

The Link

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Executive Director's Report

ACSC is in its 10th year of bringing HIV/AIDS Services to Simcoe County and parts of Muskoka. We have a proud heritage of many individuals over these past 10 years who were dedicated and passionate about bringing HIV/AIDS Awareness through education, advocacy, prevention, health promotion, referrals and our many community partnerships.

We plan on marking this anniversary through a series of events over the next few months such as the Barrie Waterfront Festival in May, a showing of an International AIDS Poster Collection in the Rotunda of the City Hall in Barrie and the AIDS Walk for Life in September whose theme this year is; 'AIDS...Know it like it is'.

We are very pleased to offer as part of our Wellness Program a 'Vitamin Package' through HERBALIFE of Canada Ltd. Through the many hours of networking and research, Tiff was able to secure a vitamin/supplement program which will supply many of our clients with much needed vitamins that will enhance their quality of life.

Our Development Planning Committee has also been busy with planning our campaign for 2005 with the theme 'AIDS...Know it like it is'. Bookmarks and posters have been created and will be shown and distributed at all of our events, while quantities last.

Without the valuable assistance of our supporters, volunteers and Board Members much of what we do would not be possible. Although we are fortunate to have financial support from the AIDS Bureau of the Ministry of Health and the Trillium Foundation; these dollars do not meet all of our financial obligations. ACSC is only able to maintain our services as our financial resources will allow. So please continue to give generously with your time, volunteerism and when possible financially.

'AIDS....Know it like it is'

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ACSC STAFF:

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
GERRY CROTEAU

SUPPORT COORDINATOR
TIFF IDEMS

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

BOARD CHAIR
SHARON SILK

FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE CHAIR
GWEN CRUMP

Call for Food Donations!

This spring, the AIDS Committee of Simcoe County is launching our First Annual Food Drive, as we are planning to stock an emergency food pantry to ensure that clients have adequate access to nutrition in emergency situations. We are requesting that donors/community members, who would like to support this initiative, contribute the following items to assist us in the start-up of this program. Please be conscious of expiry dates when donating items.

- Non-perishable food items
- Vitamins (sealed, obviously!)
- Protein supplements (Ensure, Boost)
- Food Vouchers are also welcome

For more information on specific issues surrounding nutrition for people living with HIV/AIDS, or to make a donation, contact Tiff at 705-722-6778. Note: we are in the process of negotiating for donation box spaces in the community and will keep you posted in regards to drop box locations.

CATIE Workshops:

Note: We haven't received enough requests for these workshops to confirm speakers. Perhaps this was because we attached a form in the last newsletter which led folks to think that responses by mail were preferred. If you are interested in any of the following workshops, you can email Tiff at acscsupport@rogers.com, phone me at 722-6778, fax me at 722-6560 or mail your choices to P.O. Box 744, Barrie, ON, L4M 4Y5.

NEW!

- You Need that Drug... When? - The drug approval process in Canada, presented in partnership with CTAC
- Anal Cancer in HIV
- HIV and the Heart - Antiretroviral therapy and its effect on the heart
- Vaccines for HIV positive travelers – Before you travel, you should know this information
- HIV and Depression – How HIV and depression are connected and what you can do

Drug Treatment:

- HIV Treatment 101 – An important foundation for learning about HIV. Learn the basics of HIV disease including the virus life cycle
- HIV Treatment – When to start, what drugs to start with, switching and stopping treat-

■ HIV Treatment – When to start, what drugs to start with, switching and stopping treatments, adherence issues and resistance

■ HIV Side Effects and how to manage them – Common drug side effects and strategies for managing them

Living with HIV:

■ The Doctor - Patient Relationship – An interactive workshop designed to help you make the most of your relationship with your doctor

Diverse Populations:

- Recreational Drug Use and HIV – Learn the basics about harm reduction for HIV+ users
- Women and HIV

■ Pregnancy and HIV - Protecting both you and your baby in pregnancy and beyond

Diseases and Conditions:

■ HIV/Hepatitis C co-infection - A guide to managing both diseases

Complementary and Alternative Medicine:

- Overview of CAM in HIV – Learn the basics of complementary and alternative medicine and how it is used in HIV
- Wellness Strategies – Tips for healthy daily living with HIV

Skill Development:

■ Researching Treatment Information - Learn how to do your research to make good treatment decisions

Support Coordinator's Update

Isn't Spring wonderful! As we move into the Summer months, I'd like to remind clients who have not received their Wonderland tickets to contact me. Also, ACSC has recently launched a vitamin/supplement program as a part of our Wellness program. A lot of folks look to complementary therapies as a source of wellness, and it is wonderful to be able to offer a program on a limited basis to assist with this area of health & wellness. One thing to keep in mind is that it is extremely important for each individual who is on HAART therapy to check with their pharmacist or HIV specialist regarding possible negative interactions between medications and herbal therapies. If you are interested in partaking in the program, let me know and I will send you a list of nutritional information/derivatives so that you can go over the information with your health care professional(s). We hope to acquire ongoing support so that we can sustain this program on an ongoing basis, and are aware that the short-term nature of programs like this one can be a huge source of frustration for clients. Unfortunately, the nature of funding for such programs is sporadic, short-term and often 'one-time-only', or by donation. We would like to thank our donors for their support, which has made the program possible. Special thanks to Paul for his generosity!

For your information, the Canadian AIDS Society's National Youth Advisory Committee has recently launched a National Young Women and HIV/AIDS Campaign to address the fact that "among all females testing positive for HIV in Canada, the proportion of female teens and young adults is highest". If you would like to order campaign materials for the "Know your risks—Know your choices" campaign, please call 1-877-999-7740 or you can make an order online at www.aidsida.cpha.ca/. You can also check out the campaign website at www.cdn aids.ca/risks/choices.

Take care, Tiff Idems

ARE YOU:

**Lesbian Gay Bisexual
Transgendered Transexual 2-Spirited
Intersexed Queer Questioning**

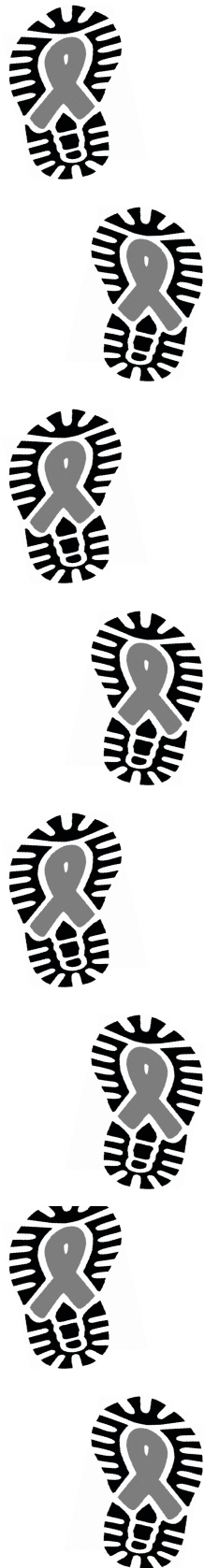
ARE YOU 14-18 or 19-24? WANT TO MEET NEW PEOPLE?

WANT A SAFE, SUPPORTIVE SPACE TO HANG OUT?

COME TO OUR DROP-IN!!

INTERESTED? CALL TIFF @ ACSC

705.722.6778 or 1.800.372.2272



**The AIDS Committee of
Simcoe County
presents**

Walk for Life

Before you know it, it'll be time to get your running shoes out of storage, dust off your AIDS Walk costume/placards/banners, and Walk for Life!

At this year's Walk, we'll start off at the big white tent at Centennial Beach in Barrie and make our way around the Lakeshore with our lanterns after sunset. Once again, we'll have live entertainment, fresh food and refreshments, a beer garden, a silent auction, door prizes, giveaways/awards for our top fundraisers, exciting surprises, and much more!

**DATE: SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER
24, 2005**

TIME: 5:00-9:00 PM

**TEAM LEADER KITS AND PLEDGE FORMS
ARE NOW AVAILABLE!**

CONTACT: GERRY OR TIFF

**PHONE: 705.722.6778 OR
1.800.372.2272**

**ADDRESS: SUITE 336, 80
BRADFORD ST., BARRIE, ON, L4N
6S7**

**EMAIL:
EXECUTIVEDIRECTOR@ROGERS.COM OR
ACSCSUPPORT@ROGERS.COM**



Love of Life Fundraiser

Thank you to all of the volunteers, sponsors & community members who came out to our recent fundraising event at Bluebarrie Hill Restaurant in Barrie! Special thanks to Michelle Guy, who did a fabulous job of organizing the dinner event and performing some great jazz for all of the supporters! Thank you to the folks at Bluebarrie Hill for the use of your restaurant space as well. We were able to sell professionally-framed, limited edition prints at the event as a fundraising initiative, and still have a selection available to any individuals who are interested in our Art Sale. Thank you for your ongoing support! Without it, the work of ACSC wouldn't be possible!

Friends and Supporters of ACSC, we are requesting your assistance in order to assure that the needs of our clients and the community can continue to be met. Whether you can help us through support of our Walk for Life, sponsorship or participation, a financial contribution, or by offering your valuable skills and/or talents. Our clients have a variety of individual needs. Some require dollars to help pay their hydro, others require funds to help them attend doctors appointments in Toronto, and others need assistance with accessing groceries in order to ensure that they have adequate healthy food for themselves and their families. Our community needs to be able to depend on ACSC for our education and prevention services, but the demanding cost of resources, transportation, condoms, and staffing do put these services in jeopardy. Please fill out the form below and contribute to our valuable work.

Please Show Your Support

Fill out the following form and return it with an attached cheque or money order to the
AIDS Committee of Simcoe County, 336-80 Bradford Street, Barrie, ON, L4N 6S7

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Address: _____ Suite: _____

City: _____ Province: _____ Postal Code: _____

Home Phone Number : _____ Work Phone #: _____

E-mail: _____

Donation: Monetary \$ _____

Volunteer time _____

(interests and times available)

Resources _____

(describe)

Please indicate if discretion is required with phone calls or mailings. Yes No

I give permission to the AIDS Committee of Simcoe County to inform me of the newsletter, AIDS Walk, special events, and other fundraising activities Yes No

HIV + Women and Pregnancy By Shari Margolese

With the advances in HIV care and treatment, many HIV+ women are living longer, healthier lives. As they think about the future, some of these women are deciding to have the babies they always wanted.

The good news is that the advances in HIV treatment have also brought down the rate of mother-to-child HIV transmission significantly. If the mother takes appropriate medical precautions, the rate of transmission can be reduced from 25 percent to below 2 percent. In addition, studies have shown that being pregnant will not make HIV progress faster in the mother.

Before You Get Pregnant

- Find an obstetrician (OB) who is familiar with HIV care. He or she can explain your options for getting pregnant with as little risk to your partner as possible.
- Get screened and treated for sexually transmitted diseases.
- Give up smoking, drinking and drugs. All of these can have a negative impact on your health and the health of your baby.
- Start taking pregnancy vitamins that contain folic acid and calcium while you are trying to become pregnant. This can reduce the rates of some birth defects.
- If friends and family are un-supportive or critical of your decision to have a child, put together a support network of people who are caring, non-judgmental and well educated

about HIV and pregnancy. Your network can consist of medical providers, counselors and other HIV+ women who are considering pregnancy or have had children.

HIV Drugs and Pregnancy

HIV+ women may want to avoid some of the more invasive prenatal tests, such as amniocentesis, chorionic villus sampling, and percutaneous umbilical blood sampling.

If the mother takes appropriate medical precautions, the rate of transmission can be reduced from 25 percent to below 2 percent.

There are two types of delivery: Cesarean section (C-section) and vaginal delivery. Elective or planned C-sections are done before labor begins and before the mother's "water" (the membranes that surround the baby) breaks. This reduces the baby's contact with the mother's blood.

For a woman on HIV therapy with a low viral load (less than 1,000), a C-section is not likely to further reduce her already low risk of transmitting HIV. But for a woman with a viral load over 1,000 or one who is not already

receiving treatment at the time of delivery, a C-section may reduce the chances of transmission. Speak to your doctor about the pros and cons of each method of delivery.

After the Baby is Born

Since a baby can be infected with HIV through breast milk, it is important not to breast feed if you have other options. However, occasional breast-feeding appears to increase risk over continuous breast-feeding. You can still have a strong bond with your child even if you bottle feed.

Once the baby is born, he or she will receive three or four HIV tests before getting the final results after several months. During this time, the baby may need to take HIV medication and anti-pneumonia medication. This doesn't mean the baby is sick; it is just a precaution to decrease the chances of transmission and illness.

In Conclusion

Deciding to have a baby is a big step for any woman, but for an HIV+ woman it is even more complicated. Talk to your doctor and OB for "preconception" health care and counseling before you start trying to get pregnant. If you plan ahead, there are many things you can do to protect your health and the health of your new baby.

*Excerpt from Voices of Positive Women's website: www.vopw.org

A Call to All Volunteers!

To any of our fabulous volunteers who would like to help with the planning of this year's events at ACSC, we are looking for volunteers to sit on our 2005 Events Committee. We are currently in need of assistance for the following positions.

- ~ **Volunteers to assist with outreach and education at various community events**
- ~ **Volunteers to recruit teams for this year's AIDS Walk**
- ~ **Planners, organizers, fundraisers, marshals, etc. for the AIDS Walk for Life 2005**
- ~ **General Assistance with ACSC initiatives (ie. Newsletter, etc.)**
- ~ **H.O.P.E. Theatre Troupe Members (ages 14-24) for performances in schools and community organizations. Contact Natalie at acscopyouthoutreach@rogers.com or 705.722.6778.**
- ~ **Placement students are welcome to apply for work study placements.**

If you are interested in sharing your time and talents with us, please contact Gerry or Tiff at 705.722.6778 or 1.800.372.2272.

New, Improved LGBTT2IQQ Youth Drop-In!

Our new, improved LGBTT2IQQ Youth Drop-In will be starting in May! We'll be holding a drop-in for the 14-18 year old group from 4-6pm and another for the 19-24 year olds from 7-9pm! We've received lots of positive input on separating the groups so that we can deal with issues without the younger section feeling intimidated and the older section feeling anxious about the fact that there may be different issues at these different stages (high school and post-high school). We are planning on integrating the two groups for special events and peer mentorship initiatives.

Some of the topics that have been suggested are as follows:

1. Coming Out (resources and support)
2. Acceptance in Community (How to foster acceptance, how to deal with homophobia in constructive ways, how to protect self)
3. Gay/Straight Alliances in Schools (How to start one, how

to educate hetero friends to take responsibility for homophobia and eliminate discrimination)

4. Homophobia and Heterosexism
5. Media representations (How to create alternative representations and address media bias and stereotypes)

Coming Soon: 2 New Support Groups for Lesbian, Gay, Bi, Trans, 2-spirited, Intersexed, Queer & Questioning Youth Ages 14-18 and 19-24!

6. Gender Socialization (How to combat socialization in home, school, etc., how to educate and encourage exploration around these issues)

7. Trans Issues need to be integrated into all of these discussions-the group needs to

make a concerted effort to make trans inclusivity a goal and provide options and support in our community for trans and gender-neutral youth

8. Same Sex Marriage/ Charter of Rights and Freedoms 101 (how to diffuse situations using empowering tools that are shared in the group, how to advocate for your rights!!)

9. Giving Blood (Dealing with the issues surrounding the Q & A on Blood Services forms—brainstorm and make change!)

10. Options for Healthy Relationships- breaking down binaries (discussion and education regarding non-monogamy, polyamory, open, casual relationships—sharing resources surrounding ethics and support)

11. Healthy Sexuality – guest speakers

We want your ideas! If you have any more ideas regarding other issues we should be addressing, or on resources that may be helpful for the group, contact Tiff at 705.722.6778 or acscsupport@rogers.com.

The AIDS Committee of
Simcoe County

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Fax: 705.722.6560

www.acsc.ca

acscexecutivedirector@rogers.com
acscsupport@rogers.com

SPECIAL THANKS TO:

AIDS Bureau

THE NEW VR

Starbucks

MediaLinx

Big Fish Video

Glaxo Smith Kline

Shire Bio Chem

Club C'est La Vie

David Anthony Salon

Cool Beer

Pepsi

Joe's No Frills

Jean's Café

Fox's Bakery

Polar Ice Vodka

Good Clean Fun

Results Placements

Town and Country Steakhouse

Tunnel Clothing

Garner's Sports

Better Vision Optical

Samson's Hair Design

Robert Steven's

Bell, Book and Candle

Running Room

Sports Swap

Paramount Canada's Wonderland

Grand & Toy

Pita Pit

Pharoah's Pita

Liz's Corner

Mother's Day

By: Liz Branham

Every day the whole year through,
Is really mother's day it's true,
But one day each year is set aside,
To honour your mother with great pride.

With cards and flowers and other things,
Till the day just fairly rings,
With all the love you fail to show,
As the rest of the year passes so slow.

So this is a poem to tell all the rest,
Of all the people I love my Mom the best,
And not just one day every year,
But every day I love her dear.....

The H.O.P.E. Theatre

Troupe is looking for new members.

Interested youth can get

involved by calling

705.722.6778, ext. 3.

