

RETHINKING HIV PREVENTION

"We can no longer accept the status quo when it comes to HIV/AIDS prevention ... It is time to expand our prevention strategies in order to more effectively reduce the number of HIV infections in the United States."

Tommy G. Thompson, Secretary, Health and Human Services (HHS), April 17, 2003

CDC

Experts estimate that **850,000** to **950,000** persons are currently living with HIV in the United States and many of these individuals don't know they are infected. It's estimated there will be **40,000** new infections per year.

Two decades into the crisis, and **AIDS** shows no signs of abating. In fact, the nature of the **epidemic** is changing as rates of new HIV infections continue to **increase** among nearly all demographics. Many experts in the field, including those at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, say a **radical** shift in AIDS prevention strategies is required to stem the tide of HIV transmissions.

"...the stress on the role that positives can play to either check or spread the epidemic is growing. In a **controversial** policy shift, the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is recasting its AIDS-prevention **strategy** to focus on rapid testing and identification of HIV-positives and focusing safer-sex education on the already infected."

"Shift in AIDS Prevention Strategy: emphasis now on accountability of those infected,"
San Francisco Chronicle September 21, 2003

"It's simply unacceptable that 40,000 people in this country become infected with HIV each year, and it's intolerable that about one fourth of those infected with HIV don't know they're infected and therefore are not receiving appropriate medical care. This new initiative will go a long way to help frontline clinicians help people overcome some of the barriers they face getting diagnosed and treated for HIV."

Julie Gerberding, M.D., M.P.H., Director of CDC

More Than 75% of HIV-Positive People Do Not Disclose Status to Casual Sex Partners

Approximately three-fourths of HIV-positive people do not disclose their HIV status to their casual sex partners, according to a study published in the September 2003 issue of the journal Sexually Transmitted Diseases. Researchers from the CDC and the Tulane University School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine interviewed 269 HIV-positive people at two New Orleans sexually transmitted disease clinics. Approximately 74.2% of respondents reported disclosing their HIV status to their primary sex partner, 69.8% to an immediate family member, 27% to another family member, 26.4% to a friend and 24.8% to a casual sex partner. **The researchers also found that patients between the ages of 18 and 22 were least likely to disclose their HIV status.**

AIDS: A GROWING CONCERN WITHIN ALL DEMOGRAPHICS

Globally

The global HIV/AIDS epidemic **killed** more than **3 million** people in 2003, and an estimated 5 million acquired the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), bringing to over **40 million** the number of people living with the virus around the world.

The region of the world most affected has been **Sub-Saharan Africa**, where over 23 million adults and children are currently living with HIV/AIDS and more than 13 million have died, accounting for more than **80 percent** of the world's deaths due to AIDS. In Africa alone, **10,000** people become infected **each day**, according to UNAIDS

UNAIDS: Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
AIDS Epidemic Update 2003

Youth

Worldwide an estimated **6,000** youth a **day** become **infected** with HIV/AIDS—one every 14 seconds—the majority of them young women. At the end of 2001, an estimated **11.8 million** young people aged 15-24 were living with HIV/AIDS, one third of the global total of people living with HIV/AIDS. Only a **small** percentage of these young people **know** they are HIV-positive.

UNICEF, UNAIDS, and WHO. 2002. *Young People and HIV/AIDS: Opportunities in Crisis*. New York: UNICEF

- AIDS is the **7th leading** cause of death among 15-24 year olds in the U.S.
- Of the 40,000 new HIV infections in the U.S. every year, 25% (10,000) are 21 or younger. **Half** (20,000) of all new infections are under the **age of 25**.
- Teen **girls** represent nearly 60% of new HIV infections among **13-19** year olds.
- Every hour **two** more American teens are newly **infected** with HIV.
- Almost all of these infections are **sex**-related.

Source: AIDS Action, www.aidsaction.org

Over 50

"The fastest-rising route of transmission in this age group is ... **heterosexual sex**. A 1996 CDC breakdown -- the most recent available -- of AIDS cases in individuals 50 or older showed cases transmitted heterosexually increased 94 percent in men and 106 percent in women between 1991 and 1996."

"Never Too Old -- for Sex or AIDS: There Is No Age Exemption for Safe Sex, but Seniors Are Not Getting the Message," *The Washington Post*, July 17, 2001

- Between 11 and 15% of U.S. AIDS cases occur in people over age 50;
- AIDS cases in the over-50 population rose more than **twice as fast** as those among young adults, between 1991 and 1996.

National Association of HIV Over Fifty (NAHOF) web site (www.hivoverfifty.org)

MSM

In July the CDC said that the number of new HIV diagnoses among men who have **sex** with men (MSM) rose for the third consecutive year in 2002 increasing 7.1% from 2001 to 2002. **HIV diagnoses among MSM have increased by 17.7% since the lowest point in 1999.**

CDC, 2003 National HIV Prevention Conference, July 28, 2003