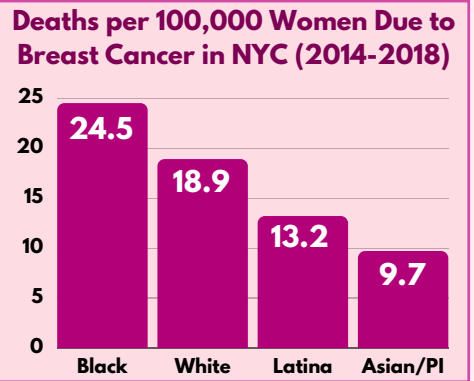


OCTOBER
2022



About 1 in 8 U.S. women will develop invasive breast cancer.

While breast cancer deaths have declined steadily over the last three decades, **Black women are still less likely to be diagnosed than white women.**



Mammogram screenings help detect breast cancer early and prevent it from spreading to other parts of the body.

If all Black women begin **mammograms** at age 40, breast cancer deaths could be reduced by **57%** compared to starting screening at age 50.

Current US Mammogram Recommendations: Women should receive mammography screening every two years starting when they are 50 years old. Women who are 40 to 49 should review their risk factors with their health provider to decide when they should get screened.

Borough President Gibson hosted and supported multiple events this October to increase awareness and preventative services against breast cancer in the Bronx.



BP HEALTH EVENTS

WITH
LOCAL COMMUNITY PARTNERS

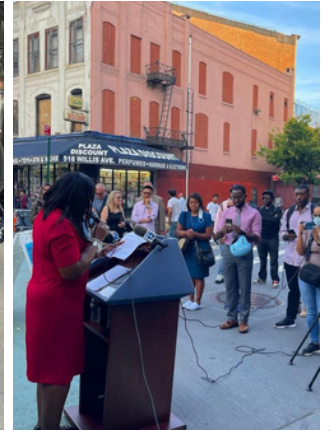
STROLLIN' FOR LIFE: INFANT MORTALITY AWARENESS MARCH

September 21 - Walter Gladwin (Tremont) Park



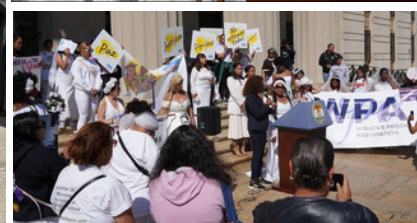
MONKEYPOX NIGHT OF ACTION

September 21 - The Hub



2022 ANNUAL BRIDES' DOMESTIC VIOLENCE MARCH

September 26 - Borough Hall



Hello Autumn



VETERANS RESOURCES FAIR WITH JAMES J. PETERS VA MEDICAL CENTER September 29 - Borough Hall



UNION COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER MOBILE DENTAL UNIT SITE VISIT October 5



UPCOMING NOVEMBER EVENTS

TRANSIT DISTRICT 11 BREAST CANCER AND DV HEALTH FAIR

11/1 12-4pm | E. 161st St. Between River Ave and Gerard Ave

INTERSECTIONALITY OF STIGMA WITH HIV, MPX, AND COVID-19 CONFERENCE

11/14 1-5pm | Lincoln Hospital Auditorium 234 East 149th St.

The Vaccine Info Hub



A one-stop shop for must-know vaccination guidelines and resources

Updated as of November 16, 2022

Flu Seasonal Vaccine

What it does: Influenza (flu) vaccines protect against the four influenza viruses that research indicates will be most common during the upcoming season. Getting the flu vaccine can keep you from getting the flu and reduces severity of illness in people who get vaccinated but still get sick.

Who is eligible: Everyone 6 months and older in the United States should get a flu vaccine every season with rare exception.

How to get vaccinated: The 2022-2023 flu vaccine is available at most pharmacies, hospitals, and community health centers. Find a location near you at www.vaccines.gov/find-vaccines/.

COVID-19 Updated Booster

What it does: The new booster targets the Omicron subvariant BA.5, the currently dominant version of the virus. It helps restore protection that has waned since previous vaccination and will protect against severe illness from all COVID-19 strains.

Who is eligible: Updated COVID-19 vaccine boosters are now available for everyone 5 and older who received their most recent vaccine dose at least two months ago.

How to get boosted: The booster is available at pharmacies, local hospitals, and community health centers. Find a location near you at <https://vaccinefinder.nyc.gov/>.

Monkeypox Vaccine

What it does: It prevents smallpox and monkeypox prior to infection. There are two doses given 4 weeks apart.

Who is eligible: 1) People of any sexual orientation or gender identity who have or may have multiple or anonymous sex partners; 2) People of any sexual orientation or gender identity whose sex partners are eligible per the criteria above; 3) People who know or suspect they have been exposed to MPV in the last 14 days; 4) Anyone else who considers themselves to be at risk for MPV through sex or other intimate contact. *If you have had MPV, you are currently not eligible to get a first or second dose.

How to get vaccinated: In The Bronx, vaccines are available at NYC Dept. of Health Clinics, Lincoln Hospital, and select private medical clinics and centers. You can make your appointment at <https://vaccinefinder.nyc.gov/locations/Monkeypox> or by calling 877-VAX-4NYC (877-829-4692).

Polio Vaccine

What it does: The polio vaccine protects against severe disease caused by poliovirus in almost everyone (99%) who has received all the recommended doses.

Who is eligible: All children should get 4 doses of polio vaccine, starting at age 2 months. People starting the vaccine series after age 4 should receive 3 doses.

How to get vaccinated: If you or your child are not vaccinated yet, talk to a health care provider. If you do not have a provider, call 311 for help finding one. Also, children ages 4 years and older can get low- or no-cost vaccines at the Fort Greene Health Center at 295 Flatbush Ave. Ext., Fifth Floor, Brooklyn. To make an appointment, visit www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/services/immunization-clinics.page.

QR Corner

Check out these local resources & services and interesting health articles!

The Bronx
Health Link
Women & Infant
Health Advocacy



Bronx Health
REACH
Health and Social
Needs Services

Montefiore
Medical Center
Community
Relations



NYC Domestic
Violence Fatality
Review: 2022
Annual Report

For more news & updates,
follow the Borough President's
social media!



<https://bronxboropres.nyc.gov/>



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