CUT FOR LIFE—
HAIRSTYLISTS AND BARBERS
AGAINST AIDS
Greetings!

Let’s face it—we have a daunting challenge, but businesses like yours can help us overcome it.

Today, more than 1.1 million people in the United States are living with HIV and many of them don’t know it. While great progress has been made in preventing and treating HIV, CDC knows more work must be done, particularly among the black/African American and Hispanic/Latino communities.

Cut For Life—Hairstylists and Barbers Against AIDS was developed by CDC to involve hair care professionals in HIV awareness and prevention efforts in communities that are most affected by HIV. The Cut For Life initiative, an extension of the Business Responds to AIDS (BRTA) program, provides hair care professionals with the tools and resources needed to raise awareness about HIV and AIDS prevention among clients.

As a hair care professional, you have strong ties to the community and we invite you to join our efforts to raise awareness about HIV and AIDS prevention in your community. Enclosed you will find a useful Cut For Life toolkit. This toolkit includes information about HIV and AIDS awareness outreach, how to encourage dialogue about HIV and AIDS with your clients, and contact information for organizations that are available to assist those who have been impacted by HIV and AIDS.

As you know, a healthy community is a strong community and working together, we can change the face of HIV in communities—one cut at a time. For more information about BRTA and to join Cut For Life, visit www.cdc.gov/BRTA.

We look forward to working with you in stopping AIDS — which is everybody’s business.

/ Francisco Ruiz, MS /
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Cut For Life, an initiative under Business Responds to AIDS, engages hair care professionals across the country in providing HIV prevention messages and resources to clients.

HIV has a major impact on clients, businesses, and the community. That’s why hair care professionals can play such a pivotal role in HIV awareness and prevention. As a trusted and respected professional, you create relationships of trust with your clients, and they may be more likely to listen to what you say about HIV.

**How to Get Involved**

What you can do:
- Host events in your shop/salon
- Use educational materials to talk about HIV prevention
- Talk to your clients about basic HIV facts, knowing their status, and seeking treatment if needed
- Partner with local health departments and community-based organizations to expand HIV testing
- Participate in trainings to keep you updated on the latest HIV facts and outreach tips and strategies
- Volunteer at a local event or form a team for the annual AIDS Walk and 5K Run

How this benefits you:
- Helps save lives: HIV is 100% preventable
- Protects your clients, staff, and business
- Provides community recognition
- Connects with a national movement
- Shows that you care about your community

How you can get involved:
To learn more or to join the BRTA Cut For Life initiative, email **BRTA@cdc.gov**. You can also visit **www.cdc.gov/BRTA**.

**Healthy Customers. Healthy Businesses. Healthy Communities.**
Raising awareness about HIV and AIDS prevention will help strengthen the overall health of your community one person at a time. As a salon or barbershop, your business is the heartbeat of your community and is the gathering place where your clients hold conversations, debates, or dialogue on topics that cross personal and political spectrums.

Working in partnership with the CDC as a participant in the BRTA Cut For Life initiative, you can choose a variety of ways to get involved. Some partners may choose to host a Shop Talk event. Shop Talk events are held in a salon or barbershop where clients, community leaders, healthcare professionals, etc. can be invited to receive and/or exchange information about HIV and AIDS, as well as discuss what can be done to combat the transmission of the disease.

The following outlines ways you can organize and produce your own Shop Talk event. This listing of steps is meant to provide a general course of action in planning your event. Feel free to add additional steps to personalize your event to fit the needs of your community and/or client base.

**Hosting a Shop Talk Event**

1. Plan your conversation or event around the needs of your clients. You know who they are and what messages they need most to hear.
2. Determine the best forum for reaching your clients. Is it one-on-one dialogue as you service them or a group session with several clients at once?
3. Determine the information and tools you will need on hand to help guide the conversation at the event. Visit CDC’s website (www.cdc.gov/HIV) to make sure that your conversation or event provides the most accurate and up-to-date information about HIV and AIDS.
4. Consider partnering with your local health department to offer additional information and insight.
5. Display Cut For Life or Act Against AIDS posters and resources on your work station mirror to spark conversation and promote your event.
6. Encourage your clients to participate in the program via emails, social media, posters, palm cards, etc.
7. Obtain feedback from participants so that you can plan future conversations and events.
8. Refer your clients to www.cdc.gov/ActAgainstAIDS or 1-800-CDC-INFO (800-232-4636) to locate testing sites and to get more information about HIV and AIDS.

Whether you choose to distribute HIV-related materials or hold Shop Talk events, as a trusted and credible voice, you have a unique opportunity to provide valuable HIV and AIDS information that can change your clients’ lives. The comfortable, familiar, and intimate environment of your shop or salon easily invites opportunities for shop talks and awareness events.

Join the fight and move towards an AIDS-free generation. Email BRTA@cdc.gov or visit www.cdc.gov/BRTA for more information.

Healthy Customers. Healthy Businesses. Healthy Communities.
FACT CHECK: HIV AND AIDS

What is HIV?

HIV stands for human immunodeficiency virus. It is the virus that can lead to acquired immunodeficiency syndrome, or AIDS. Unlike some other viruses, the human body cannot get rid of HIV. That means that once you have HIV, you have it for life.

Can I get HIV from casual contact?

For example: “Social kissing,” shaking hands, hugging, using a toilet, drinking from the same glass, or the sneezing and coughing of an infected person.

No. HIV is not spread by day-to-day contact in the workplace, schools, or social settings. HIV is not spread through shaking hands, hugging, or a casual kiss. You cannot become infected from a toilet seat, a drinking fountain, a doorknob, dishes, drinking glasses, food, cigarettes, pets, or insects. HIV is not spread through the air, and it does not live long outside the body.

What is AIDS?

AIDS stands for acquired immunodeficiency syndrome. This is the stage of infection that occurs when your immune system is badly damaged and you become vulnerable to infections and infection-related cancers called opportunistic illnesses.

Statistics: HIV and AIDS

- In 2014, an estimated 20,896 people were diagnosed with AIDS.
- In 2013, 6,955 deaths were attributed directly to HIV or AIDS.

Black/African American*

- In 2014, while African Americans represented approximately 12 percent of the total U.S. population, they accounted for almost half (44 percent) of all new HIV diagnoses.
- African American men accounted for almost one-third (32 percent) of all new HIV infections in the United States and accounted for 73 percent of new HIV infections among African Americans overall.
- Among all women diagnosed with HIV in 2014, an estimated 62 percent (5,128) were African American.

Hispanic/Latino

- In 2014, Hispanics/Latinos represented approximately 17 percent of the total U.S. population, but accounted for 23 percent of all new HIV diagnoses in the United States and six dependent areas.
- The rate of new HIV infections for Hispanic/Latino males was 2.9 times that for white males, and the rate of new infections for Hispanic/Latina was 4.2 times that for white females.

Gay, Bisexual, and Other Men Who Have Sex with Men (MSM)

- Gay and bisexual men accounted for an estimated 54 percent (11,277) of people diagnosed with AIDS. Of those men, 39 percent were African American, 32 percent were white, and 24 percent were Hispanic/Latino.
- Men who have sex with men (MSM) remain the group most heavily affected by HIV in the United States.
- Among all gay and bisexual men diagnosed with HIV in the United States in 2014, African Americans accounted for the highest number (estimated 11,201; 38 percent).
- In 2014, an estimated 39 percent (4,321) of African American gay and bisexual men diagnosed with HIV were aged 13-24.
- 72 percent of infections among African American men were among MSM.
- Young African American MSM continue to bear the heaviest burden, accounting for more than half (55 percent) of new HIV infections among young MSM.

* Referred to as African American in this toolkit.
RESOURCES

These campaigns raise awareness about HIV and AIDS, and can serve as conversation starters with your clients. Related materials such as banners, brochures and palm cards are also available.

**Act Against AIDS** is a national initiative focused on raising awareness among all Americans and reducing the risk of infection among the hardest-hit populations – African Americans, Hispanic/Latinos, gay and bisexual men, transgender women, and other communities at increased risk.

**Let’s Stop HIV Together**
The Let’s Stop HIV Together campaign raises awareness about HIV and its impact on the lives of all Americans, and fights stigma by showing that persons with HIV are real people—mothers, fathers, friends, brothers, sisters, sons, daughters, partners, wives, husbands, and co-workers.

[www.cdc.gov/together](http://www.cdc.gov/together)

**Start Talking. Stop HIV.**
Start Talking. Stop HIV. seeks to reduce new HIV infections among gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men by encouraging open discussion about a range of HIV prevention strategies and related sexual health issues between sex partners.

[www.cdc.gov/starttalking](http://www.cdc.gov/starttalking)

**HIV Treatment Works**
This campaign features people from across the United States who are living with HIV talking about how sticking with care and treatment helps them stay healthy, protect others, and live longer, healthier lives. It shows how people living with HIV have overcome barriers to get in care and stay on treatment.

[www.cdc.gov/hivetreatmentworks](http://www.cdc.gov/hivetreatmentworks)

**Doing It**
Doing It is a national HIV testing campaign designed to motivate all adults to get tested for HIV and know their status. It delivers the message that HIV testing should be a part of everyone’s regular health routine.

[www.cdc.gov/doingit](http://www.cdc.gov/doingit)

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For additional HIV and AIDS information:

- **Business Responds to AIDS**
  www.cdc.gov/BRTA

- **CDC Act Against AIDS Campaign**
  www.cdc.gov/ActAgainstAIDS

- **National Prevention Information Network (NPIN)**
  https://npin.cdc.gov

- **HIV and AIDS Awareness Days**
  www.aids.gov/news-and-events/awareness-days

- **National HIV and STD Testing Resource**
  https://gettested.cdc.gov

How can I get involved?
To learn more or to join the BRTA Cut For Life initiative, email **BRTA@cdc.gov**. You can also visit **www.cdc.gov/BRTA**.

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HIV AND AIDS AWARENESS DAYS

BRTA Cut For Life—Hairstylists and Barbers Against AIDS members are encouraged to talk about HIV and AIDS and share materials during National HIV Awareness Days. For your convenience, this calendar is a helpful reminder to keep the conversation going.

OBSERVANCES

National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day
February 7

National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day
March 10

National Native HIV/AIDS Awareness Day
March 20

National Youth HIV/AIDS Awareness Day
April 10

National Transgender Testing Day
April 18

HIV Vaccine Awareness Day
May 18

National Asian & Pacific Islander HIV/AIDS Awareness Day
May 19

National Hepatitis Testing Day
May 19

Caribbean American HIV/AIDS Awareness Day
June 8

National HIV Testing Day
June 27

National HIV/AIDS and Aging Awareness Day
September 18

National Gay Men’s HIV/AIDS Awareness Day
September 27

National Latino AIDS Awareness Day
October 15

World AIDS Day
December 1