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For Immediate Release
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BRONX DISTRICT ATTORNEY DARCEL D. CLARK URGES COMMUNITY TO BE VIGILANT ABOUT CHILD ABUSE DURING THE COVID-19 CRISIS
Reports of Abuse Have Dropped Significantly, Leading to Concerns That Staying at Home Decreases Contact with Mandated Reporters of Abuse

Bronx District Attorney Darcel D. Clark today urged the people of the Bronx to be vigilant about children at risk of abuse or neglect during the COVID-19 crisis, as social distancing and home schooling is isolating children from teachers, pediatricians, daycare staff and others who would normally be checking on their safety.

District Attorney Clark said, “As a direct result of this pandemic, we are seeing an enormous drop in reporting of abuse. We at the Bronx District Attorney’s Office continue to work with the Bronx Special Victims Squad of the NYPD and other partnering agencies to ensure that children in our community are kept safe. If you suspect a child is being abused, neglected or maltreated, please report it to the numbers below. If you have any questions, call the Bronx District Attorney’s Office Child Abuse Hotline at 718-838-7344.

“We must find ways to connect with families to make sure that they are supported, safe, and feel empowered. April is Child Abuse Prevention Month, which reminds us that everyone has a role in preventing child abuse. Now more than ever we need to stand together to prevent physical and sexual abuse of children behind closed doors. The risk to children increases when contact with mandated reporters, such as teachers and health care providers, decreases.”

The Instant Response Team (Administration for Children’s Services, NYPD and Bronx DA’s Child Abuse/Sex Crimes Bureau) jointly investigated 34 incidents of severe abuse or maltreatment in the Bronx in April, compared to 103 incidents during March (schools closed on March 16) and 152 incidents in January.

To Report Abuse or Neglect 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, anonymously, call the New York State Central Registry Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-342-3720. Mandated Reporters: 1-800-635-1522. Deaf/Hard of Hearing: 1-800-638-5163. If you believe that a child is in immediate danger, call 911.

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RESOURCES:

COVID-19 Websites NYS Parent Portal: <https://www.nysparenting.org/coronavirus-resources-parents>

NYS Department of Health COVID-19 Information: <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/home>

New York City-specific COVID-19 resources:
<http://www1.nyc.gov/site/acs/about/covidhelp.page>

Free Mental Health Services are available at NYC Well. Speak to a counselor via phone, text, or chat and get access to mental health and substance use services, in more than 200 languages, 24/7/365. For more information, visit: <https://nycwell.cityofnewyork.us/en/>

NYS COVID-19 Emotional Support Hotline: Free mental health counseling can be reached at 1-844-863-9314

