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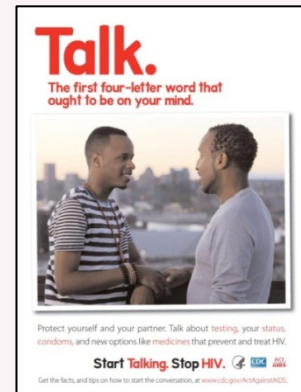
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New and Noteworthy

Start Talking. Stop HIV. — Encouraging Conversations About HIV Prevention Among Gay and Bisexual Men

On May 21, 2014, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) launched *Start Talking. Stop HIV.*, (<http://www.cdc.gov/ActAgainstAIDS/StartTalking>) a national prevention campaign for gay and bisexual men that promotes open communication about a range of HIV prevention strategies for sexual partners. *Start Talking. Stop HIV.*, which features gay and bisexual men from across the United States, encourages men in all types of relationships to talk about HIV testing, their HIV status, condom use, and medicines that help prevent and treat HIV (PrEP and PEP—pre- and post-exposure prophylaxis, and ART—antiretroviral therapy). The campaign is designed to reach and influence men in their everyday lives with messages that engage, inspire, and spark conversations between sexual partners about HIV prevention strategies.

Campaign concepts and messages reflect input from more than 500 gay and bisexual men from various racial and ethnic groups, ages, and geographic locations across the United States. Campaign ads and resources, including a campaign website and Facebook page, provide gay and bisexual men with practical conversation tips and tools. The campaign’s series of videos features gay and bisexual men talking about their successes and challenges with these conversations and offers suggestions on how to move beyond the barriers and talk to one another.



Start Talking. Stop HIV. is part of CDC's *Act Against AIDS* (<http://www.cdc.gov/ActAgainstAIDS>) initiative; it will roll out in select cities across the country in 2014.

Help us spark conversations about HIV and share information about the campaign:

- Forward this newsletter to friends, family, and colleagues.
- Download campaign materials at <http://www.cdc.gov/actagainstaids/campaigns/index.html>.
- Join the conversation on Facebook (<http://www.facebook.com/StartTalkingHIV>) and Twitter (<https://twitter.com/TalkHIV>).
- Embed campaign advertisements on your websites and social media channels.

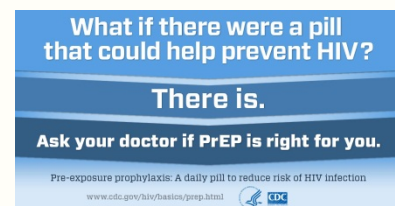


Talking can be lifesaving and is an essential step toward stopping HIV transmission in the gay community. Talk to everyone you know about HIV to break the silence and address the associated stigma that puts gay and bisexual men at risk. Learn more at <http://www.cdc.gov/ActAgainstAIDS/StartTalking>.

Show how much you like the new *Start Talking. Stop HIV.* Campaign: Like us on Facebook (<http://www.facebook.com/StartTalkingHIV>)!

New Federal Guidelines: PrEP—A Powerful Tool for HIV Prevention

On May 14, 2014, the U.S. Public Health Service released the first clinical guidelines for Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) (<http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/prevention/research/prep>). PrEP is a new HIV prevention method in which people who do not have HIV take a daily pill to reduce their risk of becoming infected. When used consistently, PrEP has been shown to reduce the risk of HIV infection among adult men and women at very high risk for HIV infection through sex or injecting drug use.



The PrEP guidelines were developed by a federal interagency working group led by CDC, and reflect input from providers, HIV patients, partners, and affected communities. The new guidelines:

- Provide clear criteria for determining a person's HIV risk and indications for PrEP use.
- Recommend that the patient receive HIV testing to confirm negative status.
- Emphasize the importance of counseling about adherence to medication and HIV risk reduction, including condom use for additional protection.

- Recommend regular monitoring of HIV infection status, side effects, adherence to medication, and sexual or injection drug risk behaviors.
- Include a providers' supplement (<http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/pdf/PrEPProviderSupplement2014.pdf>) with step-by-step support.
- Include a consumer Q&A on PrEP (<http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/basics/prep.html>) and new fact sheet (http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/pdf/prevention_research_prep_factsheet.pdf).

The new federal guidelines recommend that PrEP be considered for people who are HIV-negative and at substantial risk for HIV. For more information, please visit <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/prevention/research/prep>.

National HIV Testing Day

June 27 is National HIV Testing Day (NHTD), a day to promote HIV testing among all individuals and encourage people to take pride in knowing their HIV status. HIV can affect anyone regardless of age, race/ethnicity, education, or geographic location. Of the estimated 1.1 million people in the United States living with HIV, almost 1 in 6 is unaware of their infection.



CDC recommends that everyone between the ages of 13 and 64 get tested for HIV at least once as part of routine health care. Visit your health care provider or local clinic and ask to be tested for HIV. If you are looking for HIV testing in your community, check out the testing locator at <http://locator.aids.gov/>. Learn more about HIV testing at <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/testing/index.html>.

We would like to hear what you and your community are doing in observance of NHTD. Encourage your friends and family to get tested, share testing day messages on social media using #NHTD, and when someone asks, "Do you know your HIV status?" tell them "YES, I got tested!"

For resources and information on NHTD visit <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/library/socialmedia/awarenessdays.html>.



Stay Tuned—Take Charge. Take the Test. To Release New Campaign Materials in June

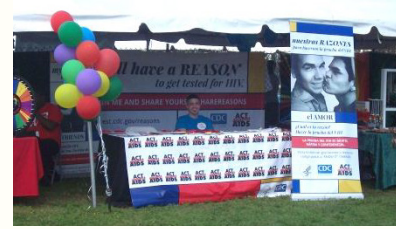
In June, CDC's *Take Charge. Take the Test.*[™] campaign will release an expanded suite of creative materials. Part of the *Act Against AIDS* initiative, *Take Charge. Take the Test.*[™] is a national campaign intended to increase HIV testing among Black women aged 18 to 34. New materials feature updated imagery and messaging that was extensively tested to ensure that the campaign would resonate with today's modern Black woman.

Updated palm cards and posters will be available for dissemination on NHTD (June 27). Updated HIV testing widgets and banners will also be available for download on the campaign website. CDC encourages local health departments, community-based organizations, activists, and others to request free materials to support local HIV testing events. For more information, visit <http://hivtest.cdc.gov/takecharge/>.

In the Community

Kicking Off Pride Season With *Let's Stop HIV Together* and *Reasons/Razones*

2014 Pride events kicked off in sunny Fort Lauderdale in late February with support from CDC's *Act Against AIDS* campaigns. Pride attendees posed for photos in front of *Let's Stop HIV Together*[™] (<http://www.cdc.gov/actagainstaids/together>) and *Reasons/Razones*[™] (<http://hivtest.cdc.gov/reasons/>) campaign backdrops while enjoying the sights and sounds of Pride. Pride-goers also received the latest *Act Against AIDS* campaign materials and information. Our next stop was Miami Pride in April. In addition to our Pride booth, we also provided resources and information in the community before Pride and worked with the local health department to provide HIV testing.



In case you missed us in Fort Lauderdale and Miami, *Reasons/Razones*[™], *Testing Makes Us Stronger*[™] (<http://hivtest.cdc.gov/stronger/index.html>), and our newest campaign, *Start Talking. Stop HIV.* (<http://www.cdc.gov/ActAgainstAIDS/StartTalking>), will be featured at Pride events throughout the summer—in San Juan; Washington, DC; Philadelphia; Seattle; and Dallas, to name a few. We are also working with the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene to offer HIV testing before NYC Pride in June.



Stop by our booth, pick up some materials, and have your photo taken. You may even catch us marching in a few Pride parades!

Contact us at ActAgainstAIDS@cdc.gov if you would you like to receive the *Act Against AIDS* campaign packet. Each packet contains fact sheets, posters, and materials.

CDC Partners With Black College Today Magazine

CDC's *Let's Stop HIV Together*[™] campaign is partnering with Black College Today Magazine and taking a ride on the Historically Black Colleges and Universities college tour! In early 2014, *Together* ads were placed in Black College Today magazine and campaign materials were placed in welcome bags to be distributed at each of the 10 stops on the 2014 Black College Today Magazine Spring Tour. Approximately 200 bags will be given away at each school.



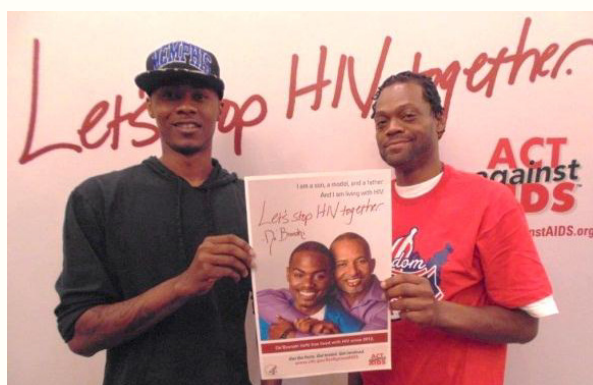
On the Road With the *Together Network*

CDC's *Let's Stop HIV Together*[™] campaign brings together a diverse group of men and women from across the United States committed to increasing awareness of and reducing the stigma associated with HIV. To extend the reach of the campaign, more than 30 participants joined the *Together Network*, a coalition of individuals who use their personal connections and affiliations to share HIV/AIDS prevention messages. Not only will you see *Network* members on posters, billboards, and CDC's YouTube channel, but you can see them at speaking engagements and events in a city near you! Here are a few highlights of what *Network* members have been up to:

- September 2013: *Together Network* members participated in a panel discussion about stigma at the U.S. Conference on AIDS (USCA) in New Orleans.
- October/November 2013: Justin Toro was a panelist at the National Alliance of State and Territorial AIDS Directors' (NASTAD) National Stigma Summit on Black and Latino Gay Men's Health in Dallas, TX.
- Fall 2013: Cedric Sturdevant led the planning and organization of Jackson Pride (Jackson, MS). Attendees took pictures in front of the *Together* backdrop and campaign materials were displayed at the events.
- Robin Barkins, Masonia Traylor, and Tiaja Pauls hosted individual speaking engagements with young people at various schools and universities in their communities, educating students about safer sex and STD and HIV prevention. *Together* materials were disseminated at these events.
- Margot Kirkland was recently inducted into the 2020 Leading Women's Society and awarded a Proclamation from the state of Maryland for her work with people living with HIV.



Left to Right: *Together Network* members Robin Barkins and Tiaja Pauls alongside event attendees



Jackson Pride-goers pose for a photo in front of the *Together* campaign backdrop.

Are you interested in having a *Network* member speak at one of your events? Email us at ActAgainstAIDS@cdc.gov. Stay tuned for more news and updates from the *Together Network* and check out new *Together* digital stories at <http://www.cdc.gov/actagainstaids/campaigns/lsht/stories/index.html>.

AIDS.gov Blog Features *Act Against AIDS* Leadership Initiative Partner Work To Reduce HIV/AIDS Among African American Women and Latinas

Learn more about the important work that *Act Against AIDS* Leadership Initiative (AAALI) partners Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Black Women's Health Imperative, and Farmworker Justice are doing to address HIV awareness and prevention among women in a recent AIDS.gov blog post! The March 19, 2014 post, "Organizations Work To Reduce HIV/AIDS Among African American Women and Latinas," can be found at <http://blog.aids.gov/2014/03/organizations-work-to-reduce-hivaids-among-african-american-women-and-latinas.html>.



To find out more about these organizations and what other AAALI partners are doing to reduce the impact of HIV/AIDS among communities hardest hit by HIV, visit <http://www.cdc.gov/actagainstaids/partnerships/action.html>.

New Study To Examine the Factors Affecting the Health of African American MSM

AAALI member Center for Black Equity is partnering with the University of Pittsburgh's Graduate School of Public Health on a new research project to study reasons why African American men who have sex with men (MSM) have an increased risk for HIV infection. The project aims to enroll nearly 6,000 African American men who attend Black Gay Pride events in large cities nationwide.



The study will generate information about HIV risk in this population and other social determinants that are affecting the overall health of African American MSM, including depression, substance use, violence, victimization, and other health problems. The study will also examine how some men have the ability to avoid these health challenges. The results of this study will help identify how African American MSM—even men dealing with adversity—can maintain and improve their health status.



Clinician's Corner

Medscape Spotlight on Updated Guidance for HIV Screening in Health Care Settings



In April 2013, the U. S. Preventive Services Task Force issued updated guidance for HIV screening in health care settings. A Grade A recommendation was given to routine opt-out screening for HIV infection in adolescents and adults aged 15 to 65 as well as in younger adolescents and older adults at increased risk.

In a new Medscape Spotlight scheduled to launch in May, a panel of experts will discuss the implication of this recommendation on primary care practices. The panel is moderated by Valerie E. Stone, M.D., of Harvard Medical School and features Margaret Hoffman-Terry, M.D., of Pennsylvania State University; Ronald H. Goldschmidt, M.D., of the University of California, San Francisco; and Jeffrey T. Kirchner, D.O., of Temple University School of Medicine.

Discussions focus on the alignment of recommendations for HIV screening issued by the CDC and various societies, follow-up care for patients who test positive or negative for HIV infection, and the implications of HIV prevention efforts that result from increased HIV screening. This latest Medscape roundtable will be free to all providers at <http://www.Medscape.com> in May 2014. The program is sponsored by CDC's *Act Against AIDS, HIV Screening. Standard Care.*TM campaign (<http://www.cdc.gov/actagainstaids/campaigns/hssc/index.html>).

Health Literacy: An Essential Element for Successful Access to Care, Use of Services, Self-Care, and Maintenance of Health and Wellness

Poor health literacy is "a stronger predictor of a person's health than age, income, employment status, education level, and race."¹

What is health literacy? Health literacy is a person's capacity to find, understand, and use basic health information and services needed to make appropriate health decisions,² and it greatly influences how individuals prevent illness, manage a condition, and seek care.

"We all need information about our health. BUT most of us can't understand it. Only 10% of adults have the skills needed to use health information that is routinely available in health care facilities, retail outlets, and the media."³

Studies show that when health information is unclear:

- People are less likely to use preventive services.
- Health diagnoses are misunderstood.
- Medications are taken incorrectly.
- People are likely to end up in the emergency room more often.



Designing and presenting clear, easy-to-read health information can help. Using plain language and health literacy principles can also help your audience fully understand the information provided.

¹ Report on the Council of Scientific Affairs, Ad Hoc Committee on Health Literacy for the Council on Scientific Affairs, AMA, *JAMA*, Feb 10, 1999.

² U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2000). *Healthy People 2010*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

³ CommunicateHealth. (2012). Health Literacy Infographic. <http://communicatehealth.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/HealthLitInfographic-11x171.pdf>

CDC encourages all health care providers, stakeholders, and partners to become more aware of health literacy issues and develop related skills. Here are a few resources to help you get started:

- CDC's Health Literacy Website (<http://www.cdc.gov/healthliteracy/index.html>)
- IOM Fact Sheet, 2012
(http://www.iom.edu/~media/Files/Activity%20Files/PublicHealth/HealthLiteracy/HealthLiteracyFactSheets_Feb6_2012_Parker_JacobsonFinal1.pdf)
- IHA's Health Literacy Matters: Beginner's Packet
(<http://www.ihahealthliteracy.org/index.php/learn-about-health-literacy/health-literacy-training/beginner-s-packet>)
- Health Literacy Online (<http://www.health.gov/healthliteracyonline/>)
- AMA Health Literacy Video (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BgTuD7l7LG8&lr=1>)
- CommunicateHealth Health Literacy Infographic (<http://communicatehealth.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/HealthLitInfographic-11x171.pdf>)
- Center for Plain Language, Plain Language Checklist
(<http://centerforplainlanguage.org/5-steps-to-plain-language/>)

Awareness Days



National HIV/AIDS Awareness Days remind us of the importance of knowing the facts about HIV and help to ensure that we do not forget about the toll the epidemic has taken on the

nation's health. In observance of these Awareness Days, CDC provides information and materials on the importance of HIV prevention, testing, and treatment.

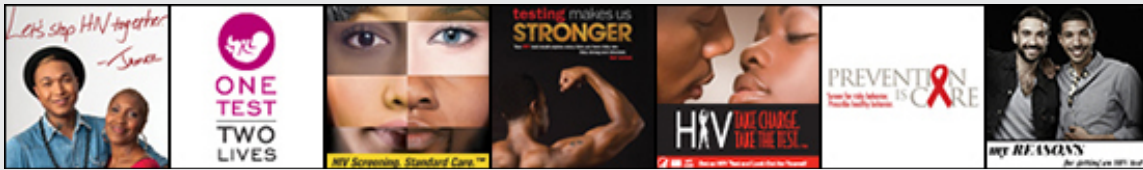
To help you stay informed, CDC has created a new Web page (<http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/library/socialmedia/awarenessdays.html>) dedicated to HIV/AIDS Awareness Day news, events, and information. In addition to the full list of annual Awareness Days, you'll find links to resources including population-specific fact sheets, featured stories, and information on how you can plan and promote your Awareness Day event.

We encourage you to spread the word on the importance of HIV awareness and prevention by having conversations with family, friends, and on social media. And be sure to mark your calendar, because several Awareness Days are quickly approaching!

Act Against AIDS Contact Information

If you have any questions or comments about *Act Against AIDS* campaigns, or for information about campaign materials or co-branding, please send an email to ActAgainstAIDS@cdc.gov or call 404-639-6080.

Learn More About Our Campaigns



Get the Facts. Get Tested. Get Involved.

<http://www.cdc.gov/actagainstaids>



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INITIATIVE

Act Against AIDS (<http://www.cdc.gov/actagainstaids>) is a national initiative launched by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the White House to combat complacency about HIV and AIDS in the United States. Act Against AIDS focuses on raising awareness among all Americans and reducing the risk of infection among the hardest-hit populations—gay and bisexual men, African Americans, and Latinos.