

National Native HIV/AIDS Awareness Day

HIV/AIDS ACTIVITIES SHEET

American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians

March 20, 2009 - A Celebration of Life

In many Native cultures around the country, the cycle and celebration of life are defined by the change in seasons. Ceremonies are held to recognize the changing of one season to another. Each of the four seasons have a special meaning, yet Spring, in particular represents a time for new beginnings. As March 20th marks the beginning of Spring in the Northern Hemisphere, Native communities from around the nation have selected this day to commemorate the annual National Native (American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians) HIV/AIDS Awareness Day.

The National Native HIV/AIDS Awareness Day will challenge Native people to create a greater awareness of the risk for HIV/AIDS in our communities; to call for increased resources for testing and early detection; and to seek support for increasing our treatment and care options.

What you can do to recognize National Native HIV/AIDS Awareness Day

Protect Yourself

- Get tested for HIV! It's important to know your status in order to protect yourself and those you care about.
- Talk privately with your health care provider or doctor about your HIV risks.
- Learn about HIV risks associated with unprotected sex and drug/alcohol use.
- Contact your local HIV/AIDS service organization, state/local health department or tribal health department for safer sex information.

Educate Others

- Organize a meeting with friends, neighbors, or other concerned community members to discuss drug and health issues in your community – together, people can make things happen!
- Post fact sheets about HIV/AIDS on bulletin boards, in local newspapers and web sites
- Remember that networking is an important factor for prevention!

Be a Friend and a Leader

- Talk to your community or spiritual leaders to gain their support for HIV/AIDS prevention and ask them to consider talking about HIV throughout the community in an effort to stop the stigma associated with the disease.
- Volunteer at a local HIV/AIDS organization.
- Help someone living with HIV/AIDS by being a friend.



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In Your Community (Rural or Urban)

- Hold an educational session in a local community center or school. Talk openly and honestly about HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment, but be sensitive to the people who are present.
- Hold a town hall meeting to discuss your community's risk for HIV.
- Sponsor a luncheon with community members, or sub-groups, to discuss HIV, STDs and other issues affecting the health and well-being of your community. It's a great way to get ideas, guidance, and support.

In Your Tribe

- Call for a Tribal, Village or Island Resolution or Proclamation to commemorate National Native HIV/AIDS Awareness Day. Acknowledge "Resolution #SAC-06-002" that passed through the National Congress of American Indians 2006 Annual Session in Sacramento, California.
- Partner with your local AIDS service organization to hold an awareness day event that is Native specific.

How can you get help to organize an Awareness Day activity?

Contact any of the following agencies for help with brainstorming and organizing events for your community. Materials can also be requested by contacting the agencies listed below.



National Native American AIDS Prevention Center (NNAAPC)
720 South Colorado Boulevard, Suite 650-S
Denver, CO 80246
(720) 382-2244
www.nnaapc.org

CA7AE: HIV/AIDS Prevention Project (CA7AE: HAPP)
357 Aylesworth Hall, SE
Fort Collins, CO 80523
(800) 642-0273
www.happ.colostate.edu

Inter Tribal Council of Arizona, Inc. (ITCA)
2214 North Central Avenue, Suite 100
Phoenix, AZ 85004
(602) 258-ITCA
www.itcaonline.com

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