

OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS

RYAN WHITE CARE PROGRAM

HEALTHY START OF NORTH CENTRAL FLORIDA

CENTRAL HEALTHY START

RURAL HEALTH PARTNERSHIP OF NORTH CENTRAL FLORIDA



## A Message

*Steven Oliva, CEO*

In 2007, our area had the highest percentage of HIV-positive persons receiving medical care of any area in the state, 84%, according to the Department of Health. This is a significant accomplishment, given our area received the lowest amount of service dollars per person living with HIV in the state. Our work is hardly finished, though.

North Central Florida Ryan White CARE Program recently completed its area-wide comprehensive HIV needs assessment. Results of the assessment show that 16% of our HIV-positive population remains “out of medical care,” in part due to lack of awareness and knowledge of service availability; continued shame, fear and stigma experienced by persons living with HIV; and system issues related to clinic flow, such as no-show/missed appointments, lack of case management support and reliable transportation. The 2009-2012 HIV Patient Care Comprehensive Plan for our area seeks to address solutions to the barriers that keep 16% of our HIV-infected community from accessing quality healthcare services.

*Check our website soon for the above reports and more at: [www.wellflorida.org](http://www.wellflorida.org)*



## HIV/AIDS awareness, education and outreach

### *A community-based approach*

On World AIDS Day, the world reflects on the disease’s impact on our communities and how it will continue to affect the future. Late diagnosis, access and/or acceptance of care, delayed prevention messages and the stigma of being associated with HIV/AIDS are factors that contribute to disparities in HIV/AIDS.

With the growing number of diagnoses and the widening disparity gap in the U.S., the Rural Women’s Health Project (RWHP) in Gainesville has been making HIV/AIDS education the cornerstone of its work since 1991 (by that year, 10 million people had been diagnosed with HIV worldwide), focusing primarily on Hispanic farm-working communities and Hispanic women.

In an effort to change prevailing attitudes and behaviors associated with HIV/AIDS within these communities, the RWHP’s goal has been to increase the self-identification of risk and to address the gap in HIV education and the barriers that the Hispanic community faces.

Campaigns have included trainings, workshops, consultations, outreach and development of materials in order to offer new, non-formal educational approaches tailored to communities’ cultural realities. It has also built several ongoing, community-based partnerships with communities in Florida, Kentucky, Alabama, Texas and Arizona.

*continued on next page*

## A Sample Health Education Toolbox

The following is a list of must-have materials that can enliven your community's HIV prevention campaign.

### Photo stories and non-formal print media

*Fotonovelas*, 'zines and pocket handouts are non-formal mechanisms that can accelerate awareness and acceptance of important health messages. Intensify messages by utilizing culturally-relevant mediums from which your community can relate and benefit.



### Condom covers

Condom covers, or small folders that hold condoms, do more than alleviate the stigma of carrying protection. Health information and artwork on the packaging can also emphasize prevention messages.

### Games

Trivia, puzzles and other activities test community knowledge and help to increase awareness about HIV/AIDS. Try varying levels of difficulty to be more inclusive of the people in your community.

### Posters

Posters are a colorful and powerful medium that can be replicated for promotional purposes in health clinics and classrooms, or as teaching tools at workshops and health fairs.

Above: An excerpt from *Gift of a Lifetime*, a *fotonovela* about STD and HIV transmission.

## Community-based approaches to combat HIV/AIDS, cont.

In addressing this diverse community, the RWHP has established a framework, which includes the concept of:

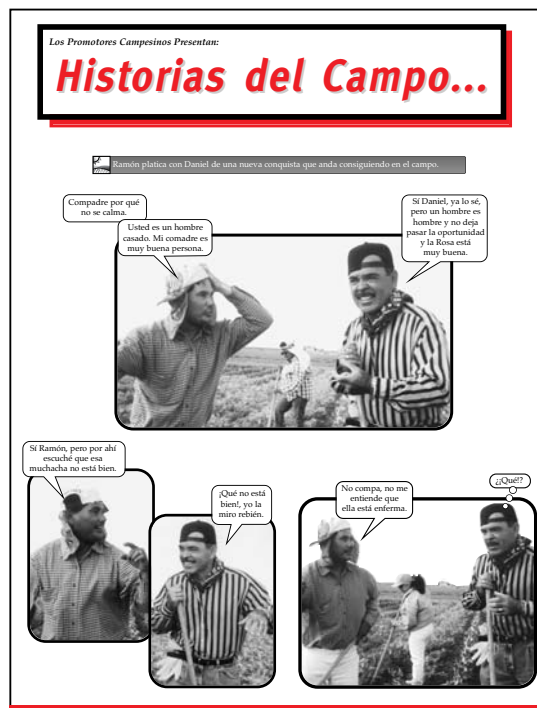
- Each one, teach one
- Presenting realistic solutions to health problems
- Modeling positive behaviors and attitudes

The RWHP uses this framework to produce health-focused *fotonovelas* (photo stories). *Fotonovelas* are a traditional print medium, popular in Mexico and Latin America. Similar to comic books, *fotonovelas* express a story through a series of dialogue bubbles and photographs (in lieu of drawings). The *fotonovela* medium has proved to be viable for wide distribution of culturally competent health information to Spanish-speaking readers.

However, each community requires a different approach to meet its healthcare needs. Understanding diverse groups in terms of age, geographic location, culture and economic status is key. Other important factors to consider when developing educational materials like the *fotonovela* are imagery, language and literacy level.

The RWHP, for example, found that Hispanic, adult women benefited from shared stories and advice from other women in dealing with health issues. The canon of youth-developed *fotonovela* projects focus on visual communication with limited text and short but powerful health messages.

For example, the group collaborated with Hispanic youth peer educators in the border community of South Padre, Texas, to develop *fotonovelas* after a weeklong training on HIV/AIDS. They highlighted three issues among young adults: unsafe sex and the importance of condom use among heterosexual couples, men who have sex with men, and HIV and alcohol/injection drug-use. The bilingual messages emphasized prevention and the importance of making better choices. Furthermore, the powerful images both



*Fotonovela* cover: *Historias del Campo*, developed by farm-worker adults addressing infidelity and HIV transmission.

illustrated the stories and demonstrated healthy sexual behaviors.

In Crescent City, adolescent peer educators from the RWHP's Project *Claridad* (Clarity) encouraged HIV prevention using similar formats. But these youth *promotores* (volunteer health promoters) also developed a curriculum—including a toolbox of materials—games, posters and *novela*-strips—to share information in a portable format.

Prevention campaigns like these are numerous. With the growth and diversity of the Hispanic community, frameworks with culturally competent materials and approaches, such as the *fotonovela* and storytelling, offer infinite possibilities for engaging health education practices.

For more information about the RWHP, its HIV community-based programs and to search for available *fotonovelas* and educational materials, visit [www.rwhp.org](http://www.rwhp.org) or send an email to [rwhp@cafl.com](mailto:rwhp@cafl.com).

Ashley Mitchell, RWHP

# World AIDS Day events throughout NCF

## Free HIV Testing in Columbia County Parks

November 21, 10:30 am to 3 pm

Millenium Park, Live Oak

December 1, 10:30 am to 3 pm

Olustee Park, Lake City

In recognition of World AIDS Day, On Eagles Wing is offering free HIV testing in Live Oak and Lake City parks. Free food and giveaways. For more information, call 386-961-8371 or 386-758-1158.

## Free HIV Testing in Lake County

December 1, 8 am to 1pm

Umatilla Health Clinic, 249 E. Collins St., Umatilla

December 5, 10 am to 3 pm

December 6, 10 am to 2 pm

First Baptist Church Medical Clinic parking lot, Leesburg. Located at the corner of North 13th and West Main streets. Free HIV-AIDS testing by House of Hope International, Lake County Health Department and First Baptist Church Leesburg.

## Meridian Behavioral Annual World AIDS Day Luncheon

December 1

Sid Martin Bridge House, 4400 SW 13th St., Gainesville

Honorary speaker, Dr. Andrew McRae, Pastor of Faith Tabernacle Missionary Baptist Church, is the Faith Consultant to the Bureau of HIV/AIDS and has actively offered HIV/AIDS testing and outreach for over 20 years in Alachua County. Call Sebrenah Phillips for more information at 352-374-5600 ext. 8257.

## To Lead You Must be Aware: AIDS is Real A World AIDS Day Extravaganza

December 1, 7 pm to 9 pm

Reitz Union Grand Ball Room, UF

Co-sponsored by RUB, ACTIONS, and RCP, the theme of this year's event will be CODE RED!

Activities include: entertainment, skits demonstrating how easily HIV/AIDS can spread, speakers from the community, and a panelist of experts that will answer questions and vote on HIV/AIDS awareness commercials.

## 3rd Annual Positives Empowering Positives World AIDS Day Banquet

December 5, 6:30 pm to 9 pm

First Lutheran Church, 1801 NW 5th Ave., Gainesville

This free, formal event features food, entertainment and an award ceremony recognizing agencies that have worked in the fight against HIV. Anyone affected by or infected with HIV/AIDS is invited to attend. Please RSVP to Laura Copeland by December 1 at 352-334-7972.

## Black AIDS Services and Education (B.A.S.E.) AIDS Walk

December 6, 9 am

Walkers meet at Gainesville City Hall

To register for the walk contact, Joe Reaves at joereaves2003@yahoo.com or call 352-213-7850.

## World AIDS Day Gospel Fest

December 6, 5 pm to 7pm

Bethlehem Missionary Baptist Church, 800 Madison St., Palatka

Hosted by the Putnam County Faith Based HIV/AIDS Coalition, the event will consist of gospel singing, praise dancing and poetry reading. Keynote speaker: Dr. Andrew McRae.

## Florida: HIV Cases Reported in 2007

**Total: 5,980**

**Male**

**4,153**

**Female**

**1,827**

**Black, Non-Hispanic**  
**2,672**

**White, Non-Hispanic**  
**1,941**

**Hispanic**

**1,291**

**Other/Unknown Race**  
**76**

**Age 0-12 Years**

**164**

**Age 13-19 Years**

**240**

**Age 20-29 Years**

**1,346**

**Age 30-39 Years**

**1,572**

**Age 40-49 Years**

**1,643**

**Age 50+ Years**

**1,015**

## Working Together to Build Healthy Communities

Want to learn more about WellFlorida and/or our Community Partners?

Would your organization like to submit an article for publication in the WellFlorida newsletter?

Interested in becoming a board member at WellFlorida or with one of our Community Partners?

If you answered yes to any of those questions, please contact us. Fill out the form below and mail it to us OR email Katelyn Allen at [kallen@wellflorida.org](mailto:kallen@wellflorida.org) OR call 352-313-6500 ext. 100.

Area(s) of interest: \_\_\_\_\_

Please send me additional information on:

- North Central Florida Ryan White CARE Program
- Healthy Start of North Central Florida
- Central Healthy Start
- Rural Health Partnership of North Central Florida
- WellFlorida Council

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_



### ***Origin of the AIDS Red Ribbon***

The international symbol of AIDS awareness, the red ribbon, is worn by many year-round and especially on World AIDS Day. The ribbon shows care and concern, and reminds others of the need for support and commitment.

As the result of a grass roots effort, there is no one official AIDS ribbon manufacturer. Many people simply make their own, which is easily done using some ordinary red ribbon and a safety pin.

*Source: AVERT, an international AIDS charity, [www.avert.org](http://www.avert.org).*

### **World AIDS Day**

On December 1 each year, the world observes World AIDS Day to raise money, increase awareness, fight prejudice and improve education about HIV/AIDS. It was started by UNAIDS in 1988; in 2005, responsibility shifted to the World AIDS Campaign. The group set a goal of universal access for prevention, treatment, care and support by 2010.

This year marks the 20th anniversary and the continuing theme from 2007 of “leadership.” Building on 2006’s theme of accountability, this year’s focus is on the discrepancy between commitments to halt the spread of AIDS and the actions taken to follow through. With only two years left to accomplish these goals, it is important for all leaders to help stop AIDS. Governments, policy makers and local health authorities, as well as families, communities and individuals are needed to help bring about change.