



5 Ways Colleges and Universities Can Improve Their HIV Strategies

The HRC Foundation offers a (free!) “HIV 101” guide for students and educators.

April 12, 2018 By [Trent Straube](#)

Although the overall rate of new HIV infections is declining in the United States, 20 percent of new cases are among youth ages 13 to 24, with 80 percent of those diagnoses occurring in people between ages 20 and 24. To help reach this population with vital HIV information, the HRC Foundation (part of the LGBT advocacy group Human Rights Campaign) has released HIV 101: A Guide to HIV Prevention, Treatment, and Care on College and University Campuses.

The cover of HRC Foundation's guide Courtesy of HRC

“The path toward ending the HIV and AIDS epidemic goes right through America’s colleges and

universities,” said Mary Beth Maxwell, HRC’s senior vice president for programs, research and training, in an [HRC press release](#). “Our colleges and universities are not just tasked with educating our nation’s students, but also protecting the health and wellbeing of their student body and campus community. By taking the steps necessary to provide equitable treatment, expand access to care and offer educational resources on HIV, students and administrators alike can help bring our world one step closer to an AIDS-free generation.”

The 21-page guide notes that, as a group, college students are more likely to engage in high-risk sexual behaviors, have multiple sexual partners and experiment with alcohol or drugs (which can impair judgment and lower inhibitions, thus raising HIV risk). At the same time, these students are less likely to discuss HIV with their sexual partners or get tested for the virus (only 24.5 percent of college students reported being tested, notes HRC).

The guide was released to coincide with [National Youth HIV & AIDS Awareness Day](#) (NYHAAD), observed each year on April 10.

The report offers facts about today’s HIV epidemic and spells out ways that colleges and universities can promote HIV awareness. It also sums up five ways that colleges and universities can improve HIV prevention, treatment and care while bolstering the health of their students. They are:

1. Evaluate your institution’s current student sexual health programs, practices, and policies.
2. Make inclusive sexual health education a top priority on campus to address the inequality that LGBTQ students face.
3. Ensure that campus health care providers receive up-to-date training on the latest recommendations from the CDC [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention] and other accredited public health organizations regarding HIV prevention, treatment and care guidelines.
4. Partner with and support student-led initiatives to promote HIV awareness and sexual health education, particularly those led by LGBTQ and POC [people of color] student organizations.
5. Partner with and support community initiatives that promote HIV awareness and sexual health education.