

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

## **HOW TO USE THE TOOL KIT**

**HIV Vaccine Awareness Day  
May 18, 2004  
HIV Vaccine Research: Real People. Real Progress.**

### **How to Use the Tool Kit**

The components of this tool kit are designed to provide you with a variety of ideas about how you can spread the word about HIV Vaccine Awareness Day and how to develop activities or events in your local community. The kit contains various sample elements that build upon the theme “Real People. Real Progress.” and can be tailored to speak directly to your local community, constituents or media. You are free to use any or all of them as you deem appropriate. Materials and more information can be found online at [www.aidsinfo.nih.gov](http://www.aidsinfo.nih.gov).

### **Sample Email to Membership/Staff**

Email messages are a great way to reach interested groups of people using your organization's email contact lists. Use the tool kit's sample email message to encourage your organization's staff, members or affiliates, or those of other organizations, to participate in local activities or to plan their own HIV Vaccine Awareness Day activities and outreach efforts. Ask them to wear their red AIDS ribbon upside down on May 18<sup>th</sup>.

### **Sample Letter to the Editor**

Letters to the Editor are an excellent way to get your views out to large numbers of individuals quickly. Letters to the Editor convey information about a specific topic, concern or issue affecting your community. Most Letters to the Editor are written in response to a story, editorial or column that appeared in your local paper. Letters to the Editor should be sent directly to a publication's Editor, be no more than one page in length, signed and mailed, hand delivered, emailed, or faxed within a day or two after the story/article/editorial or another "Letter to the Editor" appears. Please check with your local paper to see if they have guidelines regarding the length of the letter.

### **Sample Op-Ed**

An opinion editorial, or op-ed, like the sample provided in this tool kit, can be written and distributed at any time and does not have to be in response to a specific article. Op-eds should be focused and call attention to specific issues or concerns, and then offer solutions or challenges to the readers. Often, the op-ed is aimed at opinion leaders, elected officials or others who help shape policy.

For HIV Vaccine Awareness Day, the op-ed should focus on the impact of HIV in your community and the need for increased awareness and education for HIV vaccines. Since this year's theme is “Real People. Real Progress.” the op-ed should focus on the *real people* involved in HIV vaccine research and thank the volunteers, researchers and health professionals involved in the effort. Also, it should focus on the *real progress* made, the need for continued public awareness, and participation in clinical trials and research, especially those in at-risk populations, such as communities of color and those who are sexually active. The op-ed should also discuss HIV Vaccine Awareness Day activities taking place in your community.



The op-ed piece should be placed on your organization's letterhead over the signature of a representative of your organization. If you decide to write your own op-ed article, read a few samples in your local paper to get a sense of what the paper is likely to accept and to better understand the paper's audience. Follow the paper's rules for length, timeliness and signature requirements. Ask the readers to wear a red AIDS ribbon upside down on May 18<sup>th</sup>.

### **Sample Newsletter Article**

Included in the tool kit is a sample newsletter article for your organization's publications. You also may contact other organizations that provide community services or health care to publish the article in their newsletters.

Always localize the article to include information about vaccine research, volunteers or related activities in your area, and also include information about what your organization is doing to promote awareness. For HIV Vaccine Awareness Day, be sure to highlight local events (publicize the location and time), explain the meaning of the upside-down red AIDS ribbon and encourage community participation. Don't forget to ask readers to wear a red AIDS ribbon upside down on May 18<sup>th</sup>.

### **Sample Press Release**

You should modify this press release to highlight activities in your community. A short, well-written press release is the best way to get your story in the hands of reporters. Check your local yellow pages for media outlets, and call them to get the names of editors or reporters covering national news, community events, health, science, minority issues or women's issues. Also be alert to community newsletters and smaller circulation publications.

### **NIAID HIV Vaccine Research Fact Sheets**

When you cannot include all the information you want to share in a one-page letter, you may include a fact sheet with your mailing or fax. You may use the fact sheets in this kit or use them to develop other background materials of your own.

Fact sheets can also serve to inform the media about the HIV crisis globally, nationally and locally; at-risk groups in your area; the need for public education and local availability and the value and potential of HIV vaccines.

You can use fact sheets as the basis for a poster, headline or flier. Bullet points work very well in fact sheets and are easily incorporated into news stories or articles by authors. Make sure your facts are accurate and that you can cite the source of the fact, if asked, and always add local statistics.

### **HIV Vaccine 101 Quiz**

This true or false quiz on HIV vaccine research helps dispel some of the myths and misperceptions about HIV vaccine research. The quiz can be distributed to participants at your events as an opening icebreaker or a starting point for discussion about HIV vaccine research.