

THE NIA ALLIANCE NEWSLETTER

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Why We Do What We Do

Last month we reported on the high rate of infection in our nation's capital and Nancy shared with us her reflections regarding the state of AIDS in Black America – the news is grim. There's no disputing that – the numbers don't lie!

However, we know that there is a Balm in Gilead!

As you'll read in this month's edition, research has shown that the majority of people who know they are infected take steps to prevent transmission to their partners. However, despite this success, we must remember that the fight against HIV is far from over and this is why we do what we do. Glory!!

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HIV Transmission Rates in the United States

Dramatic Declines Indicate Success In U.S. HIV Prevention

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that approximately 1.1 million persons are living with HIV in the United States. This number is expected to continue to increase over time, as antiretroviral treatments prolong the lives of those who are infected and more people become infected with HIV than die from the disease each year. As the number of people living with HIV—or HIV prevalence—grows, so does the opportunity for HIV transmission to others.

Innovative measure of HIV Prevention shows success

Although CDC recently reported that annual HIV incidence has remained stable in the United States in recent years, these estimates do not provide a full picture of the effect that HIV prevention efforts are having across the country.

To understand the impact of prevention efforts on the US HIV epidemic, Johns Hopkins researcher Dr. David Holtgrave conducted an analysis designed to measure the annual rate of HIV transmission in the United States. The transmission rate represents the annual number of new HIV infections transmitted per 100 persons living with HIV. It is calculated by dividing HIV incidence for a given year by HIV prevalence for the same year, and multiplying this number by 100.

Put simply, the transmission rate compares the annual number of new infections to the number of persons living with HIV, and indicates the likelihood that an HIV infected individual will transmit HIV to others.

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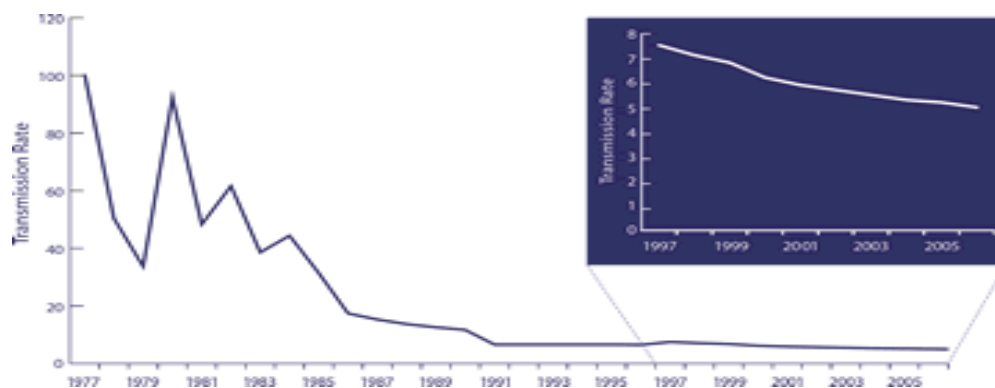
HIV Transmission Rates in the United States...cont'd

Significant Declines in Transmission Rates

Researchers found that the HIV transmission rate has declined dramatically since the early days of the epidemic. In 1980, for example, when the disease was still undetected, the transmission rate was 92 percent, meaning there were 92 transmissions per 100 persons living with HIV at the time. After the identification of AIDS, and later HIV, and the implementation of HIV testing and other prevention efforts, transmission rates began to decline.

Since the peak level of new infections in the mid-1980s, just prior to the introduction of HIV testing, the transmission rate has declined by approximately 89 percent (from 44 transmissions per 100 persons living with HIV in 1984 to five transmissions per 100 persons living with HIV in 2006). Over the last decade, as prevention efforts have been expanded and improved treatments for HIV became available, the transmission rate has declined by 33 percent (from an estimated eight transmissions per 100 persons living with HIV in 1997 to five in 2006). Five transmissions per 100 persons living with HIV in 2006 means more than 95 percent of persons living with HIV did not transmit the infection that year.

These data underscore the importance of reaching all infected individuals with HIV testing and prevention services. Previous research has shown that the majority of people who know they are infected take steps to prevent transmission to their partners.



Declines in Transmission Rates Reflect success of Prevention Efforts Nationwide

Declines in HIV transmission rates reflect the success of prevention efforts across the US, on a national, community, and an individual level. Communities and public health partners are working to tailor prevention efforts to meet local needs, mobilize communities, and expand the reach of HIV prevention. These data also indicate that people living with HIV are taking steps to protect themselves and their partners from infection.

These findings add to several recent signs of success in HIV prevention. Stable incidence in recent years, as well as dramatic declines in mother-to-child HIV transmission and declines in new infections among injection drug users and heterosexuals, are also important signs of progress against this disease.

Implications of the Findings

Despite these successes, we must remember that the fight against HIV is far from over. HIV continues to take a severe toll on multiple communities in the US. Waging a continued battle against HIV will take a continued commitment across the country. We all must do more—as individuals, communities, and as a nation—to expand the reach of effective prevention efforts to those at risk and stop the spread of HIV.

WOMEN OF COLOR LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

The Women of Color 3-day leadership training is confirmed for Wed, May 27-Fri the 29th at Mount Aery Baptist Church - 73 Frank Street Bridgeport, CT. Training hours—Wed and Thu from 9-5 and Fri is from 9-2. Breakfast and lunch will be served each day.

Please note that these are federal trainers!
All participants will receive a certificate of completion.

Introduction

The WOCLI is designed to equip and empower a cadre of skilled leaders to understand the policymaking system, the role of advocacy and the need to find a voice in the decision-making process that impacts health for Women of color. This Institute will help Women of color to build leadership in much needed programs and health services to prevent the spread and mitigate the effects of HIV/AIDS and other health related diseases. Ultimately, this leadership will be instrumental in creating a healthy lifestyle and affecting quality of life for women of color.

The focus of WOCLI is more than just on one's ability to address issue of diagnosing, treating and preventing HIV/AIDS; it is about the fact that Women of color have long been disproportionately affected by chronic yet preventable diseases, which often are diagnosed too late and negatively impact longevity and quality of life. NMAC recognizes that now more than ever, strong Women's leadership in health policy is critically important.

Leadership

While these facts paint a grim picture, strength in women's leadership can turn our adversity into our ally. WOCLI aims to do this by targeting women of color in agencies and community organizations addressing health disparities and build leadership by envisioning how one's voice can change one's future and join other women in the tides that bind.

OTHER TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES...

We are currently recruiting new Nia Alliance Participants!

5th Women's Cohort: June 1, 8, 15, 22 and 29. Classes will be held Monday nights at GBAPP 158 Mill Hill Ave, Bridgeport, CT.

Sexually Transmitted Disease Training

Thank you for your response and interest. The STD training is now confirmed for Tuesday, June 16th at GBAPP, beginning at 5:30pm.

Dinner will be served, so we will need a final headcount by June 8th. Please send an email to Nancy to confirm your attendance.

NIA
TRAINING
OPPORTUNITIES

DID YOU KNOW:

There are more than 25 diseases that are transmitted through sexual activity.

Sign up for the STD training and learn more!

INTRODUCING...THE NIA ALLIANCE RESOURCE BOOK

The Nia Alliance will have its very own prayer and litany brochure that will be printed and distributed to our partners in the faith community, featuring prayers, litanies, words of comfort, poems, sermons, etc., as submitted by the members of the Nia Alliance!

If you would like to submit content to be included in the Nia Alliance Resource book, please submit the following information to Nancy in Microsoft Word format (not PDF):

- Content (prayer, litany, etc)
- Brief bio
- Cohort group (1st, 2nd, etc)

Please note that we will also need to arrange to take your picture.

The deadline to submit your information to Nancy is **May 29th**.

We look forward to your participation in this exciting project. The Nia Alliance Resource Book will be blessing to each reader!

NIA EVENTS—WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU!

Stay Tuned for Details Regarding the Following Events:

Men's Retreat

Date: Friday, July 24th

Location: East End Baptist Tabernacle Church, Bridgeport, CT

Our Church Lights the Way Community Testing Event

Date: Saturday, June 13th

Location: Washington Park, Bridgeport CT

Second Annual Nia Retreat

Date and Location: TBD

ASHA - Addressing Sexual Health and AIDS**Women's Conference**

Date: Saturday, August 15th

Time: TBD

Location: East End Baptist Tabernacle Church, Bridgeport, CT

Second Annual Black & White Dinner

Date: Friday, September 2nd

Time:

Location: Holiday Inn, Bridgeport, CT

**UPCOMING
EVENTS:**

**ENGAGE!
EDUCATE!
ENJOY!**

ABOUT US

THE NIA ALLIANCE

GBAPP
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Bridgeport,
CT 06610
Tel: 203-366-8255

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:

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NEXT MONTH'S EDITION

Next month we'll provide an overview of the types of services offered by 2-1-1.

In our travels and conversations we encounter people who may require services that span beyond the scope of our understanding or geographical jurisdiction. In these instances, we can refer them to 211 where they can be referred to the most appropriate resource to address their needs.

Nia, your labor is not in vain; the battle can still be won! Stay tuned!



Would you like to contribute to the newsletter? Please email your content (article, event, pictures, etc) to nkingwood@gbapp.org by the 10th of each month. Please note that Nancy will approve all newsletter content.