

Countywide Services Agency

Department of
Health and Human Services

Division of Public Health

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For Immediate Release

National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day Feb. 7

(Sacramento, CA) – In Sacramento and across the United States, the HIV/AIDS epidemic is a health crisis for black Americans. At all stages of HIV/AIDS – from infection with HIV to death with AIDS – blacks (including African-Americans) are disproportionately affected, compared with members of other races and ethnicities.

In Sacramento County, the rate of AIDS diagnoses for Black Americans ranges from 8% to 23% higher than for whites, depending on factors of age and sex.

National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day (NBHAAD), which occurs annually on February 7 and marks its 10th anniversary this year, is a nationwide community HIV testing and treatment effort. It's designed to encourage black Americans to ***get educated, get tested, get involved and get treated***, as HIV/AIDS continues to devastate black communities, both domestically and internationally.

The Sacramento Alliance to Prevent AIDS (SAPA) is drawing attention to and raising awareness of this very important day. **On Sunday, February 7, 2010, a coalition of Community Based Organizations and Community Members will host a five-hour event from 12:00 noon - 5:00 p.m. at the Main Event Beauty Complex, 3514 Broadway, Sacramento.**

Dozens of community-based agencies will host educational activities aimed at engaging the Black community in understanding HIV/AIDS, how to keep themselves and their loved ones safe, and the impact the disease has on our community. Participants can enjoy free food, live entertainment, local guest speakers and voter registration. Free, confidential Rapid HIV testing will also be available and encouraged.

The disparity in AIDS infection between black Americans and white Americans is extremely troubling. According to Sacramento County Epidemiology and Disease Control (2002-2008):

- In the Sacramento region there are currently 4,153 people known to be living with HIV and AIDS

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- African-Americans represent less than 11% of the Sacramento County population, but make up 22% of all HIV cases
- Of all women with HIV in Sacramento County, 42% are African-American
- Although MSM (men who have sex with men) contact is still the #1 reported risk factor for HIV transmission, more than 1 out of 5 (22%) of Sacramento County's HIV and AIDS cases are passed through heterosexual contact.

With startling statistics like these affecting the African-American community, Sacramento's community activists are lending their support and hoping everyone in the nation will follow suit. Of all racial and ethnic groups in the United States, HIV and AIDS have affected African-Americans the most. Data show that Sacramento follows the national trends:

- In 2005, the rate of AIDS diagnoses for black adults and adolescents was 10 times the rate for whites and nearly three times the rate for Hispanics
- The rate of AIDS diagnoses for black women was nearly 23 times the rate for white women
- The rate of AIDS diagnoses for black men was 8 times the rate for white men

For more information on the National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day activities in Sacramento, please contact:

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