

THE NIA ALLIANCE NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2009

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HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

*On behalf of the Nia Alliance for Men and Women of Color,
I would like to wish you and your family a very blessed
and happy holiday.*

May God continue to bless and keep you in 2010!!!

Nancy

HIV/AIDS: UPDATED FACTS

As we move into 2010 we wanted to begin the New Year with a renewed understanding of the struggle, so this month's newsletter will highlight the updated national HIV/AIDS statistics for African Americans as reported by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Additionally, in light of the updated statistics, we felt it equally important to share with you a link to an interview conducted by NPR commentator, Michel Martin that dispels the mistruth regarding down-low brothers and their lifestyle accounting for the high rate of infection for black women in our communities.

It is our hope that you will review the data and listen to the report and incorporate this information into your discussions and presentations, as it is incumbent upon us to speak truth to power not just to prevent the spread of this disease, but also to help remove the stigma associated with people who are living with this disease and those who have a lifestyle that differs from our own.

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HIV/AIDS AMONG AFRICAN AMERICANS—REVISED AUGUST 2009

The HIV/AIDS epidemic in African American communities is a continuing public health crisis for the United States. At the end of 2006 there were an estimated 1.1 million people living with HIV infection, of which almost half (46%) were black/African American. While blacks represent approximately 12 percent of the U.S. population, they continue to account for a higher proportion of cases at all stages of HIV/AIDS—from infection with HIV to death with AIDS—compared with members of other races and ethnicities.

The Numbers: HIV/AIDS in 2007

- ◇ Blacks accounted for 51% of the 42,655 (including children) new HIV/AIDS diagnoses in 34 states with long-term, confidential name-based HIV reporting.
- ◇ Blacks accounted for 48% of the 551,932 persons* (including children) living with HIV/AIDS in 34 states with long-term, confidential name-based HIV reporting.
- ◇ For black women living with HIV/AIDS, the most common methods of transmission were high-risk heterosexual contact** and injection drug use.
- ◇ For black men living with HIV/AIDS, the most common methods of HIV transmission were (in order):
 - ◇ sexual contact with other men
 - ◇ injection drug use
 - ◇ high-risk heterosexual contact**.

AIDS in 2007

- ◇ Blacks accounted for 49% of the estimated 35,962 AIDS cases diagnosed in the 50 states and the District of Columbia.
- ◇ In 2007, the rates of AIDS diagnoses decreased among blacks but were still higher than the rates of any other race/ethnicity. The rate of AIDS diagnoses for black adults/adolescents were 10 times the rate for whites and nearly 3 times the rate for Hispanics. The rate of AIDS diagnoses for black women was 22 times the rate for white women. The rate of AIDS diagnoses for black men was almost 8 times the rate for white men.
- ◇ Blacks accounted for 44% of the 455,636* people living with AIDS in the 50 states and District of Columbia.
- ◇ By the end of 2007, 40% of the 562,793* persons with AIDS who died were black.

Prevention Challenges

Like other communities, African Americans face a number of risk factors that contribute to the high rates of HIV infection:

- ◇ Sexual risk factors include high-risk sexual contact such as unprotected sex with multiple partners or unprotected sex with persons known to have or be at a high risk for HIV infection. People may be unaware of their partner's sexual risk factors or have incorrectly assessed them.
- ◇ Injection drug use may add to the higher rates of infection for African Americans. In addition to being at risk from sharing unclean needles, casual and chronic illegal substance users may be more likely to engage in unprotected sex under the influence of illegal drugs and/or alcohol.
- ◇ Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) continue to be experienced at higher rates within the African American community, more so than any other race/ethnicity in the United States. The presence of certain STDs can significantly increase one's chances of contracting HIV infection. A person who has both HIV infection and certain STDs has a greater chance of spreading HIV infection to others.

REVISED DATA, CONTINUED AND LINK TO NPR INTERVIEW

- ◇ Lack of awareness of HIV serostatus is risky for African American men and women. In a recent study of men who have sex with men (MSM) in five cities, 46% of the black MSM were HIV-positive and 67% of those men were unaware of their infection.
- ◇ Stigma, a “negative social label that identifies people as deviant”, also puts too many African American communities at a high risk of infection. Any behavior deemed deviant (i.e. MSM) has been highly stigmatized. Many at risk for HIV infection fear stigma more than knowing their status, choosing instead to hide their high-risk behavior rather than seek counseling and testing. Therefore they continue to be at risk and may infect others.
- ◇ The socioeconomic issues associated with poverty, including limited access to high quality healthcare, housing and HIV prevention education may directly or indirectly increase the risk factors for HIV infection.

*Includes persons of unknown race or multiple races/other.

**Heterosexual contact with a person known to have or to be at risk for HIV infection.

Please click link to access the NPR interview with Dr. Kevin Fenton, of the Centers for Disease Control: Myth: HIV/AIDS Rate Among Black Women Traced To Down Low Black Men <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=114237523&sc=emaf>

NIA EVENTS—WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU!

UPCOMING
EVENTS:

ENGAGE!
EDUCATE!
ENJOY!

GBAPP and the Nia Alliance is honored to collaborate with St. Charles Church of Bridgeport to help feed the residents of the Alpha Community Services. Alpha Community Services is part of the Central Connecticut Coast YMCA program of services.

Date: on Tuesday, December 22nd

Time: 4:30p to 8:30p

Location: 387 Clinton Avenue | Bridgeport, CT 06604

NIA ON THE WEB

Nia is now on Facebook! You can become a fan at: **Nia Alliance for People of Color**



Online you'll find updates, inspirations, pictures and other relevant information regarding the Alliance. As always, if you would like to submit content, please send your content to: nkingwood@gbapp.org

We look forward to seeing you on Facebook!

RESOURCES: WHERE TO FIND IT...

Need HIV, STD or Static 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 06651
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

GBAPP
158 Mill Hill Avenue
Bridgeport, CT 06610
Tel: 203-366-8255
www.gbapp.org

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.

For more information regarding the Nia Alliance and GBAPP, please contact:

**Contact: Nancy Kingwood, MSHS, CHIVC
Director of HIV and Faith Based Services
GREATER BRIDGEPORT ADOLESCENT PREGNANCY PROGRAM
158 Mill Hill Avenue
Bridgeport, CT. 06610
Tel: (203) 384-3629
Fax: (203) 367-9588
Email: nkingwood@gbapp.org**

Would you like to contribute to the newsletter?

Please email your article, event, pictures, etc to nkingwood@gbapp.org by the 10th of each month.

