Mexican Group Banda MS Joins the CDC to Fight HIV Stigma

"Detén el estigma del VIH."

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Mexican musical sensation Banda MS is collaborating on a different kind of hit: a message to end HIV stigma. The chart-topping group joined forces with the Pinyon Foundation and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for the Spanish-language campaign "Detén el estigma del VIH" ("Stop HIV stigma").

The multimedia campaign kicked off this month on Hispanic Communications Network—La Red Hispana, according to a press release from the network. An updated version of existing CDC campaigns, this one includes a helpful guide on stigmatizing language and how to speak openly about HIV in language that is supportive.

"There is a negative stigma and incorrect negative beliefs about people living with HIV, and as a community, it is our responsibility to help so that we can all live healthier lives," said Oswaldo Silvas, the spokesman for Banda MS, in one of the campaign's videos.

The full name of the group is Banda Sinaloense MS de Sergio Lizárraga. The MS refers to the band's city and state of origin: Mazatlán, Sinaloa. What's more, banda refers to a style of regional Mexican music known for brass and percussion. Active for more than 10 years, the group has won numerous Billboard Latin Music Awards, including top Latin album, among many others.

In related news, October 15 marked National Latinx AIDS Awareness Day. According to the CDC, Latino men who have sex with men (MSM) are the second-most affected subpopulation in the United States, after Black MSM. Overall, Latinos made up 18% of the U.S population but accounted for 26% of new HIV diagnoses in 2016; among those, 87% were among men.

To read more about the CDC's stigma-busting campaign (in English), check out "'Let's Stop HIV Together' Relaunches to Fight HIV Stigma" and "Let's Stop HIV Stigma."

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