

# Metro TeenAIDS Quick Facts



651 Pennsylvania Avenue SE, Washington D.C. \* phone: 202-543-8246 \* fax: 202-543-8249 \* www.metroteenaid.org

*“Metro TeenAIDS speaks to youth in their own language and in their own space.”*

-Young Women of Color Leadership Council member



## Who We Are

Metro TeenAIDS, founded in 1988, is a community health organization dedicated to supporting young people in the fight against HIV/AIDS. Through education, support, and advocacy, MTA provides HIV testing and counseling to prevent the spread of HIV. MTA promotes responsible decision-making through its in-school and after-school school programs, and improves the quality of life for young people who are HIV-positive, at risk of HIV infection, or in families with HIV/AIDS. MTA is the only organization in the Washington, DC area focused solely on the needs of youth as they relate to HIV and AIDS.

## What We Do

**HIV Prevention Outreach and Education** – Metro TeenAIDS (MTA) trains and hires youth to provide outreach and education to high-risk youth in DC. Metro TeenAIDS uses street contacts, hosts young people in our Freestyle Youth Center for after-school programs, and provides “HIV 101” presentations in school- and community-based settings. MTA conducts HIV prevention outreach and education with the purpose of reducing risky behaviors among youth. Additionally, our programs distribute information and materials to youth and connect them to services provided by MTA and other community organizations.

**Health Education and Risk Reduction** – MTA offers an integrated HIV/AIDS and substance abuse prevention curriculum, called Making Proud Choices! (MPC). The goal of MPC is to build students’ skills and confidence to decline sex and/or negotiate safer sex and improve overall relationship management abilities. Students gain knowledge and skills about STDs, pregnancy, drugs, alcohol, and risky behavior. Making Proud Choices! is delivered to every 10<sup>th</sup> grade health class in all DC public and charter schools.

**Connections to Testing and Care** – MTA offers free, confidential, and youth-friendly HIV counseling, testing, and referral services at our Youth Center and in community-based settings. MTA also connects HIV-positive youth with medical care, case management, and risk counseling. In 2007, MTA connected 15 youth and young adults to intensive HIV care services.

**Emotional and Psychological Support** – Through its Family Center, MTA provides counseling, therapy, and life skills development to children (ages 5-18) whose primary care givers are living with AIDS or have died from AIDS. An estimated 25% of these children are themselves HIV-positive. Programs include individual and group therapy, life skills development, and support groups for HIV-positive caregivers and those who care for children who have lost parents to AIDS.

**Policy Advocacy and Community Organizing** – With the help of engaged community partners, MTA created the DC Healthy Youth Coalition. MTA works with policymakers, community leaders, youth, and families to ensure that youth’s needs are included in policy responses to the problems with DC’s current HIV/AIDS prevention and sexual health education. MTA staff and youth employees have met with every School Board and City Council member, testified in hearings, and served on panels to review programs and policies.

**Training and Evaluation** – Metro TeenAIDS is expanding its training programs with youth-serving agencies and groups across the city. In 2008, Metro TeenAIDS will design a training program for school nurses on how to maximize their effectiveness in reducing teen pregnancies and HIV/STDs. We will also provide Making Proud Choices! training to the staff at DC Parks and Recreation and work with other youth-serving agencies to expand our technical assistance.

**ACHIEVE Job Readiness** – Poverty is highly prevalent among both HIV-positive youth and those living in homes with HIV and AIDS. To address this risk factor and reduce teens’ idle time (itself a risk factor for HIV infection), MTA has tailored a job readiness program to assist our target group in exploring work interests and in developing skills needed for gainful employment.

**Social Marketing** – Metro TeenAIDS and an advisory board of 20 DC youth are implementing a community-level intervention designed to change youth’s attitudes about HIV testing; increase their access to and use of HIV testing; and enhance the capacity and expertise of HIV counseling, testing, and referral service providers serving high-risk heterosexual adolescents and young adults of color in Wards 5, 6, 7, and 8.

# HIV in the District

D.C.'s HIV and AIDS rate is ten times the national average. D.C. has the highest HIV and AIDS rate for both adults and adolescents in the country.

AIDS is devastating the District. While there are 14 cases of AIDS for every 100,000 people in the U.S., the D.C. rate is a staggering 128.4 cases per 100,000 people

*Heterosexual sex is the most prevalent transmission route for HIV infection in D.C.*

More people contracted HIV through heterosexual sex (37%) than through men having sex with men (27%), or through intravenous drug use (14%). Twenty-two percent of infections occurred by unknown modes of transmission.

*Between 1997 and 2006, almost 70% of all D.C. AIDS cases progressed from HIV to AIDS in less than 12 months after the initial HIV diagnosis, primarily due to late testing; the rate nationally is just 39%.*

The District accounted for 9% of all pediatric AIDS cases across the country in 2005.

*African-American residents account for 57% of the District's population, but they account for 81% of new reports of the city's HIV cases.*

African-American women constitute 58% of the District's female population, but account for 90% of all new female HIV cases in D.C..

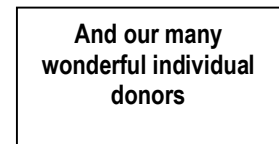
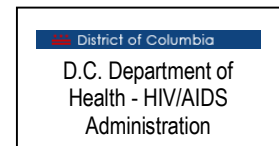
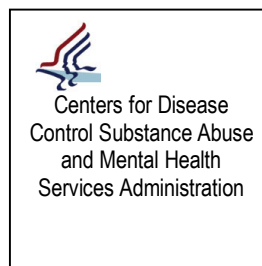
*Across our city, there are an estimated 6,000 youth who are either HIV-positive themselves or live in a family with an HIV-positive caregiver.*

HIV infection rates among the District's young people tripled for the period between 2000 and 2005, compared to the previous five years.

## MTA's Major Accomplishments in 2007

- Increased teens' access to HIV testing, prevention information, and resources by reaching more than 11,500 youth through testing, counseling, prevention outreach and education programs.
- Increased the number of DC youth who know their HIV status by administering HIV tests to 616 youth and delivering test results to 100 percent of them.
- Reached 2,500 10<sup>th</sup> graders through the Making Proud Choices! curriculum, and initiated Junior High and Middle Schools HIV prevention after-school programs.
- Increased the potential lifespan of 15 high-need youth who tested positive for HIV by getting them connected (and keeping them connected) to primary medical care and case management services.
- Provided counseling, therapy, and life skills development to 40 families coping with AIDS. Clients include children ages 5 through 18 whose parents or primary caregivers have AIDS, or have died from AIDS; caregivers who are living with HIV; and those caring for children whose parents have died of AIDS.
- Led the local effort to support the passage of new Health Education standards which include medically accurate, age-appropriate, comprehensive sexuality education, including HIV/AIDS education.
- Worked with the Department of Health HIV/AIDS Administration to release the City's first "Youth and HIV Prevention Initiative Plan" in more than 10 years. The groundbreaking plan engages all of District agencies that interact with youth in the fight against HIV/AIDS.
- Formed and mobilized the DC Healthy Youth Coalition, an alliance of over 25 local organizations advocating collaboratively for comprehensive sexuality education standards and curricula for all DC schools.
- Increased information on adolescent risk behaviors and attitudes through two reports: one on risk and HIV testing behaviors among District youth (based on surveys with 466 youth ages 13-24), and another on behavior and attitude effects of the Making Proud Choices! curriculum.
- Provided educational health training and outreach activities to young men of color who have sex with men, and to young transgender women of color.
- Expanded the role of young men of color who have sex with men and of transgender young women of color in MTA's program development, educational and outreach activities by hiring seven youth advisors.

## A special thanks to the funders of Metro TeenAIDS



To donate, visit our secure website at: [www.metroteenaid.org](http://www.metroteenaid.org) or call 202-543-8246