



Connecticut AIDS Resource Coalition

Press Release  
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Contact: Shawn M. Lang, Director of Public Policy  
CT AIDS Resource Coalition  
(860) 761.6699 (c) 860.543.9113

National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day  
March 10, 2010

**(Hartford)** The CT AIDS Resource Coalition announces National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day, Wednesday, March 10, 2010. This event is a nationwide initiative commemorated on March 10<sup>th</sup> every year to raise awareness of the increasing impact of HIV/AIDS on women and girls.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, every 35 minutes, a woman tests positive for HIV in the United States. More and more women have become infected with HIV since it was first reported in the early 1980s.

"HIV/AIDS continues to be a major concern for women in our state", said Shawn M. Lang, Director of Public Policy for the Connecticut AIDS Resource Coalition. ~~Lang went on to say that,~~ "Women may become infected unknowingly. We're encouraging all women and girls to get routinely tested for HIV as part of their annual medical exams."

In Connecticut, women account for **30%** of all people living with HIV/AIDS. Nationally, this places Connecticut first in AIDS cases among women.

"Most people don't think about it but HIV/AIDS is a women's issue, and yet w-Women account for 25 percent of all new HIV/AIDS diagnoses in the country, making women the fastest-growing demographic affected," said Teresa C. Younger, executive director of the Connecticut General Assembly's Permanent Commission on the Status of Women (PCSW). "HIV/AIDS is the leading cause of death for African American women aged 25 to 34."

According to PCSW research, ~~"It is unfortunate but true that women and people of color are disproportionately affected by the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Connecticut. A~~lthough Blacks/African-Americans and Hispanics represent 9.1% and 9.4% of Connecticut's population, respectively, 62.3% of reported AIDS cases and 65.9% of reported HIV infections are among these populations. Among women, the disparities are even more dramatic, with Black/African-American and Hispanic women representing 70.2% of females with AIDS, and 72.3% of females with HIV infection.

“It is unfortunate but true that women and people of color are disproportionately affected by the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Connecticut,” said Younger. “It is essential that women break through any cultural barriers and fears and get tested. National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day gives women the opportunity to put our health first. We, as women have an obligation to take care of ourselves and take the lead to get tested.”

To find out where to get tested for HIV, call 211 or go to this website <http://www.hivtest.org/>.

*About CARC: CARC is the statewide umbrella organization supporting HIV/AIDS service providers in Connecticut. The mission of CARC is through its member agencies, strives to ensure quality housing and supportive services for people living with HIV/AIDS in Connecticut and to promote effective HIV/ AIDS awareness and prevention education.*

*About the PCSW: The Permanent Commission on the Status of Women was formed in 1973 under Sec. 46a of the Connecticut General Statutes to study “all matters concerning women, and in furtherance of that responsibility shall: (a) inform leaders of business, education, State and local governments and the communications media of the nature and scope of the problem of sex discrimination, with a view to enlisting their support in working toward improvement; (b) serve as a liaison between government and private interest groups concerned with services for women; (c) promote consideration of qualified women for all levels of government positions; (d) oversee coordination and assess programs and practices in all State agencies as they affect women.”*

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