



Public Health
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Champaign-Urbana Public Health District

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Champaign-Urbana Public Health District Joins Local Churches in the “Black Church Week of Prayer for the Healing of AIDS”

Champaign-Urbana Public Health District and Local Churches Hope Event Will Shine a Light on the AIDS Crisis in African American Communities

Champaign, IL – March 2 – 8, 2008 marks the 16th Annual Black Church Week of Prayer for the healing of AIDS. This national program event, produced by The Balm in Gilead, is a week long education and awareness campaign highlighting the role of the Black Church in addressing the AIDS crisis. This campaign serves to pave the way for the continuous delivery of prevention education and services to the African American community via faith communities.

The Champaign-Urbana Public Health District (CUPHD) has joined with local Black Churches to provide HIV/AIDS educational materials, clinic services information and support resources to the African American Community. Local events are scheduled for March 2, 2008 at the Crossroads of Life Community Church in Rantoul, Glory International Center in Champaign, and New Covenant Fellowship in Champaign. The New Life Church in Danville hosted an event earlier on February 24, 2008. CUPHD would like to encourage all local Black Churches to participate, and would be happy to send supporting materials to any interested churches. Free program materials may be requested by calling 217-531-5372.

“HIV is 100% preventable,” said Candi Crause, Interim Director of Infectious Disease for CUPHD. “The key to overcoming this crisis in the African American community is to not only to educate people on the facts as they relate to HIV / AIDS, but to open the door of communication. Like most infectious diseases, HIV spreads through silence and ignorance. Only by working openly together, can we hope to stop this epidemic.”

72 African Americans are infected with HIV everyday. African Americans make up approximately 13 percent of the population of the United States, yet almost half of the total AIDS cases reported in the Country are among members of the African American Community. In 2007, HIV / AIDS was one of the top ten leading causes of death for African Americans between the ages of 25 and 44. African American women are disproportionately affected by HIV/AIDS, and HIV/AIDS is the leading cause of death among African American women ages 25-34. Of the estimated new AIDS cases, 61% are among African American teen girls ages 13-19.

The Champaign-Urbana Public Health District's Infectious Disease Division offers HIV education, prevention, testing and treatment at their new location at 201 West Kenyon Road in Champaign. Appointments are available Monday thru Friday; 8:00am – 4:00pm by calling 217-239-7827. CUPHD also offers "Rapid Testing Tuesdays" from 4:00pm – 5:30pm – no appointment is necessary.

For more information on HIV / AIDS education, prevention, testing and treatment or any CUPHD programs please contact CUPHD at (217) 352-7961 or visit CUPHD on the web at www.cuphd.org.

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