Beyond Behavior: Engaging Prevention & Reproductive Justice to End the HIV/AIDS Epidemic

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SisterLove, Inc.
Atlanta, Georgia
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MISSION

• To eradicate the impact of HIV/AIDS and other reproductive health challenges upon women and their families through education, prevention, support and human rights advocacy in the United States and around the world.
HIV/AIDS Among African American Women

- Rate of AIDS diagnoses for African American women in 2005 were 23 times the rate for White women.

- Among African American women living with HIV/AIDS, primary transmission categories include:
  - High-risk heterosexual contact
  - Injection drug use

- Highest rates of AIDS diagnoses are among adult and adolescent females in the Southeastern United States.
Impact of AIDS Epidemic

AIDS Rates for Female Adults and Adolescents Reported in 2005—United States and Dependent Areas

- NH: 1.8
- MA: 7.1
- RI: 6.1
- CT: 15.6
- NJ: 10.6
- DE: 18.9
- MD: 24.2
- DC: 100.0

* Rates were not calculated for areas reporting fewer than 5 AIDS cases in females in 2005.
Impact of AIDS Epidemic

Reported AIDS Cases among Female Adults and Adolescents, by Region and Race/Ethnicity, 2005
50 States and DC

- White, not Hispanic
- Black, not Hispanic
- Hispanic

Region
- Northeast N=3,235*
- Midwest N=1,084*
- South N=5,378*
- West N=887*

* Region totals include females of unknown race or multiple races.
Impact of HIV/AIDS - Georgia

• Among Top 15 States with greatest burden, Georgia ranks
  – $4^{th}$ in nation for Blacks living with HIV/AIDS
  – $5^{th}$ in nation for number of new AIDS cases
  – $8^{th}$ in nation for HIV/AIDS case rates per 100,000 Blacks

• Atlanta ranks $11^{th}$ among the top 15 Metro Areas for number of Blacks living with AIDS

Taken from Kaiser Family Foundation, An Overview of HIV/AIDS in Black America, July 2007
# HIV/AIDS Rate by Zip Code

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<th>Zip Code of Residence at Diagnosis</th>
<th>2004-2005 Rate per 100,000</th>
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The Human Rights Framework

- Civil
- Political
- Economic
- Social
- Cultural
- Sexual
- Developmental
- Environmental
  - Immigrant/Refugee
  - Indigenous People
SisterLove Inc.

“Healthy Loving is Healthy Living”

Programs/Projects

• Health Education & Advocacy
  – Healthy Love Party
  – Community PROMISE
  – Evidence Based Interventions
  – Zip Code Project LINK
  – Atlanta Family Circle
  – Emergency Room Referral

• Bridge Leadership
  – Positive Women’s Leadership
  – SisterSong
  – Poor Peoples’ Day
  – Positive Connections

• SisterLove In South Africa
  – Thembuhlelo Co-op
What’s New?

• Georgia Women & Girls Empowered Together: Tea & Wisdom
• HerStory Campaign – State of Georgia
• Urban Health Initiative – Metropolitan Atlanta
• Campaign to End AIDS (C2EA) – Stand Against AIDS/National AIDS Strategy
• Southern Women in Leadership on HIV/AIDS
• Dangerous Intersection: Violence & HIV Prevention for Women & Girls
QUESTION(S):

Is a resource-poor Black or Latina woman with children more likely to contract HIV because she “chooses” to have unprotected sex, or because she chooses to do so in order to keep the man who pays her bills, feeds her kids and secures a roof over their head? Which has a greater influence on her risk for contracting HIV?
Reproductive Justice & HIV/AIDS
www.sistersong.net

- Sexual Stigma and Discrimination
- Reproductive Choices vs. Options
- Comprehensive Education, Treatment & Care
- Involvement & Engagement of Affected Women & Girls in Advocacy Leadership
- Improve women’s economic, social, political and cultural status
HIV Prevention Justice

www.preventionjustice.org

• Intersection of HIV & Violence Against Women & Girls of Color
• Gendered approaches to prevention and treatment research & trials (microbicides)
• Restrictions/Prohibitions to Syringe Exchange
• Economic Empowerment for Women & Girls
• Surveillance & Incidence Reporting not inclusive of women’s/girls’ risks
Where’s the Action?

• National AIDS Strategy
• Ongoing Informing and Mobilizing Conference Calls
  – CHAMP
  – IRMA
  – WAAC
• 100 Days of Action
• YOUR OWN COMMUNITY??
Juanita says:

“Give [us] a voice and a platform for that voice...Give a safe place to let their voices be heard and validate them. Positive people are not taken seriously, and positive women are taken even less seriously. People think positive people are way down on the ‘totem pole’. We need positive women’s voices to continue to fight the stigma. How do we do that? We tell our stories and reflect each other.”
“I am not the enemy, I am the answer. If you silence my voice, then what happens to my behavior?”
Change Women’s Lives
Change the Epidemic

Engage Reproductive Justice and Prevention Justice to End HIV and AIDS
Contact Me!

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