



...Because every child deserves a childhood

May 1, 2015

Central Administration

6339 Mill Street
P.O. Box 5005
Rhinebeck, NY 12572-5005
Tel: (845) 871-1000
Fax: (845) 876-2020
Email: astor@astorservices.org
Website: www.astorservices.org

First Lady Chirlane McCray Visits Astor's Program in the Bronx *Importance of Mental Health Programs in the Public Schools*

For more information, contact:

Sonia Barnes-Moorhead
(845) 871-1117, smoorhead@astorservices.org

Website: www.astorservices.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Bronx, NY – On Wednesday, April 29, Astor staff met with Chirlane McCray, NYC First Lady, who visited their satellite clinic program at MS118 in the Bronx, to discuss the importance of mental health services in the public schools. McCray wrote a Guest Column on February 26 in the *NY Daily News* entitled, “*How we will shatter the mental illness stigma,*” where she discussed their family’s experience with her daughter, who suffered from depression.

McCray is visiting programs in the five boroughs that serve kids and adults with mental health issues so “together, we can create a mental health system that meets the needs of all New Yorkers.”

The school principal, Giulia Cox, who was also in attendance, spoke highly of Astor and the need to have the mental health services Astor provides in the NYC public schools. Cox advocated for funds to cover services desperately needed for the mental health services and the Department of Education (DOE) staff. Cox also advocated for regular meetings with Astor’s mental health specialists to teach DOE’s staff how to recognize triggers and to engage children in meaningful ways.

Two parents, whose children receive mental health services from Astor, both echoed that they saw a tremendous difference in their children as a result of the mental health services they receive. Their children have a level of trust that they did not have prior, and speak to them openly about their feelings.

Since the mid-1970s, Astor has been providing mental health and educational services to children and adolescents in the Bronx.

May is Mental Health Awareness Month and Astor is drawing attention to reducing the stigma around mental health through public outreach – visit their website: www.astorservices.org; and their Facebook page: [astorservices](https://www.facebook.com/astorservices) for more information. To learn more about the services Astor provides in the Bronx or the Hudson Valley, visit their website or call (845) 871-1117.

About Astor

Since 1953, Astor Services for Children & Families (formerly The Astor Home for Children) has been providing behavioral and educational services in a caring environment where children and their families find strength, healing, hope and trust. Now serving more than 6,000 children and families annually in over 33 locations, Astor’s current range of services in the Hudson Valley (Dutchess, Orange and Ulster counties) and the Bronx include: Residential Programs (for children ages 5-14 who have severe



behavior and mental health challenges); Early childhood Programs (Astor operates the Early Head Start and Head Start Programs in Dutchess County, a federal early childhood program for low-income families); and Community-Based Behavioral Health and Prevention Services (outpatient mental health services).

###



L-R: Iliana Baez, LMSW - Social Work Clinician, Zory A. Wentt, LCSW-R - Program Director, Chirlane McCray, Ed Pruitt, Assistant Executive Director, Public Policy & Organizational Development