World AIDS Day 2021 [VIDEO]

The theme for World AIDS Day 2021 is “Ending the HIV Epidemic: Equitable Access, Everyone’s Voice.” Here’s what that means.

December 1, 2021 By Trent Straube

Wednesday, December 1, marks World AIDS Day. Launched in 1988 by the World Health Organization, the day offers everyone around the globe a chance to support people living with HIV, commemorate those lost to the virus and honor everyone fighting to end the epidemic. It’s an opportunity to educate, raise awareness, fight stigma, promote testing and prevention, release updated data, launch new initiatives (or a World AIDS Day emoji on Twitter!) and much more.

Join us on #WorldAIDSDay as we remember and honor the lives lost to #HIVAids. Beginning at 8:30am PST https://t.co/MstfaabMoR pic.twitter.com/y3NWbHp9Zw

— National AIDS Memorial (@aids_memorial) November 30, 2021

In fact, so many newsworthy HIV-related events and announcements take place around this date, it’s impossible for one article to cover them all. For a more complete roundup from POZ, click #World AIDS Day, where you’ll find, for example, more details about the updated National HIV/AIDS Strategy, the International AIDS Society’s global scientific strategy to cure HIV and the latest HIV data released from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as well as a calendar of World AIDS Day events. Sample social media posts appear throughout this article, but search #WorldAIDSDay to find events near you or messages you’d like to share.

We’ve known for 40 years that our strength has always been each other.

As we mark #WorldAIDSDay we remember those we've lost to HIV and recommit to doing all we can to end the epidemic and ensuring those of us living with HIV receive the care we need to live long, healthy lives. pic.twitter.com/WAJeSl4v3w

— AIDS United (@AIDS_United) December 1, 2021

Of note, President Joe Biden is slated to speak from the White House about the National HIV/AIDS Strategy and the "Ending the HIV Epidemic in the U.S." initiative. Biden will make his remarks beginning at 2:30 p.m. ET (11:30 a.m. PT), and they'll be livestreamed on the NMAC and USCHA websites. (The national advocacy group NMAC fights the epidemic though the lens of race and spearheads the annual U.S. Conference on HIV/AIDS—#2021USCHA—which takes place virtually this year December 2 and 3.)

This Wed, Dec 1 is #WorldAIDSDay. Join for NYC events:

3:30 PM: Rally/March at Christopher Park (https://t.co/AEnha1bUS2)

4:30 PM: Community Forum (https://t.co/UeaUgtjBi9)

5:00 PM: Words of Remembrance

6:00 PM: Out of the Darkness (Both at NYC AIDS Memorial) pic.twitter.com/EMQnPgFuTw

— Jason Rosenberg (@mynameisjro) November 29, 2021

The U.S. government's theme for World AIDS Day 2021 is "Ending the HIV Epidemic: Equitable

Access, Everyone's Voice." The theme, according to a blog post on HIV.gov, "highlights the Biden-Harris Administration's strong commitment to ending the HIV epidemic globally by addressing health inequities and ensuring the voices of people with HIV are central in all our work."

Interesting Eye of Fatima iconography for U=U and appropriate for #EndStigma #UEqualsU #WorldAidsDay2021 https://t.co/3kq0TMZgmx

— Derrick Mapp (@6dm4) December 1, 2021

Yesterday, November 30, the White House released a Proclamation on World AIDS Day, 2021. "While we have made remarkable progress in the 40 years since the first-known reported case of AIDS, this disease remains a serious public health challenge," the proclamation reads. "The COVID-19 pandemic has added to the challenges our heroic health care and frontline workers face, yet they continue to deliver essential HIV prevention services and provide vital care and treatment to people living with HIV. The pandemic has also interrupted HIV research and highlighted the work that still remains to achieve equitable access to HIV prevention, care, and treatment in every community—particularly for communities of color, adolescent girls and young women, and the LGBTQI+ community."

The proclamation also lays out funding request to end the epidemic—including stigma and discrimination—both at home and across the globe.

President Biden releases proclamation for #WorldAIDSDay which includes:

■ $670 million request in HIV funding for HHS

■ Challenges impacted by COVID-19

■ Upcoming HIV/AIDS strategy announcement

■ A focus on equal access for LGBTQ+, people of color, teens & women https://t.co/UhQun6MDu5

— Human Rights Campaign (@HRC) November 30, 2021

About 1.2 million people were living with HIV in the United States in 2019, according to the CDC's Basic Statistics page. That year, 36,801 people were diagnosed with HIV, a 9% drop from 2015. What's more, 65% of transmissions were a result of male-to-male sexual contact, 23% were due to heterosexual contact, 7% were due to injection drug use and 4% were due to male-to-male sexual contact and injection drug use.

"If we look at HIV diagnoses by race and ethnicity, we see that Black/African-American people are most affected by HIV," writes the CDC. "In 2019, Black/African-American people accounted for 42% (15,340) of all new HIV diagnoses. Additionally, Hispanic/Latino people are also strongly affected. They accounted for 29% (10,502) of all new HIV diagnoses."

"Thank you @Twitter @Policy for launching the first emoji for #WorldAIDSDay this year. We encourage everyone to be part of this important conversation and move forward from commitment to action to #EndInequalities, #EndAIDS and #EndPandemics." pic.twitter.com/4T2h56XSYu

— UNAIDS (@UNAIDS) November 25, 2021

For a global perspective on the epidemic, the United Nations Joint Programme on HIV AIDS (UNAIDS) provides key statistics on HIV and AIDS. A few highlights:

- 7 million [30.2 million to 45.1 million] people globally were living with HIV in 2020.
- 2 million people were accessing antiretroviral therapy as of June 30, 2021.
- 5 million [1 million to 2 million] people contracted HIV in 2020.

- 680,000 [480,000 to 1 million] people died of AIDS-related illnesses in 2020.
- 3 million [55.9 million to 110 million] people have become infected with HIV since the start of the epidemic.
- 3 million [27.2 million to 47.8 million] people have died of AIDS-related illnesses since the start of the epidemic.

To learn about HIV rates in your city, county and state, visit AIDSVu.org, which also offers a collection of sharable graphics.

> You're invited! Join Let's Stop HIV Together this #WorldAIDSDay (Dec. 1) for an important Insta Live conversation on equitable access to #HIV prevention and care. See you there! #StopHIVTogether #WAD2021 pic.twitter.com/aWwbEMJsP5
>
> — NMAC (@NMACCommunity) November 21, 2021

Be sure to visit the POZ Basics on HIV/AIDS, where you can learn about transmission, prevention, treatment and more. And to learn more about World AIDS Day milestones, check out Everyday: World AIDS Day Edition.

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