



March 25, 2009

Dear Colleague,

April is STD Awareness Month, an annual observance to raise public awareness about the impact of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) on the lives of Americans and the importance of individuals discussing sexual health with their health care providers and, if sexually active, their partners. This letter summarizes CDC's activities and other events that will complement and support your local activities.

#### **STD Awareness Month website**

CDC's [STD Awareness Month website](#) is being updated for 2009 and will provide our STD prevention partners with information and tools to support your local STD Awareness Month activities. Please visit the site and provide us with links to your activities so we can include the links on the site and make the information available to all.

#### **National Collegiate Contest**

To connect with young adults, CDC created the Collegiate STD Awareness Month Campaign Contest. Student teams from participating HBCUs and HSIs (Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Hispanic-Serving Institutions) are developing STD awareness campaigns that employ new media and innovative approaches to reach 18-25 year olds on their campuses and in the surrounding communities. Winners will be announced in April on the STD Awareness Month website, and CDC will work with the winning team to implement the communication campaign. We very much appreciate the support and assistance our state and local STD prevention program partners provided to the student teams in your communities.

#### **National HIV and STD Testing Resources**

Last year, CDC added STD testing locations to the National HIV and STD Testing Resource website. This year, we're making additional enhancements, including a new URL specific to STD testing ([www.findSTDtest.org](http://www.findSTDtest.org)) that will go live on April 1. A widget is being developed to allow you to embed the findSTDtest search box on your website; you'll be able to do this from the [STD Awareness Month website](#) site after April 1. If you have not already done so, please go to [the website](#) and be sure your clinic(s) are included in the data base and that the information about them is current. Since the findSTDtest.org website will be promoted throughout April as a source for STD testing locations, we want to ensure that the information is accurate. Please contact Rachel Kachur ([rlk4@cdc.gov](mailto:rlk4@cdc.gov)) if you need assistance updating your information.

#### **New National Campaign**

To support National STD Awareness Month, throughout April, MTV and the Kaiser Family Foundation are working with Planned Parenthood Federation of America and other partners to inform young people about STDs and promote testing and treatment as needed. The national campaign is part of *It's Your (Sex) Life*, an ongoing public information partnership of MTV and the Kaiser Family Foundation to help young people make responsible decisions about their sexual health. Through a wide-range of on-air, online and mobile components, the campaign seeks to generate buzz and help remove stigma around STDs and testing. Celebrity spokespersons, sweepstakes, and links to nearby STD testing centers will encourage young people to learn more

about STD testing. Visit the [STD Awareness Month](#) website after 8 PM April 1, to learn more about this new campaign.

CDC is providing technical assistance to the campaign to ensure the accuracy of health information. In addition to becoming familiar with the campaign resources and using them, if appropriate, in your community, please reach out during April to health care providers in your area to make them aware of the national campaign. The campaign will provide an excellent platform for you to remind providers about the importance of talking with patients – especially those under the age of 25 – about their sexual health and STD testing that is appropriate for them. Given the expected reach of this campaign with young adults across the country, the population of clients requesting STD information or testing during the month of April may increase. You should also be aware that for many of the clients this may be their first experience with STD testing. In order to provide clients with positive testing experiences, protocols and procedures may need to be adapted in some clinic settings.

### **STD Prevention Materials**

The following materials are available to you without charge:

- STD “The Facts” brochure series. This award-winning series of 10 brochures was developed for the general public and uses plain language. They are available to health departments and other partners to be ordered in quantities up to 500 per brochure at CDC’s [online ordering page](#).
- *A Guide To Taking A Sexual Health History*. This is a practical guide for health care providers and would be a good resource to share with health care providers in your community, especially if you are making them aware of STD Awareness Month activities. These are also available to be [ordered online](#).
- CDC STD Fact Sheets. These are available for [download](#) and local printing and are designed to work in either black and white or color. Downloadable professional print files are also available if you want to print large quantities of these at a local printer.
- Each of DSTDP’s 65 project areas and IPP Regional Coordinators will receive the following campaign materials on April 1:
  - Clinic Kits with promotional materials for clinics to use and distribute during April
  - Campaign posters that can be used in a variety of clinic and non-clinic locations
- Electronic campaign materials are available for download beginning April 1, at [www.GYT09.org](http://www.GYT09.org).

These national efforts are meant to provide support, visibility and context for state and local awareness activities – the key services and outreach that make real impact in your communities. We look forward to your feedback and to working with you as we try to increase both national and local visibility for STD prevention and promotion of sexual health.

Sincerely,

/John M. Douglas, Jr./

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