

We Make the Change

- *We Make The Change (WMTC)* - a statewide campaign designed to increase the awareness of HIV/AIDS and its impact on minority communities throughout Florida.
- Launched in 1999, *We Make the Change* informs and educates Florida's African-American, Hispanic, Haitian, and Caribbean communities about prevention programs and services that can help fight the spread of HIV.
- *We Make the Change* comprises the following initiatives:
 - Stop the Spread
 - Sistas Organizing to Survive (SOS)
 - Faith-Based Initiative
 - L.U.C.E.S. – Latinas Unidas Contra el SIDA (Hispanic women)
 - Man Up – Mobilizing Florida's Men
- The Florida Department of Health (DOH) wants people to get tested, know their HIV status, and visit www.wemakethechange.com for more information and testing locations. You can also text your zip code to 477473 for the testing site nearest you.

Stop the Spread

- *Stop the Spread* was introduced in 2007 as part of Florida's African-American Testing Initiative (AATI) to reach HIV-infected persons, primarily non-Hispanic blacks, who are unaware of their infection.
- Objectives of *Stop the Spread*:
 - promote HIV testing as a routine part of overall healthcare.
 - encourage HIV testing in healthcare settings.
 - help local testing centers increase HIV testing.
- The Florida Department of Health has identified 11 of Florida's 67 counties for the initiative based on the racial/ethnic disparities in the state.

Sistas Organizing to Survive (SOS)

- *Sistas Organizing to Survive (SOS)* is the grassroots mobilization of black women in the fight against HIV/AIDS.
- Launched on June 20, 2008, SOS encourages black women to get tested where they live, work, play, and worship.

- The goal of SOS is to test 100,000 black women each year by 2010.
- Since its launch, eight local SOS conferences have been conducted, over 4,100 people have taken the online pledge, and over 88,000 black women were tested in 2008.
- Objectives of SOS include:
 - To educate black women about HIV/AIDS and how other STDs, hepatitis and substance abuse increase their risk.
 - To empower black women to take charge of and control their sexual health.
 - To connect black women to HIV/AIDS resources.

Faith-Based Initiative

- Florida is the first and only state to establish a formal, faith-based HIV prevention network.
- The Department of Health has partnered with the Eleventh Episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church to establish AME churches as HIV testing sites across Florida.
- *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 is a key faith activity aimed at raising awareness of HIV/AIDS.

Latinas Unidas Contra el SIDA (L.U.C.E.S.)

- *L.U.C.E.S.* is dedicated to empowering Hispanic communities to develop healthy lifestyles through information, education and advocacy.
- The initiative connects Latina women to HIV/AIDS resources and strengthens their ability to take charge of their sexual health.
- Additional goals of *L.U.C.E.S.*:
 - To raise awareness about the magnitude of HIV/AIDS among Latina women in Florida.
 - To offer tools to enable Latina women to educate others about HIV/AIDS and HIV prevention where they live, work, play, learn, and worship.
 - To increase the capacity of Latina women to build effective responses to the HIV/AIDS epidemic in local communities.

Man Up – Mobilizing Florida’s Men

- Released in September 2009, *Man Up: The Crisis of HIV/AIDS Among Florida’s Men* seeks to mobilize men to eliminate their risk of acquiring or transmitting HIV/AIDS.
- The goal of the report is to stimulate implementation of community action plans aimed at preventing the further spread of HIV/AIDS among Florida’s men and their partners.

- Objectives of *Man Up*:
 - To encourage men to “*Man Up*” and take responsibility for the consequences of their sexual actions and other HIV risk behaviors.
 - To create an enabling environment to support awareness of men’s health issues.
 - To engage in a dialog about men’s health, including awareness of HIV and the need for testing.

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 in Florida

- Blacks comprise 15% of the adult population; yet represent over half (53%) of AIDS cases and 45% of HIV cases.
- In 2007, HIV was the 6th leading cause of death among Hispanic men and the 3rd leading cause of death among Hispanic women, ages 25-44.
- For the last 15 years, HIV/AIDS has been the leading cause of death of black women aged 25-44.
- In Florida, 1 in 472 Hispanic/Latina women are living with HIV/AIDS, compared to 1 in 1,281 white women.
- In Florida, 1 in 123 adult men was living with HIV/AIDS through 2008. Furthermore, 72% of new infections are among men.