



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Kevin S. Parker

## Senator Kevin Parker Co-Sponsors Resilient Young Minds Inc's 5th Annual Suicide Walk

JAUkia MCCONEYHEAD September 21, 2023

| ISSUE: **BLACK YOUTH SUICIDE, SUICIDE PREVENTION MONTH**



**Brooklyn, NY** - In marking September as suicide prevention month, State Senator Kevin Parker collaborated with Resilient Young Minds Inc. (RYM Inc.) in successfully staging the 5th Annual Suicide Awareness Walk in Brooklyn. RYM is a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting mental health awareness and supporting suicide prevention initiatives. The

event held at Canarsie Park brought together community members, advocates, and leaders to raise awareness and encourage discussions about mental health challenges faced by individuals, particularly within the African American community.

According to national statistics, suicide rates among African Americans have been rising steadily over the years, increasing by about 19%. The new analysis also shows that African American individuals between 10 and 24 years old saw the most significant proportional increase in suicide rate between 2018 and 2021 among the age groups examined. The rate rose by nearly 37%, from 8.2 deaths per 100,000 in 2018 to 11.2 per 100,000 in 2021.

“It is crucial to address and shed light on the unique circumstances and experiences that lead to these alarming rates,” said Senator Parker, who has co-sponsored the walk for the past four years. “It is imperative that we continue to unite, educate, and take action to save lives. Partnering with Resilient Young Minds Inc. is an opportunity to highlight the urgency and importance of raising awareness about mental health and suicide prevention. We must work together to support those struggling and ensure access to much-needed resources, particularly within the African American community. Collectively, we can create a safer, more empathetic space that nurtures mental well-being,” he concluded.

Simone Muschett, LMSW Founder and CEO of Resilient Young Minds Inc., expressed her gratitude and shared a personal sentiment regarding the significance of the Suicide Awareness Walk. She said: “As someone who struggles with mental health personally and has survived an attempt, I am beyond moved to see so many people stand up for the cause

that is so near and dear to my heart. It is especially gratifying because I know how alone I felt when I went through my struggles.”

In thanking all who have contributed to making the walk a successful venture, Muschett said that the first march five years ago started with 15 people. Senator Parker was the first community leader to stand with us and has been consistent this entire time. Now we have sponsors at both community and corporate levels, and I am grateful that the vision I had five years ago is coming to fruition,” said Muschett, adding, “This is not just a walk. It is a wellness experience!”

#### **About State Senator Kevin Parker**

Senator Kevin S. Parker is intimately familiar with the needs of his ethnically diverse Brooklyn district comprising sections of Flatbush, East Flatbush, Kensington, Ditmas Park, Midwood, Flatlands, Canarsie, Georgetown, Old Mill Basin, Mill Basin, Marine Park, and Bergen Beach. A lifelong Brooklyn resident, Senator Parker is the Chairman of the Senate Energy and Telecommunications Committee and a member of several other Senate committees including Finance, Rules, Banks, Internet and Technology, as well as Budget and Revenue.

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