

THE NIA ALLIANCE NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2010

Volume 2, Issue 6

HIV IN THE NEWS!

Over the past few months we've seen a number of big news announcements in the world of HIV. Beginning with the [FDA Approval of the First-of-Its-Kind HIV Test Which Can Detect HIV Days Earlier Than Current U.S. Tests](#), to the most distinguished, the revealing of [President Obama's National HIV Strategy](#). We also have at the time of this writing, the news that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released a study titled "[Communities in Crisis: Is There a Generalized HIV Epidemic in Impoverished Urban Areas of the United States](#)", although, for those us in these urban communities, this is not news!

However, there was another announcement; one that seemingly flew under most people's radar. Despite the FDA approving this new "First-of-its-kind" HIV test, this same FDA decided to uphold the ban on gay men donating blood. This announcement seemed to have flown so far under the radar that most folks either were unaware of the ban or didn't know that it was still in place. Being relatively new to the struggle, I had never heard about the ban, so I was shocked when I heard the preview of the topic while listening to NPR on June 29th where host, Neal Conan interviewed Professor Arthur Caplan of the University of Pennsylvania. Professor Caplan had previously chaired the Advisory Committee on Blood, Safety and Availability for four years and had worked along with other advocates to get this outdated, and some would argue unnecessary, ban overturned, but to no avail.

After the radio segment I immediately went to NPR's website to read the comments. It was no surprise to find reference to fact that "African-American women account for a STAGGERRING amount of the new HIV cases in a lot of large cities" and of course it was accompanied with the question of should African American women also be banned from donating blood.

Somehow I couldn't wrap my brain around the need to continue this blood ban given the strides in testing, especially given the FDA's announcement of this new test to detect HIV within days of risk exposure. What was the basis for continuing the ban? Was it the fear from the public? What about the frustration of the gay community for being the continued target of a ban when the numbers no longer support them as being the high-risk group? While not widespread, the question of banning African American women from donating blood really got me thinking. Could the fear of tainted blood from the public and the frustration of gay people being banned from donating blood turn towards African American women? I pictured the new headline: African American Women: The New Face of HIV, Banned From Donating Blood! Could this be another stigma for black women and the black community... as if the black woman didn't have enough to content with!

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HIV IN THE NEWS!

As agencies and advocacy groups battle for budget dollars to meet the new objectives outlined in President Obama's new HIV strategy, I thought it important to get a pulse on the public's opinion to see if people are aware of this blood donation ban. If they were aware that African American women represent the new face of HIV/AIDS in America. If Americans knew about the strides in the testing process and more importantly, if they thought a blood donation ban was still necessary. And if a ban is still necessary, should African American women be subject to the ban as the new face of HIV. Using a hardcopy and an online format, I created a [survey](#) to capture the opinions of the people. Anticipated outcomes of the study: during the survey process, the Nia Alliance will educate people regarding HIV, the statistics and high risk groups; educate regarding the blood donation and testing process, as well as understand people's opinion about the FDA's ability to keep our blood supply safe. Additionally, we will obtain the public's opinion regarding the blood donation ban, and thoughts about the two risk groups (Gay community and African American women) and their possible affect on our blood supply. This data will be aggregated to determine the educational needs of the community as it relates to race, gender and sexual orientation and HIV.

Here is the link to the blood donation survey - <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/5YV3766>

Please complete the survey and give us your thoughts on this issue. Thank you!

AS REPORTED ON CHANNEL NEWS 12



Survey finds 2/3 of CT teens having sex

(08/16/10) HARTFORD - A new survey finds that about 2/3 of Connecticut's high school seniors say they have had sex within the last year.

The state's 2009 Youth Risk Behavior Survey finds that just 59% of those teens say they used a condom.

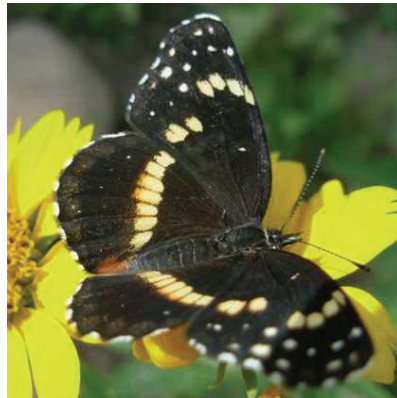
The survey says about one in four high school freshman say they had had sex.

The results have health officials worried that not enough teens are taking precautions against STDs and pregnancy, and encourage parents to talk to their children about proper protection.

Sacred Women: A Support Group for Positive Women

Sacred Women Support Group

“Who can find a virtuous woman- for her price is far above rubies,”



“watch the transformation”

Wednesday September 29th 11:00 am

Guided by principles of faith, Sacred Women support group aims to bring women living with HIV/AIDS together on a monthly bases to offer support with matters of the heart. We also offer HIV educational seminars, health information and other supportive services.

on site child care and refreshments

Tokens available

For more information please contact: Rev. Peggy Hill or Linda Robinson
The Ashe HIV Faith Project
Mount Aery Development Corporation
72 George Street
Bridgeport, CT 06604
203-870-0761

all information shared is confidential

This project is funded by the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention
Nancy Kingwood, MSHS, BC-HSP Project Director

UPCOMING EVENTS



Access our calendar below for information regarding our upcoming events.
Please come out and support the community as your calendars permit!

For more information regarding our upcoming events, please bookmark the following web address: <http://www.localendar.com/public/NiaAlliance>

If you're aware of a community or faith based event and would like to add it to the calendar, please submit the following information to newsletter@niaalliance.com

- ◇ Event Name
- ◇ Point of Contact
- ◇ Date and time of Event
- ◇ Description of Event

RESOURCES: WHERE TO FIND IT...

Need HIV, STD or statistical info and not sure where to find it?
See the list of resources below.

FREE LOCAL HIV TESTING LOCATIONS**GBAPP**

258 Mill Hill Ave, Bridgeport, CT 06604
Hours: Mon-Fri., 9am-5pm
203- 384-3629

Optimus Health Care Incorporated

982 East Main St, Bridgeport, CT 06608
Hours: Mon-Fri., 9am-5pm
203-696-0085

Southwest Community Health Center

361 Bird St, Bridgeport, CT 06605
Hours: Mon-Fri., 8:30am-5pm
203-330-6000

Yale-New Haven Hospital (AIDS Care Program)

20 York St, New Haven, CT 066511
Hours: Mon., 9am-3pm; Tues., Thurs., Fri., 8:30am-5pm; Wed., 9:30am-3pm
203-688-3298

Norwalk Health Department

137 East Ave, Norwalk, CT 06851
Hours: Mon-Fri., 9am-5pm

HIV/AIDS Statistics

Local Stats: CT Department of Public Health (DPH)

<http://www.ct.gov/dph/cwp/view.asp?a=3135&q=393048>

National Stats: Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

<http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/topics/surveillance/resources/reports/index.htm>

Other Related Information:

STD info: Fact Sheets, Statistics, STD testing Sites, etc:

<http://www.cdc.gov/std/default.htm>

Substance Abuse: Treatment facilities, etc:

<http://www.ct.gov/DMHAS/site/default.asp>

2-1-1: referral services for the entire state of CT:

<http://www.infoline.org/>

**REFERRAL
SOURCES:**

**TESTING
SITES,
STATISTICS,
ETC...**

ABOUT NIA

THE NIA ALLIANCE

MADC
72 George Street
Bridgeport, CT 06604
Tel: 203-870-0761
www.niaalliance.com

The Nia Alliance is an initiative with the goal to develop a volunteer network of men and women who are dedicated to learn and respond to the growing HIV epidemic among women of color. In August 2006, GBAPP, Inc. developed a training curriculum to prepare men and women of color to serve as volunteer liaisons to faith-based organization. Objectives for participants completing the training workshop are 1) enhance knowledge of HIV, 2) develop skills to engage peers in HIV-related services, and 3) serve as community liaisons and planning body for HIV awareness events sponsored by GBAPP.

NIA ALLIANCE MISSION STATEMENT

The Nia Alliance is a community mobilization initiative dedicated to equip people of African descent to respond effectively and emphatically to the AIDS epidemic in communities of color through education, advocacy, direct services and community collaboration. Grounded in faith, we recognize the importance of being inclusive and nonjudgmental as we empower our participants to make informed decisions.

The Ashe HIV Faith Project

funded by the Substance Abuse Mental Health Service Administration's Center for Substance Abuse Prevention Faith and Community Based Support Initiative

The Ashe Faith Project aims to reduce substance abuse and HIV/AIDS in communities of color by strengthening the partnerships between local community organizations and faith groups, utilizing a wealth of knowledge, experience and passion to maximize local synergies, promote program collaboration, and encourage service integration.

For more information regarding the Nia Alliance, please contact:

Contact: Nancy Kingwood, MSHS, CHIVC

Project Director

Mount Aery Development Corporation (MADC)

72 George Street

Bridgeport, CT. 06604

Tel: (203) 870-0761

Fax: (203) 394-9957

Email: ashefaithmadc@yahoo.com

**Would you like to
contribute to the
newsletter?**

Please email your article,
event, pictures, etc to
newsletter@niaalliance.com
by the 10th of each month.

