



First Religious Respite Home for Children with Special Needs



(L-R) Councilman Mathieu Eugene; Assembly Member Rhoda Jacobs; Councilman Jumaane Williams; Brooklyn Borough President Marty Markowitz; NYS Senate Finance Chair Carl Kruger; Assembly Member Steven Cymbrowitz; Abe Eisner, President, Board of Directors, HASC Center; Shmiel Kahn, Executive Director, HASC Center; Dr. Chaim Wakslak, Clinical Director, HASC Center; Rabbi Yechezkel Pikus, Executive Director, COJO of Flatbush

Parents, neighbors, volunteers, friends and governments officials were all on hand at the grand opening, on May 13th, for HASC Center's Lev Tova, New York's only religious overnight respite home for children with special needs.

The wide array of agencies represented at the grand opening demonstrates the value of this pioneering service and the expectation that the children they serve will have the opportunity to benefit from Lev Tova's respite program. Professionals as well as parents of children with special needs toured the home, spoke to the nurse, and met the staff that would be caring for their children.

Lev Tova's living and dining rooms are spacious and welcoming. With six large bedrooms, up to eight children can be accommodated at a time. Lev Tova even provides a state-of-the-art Snoezelen Room which offers a wide range of sensory experiences for the children to enjoy. Many parents commented on the range of features intended to meet the highest standards of safety.

Conveniently located on Avenue J off Ocean Avenue, the new home is sure to provide great assistance to untold numbers of children and their families for many years to come.



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HASC Lobbies Albany Against Program Cuts

A group of HASC Center's program participants, program supervisors and coordinators met with legislators in Albany to thank them for their ongoing support, and to impress upon them the vital importance of the services provided by the Center. HASC Center runs an array of programs for



individuals with developmental disabilities, providing them with the necessary tools and guidance to achieve the highest possible level of independence and empowerment.

The group had the opportunity to meet personally with State Legislators, including Senate Democratic Leader John Sampson, Senate Finance Chair Carl Kruger, Senator Daniel Squadron, Senator Eric Adams, Senator Kevin S. Parker, Senator Bill Perkins, Senator Martin Malave Dilan, Senator Rev. Ruben Diaz, Sr., Assembly Member Felix Ortiz, Assembly Member Rhoda Jacobs, Assembly Member Karim Camara and Assembly Member James F. Brennan who heard firsthand of the significant accomplishments individuals in the group achieved through their participation in HASC Center's wide array of programs and services.

HASC Center's program participants share their concerns with New York State Senate Finance Chairman Carl Kruger at the State Capitol in Albany.

Greenfield Demands Security Upgrades for Subways

In a joint hearing of the City Council's Public Safety and Transportation Committees last month, Councilman David G. Greenfield demanded swift action to ensure the safety of the New York City Transit Authority's nearly 4.3 million daily riders.

At the hearing, Greenfield slammed the MTA for "failing in its responsibilities to commuters." Greenfield pointed out that the MTA is years behind its promise to secure train stations, and the policy of prioritizing stations for cameras would encourage those seeking to attack the transit system to enter the system through unprotected stations.

Greenfield demanded of Prendergast that "all train stations be protected with this most basic of security measures."

Greenfield's questioning also revealed that the MTA is nowhere near completion of a five year old promise to install equipment to expand cell-service in New York's subway stations.

In his questioning of NYPD Transit Chief Raymond Diaz at the same hearing, Chief Diaz agreed with Greenfield that cell phone service in train stations would improve the security of New York subway riders.

Greenfield's line of questioning highlighted the MTA's mismanagement of funds allocated for security improvements. Reflecting on the exchange with Prendergast Greenfield said, "I think we have to focus more on the common sense solutions that will make an immediate impact on the safety of our transit system."