

Faith-Based Initiative

- The Florida Department of Health is first state health department to establish a formal, faith-based HIV prevention network.
- The Florida Department of Health Bureau of HIV/AIDS has partnered with the Eleventh Episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church to identify at least one AME church in each of Florida's 67 counties as an HIV testing site or test location.
- The Bureau has also partnered with the General Baptist State Convention to establish an HIV ministry with every church affiliated with the association.
- Currently, the faith network consists of nearly 150 churches statewide.
- Objectives include:
 - Increase awareness of HIV and AIDS in the faith community.
 - Reduce the stigma associated with HIV and AIDS within the church.
 - Encourage congregations to discuss the effects of the HIV epidemic on Florida's black community.
 - Address denial issues associated with HIV in the faith community.
 - Promote the importance of HIV testing and knowing your HIV status.
 - Ask Florida's churches to talk about HIV infection, transmission and related behavior.
- We Make the Change uses community faith-based events such as church conferences and concerts as avenues for HIV education.
 - The National Church Week of Prayer for the Healing of AIDS, March 7 – 13, is a key faith activity aimed at raising awareness of HIV/AIDS.

HIV/AIDS in Florida's Black Community

- Of the 114,057 adult AIDS cases reported in Florida in 2009, (46%) were among blacks.
- Blacks comprise 15% of the adult population; yet represent over half (53%) of AIDS cases and 48% of HIV cases.

- In 2009, the HIV case rate among adult black men was 7 times higher than that for white men in Florida and 20 times higher for adult black women than that among white women.
- In Florida, 1 in 43 black men and 1 in 64 black women were living with HIV/AIDS in 2008, compared to 1 in 208 white men and 1,153 white women.
- For the last 16 years, HIV/AIDS has been the leading cause of death of black women aged 25-44.

Trends in HIV Testing

- In 2008, 373,102 HIV tests were conducted in Florida's registered testing sites, representing a 13% increase over the previous year.
- 2008 marks the eighth consecutive year that the number of HIV tests performed in Florida exceeded 250,000.
- Increases in testing were recorded among all racial/ethnic groups, but especially in blacks.
- By ethnicity, 21.3% of HIV tests were blacks, 24.7% were Hispanics, and 50.7% were whites.
- At least 80% of the estimated 125,000 persons with HIV in Florida know they're infected.

HIV/AIDS Info and Resources

- Florida Department of Health Bureau of HIV/AIDS Reports: http://www.floridashealth.com/Disease_ctrl/aids/index.html
 - Silence is Death: The Crisis of HIV/AIDS in Florida's Black Communities
 - HIV/AIDS and Blacks, 2009
 - US vs. FL Factsheet, 2008
 - HIV Counseling and Testing Annual Report, 2008Laura