



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 23rd, 2012

CONTACT: Amy Ellenbogen, Director, Crown Heights Community Mediation Center 718-773-6886
DURING EVENT: Ife Charles, Deputy Director, 646-671-2164 or Ms. Ellenbogen at 646-660-3459

S.O.S. Crown Heights Celebrates “Arts to End Violence” At Gallery Opening Tonight

S.O.S. (Save Our Streets) Crown Heights will have its Art Showcase and Gallery Opening **tonight, May 23rd at 6:30 PM**. Art submitted by youth, professional, and emerging artists will be displayed at the gallery of local artist Ron Taylor at 1160 St. Johns Place, between Kingston and Albany Avenues. Film submissions will be shown next door at the Greater Restoration Baptist Church at 1156 St. Johns Place.

The Art Showcase is one of the events of the Second Annual S.O.S. Arts to End Violence Festival, a celebration of neighborhood artists whose submissions convey messages of non-violence and community building. After the end of the festival, reproductions of the artwork will be displayed in local businesses throughout the summer. "This is an innovative way for artists in the neighborhood and beyond to contribute to the anti-gun violence movement that is thriving Crown Heights," says Amy Ellenbogen, Director of the Crown Heights Community Mediation Center, home of the S.O.S. Program. "The reproductions of the art that travel into the barbershops, laundromats and stores will increase awareness and dialogue with people who might not come to the gallery."

The Arts to End Violence Festival will continue with a **film night tomorrow, May 24th**, at LaunchPad (721 Franklin Avenue). The night will begin at **7:00pm** with a selection of **Arts to End Violence films** and a discussion with the filmmakers, and will be followed at **8:00pm** by a screening of the movie **Player Hating: A Love Story** organized by the Kings County Cinema Society. Previous events included a Block Party on Saturday, May 19th, and an impromptu display of the art reproductions on Utica Avenue at a shooting response on Tuesday, May 22nd.

About S.O.S. Crown Heights

Shootings have been reduced in the S.O.S. target area in the past two years, from 23 incidents in 2010 to only 12 in 2011. Outreach Worker Supervisor Lavon Walker says that “everyone in the neighborhood has a role to play in ending gun violence.” Unifying the community to stand against gun violence is central to the work of S.O.S.

For more information about Arts to End Violence visit www.artstoendviolence.tumblr.com.

For more information about S.O.S. visit www.soscrownheights.org, like our Facebook page (facebook.com/soscrownheights) and follow our twitter (www.twitter.com/SOSCrownheights).

S.O.S. is a project of the Crown Heights Community Mediation Center. The Mediation Center is a project of the Center for Court Innovation—a public-private partnership between the Fund for the City of New York and the New York State Unified Court System.