A Time to Focus on HIV and Young People

Every April 10 marks National Youth HIV & AIDS Awareness Day.

April 10, 2020 By Trent Straube

“Día nacional de concientización sobre el VIH/SIDA en los jóvenes: 10 de Abril.” That’s the simple message of an HIV campaign in Oregon posted on Instagram on Friday, April 10, which marks National Youth HIV & AIDS Awareness Day (NYHAAD) 2020. It’s an opportunity to highlight the HIV-related needs and challenges of young people and to raise awareness about testing, prevention and treatment.



View this post on Instagram

¿Sabías que que los programas de educación para la salud (#HealthEd) en la escuela brindan a los

jóvenes un entorno seguro y respetuoso para aprender sobre la prevención del #VIH? Más información en

https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/library/ awareness/nyhaad.html #NYHAAD #vih #haztelaprueba #oregon

#EndHIVOregon #luchacontraelvih #salud #prep

A post shared by End HIV Oregon (@endhivoregon) on Apr 10, 2020 at 7:30am PDT

One of the challenges facing youth living with HIV is the shift from pediatric care into adult care. That usually happens at age 25, and it puts them at risk of falling out of care. To ensure the transition is as smooth as possible, Advocates for Youth—the organization that launched NYHAAD seven years ago—released the Medical Mentorship Toolkit & Guide.

Mentorships, according to the guide, help young people living with HIV develop the confidence and skills needed to navigate the health care system. Available via email, the tool kit was developed to help organizations and individuals who work with HIV-positive youth ages 13 to 24.

According to @CDCgov, 13 to 24-year-olds are at a greater risk for #HIV. And those who are Black or Latinx have the highest risk. Get the facts this National Youth HIV & AIDS Awareness Day. #NYHAAD pic.twitter.com/0y3U64fMLN

— Human Rights Campaign (@HRC) April 10, 2020

“Young people ages 13 to 24 have always known a world with HIV,” writes Advocates for Youth on the importance of the mentorship tool kit. “Although ongoing scientific advances in prevention and treatment have cut the numbers of new infections substantially, young people remain disproportionately affected. 1 in 5 new HIV diagnoses in the U.S. were among young people in this age group, and only half know their status. Young people also have low rates of HIV testing and are least likely to be connected to HIV care after testing positive. Young people living with HIV are also less likely to remain in care or to have viral suppression.”

Mentors support youth living w/ HIV to build skills & close gaps in care by:

✔connecting personally

✔providing information & guidance

✔when appropriate, sharing experiences.

This helps gain confidence & skills to manage their own healthcare. #NYHAAD https://t.co/7uEEGT7qJ5 pic.twitter.com/NTaCtD4loX

— SacPOP (@Sac_POP) April 10, 2020

You can download graphics to promote NYHAAD and the mentorship tool kit on AdvocatesForYouth.org.

In related news, see the POZ article “The Unique Needs of Youth in HIV Programs Forced to Go Virtual.”

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