Greater Expectations

A new campaign challenges the media to raise awareness about HIV/AIDS in black communities.

October 1, 2009 By James Wortman

Over the summer, the Black AIDS Media Partnership—a new coalition of major U.S. media companies—launched the “Greater Than AIDS” campaign. Its goal? To encourage media companies to better address HIV/AIDS in black America, which accounts for about 50 percent of annual HIV cases in the United States and roughly 50 percent of AIDS-related deaths.

The effort was developed with support from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Elton John AIDS Foundation and others. The Kaiser Family Foundation (KFF) and the Black AIDS Institute are providing strategic direction and management as well as overseeing the campaign.

“The campaign is a call to action,” says Black AIDS Institute founder and CEO Phill Wilson. “We’re encouraging people to get informed, to get tested, to get treated, to use condoms, to talk openly, to fight stigma and to get involved.”

According to a recent KFF survey, 44 percent of black Americans say that their primary source for HIV information is the media, not family members and health care providers. Despite this, only 33 percent of them say they have seen, heard or read a lot about HIV/AIDS in the United States in the past year compared with 62 percent in 2006.

“The message is that the individual concern about HIV/AIDS is great, but there is a limited sense of community ownership and responsibility,” Wilson says of those statistics.

Companies that have committed to support the campaign include American Urban Radio Networks, CBS Outdoor, Clear Channel Communications, ESSENCE Communications and the National Newspaper Publishers Association. In addition to drawing attention to the domestic HIV/AIDS crisis, the CDC’s five-year “Act Against AIDS” campaign (which includes “Greater Than AIDS”) will extend HIV prevention, education and anti-stigma messaging through radio, outdoor, print, online and television venues.

“AIDS is a battle we can win,” Wilson affirmed. “African Americans are greater than any challenge that we’ve confronted in the past, and we will be greater than HIV/AIDS as well.”

For more information on “Greater Than AIDS,” visit greaterthan.org.

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.
http://beta.docker.poz.com/article/greater-than-aids-october-17280-3817