

Media Release

AIDS Awareness Week 2006

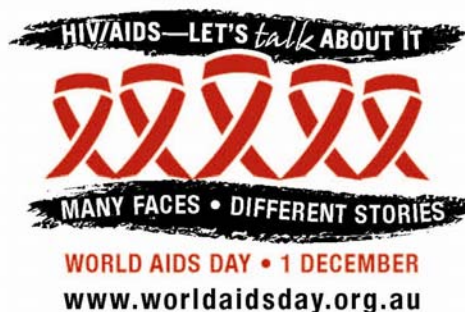
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The AIDS Council of South Australia Inc.

Telephone: (08) 8334 1611

Facsimile: (08) 8363 1046

Contact: Kate Hartwig, Executive Director



AIDS Awareness Week
28th November – 1st December, 2006

64.3 million HIV cases
23.1 million AIDS deaths*

*National AIDS Trust <http://www.nat.org.uk/page/426>

These are the frightening statistics for HIV/AIDS worldwide to November 2005. In Australia, our quick and proactive response to this global pandemic has resulted in our having one of the lowest infection rates in the world at around 1.3 per 100,000. But still, in this country there have been 25,243 HIV infections, 9,759 AIDS diagnoses and 6,594 deaths (*National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research figures to 31 December 2005*).

Infection rates are on the rise throughout the country and here in South Australia we've seen a significant increase of 36% over the last 5 years.

AIDS Awareness Week is being launched at 10.00 am on Wednesday, 29th November at the Art Gallery of South Australia by Minister for Health, the Hon. John Hill with the theme "**HIV/AIDS – Let's talk about it. Many faces, different stories**".

The aim of the week is to raise awareness in the community about HIV/AIDS issues including the need for support and acknowledgement for people living with HIV/AIDS. The highlight of the week will be **World AIDS Day, 1st December**, with red ribbons being sold throughout the metropolitan area to raise funds for the Red Ribbon Bobby Goldsmith Fund.

Also speaking at the launch will be Alischa Ross, Founder and CEO of Y.E.A.H. (Youth Empowerment Against HIV/AIDS) about her work in promoting awareness of HIV/AIDS to the general community with a focus on young people.

"AIDS tells the story of the way the world is. As the World experiences our worst ever Public Health crisis we cannot afford to let generations of Australians grow up in a state of ignorance and naivety. YEAH is Australia's first education service focused on delivering information about HIV/AIDS to young people across Australia" she says.

For further information about AIDS Awareness Week and World AIDS Day, please contact:

Kate Hartwig

Executive Director

AIDS Council of SA

(08) 8334 1611 or 0438 833 962

Annette Crawford

Business Development Manager

AIDS Council of SA

(08) 9334 1611 or 0407 546 321

Ends.