

HIV Vaccine Awareness Day – May 18th. **Real People. Real Progress.**

TOOL KIT INTRODUCTION

HIV Vaccine Awareness Day
May 18, 2004

HIV Vaccine Research: Real People. Real Progress.

May 18th is HIV Vaccine Awareness Day. It is a day to educate Americans about the need for vaccines to prevent HIV. This year's theme is "Real People. Real Progress." We would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the contribution of thousands of study volunteers, scientists and health professionals committed to finding a safe and effective vaccine. With the help of these people behind the science, much progress has been made towards developing a safe and effective preventive HIV vaccine. Currently, there are over 20 promising HIV vaccine candidates in various stages of testing. Yet, there is still no vaccine. We are all in this together. All Americans, especially at-risk populations, such as communities of color and those who are sexually active, need to learn more about HIV vaccine research, and be a part of making an HIV vaccine a reality.

Research conducted as part of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases' (NIAID) National HIV Vaccine Communications Campaign, shows that Americans lack awareness of the need for -- and promise offered by -- HIV vaccine research. However, the research also confirms that even a small amount of HIV vaccine education can positively affect attitudes. This reinforces the essential role community leaders and influencers, people like you, can play in creating awareness and helping change attitudes, especially among communities most affected by HIV/AIDS. Help leverage the messages of HIV Vaccine Awareness Day by speaking about the progress and potential of HIV vaccine research and the need for greater community awareness and involvement.

For the second year in a row, National HIV Vaccine Awareness Day will be commemorated with a twist on a familiar symbol of AIDS awareness. Acknowledge HIV vaccine research by wearing a red AIDS ribbon upside down on HIV Vaccine Awareness Day (May 18th). The upside-down AIDS ribbon forms a "V," for "vaccines," the vision of a world without AIDS, and symbolizes the urgent need to stop the spread of HIV/AIDS.

The online tool kit included here is designed to make it easy to conduct HIV Vaccine Awareness Day activities at the local level. Included are samples of various media outreach tools that can be adapted for your use. We encourage you to tailor all materials to reflect the specific concerns and needs of your community. Use those materials that will work best for you.

In this tool kit you will find:

- Key Messages and Talking Points
- How to Use the Tool Kit
- Sample Email to Membership/Staff
- Sample Letter to the Editor
- Sample Opinion-Editorial (Op-Ed)
- Sample Newsletter Article
- Sample Press Release
- NIAID HIV Vaccine Research Fact Sheets
- HIV Vaccine 101 Quiz
- Evaluation Form

*May 18th. Wear your
Red AIDS Ribbon upside down*

