



Buddies HIV Support Group Marks 33 Years by Hosting a Wellness Fair

The New Jersey event illustrates how the epidemic and the group's mission have evolved. [VIDEO]

September 25, 2018 By [Trent Straube](#)

When Buddies New Jersey Inc. launched 33 years ago, its goal was to provide support to people dying from AIDS-related illnesses. Today, as HIV treatment has vastly improved, Buddies has expanded its mission, reports [NorthJersey.com](#).

To celebrate its 33rd year, the group held its first annual Resource and Community Wellness Fair in the parking lot of its Hackensack headquarters. Open to the entire community, the fair included a variety of booths that provided information and fun—everything from free massages and healthy foods to details about Medicare and Medicaid and HIV prevention. Sections of the New Jersey AIDS Quilt, part of the national memorial to those lost to the epidemic, were on display at the fair.

“The message of today is we want [to use education, texting and prevention] to keep our whole neighborhood well and communicating with us to keep HIV out of the picture,” Ray Welsh, fundraising and events manager for Buddies, told [NorthJersey.com](#).

Originally founded in Teaneck, New Jersey, the Buddies organization today serves 500 clients living with HIV and provides prevention counseling and services to 70 people. It also maintains a home in Paramus for clients who need housing.

Check out the [NorthJersey.com](#) article for a slideshow from the September 23 fair.

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