

HIV/AIDS Regional Services

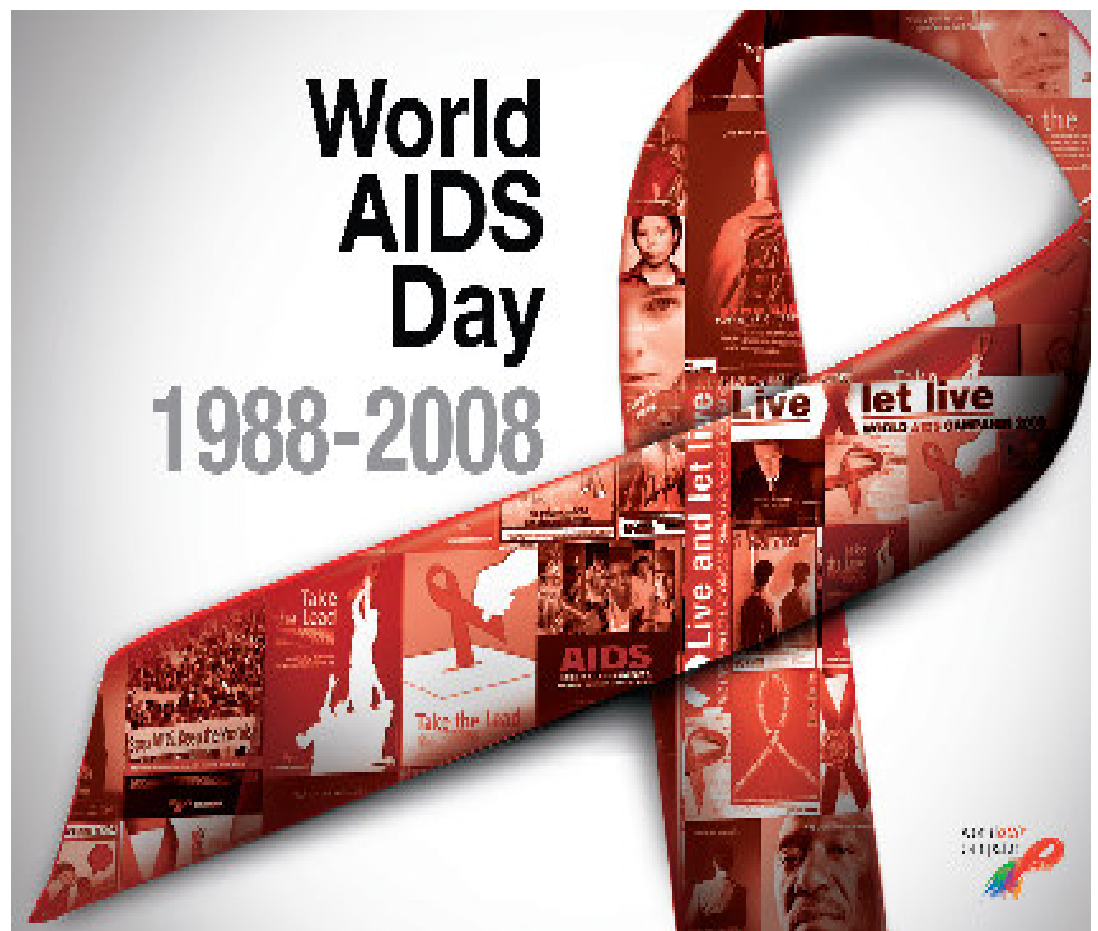
20th Anniversary



Christmas Wish List

- Hygiene products
- Clothing
- New socks
- Bedding
- Vitamins
- Non-perishable food items (stews, soups, crackers, etc).
- Dog/cat food and supplies

We are also looking for warm winter clothing including hats, mitts, socks, scarves, coats and boots.



***Please join HARS for an Open House on
December 1, 2008 from 12 noon till 4:00pm
in honour of our 20th anniversary and the
20th anniversary of World AIDS Day.***

**Executive Director
John MacTavish**

Well it's hard to believe that the fall is behind us and we are heading into Winter and the Holiday Season. The office has been extremely busy over the last few months with staff on the run. Presently we are getting ready for the winter and putting together a winter warming project, so if you have some extra gloves, scarves, socks and blankets please drop them off at the office. The winter is a difficult time for service users so we are attempting to make it a little less difficult for people. HARS will be hosting a Open House on December 1 from Noon until 4 PM so drop in and check out the office and see what is happening at HARS. The office will close on December 23, 2008 at 4:30 and re-open on January 5, 2009.

I would like to wish everyone a happy holiday season and the best for the New Year.

-John MacTavish, ED.



**Regional Support Coordinator
Kate Brett**

First and foremost I would like to begin by thanking the following businesses and people for their assistance with the AIDS Walk For Life: Bayview Mall, Organic Underground, Master Bedroom, Mark's Work Warehouse, Taste of Country, Foxboro Foodland, Belleville Public Library, Green Willow, Community Press, Loyalist College, Belleville Chamber of Commerce, Stanley's Fashions, Culligan Water, Good-Life Fitness, Dollarama, Crossings, HMV, Quinte Mall, Call-A-Geek, Belleville Rotary Club, Hastings & Prince Edward Counties Health Unit, CKWS, CHEX, Reid's Dairy, Quinte Mall, Scotiabank, Quinte Health Quest, Brad Robar RMT, Stacey Harris RMT, Virginia Beattie RMT, Vikki Langelier Intuitive Healer, and Plan B (the band). I would also like to extend my gratitude for all those who came out and participated in the Walk.

It's that time of year so I am including the following information for people to access Christmas hampers; in Hastings & Prince Edward Counties people can apply for Christmas baskets at Century Place in Belleville between 10AM and 4PM Monday to Friday, before December. There will also be a Christmas lunch on December 25th at Bridge Street Untied Church and people need to register before December 23rd by calling 613.969.1020. This is the same number to find out information regarding the Christmas Baskets. In Leeds & Grenville counties people can apply at 175 First Avenue, the third week in November between 10 AM and 2PM, and can call 613.342.5211 for more information.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a happy holiday season.

-Kate Brett, Regional Support Worker

The Lucy Fund

The Lucy Fund is a special HARS assistance program to benefit some of our four-footed friends. The fund came into existence with a donation by Ruth Sheridan after the death of her beloved dog Lucy. Ruth has been a supporter of HARS for many years and she wanted to do something that would assist PHA's and their pets. The hope is that we will be able to provide PHA's with help covering some of the costs of having a pet. At this time the assistance that we can provide is minimal, but we hope to continue raising funds to make this program viable. We are also collecting pet supplies (food, collars, leashes, new toys, kitty litter etc.) to be given to pets in need.

Our animal companions can make a significant difference to the quality of our lives. They bring us unconditional love and acceptance. They don't judge us or stigmatize or make us feel like we don't count. Lucy's Fund is a way for those of us who love our furry friends to contribute to the health and well-being of someone else's beloved companion. If you would like to donate to this project please mark your donation to **The Lucy Fund**.



Lucy, Oct. 29, 2001—Sept. 24, 2007.

"There is no psychiatrist in the world like a puppy licking your face." ~Ben Williams

"Dogs are not our whole life, but they make our lives whole." ~Roger Caras

City Support Coordinator Allison Cope

Winter is on the door step, there can be no denying it any longer. We have been very busy this fall and expect the tempo will only increase in December and January. We desperately need some specific items. If you have any of the following to spare, please consider bringing them to HARS. A small thing can make a world of difference to a person in need.

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|------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| -Gloves/mittens | -razors and shaving cream | -packages of instant coffee |
| -Boots | -tampons and/or menstrual | -Crackers |
| | -Bandages (all sizes) | -Cans of stew |
| -Cat/door food | -Vicks Vapour Rub | -Packages of instant oatmeal |
| -Kitty litter | | -Calorie rich food |
| -Flea medication | | -supplement drinks |

HARS cannot meet all the needs of the people who come through our doors, but we would very much like to be able to offer some small measure of comfort where we can. You can help to make someone's day a little bit easier by donating any of the above.

"For the meaning of life differs from man to man, from day to day, and from hour to hour. What matters, therefore, is not the meaning of life in general but rather the specific meaning of a person's life at a given moment" (Viktor Frankl)

-Allison Cope, City Support Worker



HIV Stigma Campaign

The 2008-2009 Gay Men's Sexual Health Alliance (GMSH) HIV Stigma Campaign is a sexual health and HIV prevention campaign for gay men across the Province of Ontario. The goal is to get gay guys across Ontario talking about the impact of HIV stigma.

The **Key Messages** of the Campaign are:

- ***HIV-related shame, fear, guilt and prejudice exist in the gay community***
- ***HIV stigma and discrimination affects the health and well-being of both HIV-positive and HIV-negative gay men.***
- ***HIV stigma and discrimination make it harder to prevent HIV transmission***
- ***We can all fight HIV stigma and discrimination***

Visit the entertaining and educational website (www.hivstigma.com) featuring games, opinion polls, links to sexual health information and the profiles of online facilitators who are introducing key issues and encouraging online discussion around HIV stigma. These facilitators are men who are passionate about HIV/AIDS in their social, sexual and professional lives and speak from a variety of perspectives about HIV stigma.

**Prison Support Coordinator
Diane Smith-Merrill**

Well we have finally had our first snow fall. Fortunately it did not last long and it was not a lot. Things have been quite busy in the prisons these past few months, lots of releases and information sharing. Correctional Services Canada has started up the Peer Education and Counselling Program (PEC) again so I have been busy going into the different institutions and doing workshops with those who have volunteered. The goal of this program is to train offenders about HIV/AIDS and HEP C so that they can then act as confidential counselors for others who do not want to speak with CSC staff. So far these volunteers have been motivated and are asking lots of really good questions.

As well, John MacTavish and I attended a meeting in Toronto for AIDS Service Organizations with health care staff from provincial Detention and Remand Centres. These meetings are to help with understanding each of our roles and concerns which come up with our service users. It has been a great opportunity to meet face to face with many of the staff members we speak with on a regular basis and to make contacts with new health care staff.

I will also be participating in a poster contest as a judge which CSC has set up inside the 8 Federal Institutions. Those who choose to create a poster which provides information about HIV/AIDS and harm reduction will be entered into the contest and the one chosen will hopefully be made into a poster. So lots of events going on inside right now.

-Diane Smith-Merrill, Prison Support Worker

**Education Coordinator
Rebecca Anweiler**

September's come and now seems like a long time gone. A great crew of volunteers put in a lot of effort towards setting up and dismantling a very successful Lantern Festival that followed on the heels of the AIDS Walk again this year. I need to especially thank Joseph Babcock and Marney McDiarmid for helping me with my first big HARS event. We also had more artist involvement through the presentation of installations throughout the park for the evening of the event, including installations by Marney, Joseph, Don Maynard, Maggie Hogan, and Rebecca Soudant. We got great media attention from CFRC 101.9 FM, Whig Standard advertising, a good turn-out of wonderful drummers, a labyrinth of light, and a great turn-out of people to the event.

Lately it's been a very busy time with a lot of workshops happening and many more scheduled throughout the Fall, especially through programs for at-risk youth. I've also been involved with reel-out in the schools facilitator training program, in order to assist in their efforts to raise awareness about homo- and transphobia in the classroom in several schools this Fall.

The Gay Men's Sexual Health Campaign, "would you?", that is addressing issues of stigma and discrimination in the gay men's community against men who are HIV positive, was launched last month. Please visit their website www.hivstigma.com and check out the discussions on the blogs about this important issue in the lives of gay men.

Wishing you all a safe and joy filled holiday season.

-Rebecca Anweiler, Education Coordinator

Characteristics of a harm reduction philosophy include a pragmatic attitude about sex and drug use, acknowledging that people take risks and that stigma related to those behaviors increases those risks. It strives to create a safe place where people can explore their ambivalence about personal behaviors and learn about ways to make their behavior less risky. It counts improvement in personal quality of life and community well-being as measurements of success, rather than considering abstinence as the only success. It recognizes the personal and social destruction and tragedy that are associated with drug use and unprotected sex, while understanding the forces that fuel those behaviors. It can be a slow process involving attention to everyday needs such as health care, shelter and food that support an individual's progress toward health. Many people view harm reduction programs as pre-treatment efforts.

Tools for the reduction of risk associated with IV drug use include needle/syringe exchange, cleaning needles with bleach, methadone treatment and moving to methods of drug ingestion that do not involve injecting. Techniques for lowering the risk associated with other drug use (including alcohol) include lowering the frequency of use, being knowledgeable about and avoiding drug interactions, staying hydrated, keeping medical appointments, not driving or conducting other tasks that put you or others at risk and maintaining good nutrition. Some common strategies for sexual risk reduction would be knowing your HIV status, lowering the number of sexual partners, increasing condom use, lowering incidence of higher risk behaviors, minimizing or eliminating substance use, keeping medical appointments and reducing other health risks.

From "Harm Reduction All Around", by Mary Lynn Hemphill, L.M.S.W. in www.thebody.com, November/December 2005



FUSE

A drop-in for LGBTTIQ youth (*under 19*)

Every Tuesday

99 York St. 3:30-5:30pm

Chill out. Grab a snack. Meet new people.
Chat. Do art. Get info & much more.

For info contact Marney at
marneymcdiarmid@gmail.com