

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**THE CHILD CENTER OF NY PARTNERS WITH  
LADY GAGA'S BORN THIS WAY FOUNDATION & COTTON ON FOUNDATION  
IN SUPPORT OF MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS CAMPAIGN  
'KINDER, BRAVER TOGETHER'**

*The Child Center pledges to mobilize 10,000 people worldwide to earn their **Be There Certificate**, a free online course for peer-to-peer mental health support as the mental health crisis continues*

**TUESDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2023 - New York** — **Today, World Mental Health Day**, The Child Center of NY partners with Lady Gaga's Born This Way Foundation and Australian-born fashion and lifestyle brand Cotton On's philanthropic arm, Cotton On Foundation, for their 'Kinder, Braver Together' campaign in response to the escalating mental health crisis. As part of this collaboration, The Child Center is working alongside elected officials as well as national and global organizations such as the Carnegie Institution for Science in an effort to mobilize 10,000 individuals in communities across the world to earn their [Be There Certificate](#) from now through Mental Health Awareness Month in May 2024.

The *Be There Certificate* is a free, self-paced, interactive online mental health course designed by Jack.org in partnership with Born This Way Foundation to increase mental health literacy and provide young people and their communities with the knowledge, skills, and confidence needed to safely support those who may be struggling with their mental health. The Child Center reaches more than 55,000 children and their families each year with a mission to strengthen them with the skills, opportunities, and emotional support to build healthy, successful lives.

*"We believe that partnerships are essential in our mission to reshape the future of mental health through the 'Kinder, Braver Together' campaign," said **Traci Donnelly, CEO of The Child Center**. "By joining forces with individuals, organizations, and communities worldwide, we can create a lasting impact on the lives of children and families. This campaign marks just the beginning of our journey towards a more compassionate and accessible mental health landscape. Together, we can overcome challenges and pave the way for a brighter future. Let's be kinder, braver and make a difference that resonates for generations to come."*

As part of their partnership, The Child Center will gift limited-edition 'Kinder, Braver Together' hats and T-shirts to the first 10,000 team members, children, and families who earn their *Be There*

*Certificate.* The ‘Kinder, Braver Together’ campaign was created by Cotton On Foundation and Born This Way Foundation to support youth mental health globally and equip young people with tools to take action, including the *Be There Certificate*.

*“Every day, we witness young people around the world leading and transforming the discussion around mental health and calling for increased resources to support themselves, their peers, and their communities,”* said **Cynthia Bissett Germanotta, President and Co-Founder of Born This Way Foundation.** *“We hope this partnership will accelerate the delivery of tangible resources, skills, and grassroots support necessary to build kinder, braver communities that value and improve mental health.”*

The Child Center will partner with like-minded organizations, including the Carnegie Institution for Science, and elected officials to encourage more than 10,000 people globally to earn their *Be There Certificate*.

*“As a top-tier research institution, **Carnegie Science** is committed not only to advancing our wealth of scientific knowledge, but to opening the doors to the next generation of science lovers and STEM professionals through our dedicated outreach, education, and teacher-training initiatives,”* said **President Eric D. Isaacs.** *“By joining the ‘Kinder, Braver Together’ campaign, we have an opportunity to weave mental health awareness into our efforts, ensuring that all the students and teachers who participate in our programs are prepared to recognize and seek help for mental health challenges.”*

*“If we make mental health in our schools a priority, my students will win every single time. They deserve social, emotional, and mental health support that will allow them to not just survive but thrive,”* said **Dr. Maria Rianna, Executive Committee for the NYS Council of School Superintendents, Superintendent of Schools for Glen Cove City School District, and President of the Nassau County Council of School Superintendents.** *“We are beyond excited to join alongside The Child Center of NY and Born This Way Foundation in transforming the lives of children and communities we serve.”*

*“The Port Jefferson School District is excited to partner with The Child Center of NY and other organizations,”* said **Jessica Schmettan, Superintendent of Schools for Port Jefferson Union Free School District.** *“They have provided us with necessary, relevant, and meaningful resources to educate our community. Our students’ and staff’s mental health is one of the most important topics we can address in our schools today.”*

*“Communities possess an incredible capacity to support one another and create lasting change,” said **Mauricio Miller, author and social entrepreneur.** “Oftentimes, we overlook the inherent strength that exists within individuals who face mental health challenges and assume that external interventions are the only path to progress. My research and experiences have shown that peer support networks can foster resilience, inspire hope, and lead to community-driven solutions.”*

Nationally, children and young adults are particularly vulnerable and distressed. According to the [CDC](#), in 2021, almost 1 in 5 teen girls experienced sexual violence, 3 in 5 girls felt persistently sad and hopeless, almost half of LGBTQ+ students seriously considered attempting suicide, nearly 1 in 4 attempted suicide, and nearly 3 in 4 reported persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness.

The Child Center of NY will continue to provide community support to New Yorkers struggling with mental illness, and join forces with this global initiative, alongside Born This Way Foundation and Cotton On Foundation’s global efforts. The partnership aims to foster open and supportive conversations about mental health in everyday life, particularly for the one in five New Yorkers who grapple with mental illness annually. The [NYC Mayor’s Office of Community Mental Health](#) shares that hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers are not connected to care. Black, Latinx, and Asian American, and Pacific Islander New Yorkers are less likely to be connected to mental healthcare than white New Yorkers. Additionally, among youth with mental health needs, males are less likely to be connected to mental healthcare across all races and ethnicities.

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## **About The Organizations Involved**

### **About The Child Center of NY**

Our mission is to strengthen children and families with skills, opportunities, and emotional support to build healthy, successful lives. Founded in 1953, The Child Center is a multiservice organization that reaches over 55,000 children and families each year, ranging from birth through adulthood, at almost 70 schools and community locations. The Child Center works in six main program areas: early childhood education; behavioral health; residential treatment; prevention and family support; health homes and integrated care; and youth development. The Child Center is based primarily in Queens but also serves children and families in Brooklyn, the Bronx, and Manhattan, as well as Long Island. To learn more, please visit <https://childcenterny.org/>.

### **About Born This Way Foundation**

[Born This Way Foundation](#), co-founded and led by Lady Gaga and her mother, Cynthia Bissett Germanotta, supports youth mental health and works with young people to build a kinder and braver world. Through youth-driven research, programs, and strategic partnerships, Born This Way Foundation

aims to make kindness cool, validate the emotions of young people, and eliminate the stigma surrounding mental health. Born This Way Foundation's programs include #BeKind365, Channel Kindness, the Be There Certificate, and Please Stay – all aimed at connecting young people (and anyone!) with resources to build communities that understand, prioritize, and foster good mental health. Learn more at [bornthisway.foundation](http://bornthisway.foundation).

### **About Jack.org**

[Jack.org](http://Jack.org) is Canada's leading charity training and empowering young leaders to revolutionize mental health in every province and territory. Through Jack Talks, Jack Chapters, and Be There programs, young leaders identify and dismantle barriers to positive mental health in their communities. And through ambitious innovations in youth mental health like the Be There Certificate, we give people the mental health resources they need to educate themselves. We're working towards a Canada where all young people understand how to take care of their own mental health and look out for each other. A Canada without shame, where all those who need support get the help they deserve.

### **About Cotton On**

Cotton On's purpose is to make a positive difference in people's lives. A global fashion and lifestyle retailer with eight brands, 1,500 stores and powered by 20,000 passionate team members across 22 countries, their vision is to take their Aussie lifestyle brands to the world, delivering Good along the way. They offer on trend and affordable lifestyle products across ladieswear, men's, kids, body, accessories and stationery. To learn more, head to [cottonon.com](http://cottonon.com) or [cottonongroup.com](http://cottonongroup.com).

### **About Cotton On Foundation**

The philanthropic arm of Cotton On, Cotton On Foundation, is creating a world where every young person can thrive. With outreach programs in Uganda, South Africa, Thailand and Australia, the not-for-profit's 15-year outreach has raised \$170 million AUD. Together with their team and customers, creating lasting impact across three key areas: Holistic Education, Mental Health and Environment.

### **About Prospira**

Global Prospira Global is a boutique mental health advisory firm which is proud to support the 'Kinder, Braver Together' campaign as part of its work supporting global companies, philanthropists and investors to design and implement effective global mental health solutions. Prospira Global is driven by a mission to catalyse increased and more effective action on mental health worldwide, led by intelligence and data, lived experience and our unique global network.