
National HIV Testing Day 2007

“Take the Test, Take Control”

June 27, 2007 marked the 13th annual observance of National HIV Testing Day (NHTD), sponsored by the National Association of People With AIDS (NAPWA) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). This national campaign provides an invaluable opportunity for people to “**take the test,**” thus obtaining the information needed to “**take control**” of their health and their lives. Individuals are encouraged to assess their risk for HIV infection and to know their HIV status by learning their test results. Knowing one’s status is essential as early detection of HIV allows for early treatment, which can both prolong and improve the quality of life. Negative results underscore the importance of reviewing one’s risks and modifying behaviors in order to decrease the chances of infection. By knowing their status, individuals have the power to alter their behaviors and take steps to protect themselves and their partners from infection.

A wide variety of HIV testing events highlighted NHTD throughout Florida. Both the Department of Health (DOH) “We Make the Change” and the Bureau of HIV/AIDS (BHA) Internet website promoted statewide activities. Internet users were able to click on a specific county in Florida to display a listing of all of the registered NHTD events taking place in each county.

This year, the bureau provided glow sticks, flashlights, personal fans, car magnets, and other items to community partners. The items were inscribed with the message “Get Tested for HIV” and were used to promote NHTD activities as well as an incentive item to either encourage people to get tested or to return for their results. Local county health departments and community partners provided additional promotional items such as pens, flashlights, and prepaid phone cards.

The continued expansion of rapid HIV testing throughout the state enhanced this year’s NHTD activities. Rapid testing, which delivers results in as little as twenty minutes, was available from many community-based organizations and county health departments. Organizations offering rapid testing found that the convenience of receiving same-day results was a major incentive for testing.

Participation in National HIV Testing Day was very high and activities were well attended across the entire state. Statewide events included:

Area 1

Five area organizations conducted community outreach and offered free HIV, STD, and hepatitis testing. Various media organizations promoted local events.

Area 2A

County health departments in Bay, Holmes, Washington, Jackson, Calhoun, and Gulf counties offered extended hours for HIV testing. Hours were advertised through posters and fliers distributed throughout the community. Community-based partners in Bay County also offered extended testing hours. Television and radio talk shows, newspaper ads, and street signs promoted area events for NHTD.

Area 2B

County health departments and community partners performed over 360 HIV antibody tests on NHTD. Staff conducted media interviews throughout the day to prevent new cases of HIV in the community and increase the responsibility of minority churches to address HIV concerns.

Areas 3 & 13

Thirty-eight agencies participated in events throughout the area, offering traditional and rapid HIV testing, as well as additional testing for STDs. Local media, including television, radio, and local newspapers promoted events with great success.

Area 4

Twenty-six area organizations conducted community outreach and offered free HIV, STD, and hepatitis testing. Community partners reported that many first-time testers sought HIV tests on NHTD. The success of the day's events led to the opening of an additional HIV test site in St. John's County.

Area 5

Four area organizations collaborated to offer free HIV testing in various locations and with expanded hours. Local counselors and participants were encouraged by the outreach activities and incentives proved to be very helpful in getting people to test.

Area 6

Various organizations offered testing during non-traditional hours and even expanded hours due to demand. In addition to HIV, clinics offered hepatitis and STD screening. Each person who signed in through the Specialty Care clinic received a bag filled with risk-reduction materials, pamphlets, a t-shirt, umbrella or CD case, resource information, and an opportunity to discuss any concerns with on-site personnel.

Area 7

Rapid HIV tests were conducted on Saturday, 6/30/07, at the Central Florida Fairgrounds for National HIV Testing Day in conjunction with Ministerio Esperanza de Vida, Inc. Community partners involved with testing included Miracle of Love and the HUG-Me Program. Twenty-two individuals were tested and post-test counseled.

Area 8

Several organizations offered HIV testing throughout the week of NHTD. Many individuals identified as high risk sought testing, which identified at least two new HIV-

positive individuals. Some locations successfully utilized people living with HIV/AIDS as volunteers to provide prevention messages and answer questions for those accessing HIV testing services. Informational fliers were developed and distributed, and local radio and TV stations promoted HIV testing events throughout the area.

Area 9

Over 26 sites offered free HIV tests during the week of NHTD. Area activities were well promoted through several news articles, press releases, promotional events, billboards throughout the community, and proclamations by several towns and municipalities throughout the county. Elected officials took part in a panel discussion and volunteered to be tested following the event.

Area 10

Over 40 agencies participated in NHTD events in Broward County. Much of the success of the day's events was due to the distribution of flyers, word-of-mouth advertising, posting signs in clinics, incentives, and the availability of rapid testing. The area STD program collaborated with Wal-Mart to bring HIV and STD testing to their stores in the area, and many CBOs collaborated with each other to ensure adequate staff was present to conduct testing.

Area 11A

National Testing Day was a countywide event in Miami-Dade. Outreach activities included expanded HIV testing, along with STD and other health screenings. Local organizations collaborated with businesses to offer incentives for testing and to offer testing in non-traditional locations.

Area 11B

Area CBOs collaborated to offer rapid HIV testing throughout the Keys. Testing was widely available through the use of a variety of outreach locations and extended testing hours. Incentives such as the battery-operated fans, waterproof containers, and glow sticks were popular for a population facing the onset of another hurricane season in the Keys.

Area 12

Nine community organizations collaborated to offer free rapid HIV testing to the community. NHTD events were very successful in providing HIV awareness as well as providing accessibility for underserved populations to pre- and post-test counseling.

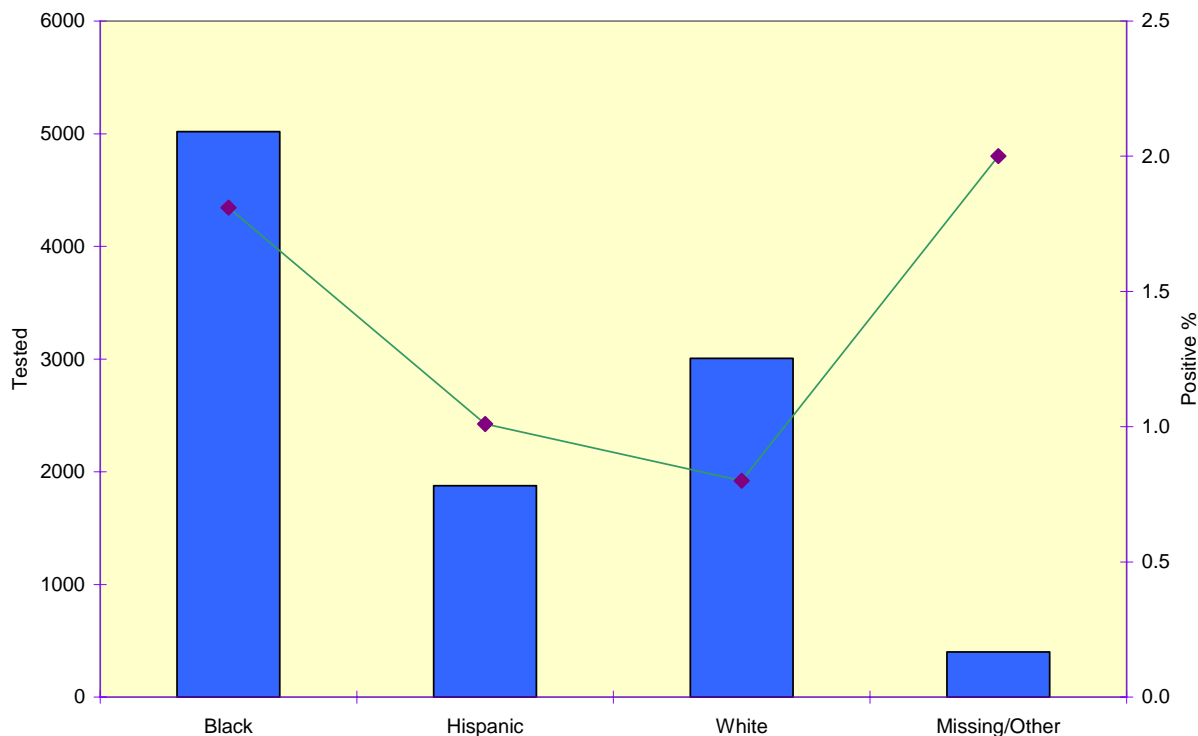
Area 15

Ten community organizations offered free rapid and conventional HIV testing during extended and non-traditional testing hours throughout the week of NHTD. Collaboration between organizations allowed the community to become familiar with the services available throughout the area. Radio announcements, flyers, and word-of-mouth advertising successfully marketed events throughout the week.

In addition to the events described above, 37 churches throughout the state provided education and testing services as part of the *Our Church Lights the Way: Black Church HIV Testing Campaign*, a valuable collaboration in the continued effort to identify individuals in Florida who are unaware of their HIV status.

According to data collected in the statewide HIV Counseling and Testing System, approximately 4,552 tests were conducted on NHTD, 60 of which were positive (1.3%). This includes all tests conducted that day by registered testing sites, not only those conducted in conjunction with special events. A total of 10,302 HIV tests were performed in Florida during the week of NHTD (June 24-30), 142 of which were positive (1.4%). There was a 62.5% increase in testing during the week of NHTD, compared to 6,340 HIV tests conducted during the previous week (June 17-23). In the week following NHTD, the number of tests performed decreased to 4,520. However, this week included July 4. The positivity rate that week was slightly higher (1.6%) than the week of NHTD.

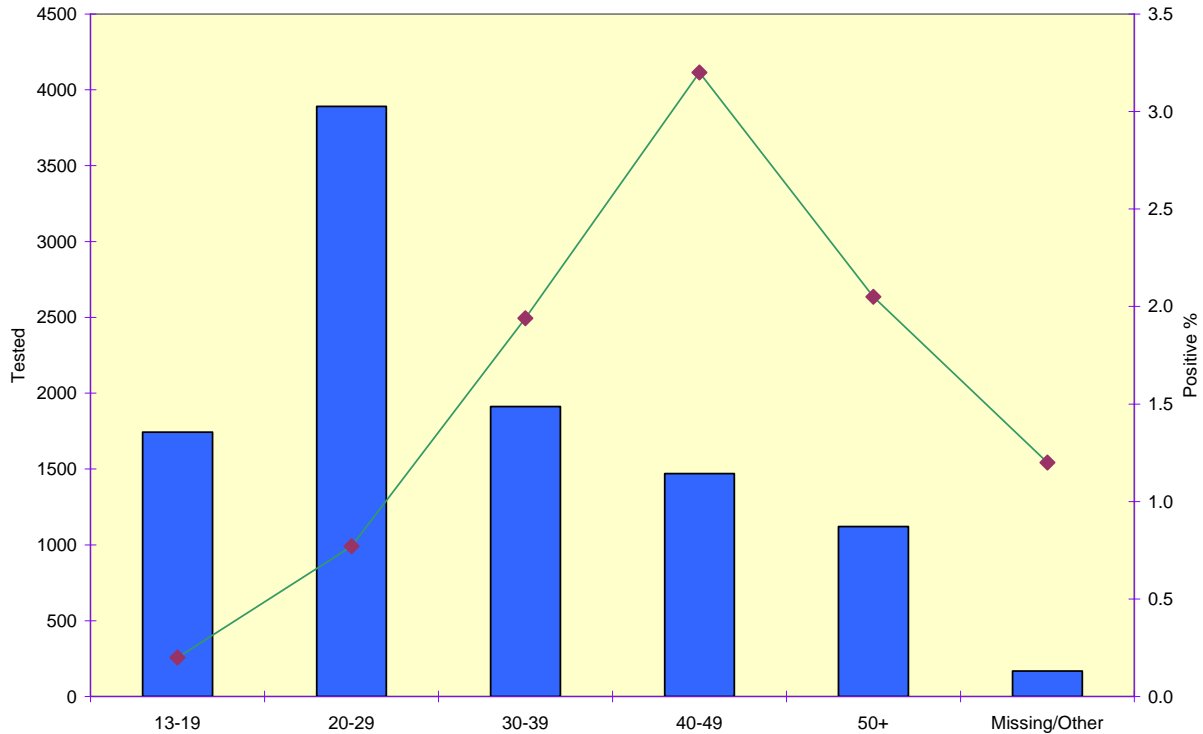
Figure 1. Number Tested and Positivity Rate, by Race/Ethnicity, NHTD Week, 2007



Of the 10,302 individuals tested during the week of NHTD, 48.7 % (5,019) identified themselves as non-Hispanic blacks and 29.2% (3,007) as non-Hispanic whites (Figure 1). Hispanics accounted for 18.2% (1,876) of the tests administered. The remaining 3.9% (400) of the tests were missing racial/ethnic data, or were recorded in the “other” category. The positivity rates were: 1.8% for blacks, 0.8% for whites, and 1.0% for

Hispanics. Blacks accounted for the majority of the positive tests (64.1%), as compared to whites (16.9%) and Hispanics (13.4%).

Figure 2. Number Tested and Positivity Rate, by Age Group, NHTD Week, 2007



Persons between the ages of 20-29 represented the largest portion of HIV tests among age groups, and accounted for 30 positive tests. The positivity rate for this age group was 0.8%. In contrast, persons aged 30-39 represented the second largest group tested, and yielded a 1.9% positivity rate. Persons aged 40-49 had the highest positivity rate with 3.2%. The 50+ age group recorded 23 positive tests, yielding a positivity rate of 2.1%. There were 141 tests with missing age data (see Figure 2).

During NHTD week, a total of 4,197 blood tests (40.7%), 3,099 oral tests (30.1%), and 3,006 rapid tests (29.2%) were performed. The majority of tests (57.8%) were administered to females; however, males accounted for the majority (57.7%) of positive tests (data not shown). The male population had an overall positivity rate of 2.0%, compared to 1.0% for females. There were 150 HIV tests with missing gender data. The majority of HIV tests administered during the week of NHTD were to persons who identified heterosexual sex as their highest risk behavior. The positivity rate of that risk group was 0.6%. The risk group with the highest positivity rate was “sex with HIV”, that positivity rate was 16.9% or 12/71. There were 50 tests with no identifiable risk, and 707 tests missing risk exposure data.

Figure 3. Number Tested and Positivity Rate, NHTD Week, 2001-2007



Figure 3 shows the number of tests done and positivity rates from 2001 to 2007 for the week of NHTD. There was a nearly 12.8% increase in the number of tests administered between 2006 and 2007. Conversely, there was a slight decrease in the positivity rate.

Table 1 shows testing data from 1996 to 2007 for the week before and the week of NHTD. In general, higher numbers of tests have been recorded the week of NHTD as compared to the preceding week. In 2007, this increase (59.2%) was above average when compared to prior years. Higher positivity rates were reported in 1996, 2002, and 2006 during the week of NHTD, whereas in 2007 the positivity rate was lower.

Table 1. HIV testing the week before, and during the week of NHTD, 1996-2007.

Time of Tests	Year											
	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
June 27, Day of Week	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed
June 17-23												
Number of Tests	4,962	4,695	4,825	4,694	4,828	5,490	5,544	5,812	5,943	6,218	5,714	6,340
Number of Positives	105	105	120	108	111	143	106	133	126	109	86	95
Percent Positive	2.1%	2.2%	2.5%	2.3%	2.3%	2.6%	2.0%	2.3%	2.1%	1.8%	1.5%	1.5%
June 24-30												
Number of Tests	5,169	5,300	5,409	6,136	6,972	8,763	9,318	10,302	7,826	8,412	8,477	10,302
Number of Positives	130	111	94	138	122	174	211	174	116	129	140	142
Percent Positive	2.5%	2.1%	1.7%	2.2%	1.7%	2.0%	2.3%	1.6%	1.5%	1.5%	1.7%	1.4%
Comparison between the week of NHTD and the previous week												
Number of Tests	207	605	584	1,442	2,144	3,273	3,774	4,490	1,883	2,194	2,763	3,962
Number of HIV+ Tests	25	6	-26	30	11	31	105	41	-10	20	54	47

A comparison of testing levels for the week of NHTD in 2006 and 2007 by area is shown in Table 2. There was an 21.4% increase in the number of tests from 2006 to 2007, from 8,477 to 10,302. Areas 9 and 10 had the greatest increases in testing this year. The area with the greatest decrease is 15, with an 41.0% drop in the number tested from 2006.

Table 2. Comparison of Testing by Area, NHTD Week, 2006 and 2007

Area	Tested 2007	Tested 2006	% Change in #	Positivity Rate 2007	Positivity Rate 2006
			Tested from 2006		
1	341	296	15.2%	0.3%	0.7%
2A	191	303	-37.0%	0.0%	1.6%
2B	589	419	40.6%	1.2%	1.0%
3	501	420	19.3%	0.4%	1.1%
4	1,001	717	39.6%	1.5%	2.1%
5	482	502	-4.0%	1.5%	1.0%
6	773	720	7.4%	1.2%	2.0%
7	926	905	2.3%	0.7%	1.8%
8	567	446	27.1%	0.5%	1.1%
9	1,152	722	59.6%	1.2%	1.4%
10	1,365	782	74.6%	2.0%	3.7%
11A	1,178	801	47.1%	3.7%	4.0%
11B	64	87	-26.4%	0.0%	1.2%
12	257	199	29.2%	0.4%	0.5%
13	284	386	-26.4%	0.4%	0.3%
14	366	335	9.3%	1.1%	1.0%
15	258	437	-41.0%	1.2%	0.7%
Total	10,295*	8,477	21.4%	1.4%	2.0%

- Area 1- Escambia, Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, Walton
- Area 2A- Holmes, Washington, Bay, Jackson, Calhoun, Gulf
- Area 2B- Gadsden, Liberty, Franklin, Leon, Wakulla, Jefferson, Madison, Taylor
- Area 3- Hamilton, Suwannee, Lafayette, Dixie, Columbia, Gilchrist, Levy, Union, Bradford, Alachua
- Area 4- Baker, Nassau, Duval, Clay, St. Johns
- Area 5- Pasco, Pinellas
- Area 6- Hernando, Hillsborough, Manatee
- Area 7- Seminole, Orange, Osceola, Brevard
- Area 8- Sarasota, Charlotte, Lee, Collier, Desoto, Glades, Hendry
- Area 9- Palm Beach
- Area 10- Broward
- Area 11A- Miami-Dade
- Area 11B- Monroe
- Area 12- Flagler, Volusia
- Area 13- Citrus, Marion, Sumter, Lake
- Area 14- Polk, Hardee, Highlands
- Area 15- Okeechobee, Indian River, St. Lucie, Martin

*7 tests missing site/county information

Florida conducted a successful National HIV Testing Day campaign in 2007. A significant number of people were tested as a result of local community and health department efforts, meeting one of the major goals of the campaign and the Bureau of HIV/AIDS, which is to increase the number of persons in Florida who know their HIV status. Participants in this year's campaign should be commended for their contributions to this success. Lessons learned from this year will be used to strengthen Florida's future NHTD efforts.