

Announcement

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A Global Survey on HIV/AIDS and Disability: Please Help

The Office of the Advisor on Disability and Development and The Global HIV/AIDS Program of the World Bank are sponsoring a Global Survey on HIV/AIDS and Disability in conjunction with the Yale University School of Public Health. We are anxious to learn how the HIV/AIDS epidemic is effecting the global disabled population and we ask for help from you and your organizations to do this.

Today, little is known about HIV/AIDS among people with disability. The general public often assumes that people with disability are not sexually active, unlikely to use drugs or alcohol and at less risk of violence or rape than their non-disabled peers. Yet those who live and work within the Disability community are keenly aware of the fact that those with disability are at increased risk of being exposed to all these known risk factors for HIV/AIDS. Moreover, most HIV/AIDS prevention efforts overlook those with disability and are unaware of the unique limitations often posed in providing them with information, (i.e. HIV/AIDS radio campaigns which are inaccessible to those with hearing impairments, newspaper ads which assume literacy in countries where few disabled children are allowed to go to school). Finally, if infected, those who are disabled are less likely than their non-disabled peers to receive counseling, support, or medical care when they begin to show symptoms of the disease.

We are starting by undertaking a Global Survey on HIV/AIDS and Disability. Over the next few months, Dr. Nora Groce of the Yale School of Public Health will be contacting you and other disability organizations and advocates by e-mail or regular mail, asking for assistance. We will be looking for information about programs that provide HIV/AIDS education, interventions and services to Disability communities. We would also welcome accounts from Disability advocates about attempts to seek help for HIV/AIDS in one's community, examples about not being able to get help for one's community, stories about governments and HIV/AIDS voluntary organizations that have tried to reach disabled people and so forth.

A web site is being established where we will post examples of innovative programs that are shared with us by you and your organizations. We will also share information being collected, relevant papers, publications and notices of research, training sessions and conferences.

If you already have information about HIV/AIDS and Disability from your own organization or if you know of a program or project that you think we should learn more about, please let us know. Finally, if you know of other Disability organizations or advocates who might have information about HIV/AIDS and Disability, we would appreciate it if you would forward this announcement on to them.

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(If you would like future correspondence to be in Spanish, French, Chinese or Arabic, please let Dr. Groce know when contacting her).