



# South Central District Health

*Keeping your family & community healthy*  
1020 Washington Street North \* Twin Falls, ID 83301  
208-737-5900 \* [www.phd5.idaho.gov](http://www.phd5.idaho.gov)

November 30, 2006

## **PRESS RELEASE – For Immediate Release**

Contacts: Mary Jensen, HIV/AIDS Program Coordinator, 737-5969  
Cheryle Becker, Epidemiologist, 737-5936

### **World AIDS Day Reminds Idaho that Disease is Still Growing**

World AIDS Day on Friday, Dec. 1, 2006, serves as an annual reminder that AIDS and HIV are on the rise in many areas of the world, and marks 11 years since Idaho's first case of HIV was reported. This year's international theme for World AIDS Day is "Stop AIDS. Keep the Promise."

In Idaho between 1985 and 2003 (the latest year for which statistics are available), 1,074 unduplicated cases of HIV / AIDS have been reported; of that number, 557 cases have received an AIDS diagnosis. South Central District Health provides case management to over 35 HIV positive people in the eight county district. Idaho residents accounted for 0.2% of total HIV cases and 0.07% of total AIDS cases reported in the U.S. since the beginning of the HIV / AIDS epidemic.

"World AIDS Day was first observed in 1988, resulting from an international gathering of health ministers who called for a new spirit of social tolerance and exchange of information on HIV and AIDS," said Mary Jensen, AIDS Advocate for South Central District Health. "We all have a responsibility to help stop the HIV / AIDS epidemic in our communities. We must work together in promoting HIV risk reduction practices, including safe sex, and tolerance toward those infected with HIV / AIDS."

The number of people living with HIV has risen from around 8 million in 1990 to nearly 40 million today, and is still growing, according to AVERT.org, an international AIDS charity. More than 25 million people have died of AIDS since 1981. Around 63% of people living with HIV are in sub-Saharan Africa. In 2006, 4.6 million people were newly infected with HIV and 2.9 million people died from AIDS.

AVERT.org reports that Africa has 12 million AIDS orphans. At the end of 2006, women accounted for 48% of all adults living with HIV worldwide, and for 59% in sub-Saharan Africa. Young people (15-24 years old) account for half of all new HIV infections worldwide -- around 6,000 become infected with HIV every day. And in developing and transitional countries, 6.8 million people are in immediate need of life-saving AIDS drugs; of these, only 1.65 million are receiving the drugs.

In September 2006, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued new guidelines about HIV screening. CDC now recommends that all persons be tested for HIV on an annual basis.

The developing world is most severely impacted by the spread of HIV and AIDS. In May 2003, the U.S. Congress approved, and President Bush signed into law, the “United States Leadership Against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria Act of 2003.” As part of the Act, President Bush’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief outlines the United States’ efforts to provide foreign assistance worldwide by partnering with nations to meet the needs of their people. The President’s plan is the largest commitment ever by a single nation toward an international health initiative – a five-year, \$15 billion, multifaceted approach to combating the disease around the world. The Emergency Plan was the first quantum leap in America’s leadership on global AIDS.

Countries all over the world will mark World AIDS Day on Friday with events including rallies, marches, and prayer vigils.

###