TuSalud

“I Could Kill You!”—Getting Young People to Talk About HIV [VIDEO]

ViiV Healthcare’s clever “Still Here” video campaign reminds a new generation that HIV remains a public health issue.

April 17, 2026 By Eva Lorenz

After first making global headlines 45 years ago, HIV might not be front-page news anymore, but it’s about to go viral. A new public service announcement (PSA) titled Still Here: Breaking Silence to End HIV aims to break the silence regarding HIV among young people and encourage them to talk about the virus. ViiV Healthcare, an HIV-focused pharmaceutical company, launched the PSA on National Youth HIV & AIDS Awareness Day (NYHAAD), marked each April 10.

Watch the ad above or on YouTube. It’s also shared on social media with a caption that reads:

> “Ignoring the impact of HIV won’t make it disappear. This National Youth HIV & AIDS Awareness Day, stay ahead of HIV by talking openly about testing, PrEP and treatment options.”

View this post on Instagram

A post shared by ViiV Healthcare US (@viivhealthcareus)

“The reality is that young people are overlooking HIV, and that must change. We created Still Here to connect with this audience in a new way about HIV,” said Bithiah Lafontant, head of enterprise communications at ViiV, in a press release. “This video…was informed by conversations with young people and deliberately mirrors their language, style and even humor to get their attention and encourage them to stop and think about HIV.”

Still Here opens with a podcaster announcing, “You might remember our next from the 1980s. Since then, with proper medication…a very manageable condition. Please welcome HIV.” The virus, depicted as a human body with a robotic head, says they are “manageable but still going viral.” In a series of clips, HIV, wearing a leather trench coat, lurks in social media comments, appears on couches at parties and is ignored on the streets (despite signs that read “I could kill you!” and yelling into a megaphone).

The video reminds young people: “HIV thrives in silence. Use your voice. Start talking about HIV.”

According to AIDSVu.org, young people made up 18% of all new HIV diagnoses in the United States in 2023, and young Black people were disproportionately impacted. African Americans make up about 14% of the total U.S. population. However, Black youth accounted for 47% of new HIV diagnoses among young people, and Black women and girls made up 50% of all young women and girls diagnosed with HIV in 2023, according to AIDSVu.org.

What’s more, most young people at risk for HIV are not taking advantage of today’s most powerful prevention: pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), which reduces the risk of contracting HIV via sex by 99%, along with using condoms and not sharing drug equipment. According to AIDSVu.org, teenagers and young adults had the greatest unmet need for PrEP among all age groups in 2024. For every person ages 13 to 24 diagnosed with HIV, only nine people in the same age group use PrEP.

“National Youth HIV & AIDS Awareness Day [#NYHAAD] is a powerful reminder that HIV remains an urgent issue for young people,” said ViiV Healthcare community partner princess Jauan Durbin about coordinating the campaign with NYHAAD. “Ending the HIV epidemic among young people starts with awareness, and Still Here does the important work of opening the door to open conversations.”

Durbin continues: “Progress is going to require trusted relationships, community-centered efforts and resources that actually reach those most impacted. So it’s our job as community partners to make sure we are meeting young people where they are.”

To date, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved four forms of PrEP: Truvada and Descovy are daily pills; Apretude is a shot given every two months; and Yeztugo is a twice-yearly injectable that is highly effective in women, gay men and gender-diverse populations. Due to insufficient evidence, Descovy is not yet indicated as PrEP for cisgender women and trans men. Generic (and much cheaper) versions of Truvada are available.

While HIV is not curable, proper treatment can suppress the virus, letting people with HIV experience slower disease progression and enjoy better overall health. People with HIV can also achieve an undetectable viral load, which means they can’t transmit HIV to others through sex. This is known as treatment as prevention, or Undetectable Equals Untransmittable (U=U).

In 2023, AIDSVu.org found that only 69% of young people with HIV achieved undetectable viral suppression in 2023. That same year, only 37% of people ages 18 to 24 reported ever being tested for HIV, meaning many in this age group were unaware of their HIV status.

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